

NORTHEAST OHIO WORKFORCE REGIONAL PLAN

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2029

**Ashtabula County
Cuyahoga County
Geauga County
Lake County
Lorain County
Medina County
Portage County
Summit County**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Regional Plan outlines the shared vision, strategic priorities, and coordinated efforts of the Northeast Ohio Workforce (NOW) region to meet the evolving needs of jobseekers and employers across five local Areas representing eight counties (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, Summit). The region's workforce development system is governed by Chief Local Elected Officials and the Workforce Development Boards (WDB) that they appoint which are business-led and comprised of local leaders in business, education, economic development, organized labor and key government and community organizations. Across the five WDBs, there are 54 businesses represented that help shape workforce policy and investment priorities.

The NOW region's five comprehensive OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) centers and three affiliate sites serve a range of customers, including businesses, jobseekers, and low-income youth and adults with barriers to employment. Services provided include basic career services, individualized career services, training services, youth services, employer services, supportive services, follow-up services, and reemployment services. As reported in the Program Year 2023 Unadjusted Annual Performance Report, the NOW region:

- Served 8,003 WIOA-funded participants, representing 35% of the statewide total
- Welcomed over 51,000 visitors to the OMJ centers
- Engaged 1,607 businesses, and
- Facilitated 227 hiring events.

With an estimated population of 2.87 million (2024) and over 1.4 million jobs, the NOW region is the second largest workforce region. Its economy is anchored by Healthcare and Manufacturing and increasingly shaped by rapid growth in Information Technology and Transportation sectors. However, the region faces several workforce challenges:

- Labor force shortfalls. Despite a strong post-pandemic recovery, the labor force remains 20,600 workers below pre-COVID levels and 62,500 below the 2008 peak.
- Population decline and aging demographics. The region is aging faster than the state overall, with 20.2% of residents age 65 or older, and labor force participation declines sharply after age 55.
- Participation disparities. Significant gaps in workforce engagement persist across race, gender, and geography. Black and Hispanic workers face unemployment rates more than double their White counterparts in some counties. Women participate at consistently lower rates than men, and youth under 25 also show lower engagement, mirroring national trends.
- Educational misalignment: While 62.8% of job postings require postsecondary credentials, just 49.7% of residents hold them, contributing to a growing skills mismatch.

These challenges are further complicated by the continued automation of routine work, the digital transformation of nearly every industry, and the rising demand for AI-related and data-informed skillsets—particularly in Healthcare, Manufacturing, and I.T.

To meet these needs, the NOW region's workforce system delivers responsive, employer-informed services. Sector partnerships in Healthcare, Manufacturing, Information Technology, Construction, and Polymers provide a platform for aligning training investments with industry demand. The system also supports strong youth engagement through paid internships, pre-apprenticeships, and career exposure events. It leverages reentry and recovery initiatives, and ensures services are accessible across urban and rural communities.

Despite these strengths, limited resources for supportive services, apprenticeships, and training subsidies constrain the system's ability to scale high-impact programs. To maximize reach, the region is leveraging braided funding strategies, including TechCred, Good Jobs Challenge, and other federal and state investments to extend impact, strengthen partnerships, and improve long-term outcomes for participants.

This plan is fully aligned with the goals of Ohio's Combined State Plan (2024–2027), which emphasizes collaboration across systems, innovation driven by data, and investments in 21st-century skills. The NOW Regional Plan builds upon that foundation with four strategic goals:

- Goal 1: Engage business leaders to drive the continuous improvement of workforce services to ensure jobseekers are trained for and connected to in-demand occupations.
- Goal 2: Operate a results-driven workforce system that achieves strong outcomes for businesses and jobseekers while maximizing the impact of available funding.
- Goal 3: Develop a high-performing workforce staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the evolving needs of businesses and jobseekers.
- Goal 4: Foster innovation to solve persistent workforce challenges and enhance service delivery.

By coordinating regional service strategies, responding to real-time labor market data, and fostering growth, the NOW region is positioned to strengthen its economy and improve the lives of its residents over the next four years.

INTRODUCTION

About the Northeast Ohio Workforce (NOW) Development Region

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Public Law 113-128) is a federal law enacted on July 22, 2014. WIOA requires the Governor of the State to designate local and regional workforce development areas and requires these areas to create local and regional workforce development plans. The NOW region was designated as a WIOA Region comprised of five Areas representing eight counties: Area 2 (Medina and Summit); Area 3 (Cuyahoga); Area 4 (Lorain); Area 5 (Lake); and Area 19 (Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage). With an estimated population of 2,874,086 in 2024, the NOW region is the second largest workforce region in the state (U.S. Census Bureau).



As a performance-driven system, WIOA holds each local workforce area accountable for achieving specific outcomes related to employment, earnings, credential attainment, and skill gains. Each area negotiates annual performance levels with the state and is measured against these benchmarks. All workforce areas in the region met their performance goals for the most recently reported Program Year 2023 (7/1/23-6/30/24).

Guiding Principles

- The NOW Regional Plan is aligned with the Combined State Plan.
- The five Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) representing the eight counties of the NOW region collaborated to produce this plan.
- The NOW Directors (the five WDB Area Executive Directors) meet quarterly to continue to implement the regional plan and to identify new workforce development solutions and innovations.
- Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) and members of the WDBs were notified and invited to participate in this plan's development.
- WDBs will continue to work closely with those education institutions that provide adult basic education, career technical training, and other post-secondary credentials that are in demand. The boards will also deliver youth workforce programs to address the needs of youth who are disconnected from the education systems.
- This plan, required by WIOA, provides strategies for the NOW region and a framework for the WDBs to align their efforts to better serve businesses and jobseekers and achieve the goals of the plan.
- For purposes of the regional plan, an initiative or strategy will be considered "regional" if it involves collaboration between at least two of the WDBs. Participation by all five areas is not required.
- This plan leverages work that has been led or conducted by others in intersecting spheres of influence to be more efficient and to utilize the needed expertise from the community.
- The plan incorporates the major priority of those who are low-income and/or have been left behind by the higher-skills economy to provide more choices/options for employment and careers and to provide employers with a qualified workforce.

[Ohio's WIOA Combined State Plan](#) (2024-2027) reinforces the state's commitment to strengthening its economy through collaboration with local workforce development partners. To support its strategic workforce vision, Ohio has identified the following four goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including

youth and individuals with barriers to employment and other populations along with meeting the skilled workforce needs of employers.

Goal 1: Coordinate efforts across entities (public, private, local, and State) to reduce unnecessary duplication and maximize resources.

Goal 2: Leverage technology and data to create efficiencies and improve services and outcomes.

Goal 3: Deploy locally driven programs that produce results.

Goal 4: Invest in and promote education and training for jobs that empower people with 21st Century skills and strengthen Ohio's strategic economic advantage, and ensure that our State has a workforce to support the health and well-being of Ohioans, their families, and communities.

The NOW regional plan is closely aligned with the goals outlined in Ohio's Combined State Plan. Both plans emphasize:

- **Coordination and Resource Optimization.** The regional commitment to operating a results-driven workforce system that delivers strong outcomes for businesses and jobseekers reflects the state's emphasis on reducing duplication and maximizing resources. By coordinating services across partners and optimizing the use of available funding, the region reinforces the state's goal of alignment across public, private, local, and state entities.
- **Innovation and Results-Oriented Programs.** The regional plan to foster innovation supports the state's goal of deploying programs that deliver measurable results. Local staff are encouraged to develop creative solutions that enhance service delivery and address persistent challenges. At the same time, strong engagement with business leaders ensure that these approaches are aligned with local labor market demands.
- **Skilling for a Competitive Workforce.** The region's efforts to ensure jobseekers are trained for in-demand occupations and to build a high-performing workforce staff mirror the state's investment in education and training that equip Ohioans with 21st-century skills.

Regional Plan Requirements

Section 106 (c) (1) of WIOA requires a regional planning process that:

1. Prepares a regional plan and incorporates local plans;
2. Establishes regional service strategies;
3. Focuses on sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors and occupations for the region;
4. Collects and analyzes regional labor market data;
5. Coordinates administrative cost arrangements and pooling of funds, as appropriate for the region;
6. Supports transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate for the region;
7. Coordinates services with regional economic development services and providers; and
8. Establishes how the region will collectively reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance.

Section 108 of WIOA contains 22 subsections regarding the elements that local plans must address. This regional plan incorporates all of the local planning elements except for those specific administrative processes of the local area (subsection 16 and 17). Also, any special initiatives of a workforce area are found in the local plans.

We have determined that there is no need for administrative cost pooling between the workforce areas in the region, therefore, no strategies regarding this element are included in this plan.

ECONOMIC & LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS

The labor market analysis relies on data provided by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services which sources information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey. All data presented is specific to the eight counties of the NOW region. Where county-level data for the NOW region was unavailable, data from Team NEO's 2024 *Aligning Opportunities* report which reflects labor market trends across a 14-county northeast Ohio footprint was used.

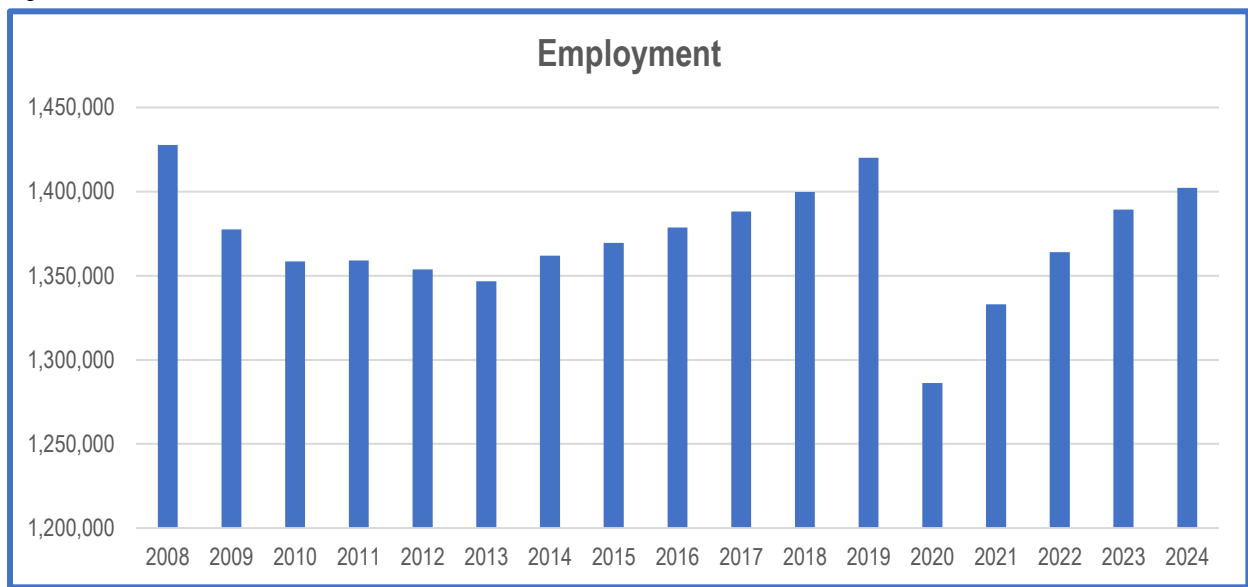
Current Employment Trends

Employment

Job Market Rising, But Not Recovered

Figure 1 below illustrates there were 1,402,300 workers in 2024, a 9% increase (116,100 jobs) since the pandemic low in 2020. Though considerably improved, this still reflects a slight shortfall from the pre-pandemic high of 1,420,100 employed in 2019.

Figure 1.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

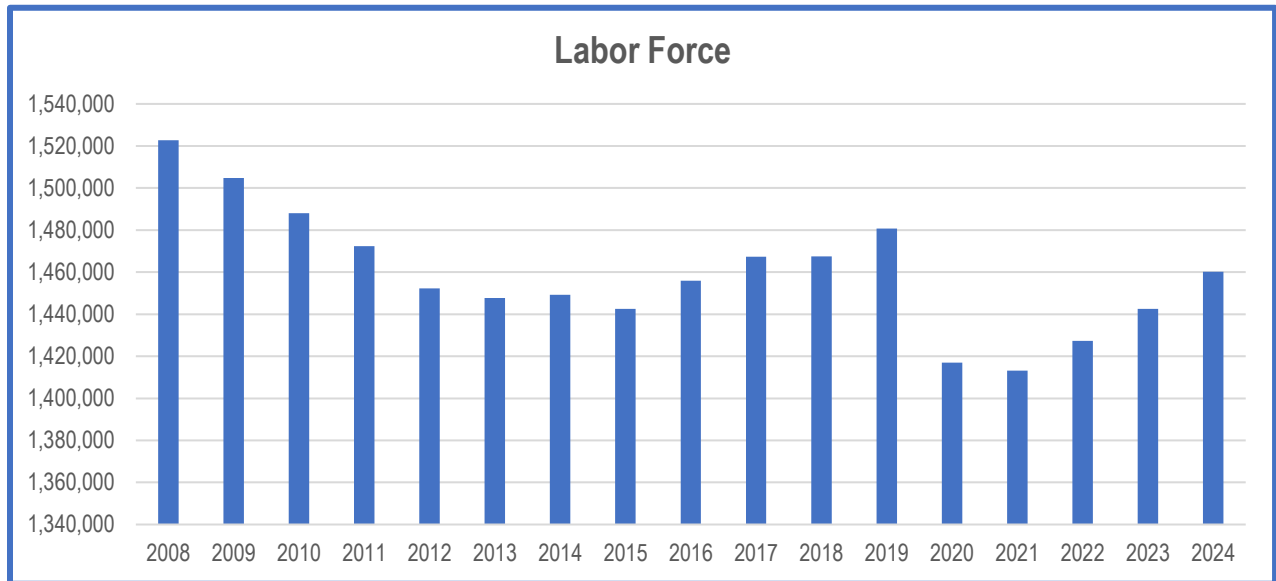
Labor Force

While the number of employed individuals illustrates workforce size, a comprehensive view of the workforce requires examining the labor force (individuals who are employed or actively seeking work). Although the number of individuals employed declined significantly in 2020 due to job losses as a result of the pandemic, the most significant shift in the labor force occurred in 2021 when workers began leaving the labor force entirely.

Labor Force Continues to See Positive Gains But Still Lags Pre-Pandemic Levels

Figure 2 below illustrates a labor force of 1,460,200 in 2024, a 3.3% increase from the low of 1,413,200 in 2021. While this represents a positive trend, the current labor force remains 20,600 workers below the 2019 pre-pandemic level of 1,480,800 and 62,500 workers below the 2008 high of 1,522,700.

Figure 2.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Labor Force Participation Rates

While these employment and labor force gains demonstrate a resilient recovery, they occur when northeast Ohio experienced a modest population decline of -.5% between 2020 and 2024. In 2024, there were 2,874,086 residents in the NOW region with Cuyahoga County, the region's most populous county, alone losing 24,000 residents over this period. NOW's population is also aging more rapidly than the state as a whole. In 2024, 20.2% of residents were age 65 or older compared to 18.7% statewide and youth under age 18 averaged 20.4%, lower than the state average of 21.9% (U.S. Census Bureau). These demographic shifts place additional pressure on the region's workforce system. A shrinking population, along with an aging population nearing retirement, limits the pool of available workers. The labor force participation rate (LFPR), the percentage of the population aged 16 and over who are either employed or actively seeking employment, serves as a critical indicator of workforce availability and potential.

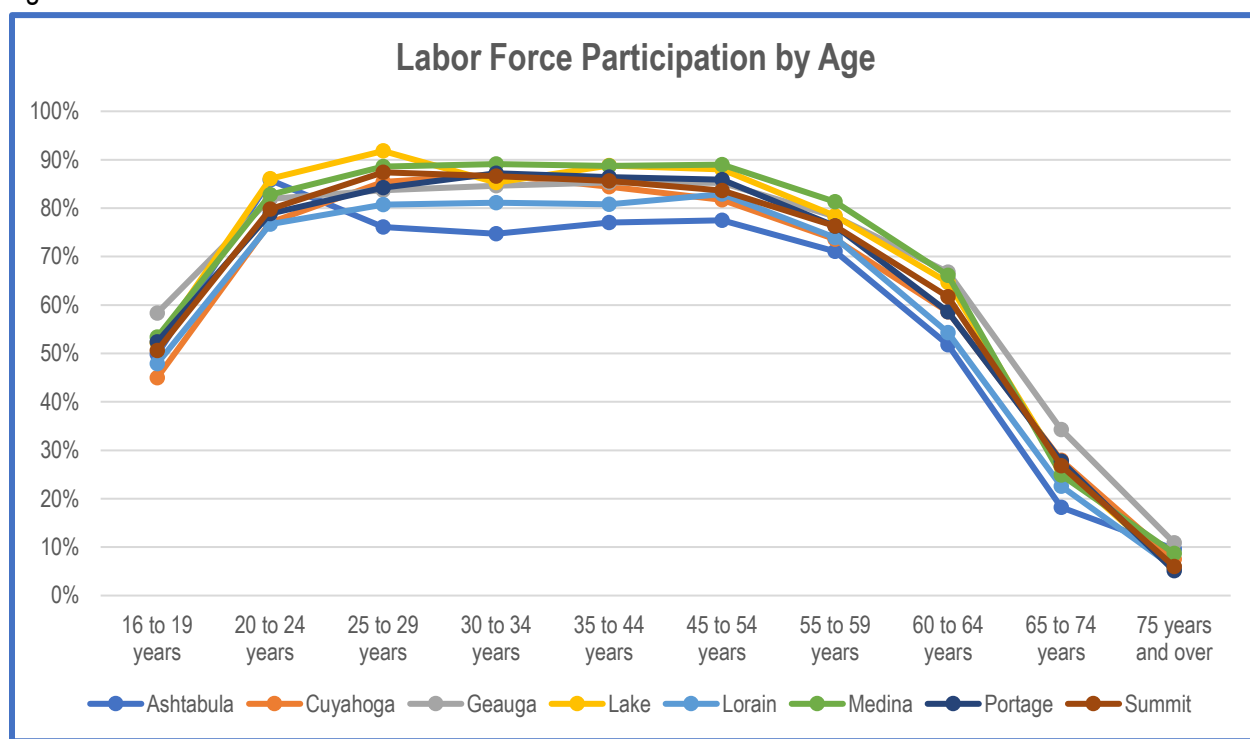
Labor Force Participation Drops Sharply After 55

According to Team NEO's 2024 *Aligning Opportunities* report, "Projections for Northeast Ohio show a 1.7% increase from 2023 to 2030 in the region's working age population (25-44), lower than Ohio (2.1%) and the U.S. (3.4%)." While the prime working-age population is projected to grow modestly, maximizing labor force participation across all age groups becomes increasingly important for sustaining the region's workforce.

Figure 3 below illustrates that labor force participation is highest among adults aged 25 to 54, with rates typically exceeding 80% across all eight counties. Participation begins to gradually decline after age 55 and drops sharply after age 60 which reflects common retirement patterns. Individuals under age 25 demonstrate notably lower participation which is consistent with national trends as many in this age group are still engaged in education or face limited access to full-time employment. Medina and Lake counties consistently demonstrate the highest participation rates across all age groups while Ashtabula County lags behind.

The Team NEO report also shows several sectors in northeast Ohio, including Agriculture, Real Estate, Manufacturing and Educational Services, have a higher percentage of workers aged 55 and older compared to both the state and national averages. Given these trends, the region faces an urgent need to both attract new workers and implement strategies to retain and transfer the knowledge of its experienced workforce.

Figure 3.



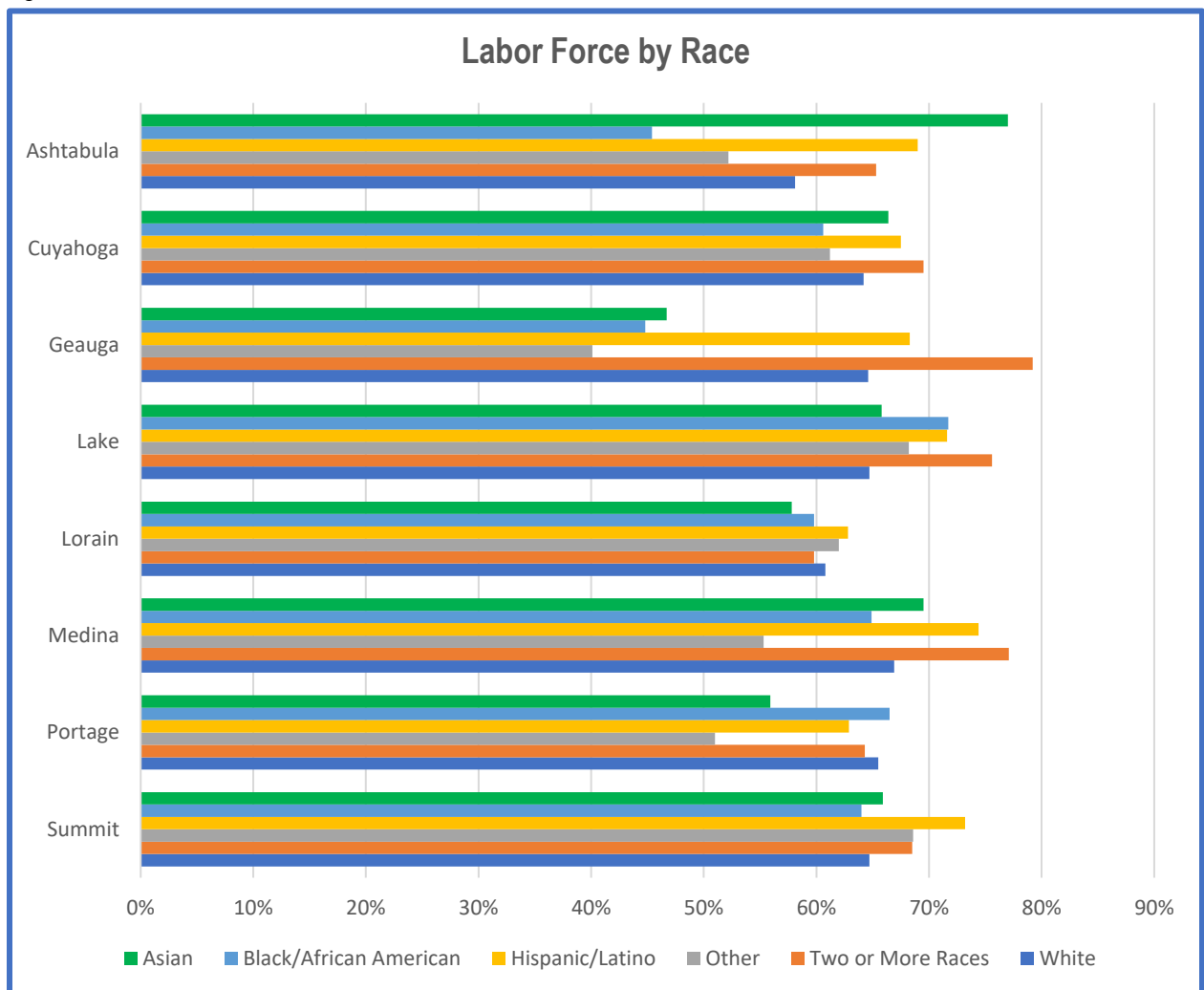
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Labor Force Participation Varies Significantly by Race

Figure 4 below illustrates labor force participation rates vary significantly by race across northeast Ohio. Individuals identifying as Two or More Races often exhibit the strongest engagement, with participation rates in some counties reaching nearly 80%. Hispanic/Latino individuals stand out for their high levels of engagement, particularly in Summit and Medina counties where their participation rates exceed 73% although much lower in Portage County (62.9%) and Lorain County (62.8%). White individuals also maintain relatively high and consistent labor force participation, generally in the mid-60 percent range although Ashtabula County exhibits a notably lower rate (58.1%). In contrast, labor force participation among Black/African American and Asian populations is far less consistent, with rates for Black individuals ranging

from below 45% (Geauga County) to over 70% (Lake County), and Asian participation showing similarly wide fluctuations.

Figure 4.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

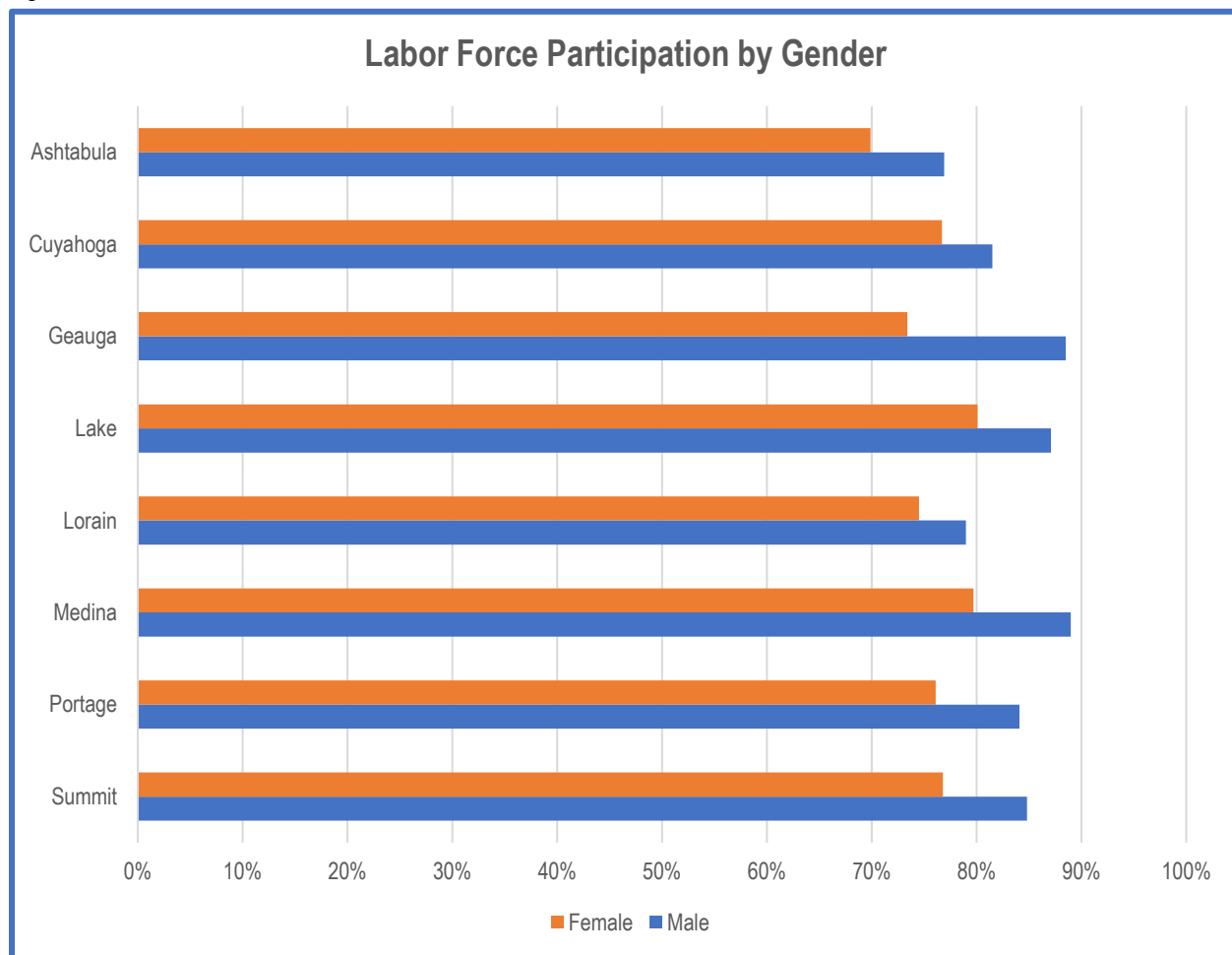
Persistent Gender Gap in Workforce Engagement

Figure 5 below highlights a clear and consistent gender gap in labor force participation rates in each county. Males participate in the labor force at noticeably higher rates than females. With rates ranging from 77% to 89%, Geauga and Medina counties show the highest male participation. Females trail males by seven to nine percentage points, ranging from 70% to 80%. This gender gap suggests that women continue to face barriers to full participation. Even in counties with relatively high female participation, such as Summit and Portage, men still outpace women by a significant margin.

Since 2010, labor force participation rates in the region have exhibited distinct trends by gender. Participation among men declined across all counties with the most significant male participation rates falling in Portage (-1.7 percentage points), Cuyahoga (-1.6 percentage points), Lorain (-1.5 percentage points) and Summit (-

1.5 percentage points) counties. In contrast, female participation increased in five of the eight counties. Medina County saw a notable rise of 3.4 percentage points, Lake and Geauga counties experienced gains of 2.0 points each, and Summit County rose 1.3 percentage points (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010).

Figure 5.

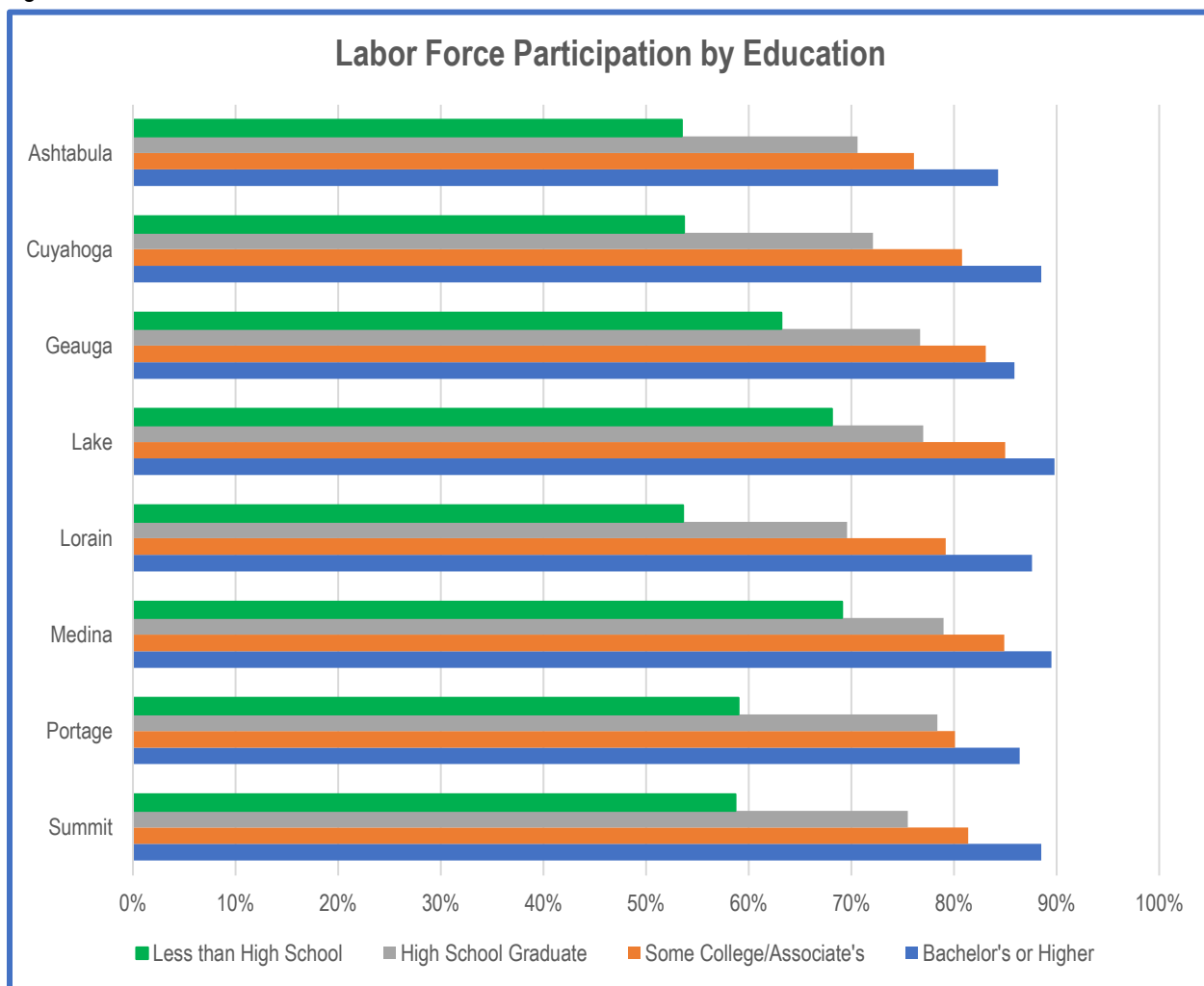


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Higher Education Levels Linked to Greater Labor Force Participation

Figure 6 below illustrates labor force participation rates exhibit a strong positive correlation with educational attainment. Individuals with less than a high school education consistently show the lowest rates, ranging from 53.5% in Ashtabula to 69.1% in Medina. High school graduates demonstrate improved participation rates, with a high of 77.0% in Lake County, though Ashtabula shows the lowest rate (70.6%). Those with some college or an associate's degree generally have higher rates than high school graduates, reaching a high of 85.0% in Lake County. Individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher consistently lead in labor force participation across all counties, peaking at 89.8% in Lake County.

Figure 6.



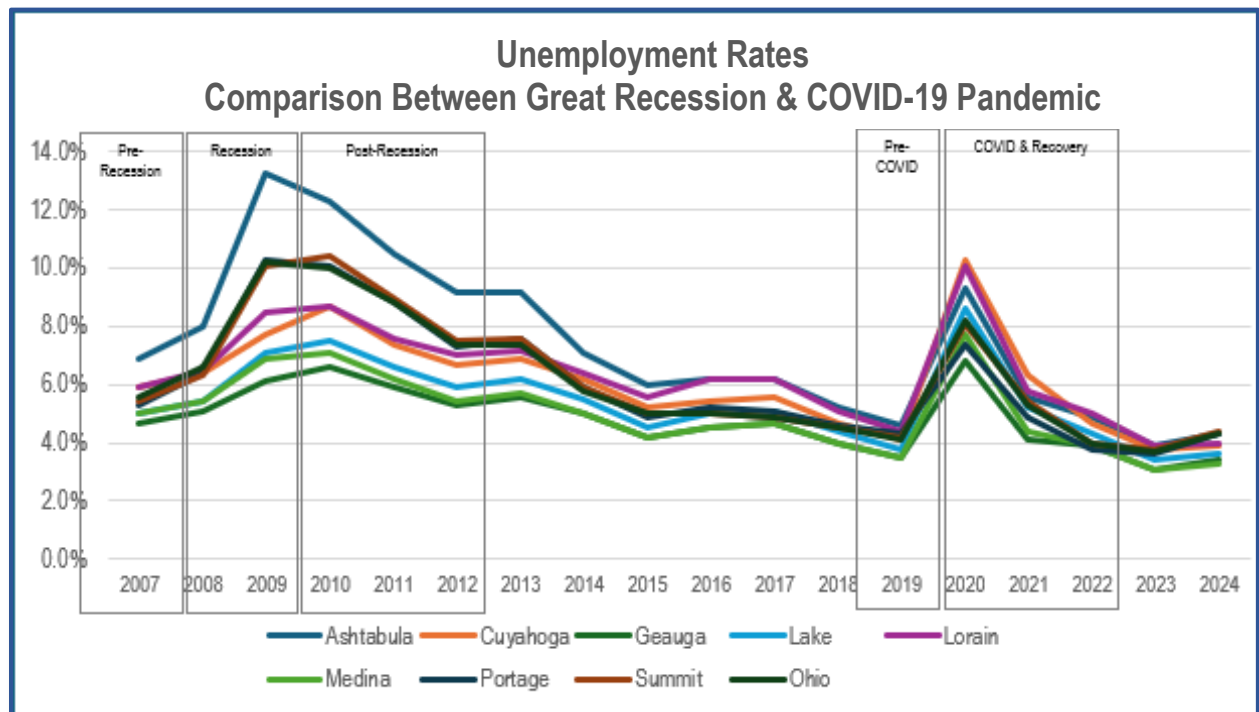
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Unemployment Rates

Unemployment Spikes During Recession and Rapid Recovery Post-COVID

Figure 7 below illustrates the historic unemployment rates from 2007 through 2024, highlighting the impact of two significant economic crises - the Great Recession (2008-2012) and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2021). During the Great Recession, all counties experienced sharp spikes in unemployment and unemployment rates remaining elevated for several years. In contrast, unemployment rates were comparatively low across the region in 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, early 2020 saw a sudden and dramatic surge in unemployment, reflecting the immediate labor market shock of the pandemic. Unlike the slow recovery following the Great Recession, post-pandemic unemployment rates declined rapidly, returning to near pre-pandemic levels by 2022. Cuyahoga and Lorain counties generally had the highest unemployment rates, while Geauga and Medina consistently had the lowest. By 2024, unemployment rates across the region had stabilized between 3.4%–4.4%, below or comparable to pre-pandemic levels and aligned with the state's rate 4.3%.

Figure 7.

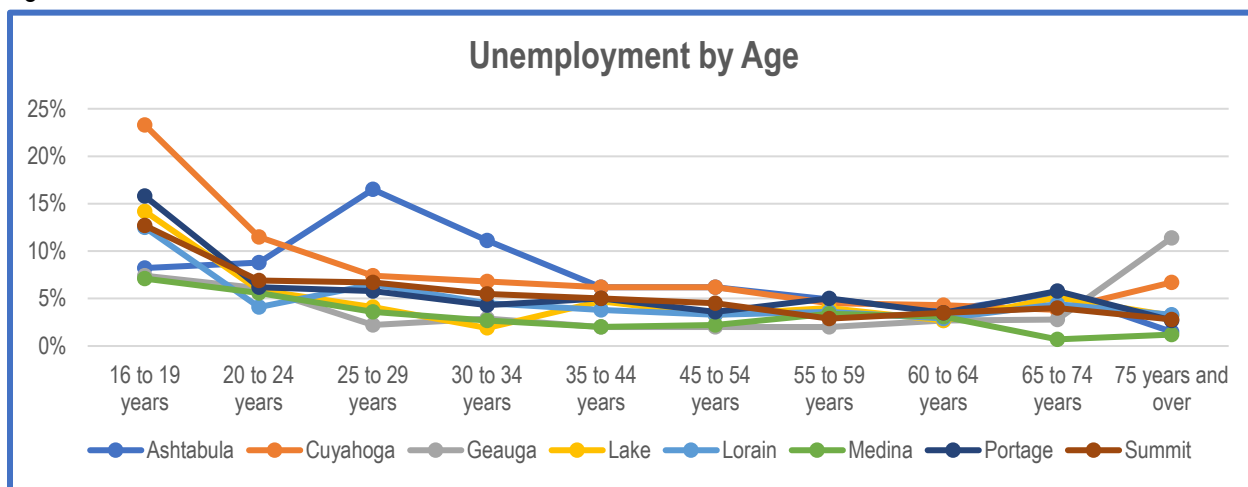


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Unemployment Highest for Teens, Drops Sharply in Adulthood and Remains Low

Figure 8 below illustrates that unemployment rates are highest among the youngest workers, with the 16 to 19 age group experiencing unemployment rates as high as 23% in Cuyahoga County and consistently elevated rates across all counties. This elevated unemployment is often attributed to limited work experience, competition with older and more experienced jobseekers for entry-level positions, and a higher likelihood of only seeking part-time or seasonal work. Unemployment drops sharply for the 20 to 24 and 25 to 29 age groups, falling below 7% in most counties. Ashtabula County, however, stands out with a higher unemployment rate of 16.5% for those age 25 to 29. Unemployment rates stabilize at lower levels, generally ranging between 3% and 6%.

Figure 8.

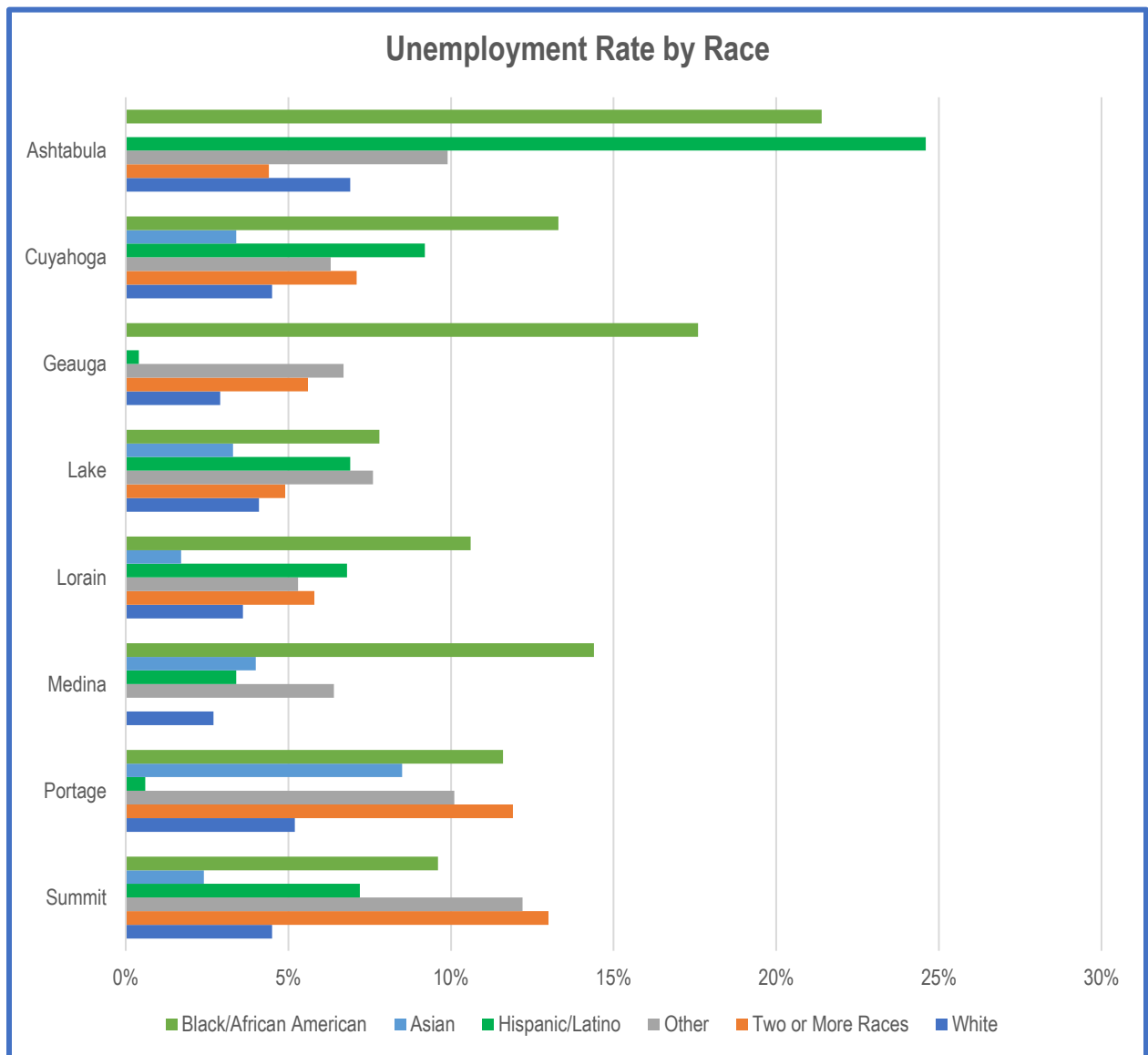


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Significant Racial Disparities in Unemployment Rates

Figure 9 below illustrates significant racial disparities in unemployment rates across northeast Ohio. Black or African American individuals continue to experience the highest unemployment rates, ranging from 7.8% in Lake County to a striking 21.4% in Ashtabula County, and they are often more than double or triple the rates of White residents. Hispanic/Latino unemployment rates vary significantly with most counties reporting rates below 10%, but an exceptionally high rate of 24.6% in Ashtabula County which is the highest unemployment rate for any group in any county. Those identifying as Two or More Races or Other also face elevated unemployment in certain counties with rates for Two or More Races peaking at 13% in Summit and for the Other category at 12.2% also in Summit. Ashtabula County reports the highest unemployment rates for nearly every racial and ethnic group. Across the NOW region, Asian individuals generally have the lowest unemployment rates. They tend to be 3% and even reach 0% in Geauga and Ashtabula counties although Portage County stands out with a higher rate of 8.5%. White individuals also have low unemployment rates, ranging from 2.7% in Medina to 6.9% in Ashtabula.

Figure 9.



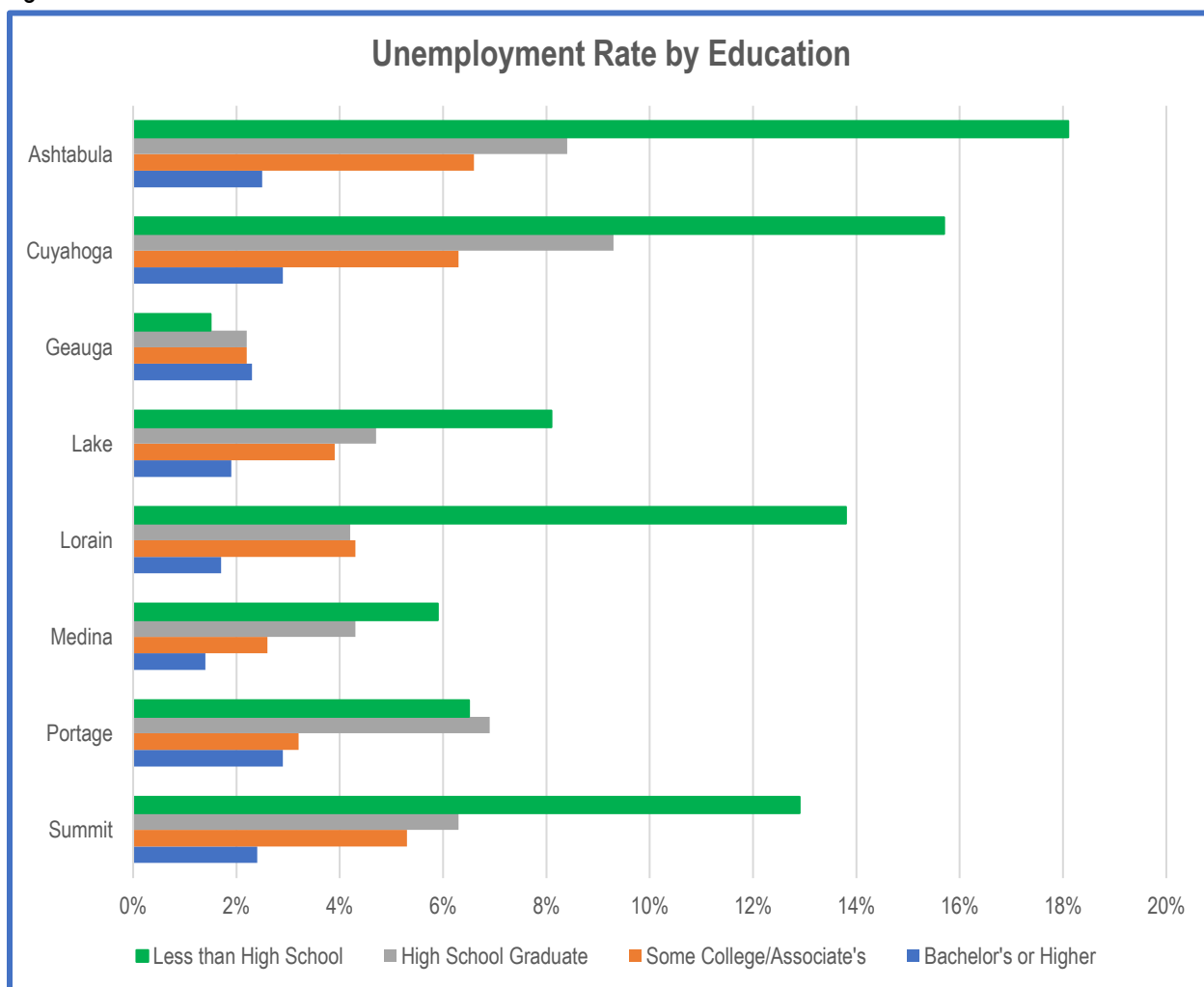
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Higher Education Equals Lower Unemployment Rates

Figure 10 below illustrates unemployment rates demonstrate a clear inverse relationship with educational attainment. Consistently, individuals with less than a high school education face the highest unemployment rates, ranging from 1.5% in Geauga County to 18.1% in Ashtabula County, indicating significant challenges for those lacking basic education. High school graduates generally experience lower unemployment rates compared to those without a high school diploma, but higher rates than those with further education, with Cuyahoga County showing the highest rate at 9.3%. Individuals with some college or an associate's degree see further improvement, with unemployment rates generally lower than high school graduates, although Cuyahoga County still reflects the highest rate at 6.3%. Individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher

consistently experience the lowest unemployment rates across all counties, with Medina County demonstrating a remarkably low rate of 1.4%, further underlining the economic value of higher education.

Figure 10.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Household Income

In addition to employment and workforce demographic trends, income levels offer critical insight into the economic realities faced by individuals and families in the region. Median household income influences everything from jobseeker behavior to access to training and support services.

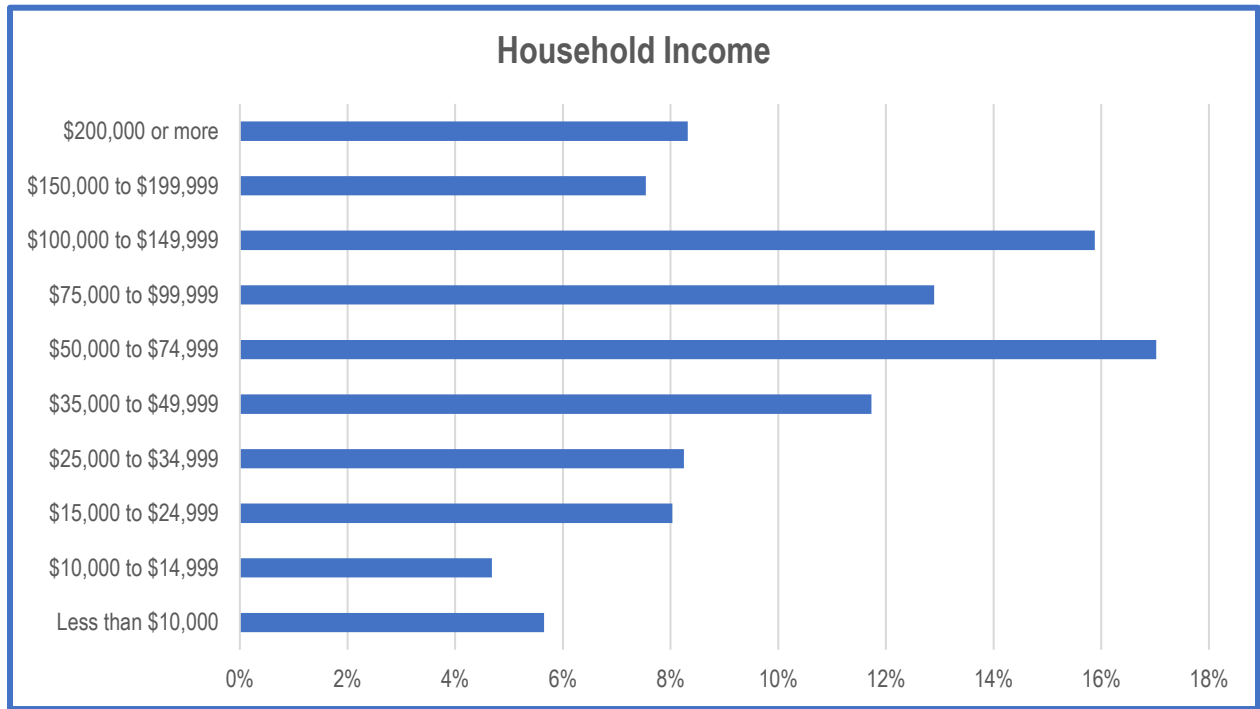
Notable Concentration of Households in the \$50,000-\$74,999 Range

Figure 11 below illustrates that across the NOW region, household income distribution is relatively balanced overall, with some notable variations among counties. Table 1 below shows:

- The largest share of households falls within the \$50,000 to \$74,999 range (17%).
- Higher-income households (\$100,000+) are more prevalent in Geauga (48.8%) and Medina (45.5%) in contrast to Ashtabula (21.2%) and Cuyahoga (28.5%).

- Lower-income households (<\$25,000) varies significantly with Ashtabula having the highest concentration (22.7%) and Geauga and Medina with the lowest (<5% each).

Figure 11.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 1.

	Less than \$10,000	\$10,000 to \$14,999	\$15,000 to \$24,999	\$25,000 to \$34,999	\$35,000 to \$49,999	\$50,000 to \$74,999	\$75,000 to \$99,999	\$100,000 to \$149,999	\$150,000 to \$199,999	\$200,000 or more
Ashtabula County	5.9%	5.9%	10.9%	9.8%	14.9%	18.5%	12.9%	13.0%	4.9%	3.3%
Cuyahoga County	7.1%	5.6%	8.9%	8.9%	12.0%	17.0%	11.9%	14.0%	6.6%	7.9%
Gauga County	2.8%	1.8%	4.0%	5.6%	7.8%	15.8%	13.5%	20.2%	12.2%	16.4%
Lake County	2.8%	2.9%	6.1%	7.8%	12.5%	16.6%	15.2%	20.2%	8.3%	7.5%
Lorain County	5.4%	4.8%	7.5%	8.1%	11.7%	17.3%	13.3%	16.4%	7.5%	8.0%
Medina County	3.0%	1.8%	5.3%	5.0%	9.5%	17.0%	13.9%	21.1%	11.2%	12.2%
Portage County	5.1%	4.0%	7.9%	8.6%	10.7%	16.7%	13.1%	17.7%	8.2%	8.1%
Summit County	4.9%	4.5%	8.1%	8.0%	11.8%	17.1%	13.6%	15.9%	7.9%	8.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

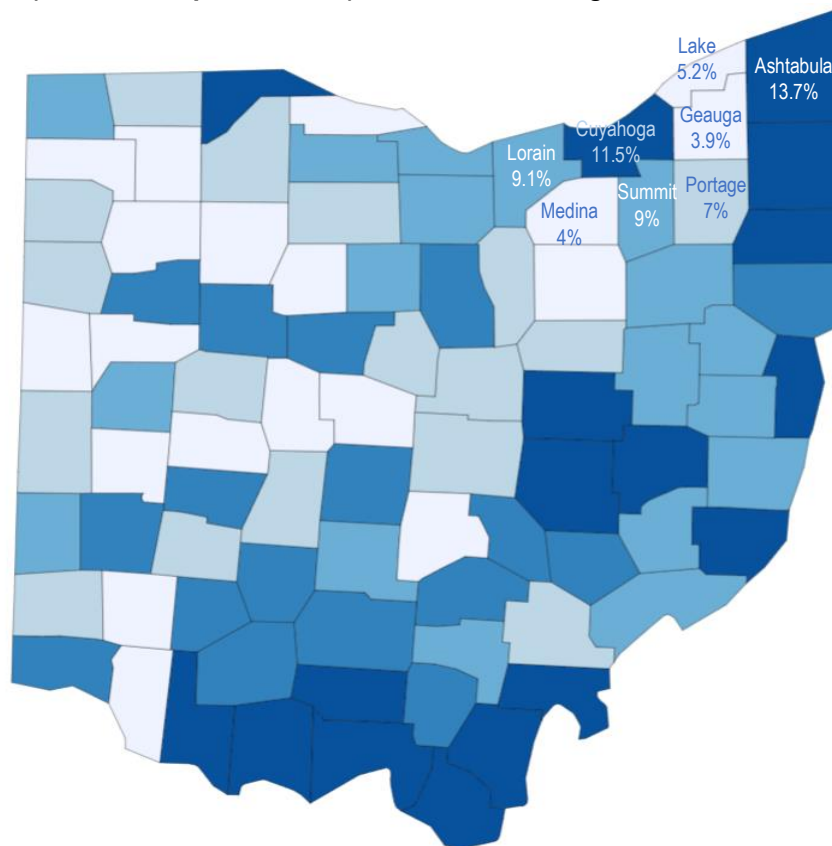
Poverty

Poverty Rates Vary Widely

Figure 12 below illustrates how poverty levels vary significantly across the eight counties. Ashtabula and Cuyahoga counties report the highest poverty rates at 13.7% and 11.5% respectively. Counties like Lorain, Portage, and Summit fall in the middle with poverty rates ranging between 7% and 9.1%. Geauga and Medina counties have the lowest poverty rates in the region at 3.9% and 4% respectively. For context, 9.2% of Ohio's families live below poverty line, higher than the national rate of 8.7%.

Figure 12.

Poverty (Families below poverty) for Ohio by County
All Races (includes Hispanic/Latino), Both Sexes, All Ages, 2019-2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

Key Industries and Occupations

Industries

Health Care and Manufacturing Represent Largest Shares of Employment; Transportation Sees Biggest Gain

In 2023, the NOW region recorded an average annual employment of 1,344,163 jobs, representing a slight decline (-278 jobs) over the past five years. Geauga and Portage counties experienced strong growth with increases of 3,987 and 8,702 jobs respectively, both reflecting double-digit percentage gains, while Cuyahoga County experienced a substantial contraction, shedding 15,463 jobs over the same period.

Table 2 below shows that nearly half (48%) of all jobs are concentrated in Health Care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Retail Trade, and Accommodation and Food Services. These sectors remain dominant with Health Care and Manufacturing consistently representing the largest shares of employment. Information Technology (I.T.) plays a critical function across all sectors, particularly within Professional and Technical Services. The adoption of advanced technologies is transforming operations in these sectors which results in the automation of routine tasks, the creation of new technology-driven roles, and a growing demand for workers to have digital and technical skills.

The region's most significant employment gains occurred in Transportation and Warehousing (+19,612) aligning with increasing e-commerce activity, Educational Services (+5,940) indicating an investment in skills development, Construction (+4,555) for ongoing infrastructure and building projects, Professional and Technical Services (+3,972) supporting the rising demand for I.T. roles, and Health Care and Social Assistance (+2,888) reflecting the needs of an aging population, growth in social assistance programs and demand for workers during the COVID pandemic.

The decline in Administrative and Waste Services (-12,257) indicates organizations streamlined operations and reduced their need for services. The decline in Retail Trade (-6,777) may be attributed to the rise of e-commerce, a trend that accelerated during the COVID-19 pandemic and led to fewer traditional retail jobs. While Manufacturing remains critical to northeast Ohio's economy, the industry experienced a shift (-6,039) likely due to disruptions from the COVID19 pandemic and the adoption of automation. Accommodation employment also saw a significant loss (-6,034) reflecting a decrease in travel and tourism activity during the pandemic.

Underlying many of these trends is the growing influence of disruptive technologies such as automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and digital platforms. Disruptive technologies are redefining industries positioned for growth, and Team NEO identifies a set of strategic industry clusters that are critical to northeast Ohio's economic competitiveness and future growth. They are:

Advanced Manufacturing	Information Technology
Aerospace and Aviation	Logistics
Automotive	Metal Production and Fabrication
Financial Services	Oil and Gas
Food Processing	Polymers and Materials
Headquarters and Professional Services	Semiconductors
Healthcare and Biotechnology	

Table 2.

Industry	2018 Employment	2023 Employment	Change 2018 to 2023
Health Care and Social Assistance	240,050	242,938	2,888
Manufacturing	169,850	163,811	-6,039
Retail Trade	137,736	130,959	-6,777
Accommodation and Food Services	119,563	113,529	-6,034
Educational Services	94,729	100,669	5,940
Professional and Technical Services	70,625	74,597	3,972

Administrative and Waste Services	85,638	73,381	-12,257
Wholesale Trade	64,067	63,532	-535
Transportation and Warehousing	42,734	62,346	19,612
Finance and Insurance	56,344	56,610	266
Construction	51,555	56,110	4,555
Public Administration	51,278	50,471	-807
Management of Companies and Enterprises	45,332	41,251	-4,081
Other Services (except Public Administration)	41,152	39,636	-1,516
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	26,296	26,211	-85
Information	21,922	20,480	-1,442
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	19,106	18,867	-239
Utilities	3,845	6,081	2,236
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	1,594	1,911	317
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1,025	773	-252
Grand Total	1,344,441	1,344,163	-278

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Market Information, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)

Occupations

Workforce Concentrated in Office, Food Preparation, Healthcare and Production and Sales Roles

Table 3 below shows occupational groups Office and Administrative Support, Food Preparation and Serving, Healthcare Practitioners and Technical, Production, and Sales employ a significant portion of workers, accounting for 49% of the total workforce.

Table 3.

Occupation	Jobs 2023	% of Total Jobs
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	135,000	13%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	113,990	11%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	95,920	10%
Production Occupations	76,650	8%
Sales and Related Occupations	74,130	7%
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	67,650	7%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	60,060	6%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	57,350	6%
Management Occupations	48,440	5%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	40,030	4%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	35,670	4%
Healthcare Support Occupations	35,620	4%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	34,410	3%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	34,090	3%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	25,120	2%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	16,660	2%

Community and Social Service Occupations	16,020	2%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	12,420	1%
Protective Service Occupations	11,390	1%
Legal Occupations	8,630	1%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	6,790	1%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	700	0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Market Information

Food Service, Transportation and Healthcare Projected to Add Most Jobs

Table 4 below shows projections (2020 to 2030) with the most growth in Food Preparation and Serving, Transportation and Material Moving, Healthcare Practitioners and Technical and Healthcare Support, with an anticipated addition of 37,648 jobs. While Production and Office occupations represent a significant portion of current workers, these occupation groups project the most significant job losses of 3,600 and 7,980 respectively.

Table 4.

Occupation	Jobs 2020	Projected Jobs 2030	Growth 2020- 2030	% Growth 2020- 2030
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	99,929	115,011	15,082	15.1%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	106,272	115,762	9,490	8.9%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	102,428	109,077	6,649	6.5%
Healthcare Support Occupations	57,754	64,181	6,427	11.1%
Management Occupations	76,295	82,125	5,830	7.6%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	42,698	47,990	5,292	12.4%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	86,217	91,434	5,217	6.1%
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	69,524	74,375	4,851	7.0%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	35,752	40,153	4,401	12.3%
Community and Social Service Occupations	24,830	27,223	2,393	9.6%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	50,859	53,019	2,160	4.2%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	43,598	45,508	1,910	4.4%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	19,015	20,274	1,259	6.6%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	22,495	23,500	1,005	4.5%
Protective Service Occupations	29,759	30,636	877	2.9%
Legal Occupations	13,280	14,070	790	5.9%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	10,323	10,961	638	6.2%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	43,385	43,786	401	0.9%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	1,354	1,398	44	3.2%
Sales and Related Occupations	125,114	122,016	(3,098)	-2.5%
Production Occupations	109,037	105,437	(3,600)	-3.3%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	183,033	175,053	(7,980)	-4.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Market Information

Projected Growth Greatest in Healthcare and Information Technology

Team NEO's 2024 Aligning Opportunities Report identifies the top 50 occupations projected by 2030. Table 5 below reflects labor market information for their 14-county footprint in northeast Ohio, and shows that it's most significant growth will be occur with healthcare and information technology occupations. These two sectors alone are expected to add a combined 6,479 jobs by 2030, representing nearly 40% of the total projected growth among the region's top 50 occupations. Key roles driving this growth are registered nurses and software developers.

Table 5.

Occupation	2023 Jobs	2030 Jobs*	# Change to 2030	% Change to 2030
Software Developers	11,010	12,924	1,913	17%
Registered Nurses	47,135	48,460	1,325	3%
Medical and Health Services Managers	5,947	6,915	968	16%
Nurse Practitioners	3,715	4,606	890	24%
Insurance Sales Agents	8,011	8,753	742	9%
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	5,205	5,933	728	14%
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	5,846	6,505	659	11%
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	8,829	9,451	622	7%
Financial Managers	9,315	9,934	619	7%
Management Analysts	8,259	8,715	455	6%
Computer and information Systems Managers	4,095	4,526	431	11%
Industrial Engineers	5,138	5,487	349	7%
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	5,086	5,413	328	6%
General and Operations Managers	46,810	47,135	324	1%
Data Scientists	1,410	1,715	305	22%
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	8,588	8,863	275	3%
Project Management Specialists	9,002	9,273	271	3%
Construction Managers	6,546	6,811	265	4%
Logisticians	2,302	2,565	263	11%
Mechanical Engineers	4,740	4,999	260	5%
Speech-Language Pathologists	2,261	2,516	255	11%
Information Security Analysts	1,570	1,809	239	15%
Computer Systems Analysts	4,546	4,771	225	5%
Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	3,542	3,764	222	6%
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	4,521	4,731	210	5%
Physician Assistants	1,163	1,370	207	18%
Respiratory Therapists	2,018	2,207	189	9%

Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Blazers	7,023	7,208	184	3%
Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	1,224	1,397	174	14%
Physical Therapists	2,899	3,060	161	6%
Training and Development Specialists	4,103	4,253	150	4%
Marketing Managers	2,814	2,963	149	5%
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	1,534	1,681	147	10%
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	2,502	2,645	143	6%
Medical Equipment Repairers	1,222	1,357	135	11%
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1,220	1,352	132	11%
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	2,029	2,144	115	6%
Pharmacists	5,058	5,169	112	2%
Insurance Underwriters	2,090	2,198	108	5%
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	10,056	10,161	105	1%
Sales Managers	5,132	5,236	104	2%
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	3,231	3,334	103	3%
Operations Research Analysts	862	965	102	12%
Social and Community Service Managers	1,807	1,903	96	5%
Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	2,061	2,152	91	4%
Civil Engineers	2,096	2,186	90	4%
Computer User Support Specialists	6,906	6,996	90	1%
Dental Hygienists	2,794	2,850	57	2%
Maintenance Workers, Machinery	447	487	40	9%
Mechanical Engineering Technologists and Technicians	567	561	-6	-1%

Source: Team NEO 2024 Aligning Opportunities

Skills and Credentials

While identifying the region's top occupations highlights where job demand is most concentrated, understanding the education and skill requirements associated with these roles is essential for aligning workforce development efforts.

Table 6 below provides job posting data from January 1, 2024, through November 30, 2024, of the most in-demand jobs in the NOW region.

Table 6.

Registered Nurses	Pharmacy Technicians
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	Light Truck Drivers
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Information Security Analysts
Retail Salespersons	Pharmacists
Accountants and Auditors	Nursing Assistants
Stockers and Order Fillers	Cashiers
Customer Service Representatives	Civil Engineers
Software Developers	Network and Computer Systems Administrators
Industrial Engineers	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	Computer User Support Specialists
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	Security Guards
Computer Occupations, All Other	Computer Systems Analysts
Medical Assistants	Driver/Sales Workers
Management Analysts	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing
Sales Managers	Marketing Managers
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	Social and Human Service Assistants
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	General and Operations Managers
Medical and Health Services Managers	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians
First-Line Supervisors of Office & Administrative Support Workers	Production Workers, All Other
Fast Food and Counter Workers	Personal Care Aides
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other
Securities, Commodities, & Financial Services Sales Agents	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
Sales Representatives of Services	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists
Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	Business Operations Specialists, All Other
Financial Managers	Nurse Practitioners
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	Food Preparation Workers

Source: TalentNeuron Gartner™

Table 7 below offers valuable insight into the qualifications employers are seeking:

Table 7.

Top 10 Skills		Top 10 Credentials	
Skills	Number	Certifications	Number
Communication	67,997	Driver's License	14,859
Collaboration	40,611	Certified Registered Nurse	7,604
Leadership	36,644	Basic Life Support	6,916
Analysis	33,208	Commercial Driver's License	5,837
Relationships	31,219	Class A Commercial Driver's License	4,084
Monitoring	30,393	Advanced Cardiac Life Support	3,845
Written communications	28,873	Occupational Safety & Health Administration Certification	3,819
Verbal communications	28,598	Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	3,158
Planning	26,151	Pediatric Advanced Life Support	2,653
Problem solving	24,512	Certified Public Accountant	2,600

Source: TalentNeuron Gartner™

Licensing requirements revealed transportation and healthcare credentials as the most commonly specified qualifications.

The northeast Ohio labor market is seeing a growing demand for Artificial Intelligence (AI)-related skills, even when not explicitly listed in job postings. Team NEO's 2024 *Aligning Opportunities* report states, "55% of organizations have implemented AI in at least one business function, up from 20% in 2017." The increasing demand for skills such as research, analytics, and data analysis proficiency (all found in the longer list of skills used to generate the Top 10 Skills in Table 8) indicates a growing need for foundational AI skills. The rising adoption of AI necessitates a more data-literate workforce. To effectively leverage AI, employees will increasingly need the ability to conduct AI-enhanced research, apply analytical techniques to AI-generated insights, and perform data analysis to inform AI implementation and optimization.

The most pressing challenge remains the mismatch between the skills jobseekers possess and those required by employers. Tables 8 and 9 below indicate that 62.8% of job ads require some level of postsecondary education and only 49.7% of the region's workforce possesses that level of education. This mismatch makes it difficult for employers to fill positions where specialized training or degrees are essential. Team NEO's 2024 *Aligning Opportunities* report states the region produces over 35,000 college graduates annually, which is theoretically sufficient to bridge these gaps if graduates' credentials and skills matched local job requirements and if graduates remained in the region.

Table 8.

Education Level	Number	Percent
GED/High School	68,124	37.2%
Associate Level	20,716	11.3%
Bachelor's Degree	83,233	45.4%
Master's Degree	5,438	3.0%
Doctoral Degree	5,646	3.1%

Source: TalentNeuron Gartner™

Table 9.

	Ages 18-24 (2022)		Ages 25 and Over		Both Age Groups	
	Total	% Total	Total	% Total	Total	% Total
Less than High School Graduate	31,627	12.40%	168,389	8.30%	200,016	8.8%
High School Degree/Equivalent	89,258	35%	596,560	29.40%	685,818	30.0%
Some College or Associate's Degree	100,366	39.30%	591,171	29.20%	691,537	30.3%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	34,063	13.30%	407,830	20.10%	441,893	19.4%
Population	255,314		2,027,478		2,282,792	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey

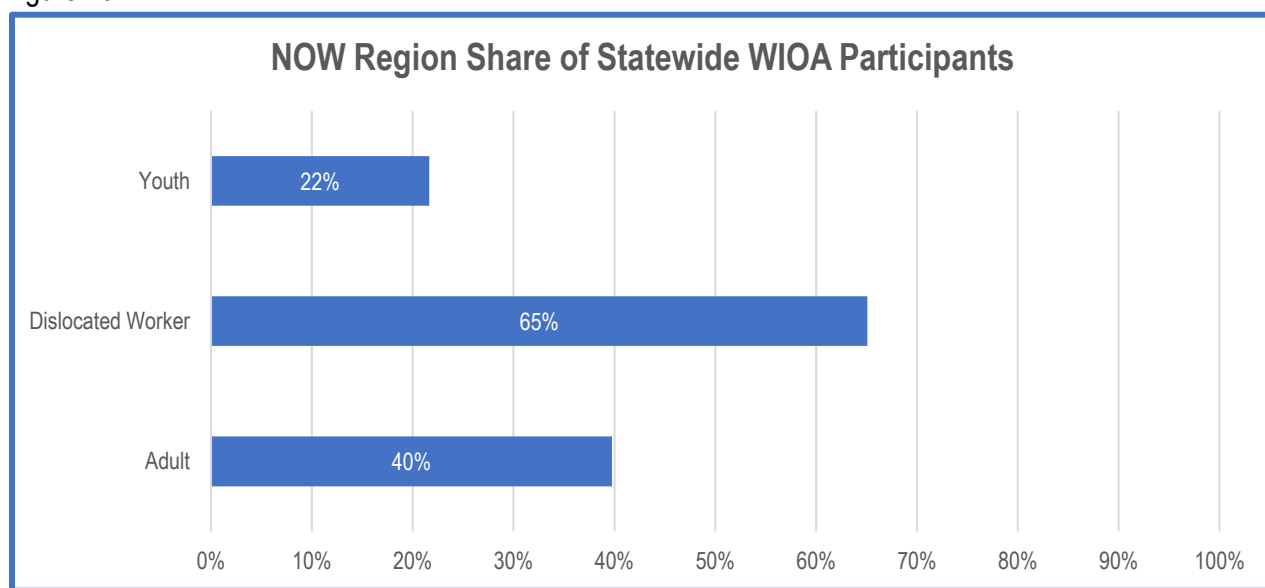
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

About OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) Centers

OhioMeansJobs (OMJ) Centers serve as the cornerstone of Ohio's public workforce system by providing jobseekers and employers with access to a wide range of employment, training, and support services. Jobseekers receive assistance with their job search, career counseling, resume writing support, skills and interest assessments, access to training, and referrals to supportive services. OMJ centers help employers by recruiting and screening candidates, organizing hiring events and connecting businesses to available hiring incentives. The NOW region operates five comprehensive OMJ centers that offer the full suite of WIOA-funded and core program services, and three affiliate OMJ centers and additional designated community locations with a more limited, but essential range of workforce services. All programs and services are funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and are available to the public free of charge.

As reported in the Program Year 2023 Unadjusted Annual Performance Report, the NOW region provided individual career services for a total of 8,003 participants (4,690 adults; 1,283 dislocated workers; 2,030 CCMEP youth) across eight counties, representing 35% of all WIOA-funded participants served statewide. Figure 13 below illustrates the regional share of participants by category, highlighting the significant role the NOW region plays in delivering workforce services.

Figure 13.



Additional metrics that reflect the breadth and depth of OMJ center services in the region include:

- 51,012 individuals who visited OMJ centers (two regions report WIOA clients only)
- 1,607 businesses engaged
- 227 recruitment events held
- \$3,768 average and \$5,990,772 total amounts written for Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)
- \$5,878 average and \$393,838 total amounts written for On-the-Job Training
- \$9,113 average and \$410,098 total obligated amounts for Incumbent Worker Training

WIOA creates a performance-based structure for providing services and each local workforce area is required to negotiate performance levels with the state annually. All workforce areas in the region have been successful in achieving these performance goals.

Workforce Development Services in the Region

This section addresses the specific services provided to the major customers (businesses, jobseekers, and youth and adults with barriers to employment) of the workforce development system. These services are:

- **Basic Career Services.** Provide jobseekers with orientation to OMJ center and services, assessment of skills, job search and placement assistance, career counseling, and referrals to partner services.
- **Individualized Career Services.** Additional support for jobseekers such as specialized assessments, individual employment plans, career counseling, workforce preparation activities, and internships for those needing additional assistance with obtaining or retaining employment.
- **Training Services.** Occupational skills training, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and incumbent worker training so jobseekers can gain skills needed for in-demand occupations.
- **Youth Services.** Services for in-school and out of school youth ages 14-24 that are focused on education and employment goals.
- **Business Services.** Provide employers with human resources support such as recruitment of qualified candidates, customized training, layoff aversion, posting job openings, and connections to organizations that support special populations.
- **Supportive Services.** Assist individuals in overcoming barriers to employment or training by providing assistance with transportation, childcare, housing, or referrals to community resources.
- **Follow-up Services.** Counseling for individuals placed in unsubsidized employment to promote job retention and advancement.
- **Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA).** Provide support to unemployment insurance (UI) claimants facing significant reemployment challenges through assessment of strengths and barriers to reemployment, development of an individualized reemployment plan, career counseling, and job search assistance. Note, RESEA is not required by WIOA, but is administered in coordination with WDBs.

Below is a more detailed listing of services available at the comprehensive OMJ centers.

Jobseeker Services

- Career counseling
- Basic skills assessment
- Career advancement education and training opportunities
- Job and labor market information
- Informational interviews
- Preparation of an Individual Employment Plan
- Information about job openings, skills and education requirements, wages and benefits
- Resume preparation and job interviewing skills
- Job referral and placement
- Skill and interest inventories
- Job-search workshops
- Links to programs at community colleges and other job training providers
- Funding for training programs for eligible individuals

- Career information and guidance assistance in identifying financial resources to support employment, education and training-related expenses
- Connections to community resources

Business Services

- Assistance in preparing job openings
- Posting job openings
- Recruiting, screening, and referring qualified candidates for job openings
- Providing pre-employment skill testing
- Scheduling and hosting employer interviewing sessions
- Providing funding for skills training for newly hired or incumbent workers through WIOA
- Creating services for mass recruitments and customized training programs
- Participating in the state-led “Rapid Response” activities for businesses and workers affected by mass layoffs and closures
- Providing employers with access to resources for hiring and workforce development, and connections to organizations that support special populations

Training Services

- **Individual Training Accounts** can be established on behalf of an eligible individual to purchase training services from an eligible provider (on the State approved eligible training provider list) that he/she selects in consultation with an OMJ center case manager. Eligible individuals include low-income adults and youth who have barriers to employment and dislocated workers who were laid-off and cannot return to their previous occupation. ITAs account for the largest amount of training investments (\$5,990,772 in PY '23) in the region through WIOA. As required by WIOA, the training must be targeted to “in-demand” occupations and the state requires that 85% of WIOA training funds must be used for in-demand training. OMJ staff engage in eligibility determinations, career counseling, and assessments of individuals in order to create an Individual Employment Plan for each person who will enter training. The WDBs work closely with the community colleges that serve this area as well as other training providers in coordination with those programs also funded by the Carl Perkins Act. Regionally, these investments are focused on in-demand jobs in the key industries of Manufacturing, Healthcare, I.T., and Transportation. The five WDBs have worked to review each other’s policies regarding local ITAs and have acted to make these policies more complementary across the region. To do so, policy changes were made in areas such as the amount of the cap for training and the duration of training.
- **On-the Job Training (OJT)** is provided by an employer (or in combination with a designated training entity) under a contract between the OMJ center and the employer. As part of that contract, the paid participant (employee) is engaged in productive work in a job that provides:
 - Knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;
 - Reimbursement to the employer for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training up to a capped amount; and
 - Limited duration training as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking into account training content, the participant’s prior work experience, and the participant’s service strategy, as appropriate.

The five Boards also worked together to review all OJT policies in order to build on the best of each other’s policies and work toward clarity for the business community.

- **Customized Training** is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (or a group of employers). It is developed and carried out through a commitment by the employer to employ, or in the case of incumbent workers, continue to employ, an individual upon successful completion of the training, and employers are required to contribute a significant amount of the cost of training as determined by the local WDBs.
- **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT)** provides both workers and employers with the opportunity to build and maintain a quality workforce. Incumbent worker training can be used to help avert potential layoffs of employees, or to increase the skill levels of employees so they can be promoted within the company and create backfill opportunities for the employers. Under section 134(d)(4) of WIOA, local boards can use up to 20 percent of their adult and dislocated worker funds to provide for the cost of providing Incumbent Worker Training. IWT takes into account:
 - The characteristics of the participants in the program;
 - The relationship of the training to the competitiveness of a participant and employer; and
 - Other factors the state or local boards may determine appropriate (e.g., the number of employees participating in the training, wage and benefit levels of those employees (both pre- and post-participation earning), and the existence of other training and advancement opportunities provided by the employer).

Employers are required to pay for a significant cost of the training for those participants in IWT. This can be done through both cash and/or in-kind payments. Wages paid to participants, while in training, may be considered as a source of matching funds. Under section 134(d)(4)(D) of WIOA, the minimum amount of employer share in the IWT depends on the size of the employer:

- At least 10 percent of the cost, for employers with 50 or fewer employees;
- At least 25 percent of the cost, for employers with 51 to 100 employees; and
- At least 50 percent of the cost, for employers with more than 100 employees.

Youth Services

- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and dropout prevention
- Alternative secondary school and dropout recovery services
- Paid and unpaid work experiences
- Occupational skills training
- Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive services
- Mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills development
- Labor market information services
- Postsecondary preparation and transition activities

The priority is to serve out-of-school youth and 75% of WIOA funds are required to be used for this cohort. Out-of-school youth are defined as 16 to 24 years of age, not attending any school, and meeting one or more of the following conditions: a school dropout; being within age of compulsory attendance but not having attended for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter; basic skills deficient; an English language learner; subject to the juvenile or adult justice system; homeless, runaway, in foster care or aged

out of the foster care system; eligible for assistance under Section 477 of the Social Security Act or in out-of-home placement; pregnant or parenting; an individual with a disability; or a low income person who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment. In-school youth must be aged 14-21, attending school, be low income, and meet one or more of the following conditions: basic skills deficient; English language learner; an offender; homeless, runaway, in foster care or aged out of the foster care system; pregnant or parenting; an individual with a disability; or a person who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment. There is an emphasis on work-experience with at least 20 percent of local WIOA Youth formula funds required to be used for work experiences (summer and year-round employment, pre-apprenticeship, on-the-job training, internships and job shadowing).

The Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) program is available for WIOA youth within TANF programs. Each county's Department of Job and Family Services and workforce development area have a county CCMEP plan that details how the two entities will coordinate, align services, focus on individualized case management and employment planning, address each individual's barriers to employment, and provide supportive services. All counties except Lorain County designated the county department of Job and Family Services as the lead agency, and the Workforce Development Agency has been designated as the lead in Lorain County. Each of the region's WDBs remain responsible for the oversight of the WIOA services and resources within the CCMEP program.

Core Partner Services

In addition to the services available in the OMJ centers described above which are authorized and funded by Title I of WIOA, the following related services are also offered through core partner programs. Each WDB creates a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with these programs for the provision of these services as well as their financial contributions toward the operations of the OMJ centers.

- Adult Education and Literacy programs known as Aspire in Ohio provide education and testing for individuals in need of a High School Equivalency credential and English as a Second Language courses as well as other literacy programs.
- The Wagner-Peyser Act allows for employment services to jobseekers and businesses with a focus on the re-employment of unemployed workers.
- WIOA Title IV amended the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and requires services for jobseekers with a disability are available in OMJ centers. Additionally, all of the OMJ centers comply with WIOA Section 188 and comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 in terms of physical and programmatic accessibility. The state requires a One-Stop certification process to be conducted by the WDBs for the OMJ centers to ensure compliance with Section 188 and ADA.
- The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides access to its services (cash assistance, childcare, housing assistance, SNAP).
- Job Corps serves economically-disadvantaged individuals ages 16 – 24 who have barriers to employment. There is one Job Corps center located in the region in Cleveland.

RESEA Services

The region collectively delivers the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program to ensure UI claimants are connected to appropriate WIOA services. The RESEA program:

- Reviews claimant's continued eligibility for unemployment benefits;
- Shares current labor market data, in-demand occupations, wages, and hiring trends;

- Develops Individual Reemployment Plans that align with claimant's experience, skills, and career interests and outlines required services and supports;
- Provides referrals to OMJ center for job search assistance, resume and interview preparation, career counseling, skills assessments, and referrals to training or education programs; and
- Monitors participation in required activities.

Priority of Services

OMJ centers provide "universal services" to anyone seeking employment and training assistance. However, funding for training services and other intensive services are finite and the following priorities are used for their investment:

- Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service consideration for all DOL-funded job training programs, including WIOA programs. Further, representatives funded through Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG), a required partner program under WIOA, are located in many OMJ centers.
- Recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient also receive priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds.

Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

Northeast Ohio's workforce development system effectively serves both businesses and jobseekers amid persistent resource constraints. As a performance-driven system, all five workforce areas in the region met their performance goals in Program Year 2023. With this strong commitment to accountability and results comes transparency supported by tools such as online dashboards and scorecards, which some areas use to communicate progress and outcomes clearly and regularly.

Business and Economic Development Engagement. A defining strength of the region's workforce system is its deep engagement with the business community:

- **Leadership and Strategic Direction.** 54 businesses provide leadership by serving on workforce boards, ensuring that employer perspectives shape regional strategies.
- **Business Retention and Expansion (BRE).** Workforce professionals participate in economic development meetings and BRE visits which generates awareness of public workforce services, builds strong relationships with local employers and creates credibility amongst economic and workforce development professionals.
- **Partner with JobsOhio.** The region relies heavily on Team NEO and the Lake to River Economic Development, and partners with them in multiple ways on talent initiatives, research and for labor market information. A significant collaboration was in 2022, when Area 2 partner with organizations including Team NEO to better understand the attitudes and behaviors of both workers and employers in the wake of the pandemic. Nearly 800 northeast Ohio employers and 5,000 residents contributed to this effort through surveys and focus groups and the findings have been shared with thousands of business and workforce programs to discuss strategies to address.
- **Employer Seminars and Outreach.** Regular employer seminars (e.g., CQE clinics), recruitment fairs, and participation in community events increase visibility and foster ongoing dialogue with the business community.
- **Employer-Focused Services.** OMJ centers offer recruitment support, candidate screening, job posting assistance, and access to customized training and hiring incentives.
- **Feedback Mechanisms.** Employer surveys and feedback systems are integrated to ensure services remain responsive to evolving business needs.

Industry Specific Strategies/Sector Partnerships

Nine sector strategies and employer-led partnerships exist across the NOW region in key industries, including:

- **Construction, Healthcare, I.T., Manufacturing, Polymers, and Youth Mental Health.** Collaboratives that include employers, educators, community-based organizations and workforce development professionals work together to generate interest in high-demand roles, align training and curriculum with employer needs so that jobseekers develop critical skills, and remove barriers that impact individuals' abilities to attain or retain employment.

Career Pathways and Youth Engagement

Northeast Ohio excels at exposing youth to career pathways early. Over 2,000 WIOA-youth benefit from OMJ's involvement with:

- **School and Community Partnerships.** Collaborations with school districts, bus tours and breakfasts with guidance counselors, and participating in youth-serving events expands access to career exploration and ensures the community is informed about the Youth Resource Center and services available to support in-school and out-of-school youth so they are prepared to go directly into the workforce or pursue additional training.
- **Career Awareness Activities.** Career fairs, manufacturing, healthcare and polymer camps, and virtual reality experiences introduce youth to high-demand industries and occupations.
- **Work-Based Learning.** Paid internships aligned with career interests and pre-apprenticeship programs provide hands-on experience and support career readiness.

Community Outreach

Community-based outreach is another hallmark of northeast Ohio's strategy and it ensures that services reach residents where they are through:

- **Accessible Service Locations.** Service providers take services directly to residents by hosting career fairs at local libraries and other accessible venues. These initiatives are essential for connecting underserved populations with long-term employment opportunities and ensuring that support is available where it is most needed. In addition, OMJ staff participate in workforce development programs offered by community organizations which allows them to introduce OMJ services to a broader community, deliver workshops on-site and assist with WIOA-eligibility.
- **Virtual and Digital Services.** Online tools like YouTube and virtual workshops expand access to information and resources.

Support Services

The region's workforce systems have developed or actively engaged in targeted initiatives focused on:

- **Transportation Assistance.** Matching funds and supportive employment programs help participants overcome transportation challenges which is a common barrier to sustained employment.
- **Childcare Support.** Referrals and, when possible, financial assistance for childcare help increase labor force participation, especially among women.
- **Reentry and Recovery Programs.** Initiatives like Citizen Circle, reentry services in correctional institutions, and programs for those in addiction recovery provide targeted support for populations facing significant barriers.
- **Benefits Bridge.** Programs to address the "benefits cliff" help workers transition to higher-wage employment without losing critical supports.

- **Support for Special Populations.** Services are tailored for veterans, individuals with disabilities, youth, and those returning from incarceration.

Performance and Accountability

The NOW region has cultivated a results-driven culture and recognizes its need to be transparent and accountable to its community by:

- **Meets and Exceeds Goals.** All five workforce areas met or exceeded performance targets in 2023, reflecting a culture of results and accountability.
- **Transparency Tools.** Online dashboards and balanced scorecards track outcomes, measure ROI, and communicate progress to stakeholders.
- **Continuous Improvement.** Regular participation in community events and employer and jobseeker surveys ensure the system remains responsive and innovative.

Despite these many strengths, resource constraints remain a significant challenge. Workforce areas report high demand for training and supportive services, especially models that combine classroom instruction with real-world experience while receiving wrap around supports. Expanding apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities is increasingly recognized as an effective way to meet this demand and allows participants to earn while they learn, transition smoothly into high-quality employment, and pursue continued training for career advancement. However, limited funding can restrict the ability to scale these types of programs and provide services to all eligible individuals. To address these challenges, northeast Ohio's workforce boards are leveraging braided funding strategies by combining state initiatives like TechCred and federal resources like US EDA Good Jobs Challenge to maximize impact. This approach maximizes limited resources and enables greater coordination across businesses, workforce development, economic development, community organizations, and education and training providers.

Accountability for Services Provided

The intake and case management system for services provided through programs carried out under WIOA by the local workforce system is state-operated, enables integrated case management and is technology-enabled. Participant data is entered into the state's system, ARIES, which is used for client tracking, providing data on enrolled participants in the various programs, and outcomes for the individual participants. The state creates performance reports for the workforce development areas on a quarterly and annual basis which track each area's progress toward achieving their performance goals which are established annually through negotiations with the state. The state submits detailed reports regarding participants, services and performance to the U.S. Department of Labor annually which maintains the national WIOA database for reports to Congress. All workforce areas in the region met their performance goals for the most recently reported Program Year 2023 (7/1/23-6/30/24).

OMJ Center Locations in the NOW Region

Area 2	OhioMeansJobs Medina County (affiliate center) 72 Public Square, 1 st Floor Medina, OH 44256 (330) 723-9675
	OhioMeansJobs Summit County (comprehensive center) 1040 East Tallmadge Ave. Akron, OH 44310 (330) 633-1050
Area 3	OhioMeansJobs Cuyahoga County (comprehensive center) 1910 Carnegie Ave. Cleveland, OH 44115 (216) 777-8200
Area 4	OhioMeansJobs Lorain County (comprehensive center) 42495 North Ridge Road Elyria, OH 44035 (440) 324-5244
Area 5	OhioMeansJobs Lake County (comprehensive center) Lake County Employment & Training Division 177 Main Street, Painesville, OH 44077 (440) 350-4000
Area 19	OhioMeansJobs Ashtabula County (comprehensive center) 2924 Donahoe Drive Ashtabula, Ohio 44004 (440) 994-1234
	OhioMeansJobs Geauga County (affiliate center) 12611 Ravenwood Drive, Suite 150 Chardon, OH 44024 (440) 285-9141
	OhioMeansJobs Portage County (affiliate center) 253 Chestnut St. Ravenna, OH 44266 (330) 296-2841

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Goals and Strategies

The region's strategic goals are designed to complement and reinforce the State's overarching goals while ensuring they effectively address the unique needs of our communities. The region's four goals are:

- Goal 1: Engage business leaders to drive the continuous improvement of workforce services to ensure jobseekers are trained for and connected to in-demand occupations.
- Goal 2: Operate a results-driven workforce system that achieves strong outcomes for businesses and jobseekers while maximizing the impact of available funding.
- Goal 3: Develop a high-performing workforce staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the evolving needs of businesses and jobseekers.
- Goal 4: Foster innovation to solve persistent workforce challenges and enhance service delivery.

Engage business leaders to drive the continuous improvement of workforce services to ensure jobseekers are trained for and connected to in-demand occupations.

Strategies:

1. Ensure the workforce system is represented in economic development meetings to establish a visible presence within the business community and to stay informed by real-time employer needs.
2. Support the development and sustainability of employer-led sector partnerships to ensure workforce services are aligned with industry needs and connect jobseekers to in-demand careers.
3. Coordinate employer-focused activities that both inform businesses of available workforce resources and establish structured feedback mechanisms to ensure their perspectives directly shape program design and drive continuous service improvements.
4. Increase business participation in upskilling.
5. Expand industry exposure initiatives for youth to build awareness of in-demand occupations.

Operate a results-driven workforce system that achieves strong outcomes for businesses and jobseekers while maximizing the impact of available funding.

Strategies:

1. Scale high-impact work-based learning and upskilling initiatives, using data to prioritize sectors with critical workforce needs and ensuring access for underserved populations through targeted outreach and support.
2. Maximize the impact of available funding by integrating resources across agencies and programs, leveraging braided funding models to expand services and support jobseekers facing barriers to training and employment.
3. Make performance data easily accessible to the public through user-friendly dashboard or online platform.
4. Strengthen connections with hard-to-reach populations by utilizing diverse outreach methods.

Develop a high-performing workforce staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the evolving needs of businesses and jobseekers.

Strategies:

1. Provide staff with ongoing training opportunities that support skill growth best practice sharing.
2. Empower staff to develop and lead community engagement activities that strengthen relationships with partners and enhance the visibility of the region's workforce services.

3. Enhance staff expertise in specialized areas to better service diverse populations and meet the evolving needs of employers.
4. Foster a culture of innovation by encouraging staff to contribute to new initiatives, experiment with emerging technologies, and share successful models.

Foster innovation to solve persistent workforce challenges and enhance service delivery.

Strategies:

1. Integrate technology into service delivery to enhance career exploration.
2. Co-design workforce solutions with underserved communities to reflect the real needs of jobseekers.
3. Strengthen collaboration with education and recovery systems to provide holistic support for jobseekers.
4. Strengthen and expand partnerships to collectively solve workforce challenges; facilitate connections to organizations offering supports, training, and resources aligned with evolving workforce needs.

REGIONAL PLANNING AND PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESSES

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires designated workforce regions to develop regional plans that promote alignment of workforce strategies across local areas. NOW's first regional plan was developed in 2017 and subsequently updated in 2021 and 2023.

In early 2025, the region's five WDB directors initiated the planning process by establishing a timeline for the regional plan update. A consultant was engaged in March, and a regional planning team was formed to support development of the plan. This team met weekly to review labor market data, formulated goals that aligned with the state's plan and supported their respective areas, identified strategies to achieve goals, provided input on plan content and ensured ongoing progress. Simultaneously, each area was updating their local plans for inclusion in the regional plan.

Drafts of the plan were shared with WDB members, Chief Local Elected Officials, and core partners across all five local areas for feedback. In July 2025, the draft was made available for public comment through a coordinated effort. One comment was received, reviewed and partially incorporated into the final version of the plan.

Comment Received	Date Received	Response/Action Taken
"Not certain if this could be a consideration but adding partnerships/collaborations with agencies which provide services for the disabled. Bring better awareness to the employers on services available including mental health organizations providing employment services. Develop and have better, more widely available trainings available to employers (even be a part of the onboarding process and for management as well) on handling not just physical but mental disabilities along w/substance use emergencies. Improving the mindset around mental health in the workplace while reducing the hesitancy of employers meeting with organizations servicing these individuals who may struggle in being connected to employment opportunities."	7/25/2025	Partially Accepted Request to add partnerships/collaborations with agencies that provide services for the disabled was declined because it is already addressed within each of the local workforce development area plans which will be included as addendums to the Regional Plan. Request to bring better awareness to employers on services was included in both references to Business Services which were expanded to clarify that staff will also provide employers with connections to organizations that support special populations. Request to develop and have better trainings for declined, but Goal 4 was revised to include that staff will facilitate connections to organizations offering supports, training, and resources aligned with evolving workforce needs. This ensures that the Regional Plan highlights the workforce system's role in connecting employers with appropriate partners and leveraging existing expertise.

Assurances

The following assurances are being provided by the local WDBs as required in WIOA Policy Letter 16-03 regarding regional planning:

- The local WDBs within the planning region assure that they will establish fiscal control and fund accounting procedures to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for all funds received through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- The local WDBs assure that they will keep records that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by the Act and shall maintain such records, including standardized records for all individual participants, and submit such reports as the State may require.
- The local WDBs assure that they will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of the Act.
- The local WDBs assure that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, regulations, written Department of Labor Guidance, written Ohio Department of Job and Family Services guidance, and all other applicable Federal and State laws.
- The local WDBs assure that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in the Jobs for Veterans Act and 20 C.F.R. Part 1010.
- The local WDBs assure that they will comply with any grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary which are necessary to enter into contracts for the use of funds under WIOA, but not limited to the following:
 - General Administrative Requirements – Uniform guidance at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and 2 C.F.R. Part 2900.
 - Assurances and Certifications – SF424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs; 29 C.F.R. Part 31,32 – Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and Regulation); 29 C.F.R. Part 93 – Certification Regarding Lobbying (and Regulation); 29 C.F.R. Parts 94 and 95 – Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension; Certifications (and Regulations).

Signature Pages

The signature pages for the regional plan attest that all assurances have been met and that the regional plan and accompanying local plans represent the local WDBs' efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other State and Local programs in the planning region.

The effective date of the regional plan and the local plans will be July 1, 2025 and remain in effect through June 30, 2029, a period of four years.

These signatures further certify that the local workforce development boards in the planning region will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable Federal and State laws, regulations, policies, and rules.

Below are the signature pages for Areas 2, 3, 4, 5, and 19 respectively. Each Area's sign-off on the NOW Plan depicts a signatory line for the local WDB Chairperson, the local workforce area's Executive Director, and the Chief Local Elected Official for the workforce area, with their typed name and position on the line below the signature.

Area 2

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 2 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029.

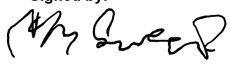
- All of the Assurances indicated on page 37 of the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 2 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- Area 2 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.

DocuSigned by:

8E29C583BED44C3... 9/17/2025 | 12:03 PM EDT

for Ilene Shapiro, Executive, County of Summit

Date

Signed by:

EB6A3B6000A243A... 9/17/2025 | 9:49 AM EDT

Colleen Swedyk, Commissioner, Medina County

Date

DocuSigned by:

31D6A3A29CB48C... 9/5/2025 | 4:41 PM EDT

Christine G. Marshall, Executive Director, Area 2 Workforce Development Board

Date

Signed by:

721300F934274C8... 9/8/2025 | 10:26 AM EDT

Paul Ratcliff, Chair, Area 2 Workforce Development Board

Date

Area 3

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 3 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029.

- All of the Assurances indicated on page 37 of the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 3 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- Area 3 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.


Justin M. Bibb, Mayor, City of Cleveland
Date 9/16/25

Chris Ronayne, Executive, County of Cuyahoga
Date

09/02/2025

Michelle Rose, Executive Director, Area 3 Workforce Development Board
Date

09/08/2025
Ethan Karp, Chair, Area 3 Workforce Development Board
Date

Area 3

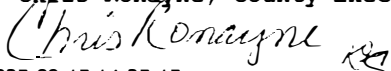
By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 3 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029.

- All of the Assurances indicated on page 37 of the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 3 Local Plan Addendum Have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- Area 3 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.

Justin M. Bibb, Mayor, City of Cleveland

Date

Chris Ronayne, County Executive



2025-09-15 14:25:15

Chris Ronayne, Executive, County of Cuyahoga

Date

Michelle Rose, Executive Director, Area 3 Workforce Development Board

Date

Ethan Karp, Chair, Area 3 Workforce Development Board

Date

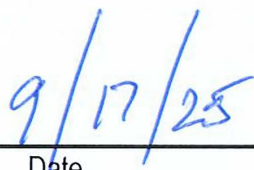
Area 4

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 4 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029.

- All of the Assurances indicated on page 37 the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 4 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- Area 4 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.



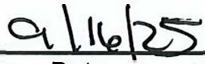
Jeff Riddell, Commissioner, Lorain County



Date



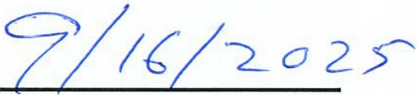
Mary Murphy, Director, Area 4 Workforce Development Board



Date



Ben Norton, Chair, Area 4 Workforce Development Board

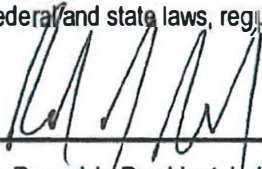


Date

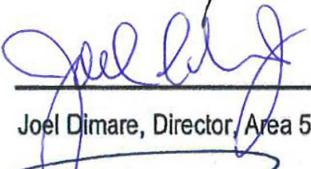
Area 5

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 5 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029.

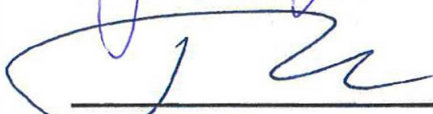
- All of the Assurances indicated on page 37 of the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 5 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- Area 5 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.



Richard J. Regovich, President, Lake County Board of Commissioners
Date 9.18.25



Joel Dimare, Director, Area 5 Workforce Development Board
Date 9-22-25

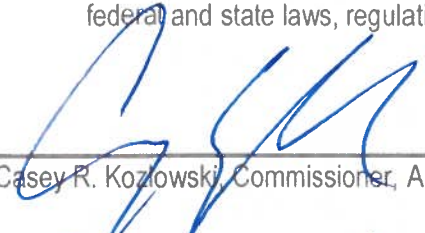


Tim Flenner, Chair, Area 5 Workforce Development Board
Date 9/23/25

Area 19

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 19 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029.

- All of the Assurances indicated on page 37 of the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 19 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- Area 19 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.



Casey R. Kozlowski, Commissioner, Ashtabula County
9-3-25
Date



Craig Sernik, Executive Director, Area 19 Workforce Development Board
9-3-25
Date



Ned Sherry, Chair, Area 19 Workforce Development Board
9/16/2025
Date

ADDENDUM

Area 2 Local Plan – Medina and Summit Counties

Area 3 Local Plan – Cuyahoga County

Area 4 Local Plan – Lorain County

Area 5 Local Plan – Lake County

Area 19 Local Plan – Ashtabula, Geauga and Portage Counties

Area 2 Local Workforce Plan

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2029



**Summit and Medina
Workforce Area**
Council of Governments



OhioMeansJobs.

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BACKGROUND

This document, the Area 2 Local Workforce Plan (local plan), is submitted as an addendum to the Northeast Ohio Workforce Regional Plan (regional plan) as required in Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Policy Letter 16-03.1. This local plan will remain in effect from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029. Under WIOA, states may establish local plan contents pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and its applicable final rules. This plan fully complies with the requirements outlined in Attachment D of Policy Letter 16-03.1.

Description of Local Workforce Area

ODJFS has certified Area 2, consisting of Medina and Summit Counties, as a local workforce region eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding. As established by ODJFS, Area 2 is one of five Workforce Areas in the Northeast Ohio Workforce (NOW) Region which also includes Area 3 (Cuyahoga); Area 4 (Lorain); Area 5 (Lake); and Area 19 (Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the combined estimated population for Area 2 was 719,775 residents in 2023. The county seat for Summit County is the City of Akron which is ranked as the 5th largest city in Ohio with 188,701 residents. The City of Medina serves as the county seat for Medina County and is ranked as the 59th largest city in Ohio with 25,889 residents. The most populous city in Medina County is Brunswick which ranks 41st in Ohio with 35,072 residents. Summit County tends to be more densely populated while Medina County is more sparsely populated and functions as a “bedroom community” with its workforce serving both Summit and Cuyahoga Counties.

The Area’s postsecondary educational resources include The University of Akron, Kent State Twinsburg Academic Center (Twinsburg), and Stark State College (Akron) all located in Summit County; and Cuyahoga Community College’s Western Campus (Brunswick) and The University of Akron’s Medina County University Center (Medina City) in Medina County. Both counties have career technical centers: Portage Lakes Career Center (Green) in Summit County and the Medina County Career Center. Additionally, there are educational compacts that support high school students: Four Cities Compact (Barberton, Norton, Wadsworth, and Copley high schools) and Six District Educational Compact (Cuyahoga Falls, Hudson, Kent, Stow-Munroe Falls, Tallmadge, and Woodridge high schools).

Labor Market Information

Full labor market and economic analysis, as required by WIOA Policy Letter 16-03.1, is included in the regional plan. Selected data points specific to Area 2 are highlighted below utilizing labor market information provided by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services which incorporates data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

- Employment reached 359,400 workers in 2024, a 6.8% increase (23,000 jobs) since the pandemic low in 2020. While this represents substantial recovery, it still falls short of the pre-pandemic high of 362,900 in 2019.
- The labor force (those employed or actively seeking work) was 375,000 in 2024, a modest 2.7% increase from the 2021 low of 365,200, and remains below the 2019 pre-pandemic level of 378,000.

The Hispanic/Latino population in Area 2 had the highest labor force participation rate of any racial or ethnic group in the northeast Ohio region with the exception of the Asian population in Ashtabula County.

- The annual unemployment rate in 2024 in Medina County was 3.3% and in Summit County was 4.3%; the statewide rate was 4.3%.
- The largest share of households falls within the \$50,000 to \$74,999 and \$100,000 to \$149,999 ranges (17.1% each).
- 4% of families in Medina County and 9% in Summit County live below poverty.
- While the NOW region experienced a slight contraction of jobs over the past five years (-278), Area 2 experienced slight growth (874) during that same period.
- Nearly half of all jobs in northeast Ohio are concentrated in Health Care and Social Assistance; Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Accommodation and Food Services, and the most significant employment gains occurred in Transportation and Warehousing.
- Almost half of all jobs in Area 2 are concentrated in Health Care and Social Assistance (17%); Manufacturing (11%); Retail Trade (11%); and Accommodation and Food Services (9%). Between 2018 and 2023, the most significant employment gains occurred in Transportation and Warehousing which grew by 38% (+5,246); Educational Services which grew by 13% (+2,554); and Construction which grew by 11% (+1,667). Job posting data for Area 2 indicates the most in-demand jobs are Registered Nurses, Heavy/Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers, Accountants and Auditors, Retail Salespersons, and Stockers and Order Fillers.

Recent investments exceeding \$106 million in Greater Akron's polymer industry are catalyzing significant growth and innovation in the region, with projections of thousands of new jobs and hundreds of additional STEM credentials. The expansion is expected to create or retain more than 4,000 jobs, spur over \$1 billion in private investment, and generate up to \$5 billion in economic impact for Northeast Ohio. This growth emphasizes the need for targeted workforce development to meet rising demand for advanced polymer manufacturing and sustainable technology skills, while also supporting small business growth and regional competitiveness.

Area 2 Workforce Development Board

The local area is served by a Council of Governments (COG), a political subdivision recognized under Chapter 167 of the Ohio Revised Code. The COG was officially approved by the State of Ohio in November 2016 and is established under the name [The Summit and Medina Workforce Area Council of Governments](#) (SAMWA COG) and subsequently adopted its own [COG Bylaws](#). The member representatives of the COG consist of one commissioner appointed by his or her peers from Medina County, and the Summit County Executive.

Please find attached to this plan Exhibit A containing a table of organization to better illustrate Area 2's organizational structure.

In compliance with WIOA, the COG members, as the Chief Elected Officials (CEO), appoint the Workforce Development Board (WDB) members to fulfill and execute the roles and responsibilities outlined in WIOA and its final rules and other binding regulations. The WDB has adopted its own [WDB Bylaws](#). The COG members retain the responsibilities assigned to CEOs under WIOA. The day-to-day WDB responsibilities,

per WIOA, are assigned to the board's Executive Director and staff. For responsibilities not specifically assigned by WIOA or its final rules, the Executive Director assumes responsibility as directed by WDB and COG bylaws. The Area 2 WDB maintains a membership of 19 of which at least 51% are from the business community. Please find attached to this plan Exhibit B containing the current roster of WDB members.

Part I: LOCAL PLAN DESCRIPTIONS AS REQUIRED BY ODJFS WIOA POLICY LETTER 16-03.1

1. The Workforce Development System in the Local Area That Identifies the Programs That Are Included in the System and Location of the OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Local Workforce Development Area

1.1.1 Programs Included in Area 2 OhioMeansJobs Center:

Program	Provider
WIOA Title I, Adult and Dislocated Workers	Medina and Summit: KRA Corporation
WIOA Title I & Social Security Act Title IV-A TANF braided to fund Ohio's Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP)/Youth Services	Medina and Summit: Jobs for Ohio's Graduates (JOG)
WIOA Title II, Adult Education and Family Literacy	Medina: N/A
	Summit: Project Learn of Summit County
WIOA Title III, Wagner-Peyser Act	Medina and Summit: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Rehabilitation Act, Title I, Vocational Rehabilitation Program	Medina and Summit: Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
WIOA Title I, Job Corps Program	Medina: N/A
	Summit: Equus Workforce Solutions
WIOA Title I, Youth Build	Medina: N/A
	Summit: Towpath Trail High School
Trade Act Title II, Trade Adjustment Assistance and North American Free Trade Agreement	Medina and Summit: Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
Jobs for Veterans Act, Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives	Medina: Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
	Summit: Ohio Department of Job & Family Services and Volunteers of America
Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, Post-Secondary Vocational Education	Medina: Medina County Career Center
	Summit: Portage Lakes Career Center
Older Americans Act Title V, Senior Community Service Employment Program	Medina: N/A
	Summit: Vantage Aging
Social Security Act Title IV-A, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Medina: Medina County Job & Family Services
	Summit: Summit County Job & Family Services
WIOA Title I, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Program	Medina: N/A
	Summit: Pathstone
Community Services Block Grant & Training Programs	Medina: N/A
	Summit: Community Action Akron Summit
Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Employment and Training Programs	Medina: N/A
	Summit: Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority

WIOA Title I, Youthbuild	Towpath Trail High School
Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	Medina and Summit: Summit and Medina Workforce Area COG

Additional Partners in the OMJ centers include:

Medina and Summit:

- Not-for-Profit Corporation Employment Preparation Agency
 - *The Goodwill Industries of Akron, Ohio, Inc.*

Summit:

- US DOL Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) Grant
 - *Volunteers of America Ohio and Indiana*
- Governmental agency focused on empowering people with disabilities in the workplace
 - *Summit County Developmental Disabilities Board*
- *United States Department of Health and Human Services (U.S. HHS) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration funding*
 - Ohio Guidestone

In Program Year 2023:

- 13,154 individuals visited the two OMJ centers in the Area
- 1,034 WIOA participants were served (600 Adult; 157 Dislocated Workers; 277 CCMEP Youth)
- 124 businesses were engaged
- 65 recruitment events were held

Area 2 is involved in a number of special initiatives:

Pre-Apprenticeship Program. Area 2 partnered with Medina’s economic development agency to support pre-apprenticeship programs for Medina County high school students. These pre-apprenticeship programs provide hands-on learning and industry exposure through job shadowing, field trips and capstone projects; build direct pathways into apprenticeship programs and high-demand careers; and fulfill high school graduation requirements.

Work-Based Learning. Area 2’s approach to youth employment in Summit County is highly collaborative, involving the County’s out-of-school network, the local United Way, Job and Family Services, CCMEP provider and local school districts. Students are connected to valuable work experiences and earn up to \$2,400 during an eight-week period over the summer. Work placements are intentionally aligned with students’ career pathways which strengthens the connection between the classroom and real-life work world. In 2024, almost 800 youth worked with over 300 local employers.

Construction Training for Youth and Women. To address the demand for construction workers and expand opportunities for underrepresented groups, Area 2 partnered on two major initiatives. By partnering with Towpath Trail High School, a drop-out recovery high school, students can earn a certificate in Construction and are prepared for immediate entry into the workforce. Designed to attract more women into construction, Area 2 partnered with the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council to conduct targeted outreach and skills training.

Police Officer Training. To address the need for public service workers, Area 2 collaborates with The University of Akron/Summit County Sheriff's Policy Academy. This program provides 711 hours of comprehensive training and prepares individuals to pass the Ohio State Peace Officer's Certification exam. OMJ staff actively recruit and support cohorts through outreach and informational sessions, financial support, and guidance for academy applicants.

Community Workforce Programs. Area 2 adopts a proactive approach to engaging residents. First, OMJ staff collaborate with community organizations like Akron's The Well CDC and go into the neighborhoods to deliver workforce development programming works, help community members remove barriers to employment, and provide hands-on assistance to help residents become WIOA-eligible. In addition, the Adult/Dislocated Worker service provider, KRA Corporation, further strengthens community engagement by deploying two dedicated staff members who meet jobseekers where they are, whether at a church, the library or a local diner, to ensure services are accessible and responsive to the needs of the community.

Welcoming Workforce Coalition. Area 2 launched the Welcoming Workforce Coalition to bring together employers, economic development agencies, government, community organizations, and educational institutions around the shared mission to strengthen the local economy by welcoming international newcomers to address talent shortages and encourage population growth. The 25-member coalition enhanced employers' cultural competency and improved the connection between international students, immigrants, and refugees to local job opportunities through five pilot initiatives. For example, the Welcoming Workforce Career Fair drew 150 international students with 96% indicating they planned to apply for jobs as a result of the event. Additionally, a half-day summit brought together 96 local leaders, including elected officials, business executives, and economic developers to build momentum around the economic contributions of international newcomers.

1.2 Location of OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Workforce Development Area

Area 2 operates one OMJ center in each county:

OhioMeansJobs Summit County
(comprehensive center)
1040 East Tallmadge Avenue
Akron, OH 44310
330-633-1050

www.summitmedinaomj.org/home/Home-Summit-County-OMJ.html

OhioMeansJobs Medina County
(affiliate center)
72 Public Square, First Floor
Medina, OH 44256
330-723-9675

www.summitmedinaomj.org/home/Home-Medina-County-OMJ.html

In addition, the WDB has established Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the following local libraries where OMJ staff regularly provide services:

Akron - Summit County Public Library System
Barberton Public Library
Cuyahoga Falls Public Library
Medina County District Library
Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library
Twinsburg Public Library

2. Explanation of the OhioMeansJobs Delivery System

2.1 How the Local Board Ensures Continuous Improvement of Eligible Service Providers and That Providers Will Meet the Employment Needs of Local Employers, Workers and Jobseekers

WIOA creates a performance-based structure for providing services, and each local workforce area is required to negotiate performance levels with the state annually. Area 2 successfully met their performance goals in the most recently reported year, Program Year 2023 (7/1/23–6/30/24). The board and/or its designated representatives ensure quality services through a combination of the following:

- Provider performance measures against established performance standards as negotiated between the Board, CEOs and ODJFS are monitored annually;
- Provider performance against additional negotiated performance metrics included in the provider contract or contract amendments are monitored monthly by WDB staff; quarterly by the Performance Committee;
- One-stop operators are required to meet established standards to obtain and retain certification; and
- Experienced workforce consultant conducts annual monitoring and compliance reviews.

Note, every two years, the board intentionally negotiates performance measures with the state that will challenge the local area to continuously improve performance. The Area has been able to meet or exceed all performance measures since Area 2 was established in 2017.

As the WIOA-funded Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services provider and One-Stop Operator, KRA Corporation has committed to:

- Regularly collecting and analyzing data to measure program effectiveness and make improvements;
- Utilizing a program model that is rooted in human-centered design which focuses on addressing the needs and preferences of jobseekers and employers; and
- Meeting regularly with business and training partners to coordinate events and develop strategic direction for immediate and emerging trends.

2.2 How the Local Board Will Facilitate Access to Services Through Use of Technology or Other Means

Area 2 OMJ centers are mandated, per WIOA Policy Letter 17-01, to register jobseekers and businesses on the OhioMeansJobs.com website to facilitate their activities. Activities to maximize utilization of services include:

- Jobseekers who visit the Area's OMJ websites can interact with a virtual assistant to guide them to the appropriate services;
- Jobseekers have access to online orientation and pre-recorded workshops;
- Jobseekers are taught how to create their resume and use the OhioMeansJobs.com system to post it, find a job, prepare for a career, and develop skills; and
- Job order requests are posted on OhioMeansJobs.com by Business Services staff.

In addition, KRA Corporation has incorporated the following:

- Outreach specialists actively participate in community events and visit businesses, resulting in an increased volume of customers visiting the OMJ center and participating in recruiting events; and

- Workshops and recruiting events are promoted by posting on EventBrite and utilizing Engage by Cell technology for text message notifications.

2.3 How Entities Within OMJ Delivery System Will Comply With Section 188 of WIOA, if Applicable, and Applicable Provisions of the ADA of 1990 Regarding the Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services, Technology and Materials for Individuals With Disabilities

Area 2 centers are dedicated to providing access, as directed by WIOA and the ADA, to all members of the public seeking service. As such, our centers provide access via:

- Computer devices for those with visual impairments;
- Handicap accessible doors, including powered doors;
- Sorenson Video Relay Service (VRS) for hearing impaired customers;
- Handicapped-designated parking spaces with ADAAG compliant signage;
- All offices on accessible 1st floor;
- Zero entry access (no change in level at the entrance to building);
- Signs posted to identify areas of available services/goods with raised letters, Grade II Braille; and
- Doors adjusted to 5 lbs. or less to comply with ADAAG.

WIOA requires that centers be assessed and certified at least every three years. This multi-phase certification process requires that centers meet accessibility and service standards to ensure people with disabilities have equitable access to workforce development services. Area 2's comprehensive center located in Summit County and affiliate center in Medina County were last certified in 2022, and will begin the recertification process which is required to be completed by December 31, 2025.

While our centers are fully accessible, true inclusion goes beyond physical accommodations. Staff participate in training provided by Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) to help them effectively engage and support individuals with disabilities.

2.4 How the Local Board Will Coordinate With the Regional JobsOhio, Team NEO

The Board values its relationship with Team NEO and local economic development organizations.

In collaboration with ConxusNEO, Area 2 sought to gain insights on the change in activities and behaviors of employers and jobseekers in light of the COVID pandemic. Team NEO was contracted to distribute online surveys and conduct focus groups with employers in Summit, Medina and Portage counties to help us gain insights about their challenges in hiring and retaining talent since the onset of the COVID pandemic. 254 survey responses were received and the research was expanded to additional northeast Ohio counties for a total of 766 survey responses. Respondents were invited to participate in virtual and in-person focus groups, resulting in insight gained from 100 employers. The results revealed that 80% of employers faced a talent shortage, 65% experienced higher turnover, 95% did not have a sufficient pool of qualified candidates, 18–30-year-olds were the hardest to recruit and retain, and finding workers interest in full-time positions were the hardest to locate. Employers reported that raising wages and providing bonuses wasn't enough of an incentive to attract or retain workers.

In addition, Summit County has a coordinated business retention and expansion strategy that includes a Team NEO representative who joins us for these site calls and visits. This coordinated approach allows us to present to companies both local and regional assets.

2.5 Roles and Resource Contributions of the OMJ Center Partners

The roles and resource contribution of OMJ center partners in the two centers are informed by:

- The negotiated terms of the MOU governing partnerships in each center;
- The unique set of services that each partner organization provides;
- The integration of services including partner staff rotation in the resource room, presenting workshops, and making referrals;
- Cost sharing throughout the system including facility, management, resource room, equipment and supplies and outreach; and
- Other legal and regulatory factors governing required center partners, including WIOA statute and regulations, and ODJFS guidance in the form of the Ohio Combined Plan and policy letters.

The board's staff will determine if partner entities are meeting statutory and contractual obligations as outlined in the above guiding documents through the contracts with the One-Stop Operators. Where corrective action is determined necessary, the staff shall request the entity responsible to take appropriate corrective action. Preference is given to mutual resolution through dispute mechanisms detailed in the MOU.

Having a partner structure, the OMJ centers benefit from a shared service model. Each partner brings a unique set of services which enhances the resources available to jobseekers and employers. All partners contribute to the day-to-day operations of the One-Stop.

Additional information about the center partners is found in Section 1.1.

3. Description and Assessment of the Type and Availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Services

On January 31, 2024, SAMWA COG released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to competitively select providers for Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers, including Training Services, and Business Services at the Area's two OMJ centers as outlined in WIOA Sections 134 (c)(2) and 134 (c)(3). KRA Corporation was selected and to commence activities on July 1, 2024.

Career Services

Area 2 procures Adult and Dislocated Worker Services through a competitive bidding or award process. The outline of routine services located below describes:

Basic Career Services

- Initial assessment of skill levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes and abilities (including skills gaps);
- Supportive service needs assessment;
- Staff-assisted job search assistance;
- Placement assistance (includes job matching, job referrals, and job development);

- Career counseling, including staff-assisted career guidance and provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations, on nontraditional employment, and from career profiles and interest inventories;
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid; and
- Provision of job club activities.

Individualized Career Services

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:
 - Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools and
 - In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.
- Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to identify all the following:
 - Employment goals;
 - Appropriate achievement objectives; and
 - Appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals, including providing information on eligible training providers and career pathways to attain career objectives.
- Individual counseling;
- Career counseling and planning;
- Short-term prevocational services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training, which include:
 - Development of learning skills;
 - Communication skills;
 - Interviewing skills;
 - Punctuality;
 - Personal maintenance skills; and
 - Professional conduct.
- Internships and work experiences (including transitional jobs) that are linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance;
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs; and
- Follow-up services.

In Area 2, the delivery of these services is provided by KRA Corporation, a nationally recognized workforce development provider with decades of experience operating under WIOA standards. KRA ensures that jobseekers receive tailored support through both online and in-person assessments, including the RIASEC tool, which helps individuals identify how their interests and strengths align with local career pathways and personal preferences. Each participant is paired with a Career Coach trained in person-centered career coaching, empowering jobseekers to explore occupations within in-demand sectors that meet quality standards for livable wages, benefits, work-life balance, and advancement opportunities. Individualized employment plans are developed for jobseekers who also participate in a one-week program focused on mastering interviewing and networking skills. This integrated, customer-focused model is designed to

maximize job placement and retention outcomes, while also supporting employers with recruitment, screening, and customized training solutions aligned to regional workforce needs.

Training Services

Area 2 training services are provided under the guidance of State and local policies. Training will be utilized for jobseekers who are unable to otherwise attain or maintain consistent and self-sustaining employment. Training may take one or more of the following forms:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
- Registered apprenticeship (which incorporates both on-the-job training (OJT) and classroom training);
- On-the-Job Training (OJT);
- Incumbent Worker Training (IWT);
- Transitional Jobs (TJ);
- Workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs;
- Training programs operated by the private sector;
- Skill upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training;
- Job readiness training provided in combination with other training services or transitional jobs;
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities for English Language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, provided concurrently or in combination with other training services; and
- Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

In addition to the eligible training providers registered in the state of Ohio's Workforce Inventory of Education and Training (WIET) system, KRA Corporation provides an online learning platform, Metrix Learning, which offers customers access to over 6,000 courses.

4. Comprehensive Case Management Program (CCMEP)

Medina and Summit Counties have each submitted and received approval from ODJFS for a CCMEP plan as directed by Ohio Administrative Code 5101:14-1-03. Currently, each county's Department of Job and Family Services are the lead agencies for the implementation of the CCMEP. The board has the oversight responsibility to ensure the WIOA negotiated youth performance is monitored within the confines of each of the local CCMEP plans. On February 3, 2025, SAMWA COG, Summit County Job and Family Services, and Medina County Job and Family Services jointly released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to competitively select providers for CCMEP. Jobs for Ohio's Graduates (JOG) was selected and to commence activities on July 1, 2025.

5. Local Board and OMJ Center Operator Coordination to Improve Service Delivery and Avoid Duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act Services

The Area 2 WDB will seek to avoid service duplication, maximize service coordination, and provide superior overall service delivery with its partners through the following means:

- Issuing RFPs for center operations for each of the two OMJ centers;

- Execution of ODJFS' Memorandum of Understanding template every two years that addresses service delivery expectations, minimizes duplicative services, and identifies avenues for coordination;
- Engaging in continuous operational improvements in accordance with local policies and OMJ certification;
- Oversight by the One-Stop Operations Committee of the WDB; and
- Maintain regular communication between SAMWA COG and the centers' Operators.

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program is designed to supplement the reemployment services provided by the public workforce system; therefore, many RESEA participants are typically co-enrolled in Wagner-Peyser Act Services. In Area 2, the ODJFS staff and, work closely with the SAMWA COG staff who oversee and implement the RESEA program. RESEA staff are onsite at both OMJ centers and provide intensive reemployment assistance to unemployment insurance claimants and ensure seamless access to all available workforce resources. This coordination prevents duplication of Wagner-Peyser Services and supports a comprehensive, integrated approach to serving jobseekers.

6. Description of Executed Cooperative Agreements Defining Service Provider Requirements

The Area 2 WDB is a party to the following agreements that determine the conditions requiring service integration and access to the suite of services available at each county's OMJ center and provider sites, if applicable:

- Career services;
- Services determining WIOA adult and dislocated worker eligibility, standardized assessment, and the provision of case management services for eligible individuals;
- Business services; and
- Services determining WIOA youth eligibility and the provision of case management services for eligible individuals.

7. Identification of Area's Fiscal Agent

The WDB has identified the Area's COG members as its subrecipient for WIOA funding. The [County of Summit's Office of Finance and Budget](#), under the direction of the County Executive, provide fiscal services for the COG. The Summit County Department of Job and Family Services is delegated as a sub-fiscal agent for the County of Summit.

Finance and Budget
Ohio Building – 7th Floor
175 South Main Street
Akron, OH 44308
(330) 643-2574

8. Description of the Competitive Process to Award Subgrants and Contracts for WIOA Title I Activities

The Area WDB staff design procurement solicitations adhering to all applicable WIOA and federal regulations, as set forth within the Area's Acquisition & Procurement policies established in 2017 and most recently amended December 19, 2024. As procurement rules for use of federal funds change, SAMWA COG will update its policy. At minimum, the SAMWA COG will conduct an annual review of procurement rules. At the time of this local plan, SAMWA COG and its sub-grantees and contractors shall use one of the following procurement methods when acquiring goods and/or services paid for in whole or part with federal funds:

1. Micro-Purchase Procedure: Allowable for purchases of up to, but not in excess of, \$10,000.00. May acquire supplies and services without soliciting quotes if price is considered reasonable, and catalog or verbal quotes may be used.
2. Small Purchase Procedure: Allowable for purchases of \$0.01 to \$10,000.00 and required for purchases of \$10,000.01 to \$250,000.00. May acquire supplies or services when receive written quotations or proposals from at least three sources, if available. SAMWA COG must identify and document the evaluation factors and their relative importance. Awards will be made to the responsible source whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered. Once a vendor relationship is established, additions, upgrades and changes will be acquired without quotes for the enhancements. The vendor relationship will be reviewed and reevaluated as deemed necessary.
3. Competitive Proposals: Allowable for purchases of \$0.01 to \$250,000.00 and required for purchases of \$250,000.01 and above. Competitive proposals may be used when the conditions are not appropriate for the use of competitive sealed bidding, micro-purchasing, small purchasing, or non-competitive proposals and under the certain conditions. Evaluation factors other than price can only be used when they are clearly explained in the Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Quotes (RFQ). Requests for proposals shall identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance and be publicly advertised through various forms of media in each county of Area 2, or on the SAMWA COG website, or both. Proposals shall be solicited from an adequate number of known suppliers. Proposals cannot be reviewed or discussed until the submission deadline passes and SAMWA COG will have a method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting awardees. Awards will be made to the most responsive and responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered. SAMWA COG may use competitive proposal procedures for qualification-based procurement of architectural/engineering (A/E) professional services whereby competitor's qualifications are evaluated, and the most qualified competitor is selected, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation. The method, where price is not used as a selection factor, can only be used in procurement of A/E professional services.

SAMWA COG may use noncompetitive procurement methods only when the award of a contract is not feasible under the micro-purchasing threshold, small purchase procedure, or competitive proposals, and one of the following conditions applies:

1. Sole Source.
2. Best Practical Source.
3. A public emergency need for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation.

Adequate justification is required before an award of any dollar amount is made and SAMWA COG will maintain that the required product or service is available only from a single source, unless the service is a public utility (e.g., electric, telephone, gas water, sewer, etc.) or the price is set by law or regulation.

For complete details, the Acquisition and Procurement Policies are found [online](#).

9. Board Actions Taken to Become or Remain a High Performing Board

Area 2 used the passage of WIOA to focus on becoming and remaining a high functioning board. The resulting actions include:

- Regularly scheduled board meetings that are held publicly and available virtually;
- Data utilization to inform and guide board decisions;
- Employer representation that is reflective of senior leaders from in-demand industries;
- As required, the chair and vice-chair positions are reserved for employers; and
- Orientation of new Board members.

The Board will review their activities, policies, and other governing activities on an ongoing basis to ensure excellent performance and address deficiencies.

10. OMJ Center's Commitment to Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management Information Systems

The OMJ centers located within Area 2 utilize the intake, case management, and financial tracking systems provided by ODJFS. These systems include the Advancement through Resources Information and Employment Services (ARIES) in 2022 and the County Financial Information System (CFIS). The OMJ websites are user-friendly. To further enhance service coordination and prevent gaps in support, the public workforce system is exploring how it might integrate its systems with the Unite Us platform which was recently adopted by social service agencies across Summit County that enables real-time data sharing and collaboration among social service agencies to ensure that residents receive seamless and comprehensive assistance.

Part II: ASSURANCES

Area 2, through its Officers and designated Agents, makes the following assurances:

- Area 2 has established and will continue to employ fiscal control and fund accounting procedures to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for all funds received through WIOA ("the Act").
- Area 2 shall keep records that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by WIOA and shall maintain all records, including standardized records for all individual participants, and submit such reports as the State may require.
- Area 2 will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the non-discrimination provisions of the Act.
- Area 2 assures that funds will be spent in accordance with WIOA, regulations, written Department of Labor guidance, written Ohio Department of Job and Family Services guidance, and all other applicable Federal and State laws.
- Area 2 assures that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in the Jobs for Veterans Act and 20 CFR Part 1010.
- Area 2 assures it will comply with any grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary which are necessary to enter into contracts for the use of funders under WIOA, but not limited to the following:
- General Administrative Requirements – Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 2900.
- Assurances and Certifications – SF 424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs; 29 CFR Part 31, 32 – Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and Regulation); 29 CFR Part 93 – Certification Regarding Lobbying (and Regulation); 29 CFR Parts 94 and 95 – Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension; Certifications (and Regulation).

Part III: AREA 2 SIGNATURES

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 2 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029:

- All of the Assurances indicated in the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 2 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- The Area 2 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.

DocuSigned by:

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for Ilene Shapiro, Executive, County of Summit

Date

Signed by:

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Colleen Swedyk, Commissioner, Medina County

Date

DocuSigned by:

9/5/2025 | 4:41 PM EDT
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Christine G. Marshall, Executive Director, Area 2 Workforce Development Board Date

Signed by:

9/8/2025 | 10:26 AM EDT
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Paul Ratcliff, Chair, Area 2 Workforce Development Board

Date

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A Organizational Chart July 2025

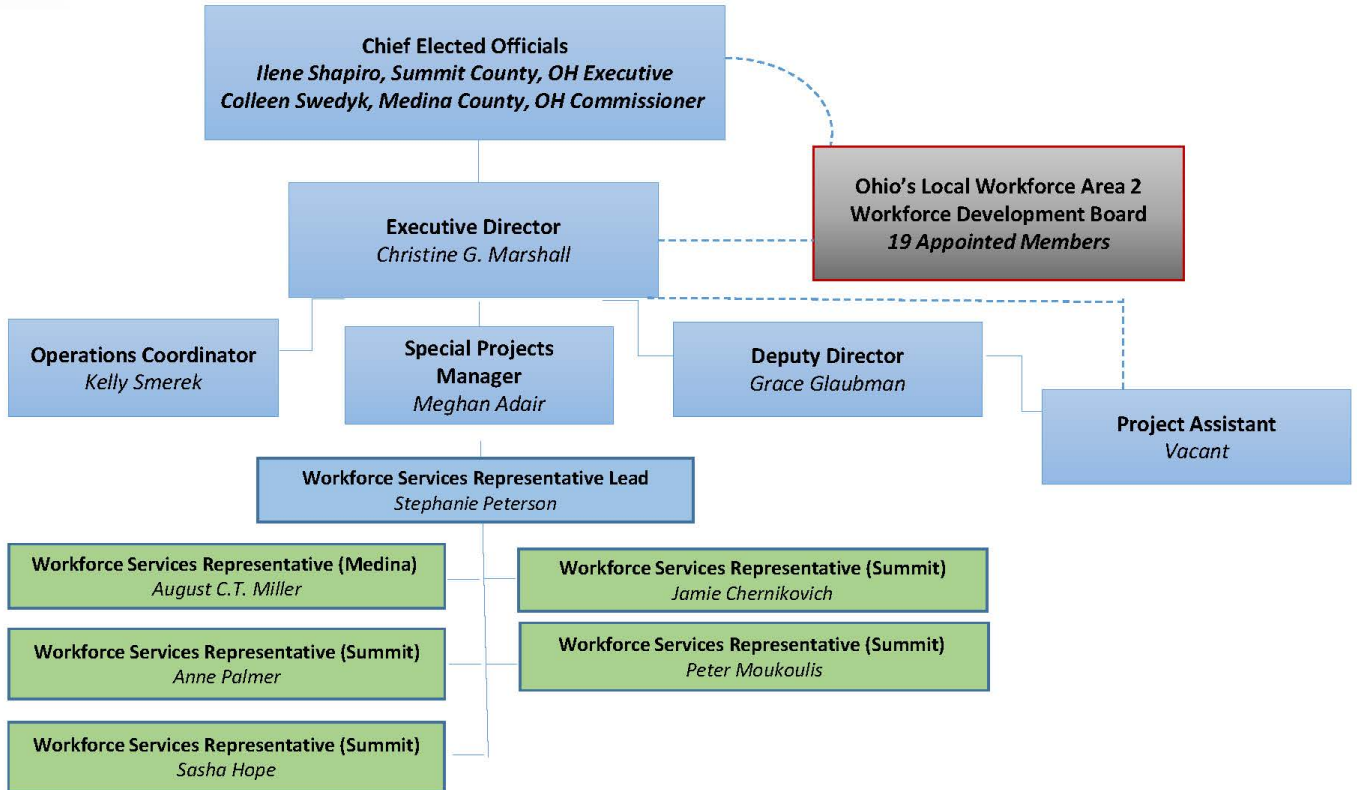


Exhibit B
Area 2 Workforce Development Board
July 2025

Name	Professional Affiliation	County	Representing	Appointments & Committees
Bissell, Jeff	Director of Special Projects & Treasurer, NMG Aerospace	Summit	Business, Manufacturing	Finance Committee
Capozzi, Matthew	Training Director, Akron Area Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee	Summit	Labor, JATC	Performance Committee Chair
Chester, John	Executive Board Member, Tri-County Regional Labor Council	Summit	Labor	Performance Committee
Cornute, Jeffrey	Human Resources and Safety Manager, SFS Group	Medina	Business, Manufacturing	
Costa, Malcolm	President & CEO, Community Action Akron Summit	Summit	Community-Based Organization	One-Stop Operations Committee
Dempsey, Patricia	Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities	Medina	Government, Vocational Rehabilitation	One-Stop Operations Committee
Dentler, Bethany	Executive Director, Medina County Economic Development Corporation	Medina	Economic/Community Development	One-Stop Operations Committee
Esposito, Anthony	Vice President of IT, People Services, Inc.	Medina	Business, Manufacturing	Finance Committee Chair; Executive Committee
Gdovin, Matthew	Executive Director, NEOnet	Summit	Business, Information Technology	
Heid, Jessica	President, Ameri-Cal Corp.	Medina	Business, Manufacturing	Performance Committee
Kelker, Toya	Community Development Relationship Manager, The Huntington Bank	Summit	Business, Finance	Finance Committee

Kelley, Katie	Director of External Affairs, Akron Rubber Development Laboratory, Inc.	Summit	Business, Polymer Research	
Lane, Amy	Director of Career Services & Workforce Development, Stark State College	Summit	Higher Education	Performance Committee
Miller, Maria	Systems Director, Talent Acquisition, Summa Health	Summit	Business, Healthcare	Finance Committee
Mitchell, Marquita	Executive Director, Project Learn of Summit County	Medina	Provider of Title II Adult Education & Literacy Activities	Performance Committee
Moore, William	Program Delivery Manager, Ohio Department of Job & Family Services	Medina	Government, Wagner-Peyser & VETS Program	One-Stop Operations Committee
Prentice, David	Executive Secretary Treasurer, Tri-County Regional Labor Council	Summit	Labor	Finance Committee
Ramos-Chesnes, Sharlene	President & CEO, True North Global	Summit	Business, Logistics	Board Vice Chair; Executive Committee; Performance Committee; One-Stop Operations Committee Chair
Ratcliff, Paul	COO, V3 Transportation	Medina	Business, Transportation	Board Chair; Executive Committee; One-Stop Operations Committee

Area 3 Local Workforce Plan

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2029



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BACKGROUND

This document, the Area 3 Local Workforce Plan (local plan), is submitted as an addendum to the Northeast Ohio Workforce Regional Plan (regional plan) as required in Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Policy Letter 16-03.1. This local plan will remain in effect from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029. Under WIOA, states may establish local plan contents pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and its applicable final rules. This plan fully complies with the requirements outlined in Attachment D of Policy Letter 16-03.1.

Description of Local Workforce Area

ODJFS has certified Area 3, consisting solely of Cuyahoga County, as a local workforce region eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding. Area 3 is one of five Workforce Areas in the Northeast Ohio Workforce (NOW) Region which also includes Area 2 (Medina and Summit); Area 4 (Lorain); Area 5 (Lake); and Area 19 (Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Cuyahoga County had an estimated population of 1,240,594 residents (2024) making it the second most populous county in Ohio. However, this is almost 40,000 fewer residents since 2010. Cleveland is the county seat, and it is the largest city in the county and fifth most populous in the state. Cuyahoga County is home to a diverse population with 47% identifying as non-White. The county also has a relatively older population with 20% aged 65 or older.

Cuyahoga County is characterized by a diverse mix of urban, suburban, and some rural communities. The county is densely populated with a median age of 40.5 years and a median household income of \$62,823 as of 2023. The workforce in Cuyahoga County is supported by a robust network of employers in sectors such as healthcare and manufacturing.

Labor Market Information

Full labor market and economic analysis, as required by WIOA Policy Letter 16-03.1, is included in the regional plan. Selected data points specific to Area 3 are highlighted below utilizing labor market information provided by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services which incorporates data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

- Employment reached 599,800 workers in 2024, a 9% increase (49,800 jobs) since the pandemic low in 2020. While this represents substantial recovery, it still falls short of the pre-pandemic high of 616,400 in 2019.
- The labor force (those employed or actively seeking work) was 624,200 in 2024, a modest 2% increase from the 2021 low of 608,300, and remains significantly below the 2019 pre-pandemic level of 643,000.
- The annual unemployment rate in 2024 was 3.9%, lower than the statewide rate of 4.3%. Cuyahoga County youth aged 16-19 have the highest unemployment rates in all of northeast Ohio, 23.3%.
- The largest share of households falls within the \$50,000 to \$74,999 range (17%).
- 11.5% of families live below poverty, ranking the county 16 out of 88 Ohio counties.
- While the NOW region experienced a slight contraction of jobs over the past five years (-278),

Cuyahoga County experienced a substantial contraction (-15,463) during that same period.

- Nearly half of all jobs in northeast Ohio are concentrated in Health Care and Social Assistance; Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Accommodation and Food Services, and the most significant employment gains occurred in Transportation and Warehousing.
- Almost half of all jobs in Area 3 are concentrated in Health Care and Social Assistance (20.4%); Manufacturing (9.8%); Retail Trade (8.7%); and Accommodation and Food Services (8.4%). Between 2018 and 2023, the most significant employment gains occurred in Transportation and Warehousing (+11,779) and Health Care (+3,235). Job posting data for Area 3 indicates the most in-demand jobs are Registered Nurses, First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers, and Accountants and Auditors.

Area 3 Workforce Development Board

In July 2024, the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Board was incorporated as a nonprofit corporation in accordance with Chapter 1702 of the Ohio Revised Code and began doing business as Greater Cleveland Works. As a nonprofit, Greater Cleveland Works retains its role as the designated workforce development board for Cuyahoga County, while gaining increased flexibility to diversify funding, deepen partnerships, and introduce innovative initiatives to better serve the community.

Greater Cleveland Work's Board of Directors (up to 30 directors) is appointed by the chief elected officials, the Mayor of the City of Cleveland and the Cuyahoga County Executive. A majority of the Directors represent business and at least two represent small business, at least 20% represent workforce of which at least two represent labor organizations, at least two represent education and training, at least three represent government and economic development, and other directors as determined by the Chief Elected Officials.

A [strategic plan](#) for 2025-2029 was adopted by the Board and is centered on these four pillars:

1. **Operational Excellence.** Achieve operational excellence through expanded reach, effectiveness, and by addressing disparities in our community within the context of work delivered by our partners and by Greater Cleveland Works.
2. **Economic Competitiveness.** Ensure Greater Cleveland Works and the workforce ecosystem support economic competitiveness with small, medium and large employers.
3. **Workforce System Funding and Capacity.** Build a reputation for getting stuff done with a bold vision toward the future that leads to increased funding opportunities and capacity to improve workforce systems.
4. **Ecosystem Effectiveness.** Identify or provide leadership for ecosystem initiatives that result in improved ecosystem effectiveness.

This work is guided by the following vision, mission, and values:

Vision: An equitable, vibrant Greater Cleveland where people from all backgrounds have quality jobs and careers with thriving employers.

Mission: Greater Cleveland Works delivers impactful services for people and employers and drives the workforce ecosystem in Cleveland and Cuyahoga County.

Values: Equity, integrity, and adaptability.

Part I: LOCAL PLAN DESCRIPTIONS AS REQUIRED BY ODJFS WIOA POLICY LETTER 16-03.1

1. The Workforce Development System in the Local Area That Identifies the Programs That Are Included in the System and Location of the OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Local Workforce Development Area

1.1.1 Programs Included in Area 3 OhioMeansJobs Center:

Program	Provider
Adult and Dislocated Workers	United Labor Agency
Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP)/Youth Services	Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.)
Adult Education and Family Literacy	Aspire of Greater Cleveland
Wagner-Peyser Act	Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
Vocational Rehabilitation Program	Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
Trade Adjustment Assistance Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program Unemployment Insurance Program	Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
Post-Secondary Vocational Education (Carl D. Perkins)	Cuyahoga Community College Polaris Career Center
Senior Community Service Employment Services	AARP Foundation NCBA Inc – Living Longer – Aging Better
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Cuyahoga County Job & Family Services
Community Services Block Grant	Step Forward
Job Corps Program	Cleveland Job Corps
YouthBuild	OhioGuidestone
HUD Employment and Training Program	Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority
Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	United Labor Agency

In Program Year 2023:

- 12,220 individuals visited the OMJ center
- Enrollments and placements exceeded PY '22:
 - 5,421 WIOA participants were served (3,512 Adult; 865 Dislocated Workers; 1,044 CCMEP Youth)
 - 1,679 gained employment at an average hourly wage of \$19.60
- The greatest number of placements occurred in Transportation (252); Office and Administration (160); and Production (138)
- The employers with the most placements were the Cleveland Clinic (74) and Amazon (67)
- 683 businesses were engaged
- 34 recruitment events were held

1.2 Location of OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Workforce Development Area

A comprehensive American Job Center is located at:
1910 Carnegie Avenue

Cleveland, OH 44115
216-777-8200
<https://greaterclevelandworks.org/>

In addition, OMJ staff provide services at the Cleveland Food Bank's Community Resource Center (15550 S. Waterloo Rd, Cleveland) and the Cuyahoga County Welcome Center (4261 Fulton Parkway, Cleveland).

2. Explanation of the OhioMeansJobs Delivery System

2.1 How the Local Board Ensures Continuous Improvement of Eligible Service Providers and That Providers Will Meet the Employment Needs of Local Employers, Workers and Jobseekers

WIOA creates a performance-based structure for providing services, and each local workforce area is required to negotiate performance levels with the state annually. Area 3 successfully met their performance goals in the most recently reported year, Program Year 2023 (7/1/23–6/30/24). Greater Cleveland Works ensures quality services through a combination of the following:

- Monthly analysis by staff and quarterly analysis by Operations and Disabilities Committee of provider's performance compared to established and negotiated WIOA performance measures (e.g., number of individuals trained, number of individuals trained and/or employed in key sectors, and wage earnings of those trained);
- Regularly gathering feedback via surveys from jobseekers and employers about services;
- Engaging "mystery shoppers" to evaluate the quality of service; and
- Meeting or exceed one-stop certification standards.

Greater Cleveland Works intentionally leads and actively participates in collaboratives that bring together businesses, education and training providers, workforce organizations, and community-based organizations to improve services for employers and jobseekers. These collaborations are designed to improve services for both employers and jobseekers by aligning workforce strategies with industry needs. The primary goal is to equip jobseekers with in-demand skills and connect them to quality jobs. The following initiatives support the continuous improvement of the workforce system:

The Built Environment Collaborative

Greater Cleveland Works leads the Built Environment Collaborative which is an investment of \$10 million by the City of Cleveland to design a citywide initiative that grows and diversifies the talent pool to meet the growing demand in construction, infrastructure, and clean energy. This initiative is a collaboration of employers, unions, education/training and organizations supporting jobseekers who are underrepresented or face barriers to employment, and the Collaborative continuously gathers real-time insights from them on skill gaps, hiring challenges, and the lived experiences of jobseekers. This feedback directly shapes the training programs, support services, and career pathways offered to ensure that they are relevant, accessible, and effective for Cleveland's workforce needs.

The Collaborative's comprehensive approach includes:

- Free and low-cost training and apprenticeships, from short-term certificates to multi-year union programs;
- Wraparound supports such as childcare, transportation, and tools, removing barriers that often prevent completion and job placement;

- Targeted outreach and resources for Minority Business Enterprises and justice-impacted individuals, expanding opportunities for those historically excluded from the trades; and
- Direct connections to local employers, unions, and contractors, creating a real pipeline to good jobs and supporting employer capacity to hire and retain talent.

As a result, the Built Environment Collaborative has already enrolled over 1,500 residents in training and placed hundreds in family-sustaining jobs, demonstrating that a responsive, employer- and worker-informed approach delivers measurable impact for Cleveland's economy and community.

Youth Mental Health SWOT: Meeting Evolving Needs Through Sector Partnership

Greater Cleveland Works also leads Youth Mental Health Strengthening Workforce Opportunities Together (SWOT) which is focused on building a sustainable, skilled workforce to meet the growing mental and behavioral health needs of Cuyahoga County's youth. This initiative is centered on listening to and collaborating with employers, service providers, and youth themselves to identify workforce gaps, training needs, and systemic barriers.

Key strategies that make this approach responsive and effective include:

- Partnering with consultants and stakeholders to map in-demand and entry-level roles to ensure training pathways are directly linked to real job opportunities and projected workforce shortages;
- Developing a cohort training model for Certified Youth Peer Support Specialists (CYPS) to expand the pipeline of care providers by integrating paraprofessionals into service delivery teams; and
- Engaging in joint advocacy at the state level to address workforce sustainability, secure funding for fellowships, improve provider compensation, and promote transparency in insurance practices.

By continuously engaging employers, educators, funders, and frontline workers, the Youth Mental Health SWOT initiative ensures that workforce development strategies are not only data-driven but also grounded in the lived realities of those delivering and receiving care. This collaborative, feedback-driven approach positions Greater Cleveland Works to rapidly adapt services, fill critical workforce gaps, and improve outcomes for both employers and youth in the region.

In addition, Greater Cleveland Works is actively engaged in local industry sector partnerships that align the efforts of education, training, economic development, and community-based organizations. This collaborative approach to developing innovative solutions to workforce challenges creates an informed environment where services can be refined and responsive to real-time needs of both employers and jobseekers and enables the workforce development system to become a more efficient, effective, and equitable. These sector partnerships include:

- Manufacturing (MAGNET)
- Healthcare (NewBridge Cleveland)
- Information Technology (Greater Cleveland Partnership)

2.2 How the Local Board Will Facilitate Access to Services Through Use of Technology or Other Means

Jobseekers can utilize technology if they are not able to access in-person services, and complete a contact form on the website, making it easier for individuals to reach out at any time regardless of their schedule or location. Staff respond within 48 hours to schedule an introductory call or in-person meeting. This option removes barriers for those who may have transportation challenges. This hybrid approach ensures services are more accessible. Service providers also provide both in-person and virtual services and the following are

available both on-site and virtually: orientation, career coaching, workshops on various workforce topics (interviewing, resume development), career fairs, and recruitment events.

The new strategic plan includes a strategy for raising awareness about services. Through innovative outreach efforts like choosing locations that are easy to access and building a presence in neighborhoods where engagement is low, the Board is prioritizing how additional jobseekers and employers can access services.

2.3 How Entities Within OMJ Delivery System Will Comply With Section 188 of WIOA, if Applicable, and Applicable Provisions of the ADA of 1990 Regarding the Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services, Technology and Materials for Individuals With Disabilities

The OMJ center complies with Section 188 of WIOA and the applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and received certification from the State of Ohio recognizing appropriate ADA compliance. OMJ provides the following physical and programmatic accommodations:

- Accessible entrances, doors, restrooms and hallways to all rooms and offices;
- Adaptive computer devices for those with visual impairments;
- Interpreter services for those with hearing impairments;
- Written procedures that staff receive which includes policies and ADA information on service animals, emergency evacuation assistance for persons with disabilities, etc.;
- Forms for jobseekers to self-identify which are used to address any barriers to employment or training as well as additional interventions with an Equal Access consultant; and
- Trainings for staff that focus on disability awareness, ADA compliance and best practices that are coordinated and/or facilitated by OEO/ADA manager on staff.

2.4 How the Local Board Will Coordinate With the Regional JobsOhio, Team NEO

Team NEO is the JobsOhio network partner in Northeast Ohio. Greater Cleveland Works routinely engages Team NEO for labor market information and leverages their annual *Aligning Opportunities* report to design strategies that address current and future workforce needs for in-demand jobs and skills. Additionally, Team NEO regularly includes the Business Services team in business retention and expansion meetings with companies looking to grow in Northeast Ohio. This collaboration allows for employers to get connected to the full range of services and resources available by the public workforce system.

2.5 Roles and Resource Contributions of the OMJ Center Partners

The roles and resource contributions of each center partner operating within OMJ are established as follows:

- The terms and conditions for each center partner are negotiated and documented in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Greater Cleveland Works;
- The terms and conditions of the WIOA statute and regulations governing each partner's program and grant appropriations;
- Ohio's Combined State Plan governs and dictates each mandated partner's role in workforce development system;
- All required partners must provide access to their programs and services through the center, either in person or virtually; and

- Partners must participate in the operation of the OMJ center, contributing a portion of their program funds and sharing responsibilities.

Greater Cleveland Works procures a one-stop operator through a competitive process to coordinate service delivery of Center partners and to manage the center's daily operations. The current one-stop operator is United Labor Agency.

3. Description and Assessment of the Type and Availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Services

Career and Training Services

Career services are designed to help individuals at every stage of their job search and career development. These services include initial assessments to understand each person's skills and needs, access to job search resources and workshops, personalized career counseling, and referrals to supportive services (e.g., childcare, financial assistance). For those needing more tailored support, individualized career services offer in-depth assessments, career planning, and connections to training, internships, or work experiences. Follow-up support is also provided to help ensure long-term employment success.

Training services are designed to help individuals who need additional skills to obtain or retain employment and achieve self-sufficiency. After an initial assessment, individuals are evaluated to determine if career training is appropriate for their goals. This process includes interviews, skills and interest assessments, and a review of labor market information to ensure that training aligns with in-demand jobs. Eligible participants are then connected to eligible training programs that best fit their career path and the needs of local employers. To be considered an eligible training provider, providers must be registered on the state of Ohio's eligible training provider list, Workforce Inventory of Education and Training (WIET) and approved by Area 3. Eligibility is not automatic and is based on:

1. Being in business for at least two years, properly registered with the Secretary of State, and in good standing;
2. Program cost, accessibility, alignment with in-demand occupations;
3. Performance standards, e.g., completion and job placement rates;
4. Training that leads to an industry-recognized credential, certificate, license, or degree; and
5. Accessible locations that are convenient and near public transit.

Greater Cleveland Works released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to competitively select a single designated provider to serve as the lead agency to implement career and training services at the OMJ center as outlined in WIOA Sections 134 (c)(2) and 134 (c)(3). In addition to these services, the agency will be responsible for administering the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program as outlined in the Social Security Act amendments of 2018 and collaborating with the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Provider (CCMEP) to expand employment opportunities for emerging talent.

In 2025, United Labor Agency (ULA) was selected, and contingent upon funding and provider's performance, the contract may potentially be extended through June 2029. ULA will be responsible for delivering:

1. Customer service that creates an outstanding customer experience
 - Conduct outreach, intake, and orientation
 - Guide customers in setting up accounts and utilizing OhioMeansJobs.com resources

- Assess skill levels, develop employment plans, and offer job search support
- Provide priority access to veterans for services as per federal policy
- 2. Provide support in the resource room
 - Staff the resource room as needed, assist jobseekers, and help employers leverage the OhioMeansJobs.com system
- 3. Collect data that can be used to describe performance and identify gaps
 - Collect necessary data, register clients, and gather feedback for continuous improvement
- 4. Employer Collaboration and Business Services
 - Recruit jobseekers for employer needs, market OMJCC Job Center services, and assist employers with hiring and training
- 5. Special Initiatives
 - Support Greater Cleveland Works' grant-funded projects, collaborating with partners to track outcomes
- 6. Reemployment Services • Administer RESEA for Area 3
- 7. Support and promote the visibility of the OMJCC Job Center brand, logo, and tagline for the workforce system, including using the name and logo on all paper and electronic media
- 8. Collaborate with Greater Cleveland Works to market, promote and educate employers, training institutions, and the public about what career services are available at the OMJ center

4. Comprehensive Case Management Program (CCMEP)

Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP) integrates funding from the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth program to deliver coordinated, individualized services that address both the academic and employment needs of participants. In alignment with this model, Greater Cleveland Works and Cuyahoga Job and Family Services jointly released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to competitively select a single designated provider of CCMEP services. In 2025, Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) was selected to coordinate the initiative designed to improve education and employment outcomes for low-income youth and young adults ages 14-24 who face barriers to employment. Y.O.U. will lead the Young Adult Workforce Collaborative in partnership with Cuyahoga Community College, The Centers/El Barrio, OhioGuidestone, and Towards Employment. This strategic partnership strives to unite best practices to deliver CCMEP services under a single, integrated provider. By combining innovative approaches and deep expertise, particularly in serving multi-system involved youth facing significant barriers to career success, this collaborative creates a more effective, cohesive, and impactful workforce development service delivery system. The benefits of this approach include the strategic leveraging of infrastructure and resources, shared accountability, and collaboration at a level never seen before in the youth workforce space. Services are tailored to the unique needs of each participant, and are delivered directly at the OMJ center and/or through partnerships with community organizations.

5. Local Board and OMJ Center Operator Coordination to Improve Service Delivery and Avoid Duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act Services

Greater Cleveland Works released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to competitively select a One Stop Operator. In 2025, United Labor Agency (ULA) was selected, and contingent upon funding and provider's performance, the contract may potentially be extended through June 2029. ULA is primarily responsible for

providing MOU partner and resource management over the OMJ center. Specific to maximizing coordination and improving service delivery, ULA will:

- Ensure compliance with the MOU that details how partners will make services available;
- Transform the OMJ center with innovative solutions designed to enhance efficiency, improve customer service, and streamline service delivery;
- Provide universal basic intake across all programs, ensuring a seamless and consistent entry point for all job seekers;
- Maintain operations to assure and exceed certification requirements;
- Provide oversight of all program activities, including collaborative partners;
- Coordinate with partners in program design and implementation and use the results for continuous improvement; and
- Conduct customer satisfaction surveys of participants and employers.

To further enhance service delivery, Greater Cleveland Works is committed to attracting quality workforce professionals and building a high performing team who can deliver impactful services and achieve better outcomes for both jobseekers and employers. As part of this commitment, we have begun transitioning to industry-specific career specialists which allows us to provide more targeted guidance and support to jobseekers based on their specific career interests and receive guidance from professions who are experts in that industry with connections to their chosen fields.

6. Description of Executed Cooperative Agreements Defining Service Provider Requirements

Greater Cleveland Works enters into agreements which set the terms and conditions requiring integration of and access to the entire set of services available through the OMJ center for:

- One-stop operator;
- WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker career and business services; and
- Youth eligibility and the provision of services for eligible individuals.

7. Identification of Area's Fiscal Agent

Greater Cleveland Works
1910 Carnegie Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115
(216) 777-8200

8. Description of Competitive Process to Award Subgrants and Contracts for WIOA Title I Activities

Greater Cleveland Works adheres to all applicable WIOA and federal regulations, as set forth within the Area's Procurement policy.

All procurement transactions will be conducted in an open and competitive manner. Greater Cleveland Works will solicit more than one source for an offer, with either a fixed price or cost reimbursement type (not allowed for construction contracts exceeding \$150,000) of contract awarded. Bids will be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources; an established method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting awardees will be used; and awards will be made to the responsible firm whose

proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered. Factors such as discounts, transportation costs and life cycle costs shall be used in determining the lowest bid. The policy outlines the methods of procurement for Goods/Supplies, Services, and Non-competitive proposals.

Greater Cleveland Works will maintain documentation of the selection process from planning through selection and the execution of a contract for the OhioMeansJobs Center Operator, Career Services Provider and CCMEP Provider. The procurement process for selecting providers includes:

1. A planning period;
2. Developing and approving the solicitation to include the release date, proposal submission deadline, and methods of disseminating (e.g., website, social media, press release);
3. A question-and-answer period for prospective vendors;
4. A time for proposal review and scoring by Greater Cleveland Works. No employee, officer, or agent of Greater Cleveland Works shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of contracts in which federal funds are used, if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved;
5. Notice of award/denial;
6. A protest period; and
7. Initiation and execution of the contract which indicates date for performance to begin under the contract.

9. Board Actions Taken to Become or Remain a High Performing Board

Greater Cleveland Works has taken the following actions:

- Adopted a strategic plan for 2025 – 2029 that focuses on operational excellence, economic competitiveness, workforce capacity and funding, and ecosystem effectiveness;
- Transitioned from an intergovernmental model to a nonprofit in order to enhance responsiveness and gain greater financial flexibility;
- Procured a consultant to train board members on engagement, expectations, committee charters, and structure as a newly formed nonprofit organization;
- Enhanced Governance Committee's role to identify and recommend senior leaders from in-demand industries for board appointment; and
- Provide orientation to new Board members.

10. OMJ Center's Commitment to Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management Information Systems

The intake and case management system for services provided through programs carried out under WIOA by the local workforce system is state-operated, enables integrated case management and is technology-enabled. Participant data is entered into the state's system, ARIES, which is used for client tracking, providing data on enrolled participants in the various programs, and outcomes for the individual participants. It is also entered into County Financial Information System (CFIS).

PART II: ASSURANCES

Area 3, through its Officers and designated Agents, makes the following assurances:

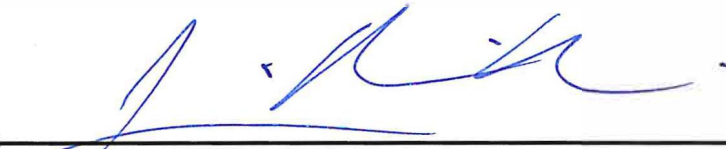
- Area 3 has established and will continue to employ fiscal control and fund accounting procedures to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for all funds received through WIOA (“the Act”);
- Area 3 shall keep records that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by WIOA and shall maintain all records, including standardized records for all individual participants, and submit such reports as the State may require;
- Area 3 will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the non-discrimination provisions of the Act;
- Area 3 assures that funds will be spent in accordance with WIOA, regulations, written Department of Labor guidance, written Ohio Department of Job and Family Services guidance, and all other applicable Federal and State laws;
- Area 3 assures that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in the Jobs for Veterans Act and 20 CFR Part 1010;
- Area 3 assures it will comply with any grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary which are necessary to enter into contracts for the use of funders under WIOA, but not limited to the following:
- General Administrative Requirements – Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 2900.
- Assurances and Certifications – SF 424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs; 29 CFR Part 31, 32 – Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and Regulation); 29 CFR Part 93 – Certification Regarding Lobbying (and Regulation); 29 CFR Parts 94 and 95 – Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension; Certifications (and Regulation).

PART III: AREA 3 SIGNATURES

All required signatures on this page and County Executive's signature appears on the next page.

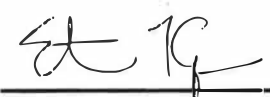
By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 3 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029:

- All of the Assurances indicated in the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 3 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- The Area 3 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.


Justin M. Bibb, Mayor, City of Cleveland
Date 9/16/25

Chris Ronayne, Executive, County of Cuyahoga
Date


Michelle Rose, Executive Director, Area 3 Workforce Development Board
Date 09/02/2025


Ethan Karp, Chair, Area 3 Workforce Development Board
Date 09/08/2025

PART III: AREA 3 SIGNATURES

Required Area 3 signatures on previous page and County Executive's signature below.

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 3 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029:

- All of the Assurances indicated in the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 3 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- The Area 3 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.

Justin M. Bibb, Mayor, City of Cleveland

Date

Chris Ronayne, County Executive

Chris Ronayne

2025-09-15 14:25:15

Chris Ronayne, Executive, County of Cuyahoga

Date

Michelle Rose, Executive Director, Area 3 Workforce Development Board

Date

Ethan Karp, Chair, Area 3 Workforce Development Board

Date

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A Organizational Structure July 2025

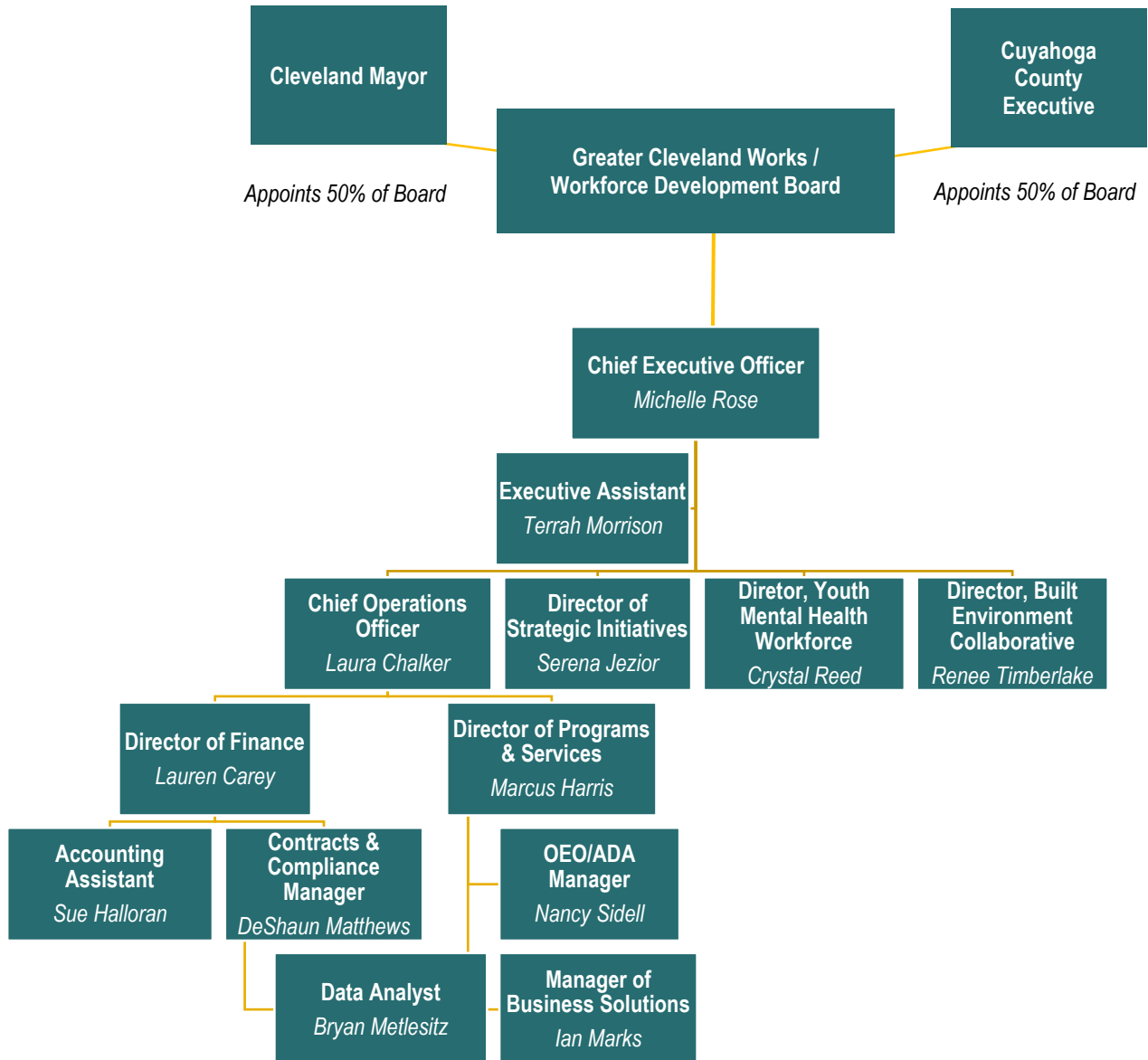


Exhibit B
Greater Cleveland Works' Board of Directors
June 2025

Camille Ali, Disabilities Chair <i>Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor</i> Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Agency	Mark Goffinet <i>Program Delivery Manager</i> Ohio Department of Job & Family Services	Brian Pearson <i>Executive Secretary</i> North Shore AFL-CIO
Angelo Angersola <i>Director</i> IBEW #38 Cleveland Electrical JATC	Paul Herdeg <i>Director of Development</i> Cuyahoga County	Michael Schoop <i>Senior Vice President, Talent</i> Greater Cleveland Partnership
Cathy Belk, Governance Chair <i>President & Chief Executive Officer</i> Deaconess Foundation	Pamela Jankowski, Operations Chair <i>Literacy and Learning Division Director</i> Cuyahoga County Public Library	Bill Seelbach <i>Senior Managing Director</i> FODIS
Marquez Brown <i>Cleveland Regional Director</i> AFSCME Council 8	Ethan Karp, Chair <i>President and Chief Executive Officer</i> Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network, Inc. (MAGNET)	Kim Shelnick, Secretary <i>Vice President, Talent Acquisition</i> University Hospitals
Marzell Brown <i>Talent Management Lead</i> Rockwell Automation	Adrian Maldonado <i>President and Owner</i> Maldonado and Associates	Kim Thomas, Youth Chair <i>Owner</i> Christopher Amira Studio
Crystal Bryant-Ageymang <i>Vice President</i> KeyBank	Shana Marbury, Finance Chair <i>Executive VP, Workforce, Community & Economic Development</i> Cuyahoga Community College	Holly Trifiro <i>Education Strategist</i> ReinventED Consulting
Jeff Epstein <i>Chief Integrated Development Officer</i> City of Cleveland	Alan Nevel <i>CEO & Managing Partner</i> INTETHIQ	James Vaughan, III., Vice Chair <i>President</i> JDD, Inc.
Senayt Fekadu <i>Owner</i> The Crispy Chick		

Area 4 Local Workforce Plan

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2029

**Lorain County Workforce
Development Agency**



OhioMeansJobs®

Lorain County
A proud partner of the
American Job Center network



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BACKGROUND

This document, the Area 4 Local Workforce Plan (local plan), is submitted as an addendum to the Northeast Ohio Workforce Regional Plan (regional plan) as required in Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Policy Letter 16-03.1. This local plan will remain in effect from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029. Under WIOA, states may establish local plan contents pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and its applicable final rules. This plan fully complies with the requirements outlined in Attachment D of Policy Letter 16-03.1.

Description of Local Workforce Area

ODJFS has certified Area 4, consisting solely of Lorain County, as a local workforce region eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding. Area 4 is one of five Workforce Areas in the Northeast Ohio Workforce (NOW) Region which also includes Area 2 (Medina and Summit); Area 3 (Cuyahoga); Area 5 (Lake); and Area 19 (Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage).

Lorain County is located in northeast Ohio along the southern shore of Lake Erie, and is bordered by Erie and Huron Counties to the west, Ashland County to the south, Medina County to the southwest, and Cuyahoga County to the east. Lorain County is included in the Northeast Region as defined by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services – Office of Workforce Development.

Lorain County has experienced significant population growth. With approximately 322,030 residents (2024), Lorain County is the 9th most populated county in the State of Ohio. This reflects a 2.8% increase since 2020 (ninth fastest growing county among Ohio's 88 counties), and a 6.9% increase since 2010 which places Lorain County among the fastest growing counties in the state. Major cities in the county include Elyria (the county seat) and Lorain, along with growing suburbs like Avon and North Ridgeville. It also consists of many rural communities located in the southern portion of the county. The county is rich in educational resources which include Lorain County Community College, Oberlin University and the Lorain County JVS. Lorain County Community College, a national leader in workforce and higher education innovation, was the first community college in Ohio to establish a University Partnership program where students can access over 100 different bachelor's and master's degree programs offered by 14 other colleges and universities.

Labor Market Information

Full labor market and economic analysis, as required by WIOA Policy Letter 16-03.1, is included in the regional plan. Selected data points specific to Area 4 are highlighted below utilizing labor market information provided by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services which incorporates data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

- Employment reached 149,800 workers in 2024, a 13% increase (17,600 jobs) since the pandemic low in 2020. This signals a strong regional recovery with employment well above pre-pandemic levels.
- The labor force (those employed or actively seeking work) was 155,900 in 2024, a 6% increase from the 2020 low of 147,100, and an increase of 2,600 participants compared to the 2019 pre-pandemic level of 153,300. Based on the unemployment rates, this growth reflects primarily an increase in employed individuals rather than an increase in jobseekers.

- The annual unemployment rate in 2024 was 4.0%, lower than the statewide rate of 4.3%.
- The largest share of households falls within the \$50,000 to \$74,999 range (17%).
- 9.1% of families are living in poverty.
- While the NOW region experienced a slight contraction of jobs over the past five years (-278), Lorain County actually experienced growth (+317) during that same period.
- Nearly half of all jobs in northeast Ohio are concentrated in Health Care and Social Assistance; Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Accommodation and Food Services, and the most significant employment gains occurred in Transportation and Warehousing.
- More than half of all jobs in Area 4 are concentrated in Manufacturing (16.3%); Health Care and Social Assistance (15.6%); Retail Trade (13%); and Education (10.3%). Between 2018 and 2023, the most significant employment gains occurred in Utilities which grew by 133% (+324) and Wholesale Trade which grew by 30% (+1,010). Job posting data for Area 4 indicates the most in-demand jobs are Registered Nurses and Heavy/Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers.

Area 4 Workforce Development Board

The Lorain County Workforce Development Board (LCWDB) is no smaller than 18 and no larger than 25 members unless approved by the Lorain County Board of Commissioners. All members are appointed by the Lorain County Board of Commissioners and include:

- a majority of members representing business;
- at least 20% workforce representatives;
- representatives administering education and training activities; and
- representatives from governmental and economic and community development entities.

The LCWDB currently consists of 23 members. The board composition stands at 52% of the seats assigned to representatives from the business community, 22% of the seats assigned to representative from the workforce category and the remaining 26% of the seats for representatives of education/training and government and economic development. The current LCWDB organization chart is included as Exhibit A and the roster is included in Exhibit B.

The LCWDB utilizes the Workforce Institute of Lorain County to serve as the staff to the board. The Workforce Institute was formed in January 1996 through a partnership between the Lorain County Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Leadership in Education, Lorain County Community College, the Lorain County JVS and Lorain County. The LCWDB is committed to the following guiding principles:

- To link employers to a world-class labor pool that meets current and future workplace needs.
- To empower individuals to achieve self-sufficiency and embrace life-long learning through career pathways and strategies that support personal development and upward mobility.
- To continually assess the interests, skills and needs of employers, jobseekers and workers and integrate those needs with education, training and service providers to deliver responsive, customized services.
- To build strong linkages between economic development, the K-12, adult and higher education systems and workforce development entities.
- To market and deliver high quality, cost-effective services and explore opportunities to generate revenue that supports the delivery of these services to all potential customers.

Part I: LOCAL PLAN DESCRIPTIONS AS REQUIRED BY ODJFS WIOA POLICY LETTER 16-03.1, ATTACHMENT D

1. The Workforce Development System in the Local Area That Identifies the Programs That Are Included in the System and Location of the OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Local Workforce Development Area

The LCWDB oversees the operation of the OhioMeansJobs Lorain County center and has selected the Lorain County Workforce Development Agency (LCWDA) to serve as the One-Stop Operator.

1.1.1 Programs Included in Area 4 OhioMeansJobs Center:

Program	Provider
Adult and Dislocated Workers	Lorain County Workforce Development Agency
Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP)/Youth Services	Lorain County Workforce Development Agency
Adult Education and Family Literacy	Lorain County Aspire
Wagner-Peyser Act	Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
Vocational Rehabilitation Program	Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
Trade Adjustment Assistance Jobs for Veterans Unemployment Insurance Program	Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
Post-Secondary Vocational Education (Carl D. Perkins)	Lorain County Community College Lorain County JVS
Senior Community Service Employment Services	Vantage Aging
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Lorain County Job & Family Services
Community Services Block Grant	Lorain County Community Action Agency
Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker	Ohio Department of Job & Family Services
Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	Lorain Community Workforce Development Agency

In Program Year 2023:

- 11,350 individuals visited the OMJ center
- 762 WIOA participants were served (440 Adult; 161 Dislocated Workers; 161 CCMEP Youth)
- 77 businesses were engaged
- 16 recruitment events were held
- \$1,255,443 for Individual Training Accounts and \$112,668 for On-the-Job Training were expended; \$134,734 for Incumbent Worker Training was obligated

The LCWDB is involved in a number of special initiatives:

Work Ready Lorain County

The LCWDA continues to serve as the lead for the Work Ready Lorain County initiative that was approved by the Lorain County Board of Commissioners in October 2015, the third county in Ohio to become part of

the ACT Work Ready Community initiative. In August 2018, Lorain County met the initial goals that were established by ACT to become a Certified Work Ready Community and has successfully maintained its status. By participating in the ACT Work Ready Communities initiative, the ACT WorkKeys assessments and the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) are utilized to measure and certify foundational workplace skills among jobseekers. WorkKeys assessments focus on three foundational skills that are essential to success in most jobs and include:

- Applied Mathematics
- Workplace Documents
- Graphic Literacy

Successful completion of ACT WorkKeys assessments will lead to the earning of a National Career Readiness Certificate, a portable evidence-based credential that certifies essential skills needed for workplace success. All jobseekers who visit OMJ complete the WorkKeys assessments as part of the Career Development Workshop. Jobseekers are able to earn the NCRC at the Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum level by minimally scoring 3 on each assessment (Bronze), 4 on each assessment (Silver), 5 on each assessment (Gold) or 6 on each assessment (Platinum). The OMJ partners are utilizing the preferred scores that are noted in the OMJ.com system to make sure that jobseekers being considered for referrals to employers in our community possess the established levels. Jobseekers who are not able to satisfy the required levels have access to both self-directed tools to help increase their scores and/or classroom led instruction that is offered through Lorain County Aspire.

To date, through the Work Ready Lorain County initiative;

- 10,491 individuals have been assessed in WorkKeys and have earned a NCRC as broken down in the following categories:
 - 2,273 - Emerging Workforce - which includes high school students, recent high school graduates, college students and recent college graduates
 - 3,023 – Current Workforce - which includes any individuals who are currently employed that complete the assessments
 - 5,089 - Transitioning Workforce – which includes individuals who are currently unemployed, are participating in adult education programs or have recent or current active military status
 - 278 - Workforce category not identified
- Since the last local WIOA plan, employer support has increased from 329 to 388 employers that have demonstrated their support for the initiative and recognize the value of the NCRC.

Participation in the Work Ready initiative helps employers identify qualified candidates and supports skills-based hiring.

Lorain County Manufacturing Sector Partnership

In November 2019, OMJ was approved to participate in the Lorain County Manufacturing Sector Partnership as an affiliate partner joining the founding companies and other affiliate partners, including Lorain County Community College and Lorain County JVS in the effort. This employer-led group is committed to promoting manufacturing and growing the available workforce in the region for manufacturing companies. In November 2021, the Executive Director of the sector partnership was added to the membership of the Workforce Development Board to provide a direct linkage to the work being addressed through the employers who are members of the sector partnership. Most recently, the OMJ center partnered with the Manufacturing Sector Partnership to recruit and enroll participants in the US EDA Good Jobs Challenge program.

Grafton Correctional Partnership

In 2023, a pilot program with Grafton Correctional Facility was launched and continues today to support individuals who complete their program and are hired by Lorain County's Facilities Department. OMJ provides supportive services, assists with transportation expenses, and aids with job preparation resources.

1.2 Location of OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Workforce Development Area

Area 4 operates one OMJ center at 42495 North Ridge Road, Elyria, OH.

In addition, OMJ staff provide services at the seven locations of the Lorain Public Library System.

2. Explanation of the OhioMeansJobs Delivery System

2.1 How the Local Board Ensures Continuous Improvement of Eligible Service Providers and That Providers Will Meet the Employment Needs of Local Employers, Workers and Jobseekers

WIOA creates a performance-based structure for providing services, and each local workforce area is required to negotiate performance levels with the state annually. Area 4 successfully met their performance goals in the most recently reported year, Program Year 2023 (7/1/23–6/30/24). The LCWDB ensures quality services through a combination of the following:

- The OMJ Committee reviews the provider's performance compared to established and negotiated WIOA performance measures (e.g., number of individuals trained) twice a year;
- A local consulting firm with workforce development expertise is engaged to review programs and make recommendations and conduct staff and Board development training;
- Feedback via surveys from jobseekers after workshops and employers after recruiting events about services is regularly gathered;
- A comment box is available in the OMJ center and regularly monitored;
- "Mystery shoppers" evaluate the quality of service; and
- Meet or exceed one-stop certification standards.

2.2 How the Local Board Will Facilitate Access to Services Through Use of Technology or Other Means

Through our Career Success Workshop, jobseekers are taught how to utilize the OhioMeansJobs.com system to post resumes, search for jobs, perform career research and access the numerous assessments that the system offers. To further assist with navigating the OMJ website, the LCWDA is currently exploring the integration of a virtual assistant.

2.3 How Entities Within OMJ Delivery System Will Comply With Section 188 of WIOA, if Applicable, and Applicable Provisions of the ADA of 1990 Regarding the Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services, Technology and Materials for Individuals With Disabilities

WIOA requires that centers be assessed and certified at least every three years. This multi-phase certification process requires that centers meet accessibility and service standards to ensure people with disabilities have

equitable access to workforce development services. The OMJ center complies with Section 188 of WIOA and the applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and received certification from the State of Ohio recognizing appropriate ADA compliance. OMJ provides the following physical and programmatic accommodations:

- Computer software and devices for those with visual impairments
- Handicap accessible/powered doors
- Handicap designated parking spaces with compliant signage
- Signs posted in Braille format to identify meeting spaces
- Handicap accessible restrooms

The LCWDB completed Phase 1 of the certification process of the OMJ center on June 29, 2016 and submitted documentation of this with all required elements to ODJFS on July 8, 2016. Phase 2 of the certification process of the OMJ center was completed by the LCWDB on August 29, 2019. Phase 3 of the certification process was completed by the LCWDB on May 26, 2022. The outcome of the review showed that that OMJ center was compliant with the established levels satisfying 58 of 60 points. The recertification process is required to be completed by December 31, 2025.

2.4 How the Local Board Will Coordinate With the Regional JobsOhio, Team NEO

ONE Lorain County Alliance together government, education and training and business organizations to better align workforce and economic strategies. Through this collaboration, we have strengthened our relationship with Team NEO, who serves as the JobsOhio entity in our region. As representatives of Team NEO and our local economic development partners engage in business expansion and attraction efforts in our area, the OMJ center has been invited to participate in the discussions to help coordinate and provide workforce services that are presented. Also, several LCWDB members are regularly participate in Team NEO events and some institutions are represented on both the LCWDB and Team NEO Board.

2.5 Roles and Resource Contributions of the OMJ Center Partners

The roles and resource contributions of each partner of the OMJ center are established by the following:

- The terms and conditions of the WIOA statute and regulations governing each OMJ center partner's program and grant appropriations.
- Ohio's combined state plan which governs and dictates each mandated OMJ center partner's role in workforce development.
- The terms and conditions of each OMJ center partner as negotiated and reduced to writing as part of a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#).

A determination of the partners adhering to the agreed upon roles and responsibilities shall be the joint responsibility of the Department of Labor, the State of Ohio, as the drafting agent of the combined state plan, ODJFS as the grant issuing authority, and the LCWDB who is responsible for oversight of the OMJ center operator. This MOU renewed July 1, 2025.

3. Description and Assessment of the Type and Availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Services

All services that are required under WIOA are available through the OMJ center. The list of services is outlined

below:

Basic Career Services

Outreach and Recruitment - techniques include monthly mailing to new claimants of unemployment benefits identified through the data sharing agreement we have in place with the ODJFS, and others who are being identified on End of Benefit reports we also receive through our data sharing agreement.

Orientation - includes information on the full array of services available through our system. Information shared also includes a description of how to access the various services. Orientation is mainly provided through one-on-one appointments and walk-ins are welcome.

Intake – is mainly performed upon completion of an orientation session for all individuals who choose to access staff-assisted services. This intake includes completion of all required forms; Registration Form, EEO Summary of Complaints and other local forms; Commitment to Service and Employment Verification Form.

Pre-Assessment - upon completion of Orientation OMJ center staff conduct a "triage" session where they gather eligibility documentation that may have been brought in by individuals who attended orientation and also to advise individuals who did not bring in the required documentation what they will need to provide in order for eligibility to be established at a future meeting date. The triage session is also used for staff to perform an initial assessment to determine if the individual will be best served through a Workforce Development Specialist, the staff who assist with career counseling and access to training, or an Employment Specialist, the staff who help with job referral and other job readiness services. The applicants are provided with additional one-on-one direction on how to access the services provided through these functions.

Eligibility – is conducted to determine if individuals are qualified to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker, youth or other partner programs. In some instances, eligibility may be determined during the intake process, for others it may be satisfied during a follow up appointment with a Workforce Development Specialist, Employment Specialist or other One-Stop partner staff.

Information and Referral – individuals that do not meet enrollment requirements of a particular program or are not eligible for WIOA services are offered assistance in accessing organizations that may be able to provide additional assistance.

Labor Exchange Services – are provided and include:

- Job Search & Placement Assistance
- Career Counseling that includes; providing information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations in addition to information on non-traditional employment opportunities

Other Basic Career Services include providing:

- Workforce and labor market employment statistics on local, regional and national level
- Job postings
- Performance information and program cost for eligible providers of training services
- Information on filing claims for unemployment
- Information on the performance of the local area and the one-stop delivery system
- Information on the availability of supportive services and follow services
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for other activities and programs of financial aid assistance for training and education
- Workshops on resume development, interviewing skills, on-line employment applications and basic computer skills

Individualized Career Services

Individualized Career Services are provided if determined appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. The OMJ center provides the following Individualized Career Services:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments, such as diagnostic testing for skill levels, interests and aptitude, including WorkKeys and the Interest Profiler offered by My Next Move for career assessments
- Group counseling and career planning
- Individual counseling and career planning
- Development of an Individual Opportunity Plan (IOP) to identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and appropriate services needed to help participants meet established goals
- Delivery of workshops focused on soft skill and other job readiness topics
- Case Management
- Job search assistance, including out-of-area job search and relocation assistance if needed
- Financial literacy services
- Access to internships and work experiences that are linked to careers

Follow-up Services

Follow up services are provided, as appropriate, and include: counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in adult or dislocated worker WIOA activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment through with the assistance of OMJ staff. These services are available for a minimum of twelve months after the first day of employment.

Training Services

Training Services are considered for eligible individuals who after having an interview, evaluation, or assessment and career planning are unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services, and for individuals who have the skills and qualifications to participate successfully in the training. Customers may access these services by being determined eligible for one of several funding sources.

The OMJ center assists eligible clients in completing the procedures that have been established by the LCWDB to access an Individual Training Account (ITA). These procedures will minimally include; ensuring that the requested training is for an approved career or career path as identified in the state demand occupations or other locally defined demand occupations, that the training provider has satisfied the requirements to be on the local Eligible Training Provider List that will be maintained by LCWDA and that the customer satisfies any other requirements that have been approved by the LCWDB.

Current policy in place that was approved by the LCWDB includes having a cap in place that limits ITA's approved for a specific occupation to 20% of total funds approved for training. Exceptions to this policy are available should we be assisting with a business expansion, a customized training or a layoff aversion activity. The board also has an approved policy in place that prioritizes the preference of training providers considering the lowest-cost option locally for the selected training, and according to the hierarchy of pursuing the training at a Lorain County publicly supported institution, a publicly supported institution beyond Lorain County, or a private/proprietary institution from within the County in this order.

Once staff have assisted the customers in completing the outlined process, and have deemed the individuals

eligible and appropriate for training, the ITA and all supporting documentation is submitted for review and approval by the LCWDA. Each participant that is determined eligible will have an ITA with an established amount of funds in the account based on an individual needs-based assessment. The funds are allocated to the individual based on total training costs and funding availability. Training services available through OMJ center include:

- Occupational skill training
- On-the-Job training
- Incumbent Worker training
- Workplace training and related instruction
- Skill upgrading and retraining
- Job readiness training
- Entrepreneurial training
- Adult education and literacy activities
- Customized training

The OMJ center staff maintain constant contact with the customers assigned to their caseload and are expected to provide case notes for all interactions that take place to support progress or lack of progress that may be identified through these interactions. Upon completion of training, customers are provided with guidance on how to access the services provided by the Employment Specialist.

4. Comprehensive Case Management Program (CCMEP)

Lorain County's current CCMEP Plan was submitted to ODJFS and took effect on May 30, 2023. The LCWDB has authorized the LCWDA to deliver the services that are being made available through CCMEP. Youth who are required to participate in CCMEP are referred to the OMJ center by the LCDJFS. The required participants who are referred are scheduled to attend an orientation that is designed to educate them about the services they will access through CCMEP, in addition to reinforcing of the requirement they have to participate. The WIOA Youth & Young Adult Program Eligibility Application and other required paperwork is completed as part of the orientation session, in addition to the completion of the Stepping Stones to Success Assessment.

OMJ center staff meet individually with each participant to make sure the forms are fully completed and to answer any questions that they may have.

Most of the youth who are referred to CCMEP are scheduled to participate in a two-week Career Success Workshop that covers both soft skill and job readiness skills. During the first week of the workshop, participants are provided with employer-driven soft skill training to help them understand what employers are looking for in an employee and also equips the participant with skills to retain employment. Some of the topics that are included in the curriculum include:

- Job Expectations & Work Ethic
- Problem Solving & Priorities
- Elements of Communication
- Good Customer Service

During the second week of the workshop, participants are provided with information and training necessary to be success in today's job market. Some of the topics that are included in the curriculum include:

- Transitional Curve, Stress, Confidence, Recognizing Transferable Skills & the Job Application
- Networking & Social Media
- Salary Negotiations & Job Search Methods

The second week of the workshop also includes an optional Career Assessment that is conducted through the use of a Career Exploration tool, Interest Profiler offered by My Next Move, in addition to the administration of the WorkKeys assessment that is in support of our Work Ready Lorain County initiative. Participants are encouraged to access the practice WorkKeys assessment that is available through the OhioMeansJobs.com site to be prepared for the actual assessment they will complete.

Upon completion of the Career Success Workshop, participants are scheduled to meet with a case manager who will work with them in helping to create the Individual Opportunity Plan (IOP) that is required for their involvement in the CCMEP program. The IOP will be developed based on the individual's hourly requirement and staff will include the results of the Interest Profiler and WorkKeys assessment in addition to information that was provided in the Stepping Stones to Success Assessment in helping to access the 14 elements that are offered through CCMEP.

Individuals who may not be able to participate in the Career Success Workshop, including those who may be actively engaged in training, employed, or just not fit to participate will be scheduled for a one-on-one appointment where the case manager will assist in creating an IOP based on their individual needs.

Additional details on the OMJ CCMEP programming can be found in the Local Plan that was submitted as required in rule 5101:14-1-03 of the Administrative Code.

5. Local Board and OMJ Center Operator Coordination to Improve Service Delivery and Avoid Duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act Services

Effective cooperation among all workforce system partners is essential for delivering seamless and high-quality services through the OMJ center. The One Stop Operator will make best efforts to maintain cooperation among all partners, and a comprehensive MOU is in place among all partners that clearly outlines roles and responsibilities for the coordination of programs, services, and activities. This MOU is effective as of July 1, 2025.

All partners agree to share responsibility for service delivery, ensuring that staff functions and shared services are maintained even in cases of staff absence. The One Stop Operator and partners have established protocols for the referral of individuals between programs. This ensures that customers are efficiently connected to the services they need without unnecessary overlap. The One Stop Operator is responsible for gaining continuous feedback via regular surveys of both businesses and jobseekers. Partners are responsible alongside the One Stop Operator in joint data collection, reporting, and performance evaluation activities.

6. Description of Executed Cooperative Agreements Defining Service Provider Requirements

A [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) exists between the LCWDB, Lorain County Board of Commissions, LCWDA, and partners listed in Section 1.1.1. which documents the roles, responsibilities, and funding commitments for the operation of the Area 4 workforce system and OMJ center. The current MOU is in effect

from July 1, 2023, until June 30, 2025. All parties will enter into good faith negotiations for the renewal that will be effective July 1, 2025.

7. Identification of Area's Fiscal Agent

The LCWDB recommended and the Lorain County Board of Commissioners approved for the Lorain County Workforce Development Agency to serve as the Fiscal Agent that is responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(iii).

Lorain County Workforce Development Agency
42495 N Ridge Road
Elyria, OH 44035
440.324.5244

8. Description of the Competitive Process to Award Subgrants and Contracts for WIOA Title I Activities

The LCWDB will follow all rules that have been established when going through the competitive procurement process should there be a need to award sub-grants or other contracts. These procedures shall minimally include:

- A pre-competitive solicitation design and planning process that takes into consideration how the services sought should be designed.
- A pre-competitive solicitation cost analysis that sets forth an estimated range of the expected bids for the provision of goods and/or services.
- When required by local policy, the publication within one or more area media outlets, as well as publication on the local website of the opportunity to submit proposals, quotes, and/or bids.
- Outreach to any vendors on the Lorain County bidder's list and/or those known in within the area to be in the market to offer applicable goods and services.
- A published, Request for Proposals, or other document that sets forth all of the terms and conditions relating to the information that must be submitted by an interested entity desiring to provide goods or services, including the basis for which the LCWDB will make the decision to award a contract.
- A decision-making process that includes review of all proposals submitted, including an analysis and where required, a scoring of the proposals submitted.
- A timely notification of the decision of which entities were and were not selected based upon the submission of information, including a period and procedure for those entities to appeal any decisions made.
- A negotiation of the final terms and conditions regarding the provision of goods and/or services, with the same reduced to a written agreement when required, that will govern the performance of the parties to the agreement.

9. Board Actions Taken to Become or Remain a High Performing Board

The Lorain County Board of Commissioners evaluates the membership of the board to make certain that the representation is comprised of individuals representing organizations as outlined in WIOA and that members satisfy the following criteria:

- All employers who are represented are deemed to either be in-demand industries, or employed in demand occupations
- All employers who are represented are chosen because the representation of their industry or commitment to the community provides for unique and valued perspectives
- All employer representatives are managerial level, and in most cases will be the most senior of their organization's management, or business owners
- As required, the chair and vice-chair positions on the LCWDB will be reserved for employer representatives in order to make sure that the board is led by those with a perspective for serving the needs of industry
- The LCWDB design includes representatives from community based/interest organizations to ensure that we are providing for the needs of impoverished or other specialized jobseeker groups, representatives in these areas
- The LCWDB design includes representatives from other agencies that are that focus on the needs of impoverished

10. OMJ Center's Commitment to Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management Information Systems

The OMJ center utilizes computers at the front desk so that jobseekers can check-in. The OMJ center continues to utilize various forms of technology to assist the jobseekers who access our system, including the County Fiscal & Information System (CFIS) that is used to track the jobseekers visiting the center, utilizing our Resource Room, and accessing other basic career services and workshops. In addition, ARIES is used to document client services, maintain client service plans, and track progress.

Part II: ASSURANCES

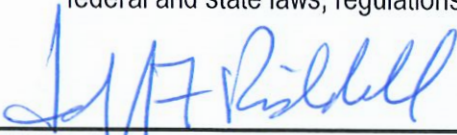
Area 4, through its Officers and designated Agents, makes the following assurances:

- Area 4 has established and will continue to employ fiscal control and fund accounting procedures to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for all funds received through WIOA ("the Act").
- Area 4 shall keep records that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by WIOA and shall maintain all records, including standardized records for all individual participants, and submit such reports as the State may require.
- Area 4 will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the non-discrimination provisions of the Act.
- Area 4 assures that funds will be spent in accordance with WIOA, regulations, written Department of Labor guidance, written Ohio Department of Job and Family Services guidance, and all other applicable Federal and State laws.
- Area 4 assures that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in the Jobs for Veterans Act and 20 CFR Part 1010.
- Area 4 assures it will comply with any grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary which are necessary to enter into contracts for the use of funders under WIOA, but not limited to the following:
 - General Administrative Requirements – Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 2900.
 - Assurances and Certifications – SF 424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs; 29 CFR Part 31, 32 – Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and Regulation); 29 CFR Part 93 – Certification Regarding Lobbying (and Regulation); 29 CFR Parts 94 and 95 – Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension; Certifications (and Regulation).

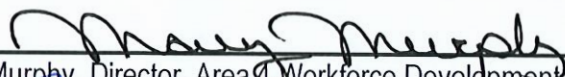
Part III: AREA 4 SIGNATURES

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 4 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029:

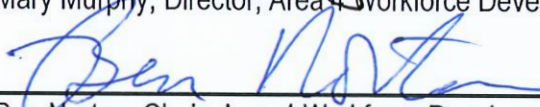
- All of the Assurances indicated in the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 4 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- The Area 4 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.

 9/17/25

Jeff Riddell, Commissioner, Lorain County Date

 9/16/25

Mary Murphy, Director, Area 4 Workforce Development Board Date

 9/16/2025

Ben Norton, Chair, Area 4 Workforce Development Board Date

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A Organizational Chart June 2025

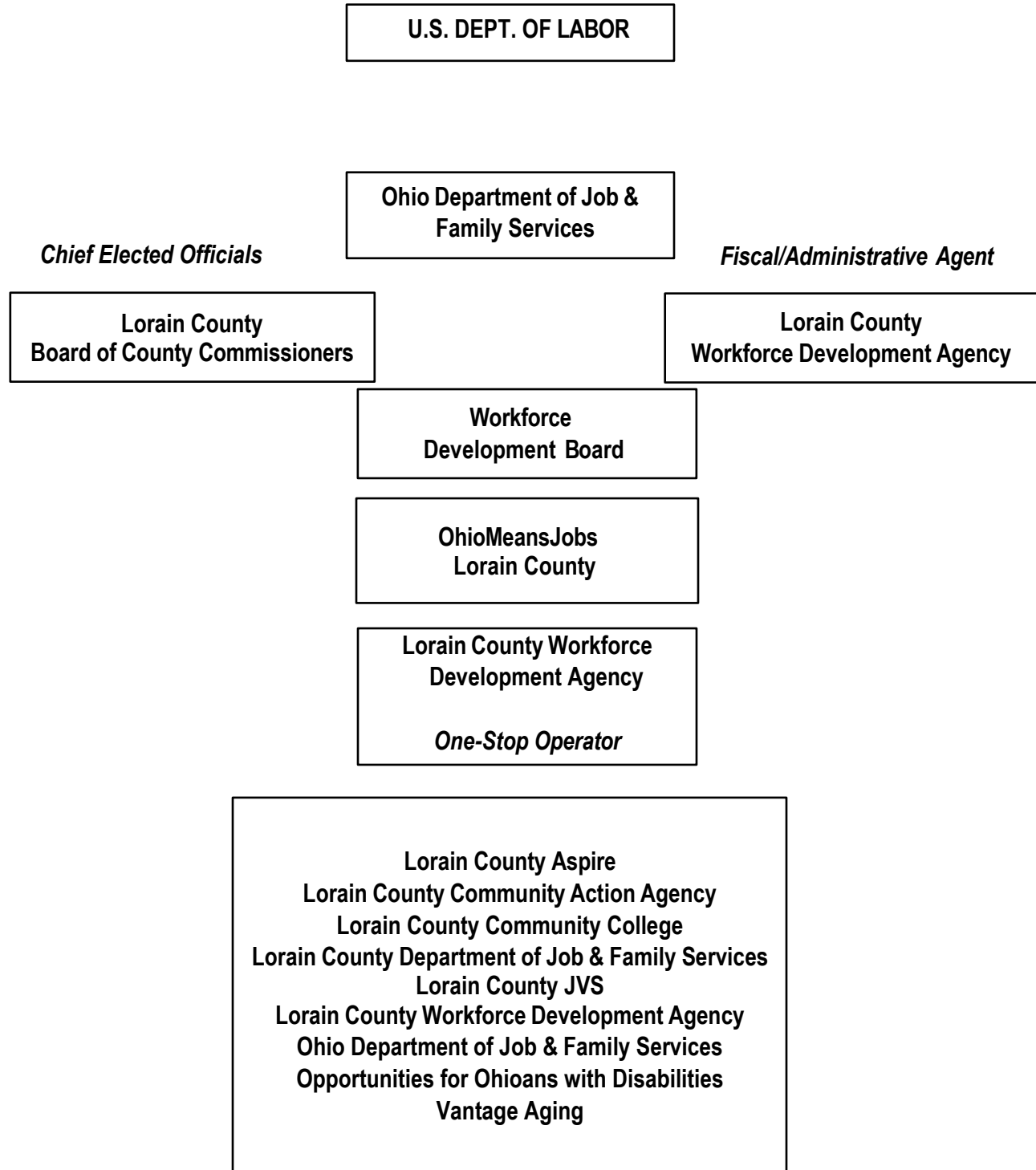


Exhibit B
Area 4 Workforce Development Board
July 2025

Chris Brown Executive Director Lorain County Manufacturing Sector Partnership	Dave Greenspan Special Projects Manager Lorain County Community Development	Sha-Niqua Matthews Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
Christopher Cabot Director Lorain County Department of Job and Family Services	Lisa Hutson Director ONE Lorain County	Susan Meek Regional Sales Manager Isto Biologics
Hanna DiVencenzo Regional Trustee Ohio Farm Bureau Federation	Nick Jarmoszuk, Jr. Skylift, Inc. Chief Financial Officer	Ben Norton President, CEO Buckeye Community Bank
Ryan Flanigan Purchasing Manager General Plug & Manufacturing	Carl Johnson Superintendent Telamon Construction	Donald Ortner Owner Associated Contractors Inc
Anthony Gallo, chair President & CEO Lorain County Chamber of Commerce	Andy Kasubinski Training Director Lorain County Electrical JATC	Erin Scheider Director of Human Resources Thogus Products Company
Charlotte Gardiner President MercyHealth – Allen Hospital	Tim King, vice chair Senior Sales Executive Wesco	Kevin Stitak Executive Director Lorain County Labor Agency
Mark Goffinet Program Delivery Manager Ohio Department of Job & Family Services	Dave Larson Vice President Sheet Metal Workers Local #33	David Zunis Director, Service and Applications Engineering Absolute Machine Tools, Inc.
Tracy Green VP, Strategic and Institutional Development Lorain County Community College	Shauna Matelski, Ph.D. President and CEO Lorain County Community Action Agency	

Area 5 Local Workforce Plan

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2029



LAKE COUNTY
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT BOARD



OhioMeansJobs.

Lake County
A proud partner of the
American Job Center network

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BACKGROUND

This document, the Area 5 Local Workforce Plan (local plan), is submitted as an addendum to the Northeast Ohio Workforce Regional Plan (regional plan) as required in Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Policy Letter 16-03.1. This local plan will remain in effect from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029. Under WIOA, states may establish local plan contents pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and its applicable final rules. This plan fully complies with the requirements outlined in Attachment D of Policy Letter 16-03.1.

Description of Local Workforce Area

ODJFS has certified Area 5, consisting solely of Lake County, as a local workforce region eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding. Area 5 is one of five Workforce Areas in the Northeast Ohio Workforce (NOW) Region which also includes Area 2 (Medina and Summit); Area 3 (Cuyahoga); Area 4 (Lorain); and Area 19 (Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Area 5 had an estimated population of 232,350 residents (2024). This represents a modest decrease (.1%) since 2020. The Area also has a relatively older population with 22.4% of residents aged 65 or older which is the highest in the NOW region and above the statewide average of 18.7%.

Labor Market Information

Full labor market and economic analysis, as required by WIOA Policy Letter 16-03.1, is included in the regional plan. Selected data points specific to Area 5 are highlighted below utilizing labor market information provided by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services which incorporates data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

- Employment reached 121,200 workers in 2024, a 11.2% increase (12,200 jobs) since the pandemic low in 2020. While this represents a strong recovery, employment remains slightly below the pre-pandemic high of 121,500 in 2019.
- The labor force (those employed or actively seeking work) was 125,700 in 2024, a moderate 4.4% increase from the 2021 low of 120,400, and still slightly below the 2019 pre-pandemic level of 126,300.
- The annual unemployment rate in 2024 was 3.3%, a full percentage point below the state's at 4.3%.
- In the NOW region, the largest share of households falls within the \$50,000 to \$74,999 range (17%); however, Area 5 has a higher concentration of households in the \$100,000-\$149,000 range at 20.2%.
- 5.2% of families in Area 5 are living in poverty compared to 9.2% of families statewide.
- While the NOW region experienced a slight contraction of jobs over the past five years (-278), Area 5 experienced growth adding significant 2,056 jobs primarily in the Finance and Insurance sector.
- Nearly half of all jobs in northeast Ohio are concentrated in Health Care and Social Assistance; Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Accommodation and Food Services, and the most significant employment gains occurred in Transportation and Warehousing.
- While the NOW region experienced a slight contraction of jobs over the past five years (-278), Lake County experienced a substantial growth (+2,056) during that same period.
- Almost half of all jobs in Area 5 are concentrated in Manufacturing (22.1%); Retail Trade (12.6%);

and Health Care and Social Assistance (11.8%). Between 2018 and 2023, the most significant employment gains occurred in Finance and Insurance which grew by 222% (+3,650). Job posting data for Area 3 indicates the most in-demand jobs are Registered Nurses and First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers.

Area 5 Workforce Development Board

Vision: To determine and immediately address the needs of every customer entering OhioMeansJobs Lake County or partner agency.

Mission: To enable OhioMeansJobs Lake County and every partner agency to work together to quickly serve customer needs by delivering their own services and/or referring them to the appropriate agency.

Please find attached to this plan Exhibit A containing a table of organization to better illustrate Area 5's organizational structure and Exhibit B containing the current roster of WDB members.

Part I: LOCAL PLAN DESCRIPTIONS AS REQUIRED BY ODJFS WIOA POLICY LETTER 16-03.1

1. The Workforce Development System in the Local Area That Identifies the Programs That Are Included in the System and Location of the OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Local Workforce Development Area

1.1.1 Programs Included in Area 5's OhioMeansJobs Center:

Programs included in Area 5's comprehensive OMJ center in Lake County are:

Program	Provider
Adult and Dislocated Workers	Lake County Department of Jobs and Family Services
Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP)/Youth Services	Lake County Department of Jobs and Family Services
Adult Education and Family Literacy	Auburn Career Center
Wagner-Peyser Act	Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services
Vocational Rehabilitation Program	Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
Trade Adjustment Assistance Jobs for Veterans Unemployment Insurance Program	Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services
Post-Secondary Vocational Education (Carl D. Perkins)	Lakeland Community College
Senior Community Service Employment Services	Vantage Workforce Solutions
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Lake County Department of Jobs and Family Services
Community Services Block Grant	Lifeline, Inc.
Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker	Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services
HUD Employment and Training Program	Lake County Metropolitan Housing Authority
Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	Lake County Department of Jobs and Family Services

In Program Year 2023:

- 2,768 individuals visited the OMJ center
- 242 WIOA participants were served (46 Adult; 80 Dislocated Workers; 116 CCMEP Youth)
- 168 businesses were engaged
- 48 recruitment events were held
- \$161,769 for Individual Training Accounts was expended and \$85,720 for Incumbent Worker Training was obligated

Area 5 is involved in a number of special initiatives: Opportunity Lake County Website, North Coast Careers OhioMeansJobs Lake County Podcast, Coursera Online Training, and Balanced Scorecard.

1.2 Location of OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Workforce Development Area

Area 5 operates one OMJ center at:

OhioMeansJobs Lake County (comprehensive center)
Lake County Employment & Training Division
177 Main Street, Painesville, OH 44077
(440) 350-4000

2. Explanation of the OhioMeansJobs Delivery System

2.1 How the Local Board Ensures Continuous Improvement of Eligible Service Providers and That Providers Will Meet the Employment Needs of Local Employers, Workers and Jobseekers

The LCWDB has an *Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU) with local providers through the state and additional contracts with outside consultants. These contracts require *Outcomes Based* results across a *Common Set of Performance Measures*. Specific local performance metrics are negotiated with the state based on the local priorities and strategies. These metrics ensure the local workforce board is staying up to date with the state standards and get regularly updated with state updates.

2.2 How the Local Board Will Facilitate Access to Services Through Use of Technology or Other Means

OhioMeansJob Lake County offers a community room with computers for job seekers and provides online courses for upskilling through Coursera software development, accounting, IT, sales, SQL, Python, public relations, Microsoft office, and product management. This program served 28 candidates in the FY 23-24, but has served over 85 candidates' total.

2.3 How Entities Within OMJ Delivery System Will Comply With Section 188 of WIOA, if Applicable, and Applicable Provisions of the ADA of 1990 Regarding the Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services, Technology and Materials for Individuals With Disabilities

LCWDB will ensure compliance with all Section 188 WIOA requirements and allow ADA accessibility within all locations and programming.

2.4 How the Local Board Will Coordinate With the Regional JobsOhio, Team NEO

The LCWDB is managed through Lake Development Authority, who is an Ohio Port Authority organization and Lake County's economic development arm. LDA works directly with the state and regional economic development organizations to bring a one-stop shop of resources to the workforce individuals and business community in Lake County.

2.5 Roles and Resource Contributions of the OMJ Center Partners

The LCWDB provides oversight to the OhioMeansJobs center located at 177 Main Street in Painesville, Ohio. Satellite services are offered at library branches throughout Lake County to expand services.

The "One-Stop Operator" of the OhioMeansJobs center is the Lake County Department of Job and Family Services (LCDJFS). LCDJFS is a quadruple-combined agency which provides Income Maintenance Programs, Medicaid/ Food stamps, Child Support, Child and Adult Protective Services and Employment and Training Services. Partners and their staff located in and around the "one stop" expand and improve the quality of services making this a true "one-stop" system.

3. Description and Assessment of the Type and Availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Services

In conjunction with the State and Regional Plans, by utilizing effective "One-Stop" operations and following the Workforce Development Board's guiding principles, locally we will strive to accomplish the following:

- Assist more individuals to join the workforce:
 - Expand outreach efforts to identify potential consumers to our services.
 - Require all job seekers to register and to utilize the ohiomeansjobs.com system.
 - Operate an effective CCMEP enabling approximately 100 young adults (age 16-24) on TANF to move into jobs with continued support and training and provide career services to approximately 50 WIOA young adults, annually.
 - Facilitate an effective WorksFirst Program for TANF adults over age 25 to move into jobs with continued coaching support, and training when appropriate.
 - Continue to place between 150-200 Adults and Dislocated Workers into jobs annually.
 - Provide Priority of Service to valuable, talented Veterans as a "ready workforce".
- Assist low-skilled workers to improve their skills to meet workforce demands in the labor marketplace:
 - Encourage and assist school-aged youth to remain through graduation.
 - Promote the use of ABLE Services to help reduce the number of residents without a high school diploma/GED.

- Perform statewide common assessment strategies to identify literacy and numeracy deficiencies and other barriers that deter employment.
- Provide and promote case management programs that offer assistance in mitigating barriers to those that have the potential of entering the workforce and retaining employment.
- Promote paid and unpaid work experience opportunities.
- Fund soft skills and skills training when appropriate for in-demand occupations
- Assist workers to improve their skills to meet employer demand for talent and to earn better wages:
 - Provide labor market data so consumers can understand workforce needs and have confidence in their career decisions.
 - Ensure career counseling opportunities for individuals accessing workforce programs.
 - Promote “learn and earn” opportunities, including apprenticeships, try-out employment, on-the-job and incumbent worker training with businesses.
 - Embed job readiness and soft-skills preparation in all workforce training programs.
 - Provide programs that allow co-enrollment between programs and services.
 - Identify and develop career pathways and promote awareness of good “middle-skills” jobs and careers for in-demand industries.
 - Pursue the acquisition of non-traditional sources to fund new and innovative program offerings.
 - Assist dislocated workers with timely and effective re-employment services to limit the duration of their unemployment.
- Work with employers to develop and implement employer specific on-the-job training, customized training and incumbent worker training opportunities.
 - Work with industry groups and clusters to define and promote careers.
 - Operate a high performing demand facing business services unit to assist employers with talent needs.
 - Identify, develop and initiate career pathways opportunities
 - Collaborate with economic development entities to identify avenues to new and expanding employer needs.
 - Provide skills training for in-demand occupations for new job seekers and upskilling employees.
 - Promote the use of ohiomeansjobs.com to employers as a resource for finding candidates and posting job openings.

4. Comprehensive Case Management Program (CCMEP)

The WIOA Youth Program is now part of The Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program CCMEP as mandated by the state of Ohio. CCMEP is driven by its own plan. The data and information obtained from the CCMEP planning process is an integral part of local workforce initiatives.

5. Local Board and OMJ Center Operator Coordination to Improve Service Delivery and Avoid Duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act Services

As a comprehensive career center, the Lake County JFS facility has a Wagner-Peyser employee in-house and collaborates with the state on their efforts to avoid duplication.

6. Description of Executed Cooperative Agreements Defining Service Provider Requirements

All service provider requirements follow the state guidelines, and each service provider is broken down in the above chart to explain the tasks of each organization.

7. Identification of Area's Fiscal Agent

The LCWDB Fiscal Agent is through LCDJFS for all programs with all state and local requirements for auditing by a 3rd party.

8. Description of the Competitive Process to Award Subgrants and Contracts for WIOA Title I Activities

The process to award subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title 1 activities is through the Ohio Revised Code state required bidding process.

9. Board Actions Taken to Become or Remain a High Performing Board

The Lake County Workforce Development Board (LCWDB) is a twenty-one (21) member board appointed by the Lake County Commissioners, with the majority representing private businesses and the balance representing higher education, economic development, organized labor and other workforce related programs and partners.

The Board's development of a local Return on Investment Tool (ROI) is unparalleled in its methodology of measuring the taxpayer's ROI in payback months. Ongoing operational goals are set and monitored on the Lake County Balanced Scorecard which has been recognized as an industry best practice.

The Lake County Workforce Development Board is committed to the following guiding principles:

- *Generate a jobs-driven system based on business retention and expansion.*
- *Create an economy that works for all people willing and able to work.*
- *Make Lake County a premier place to live, work, and play.*

- *Continuously strive to strengthen both our public and private sector partnerships.*
- *Strive to provide excellent customer service and to be proactive to effectively meet the changing needs and expectations of our employers and job seekers.*
- *Remember that our local employers, big and small, are the lifeblood of our economy.*
- *Continue to implement strategies and approaches that are data driven and recognized best practices.*
- *Commit to offering training services for in-demand occupations with the belief that our investment of time and money in human capital most always provides a significant return.*
- *Believe that everyone deserves the dignity that comes from employment and self-sufficiency.*

The LCWDB created an operating structure to assist in accomplishing its goals, which includes the creation of five Standing Committees. The committees are: Executive Committee; Planning & Programs Committee; Youth Committee; One-Stop Committee, and Marketing Committee. Board members, through these committees, have been engaged in the development of this plan. The list of Board members and their representation is attached as Exhibit B.

10. OMJ Center's Commitment to Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management Information Systems

The LCWDB will continue to upgrade their systems with the state-required technological upgrades and use the state systems and consultant tools to help deliver the needed assistance to clients.

Part II: ASSURANCES

Area 5, through its Officers and designated Agents, makes the following assurances:

- Area 5 has established and will continue to employ fiscal control and fund accounting procedures to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for all funds received through WIOA (“the Act”).
- Area 5 shall keep records that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by WIOA and shall maintain all records, including standardized records for all individual participants, and submit such reports as the State may require.
- Area 5 will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the non-discrimination provisions of the Act.
- Area 5 assures that funds will be spent in accordance with WIOA, regulations, written Department of Labor guidance, written Ohio Department of Job and Family Services guidance, and all other applicable Federal and State laws.
- Area 5 assures that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in the Jobs for Veterans Act and 20 CFR Part 1010.
- Area 5 assures it will comply with any grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary which are necessary to enter into contracts for the use of funders under WIOA, but not limited to the following:
- General Administrative Requirements – Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 2900.
- Assurances and Certifications – SF 424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs; 29 CFR Part 31, 32 – Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and Regulation); 29 CFR Part 93 – Certification Regarding Lobbying (and Regulation); 29 CFR Parts 94 and 95 – Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension; Certifications (and Regulation).

Part III: AREA 5 SIGNATURES

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 5 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029:

- All of the Assurances indicated in the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 5 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- The Area 5 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.



Richard J. Regovich, President, Lake County Board of Commissioners
Date 9-18-25



Joel Dimare, Director, Area 5 Workforce Development Board
Date 9-22-25



Tim Flenner, Chair, Area 5 Workforce Development Board
Date 9/22/25

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A Organizational Chart

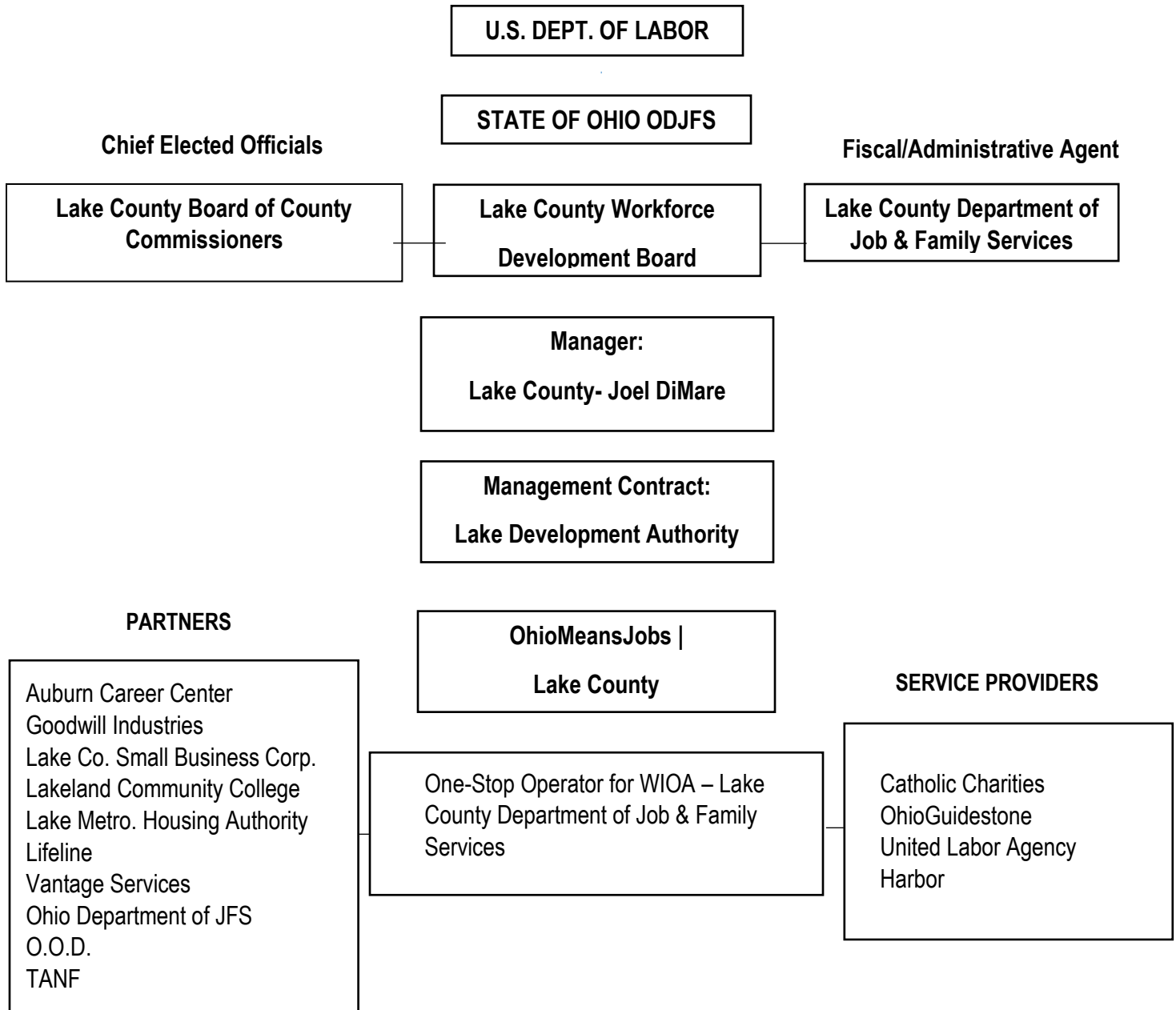


Exhibit B
Area 5 Workforce Development Board
July 2025

Mr. Dan Findley
Business Rep
Sheet Metal Workers #33

Mr. Eric Barbe
President
Euclid Precision Grinding Company

Ms. Suzanne Casar
Director
Lake County Job & Family Services

Mr. Samuel Delzoppo
Owner
Coverall Health-Based Cleaning Systems
2403-D Bunker Lane

Ms. Carrie L. Dotson
Executive Director
Lifeline, Inc.

Ms. Shirley Galipo
WS Tyler

Mr. Jacob Duritky
VP Strategy, Research, and Talent
Team NEO

Ms. Sara Spence
President

Ms. Shayna Jackson
Chief Behavioral Health Officer
Signature Health

Ms. Jackie Bongorno
Human Resources Director
STERIS Corporation

Mr. Terry Lazar
Owner
Stanley Steemer

Mr. John Griffin
Griffin Technology Group

Mr. Mark Goffinet
Program Delivery Manager
Office of Workforce Development
ODJFS

Mike Hall
Business Agent
Pipefitters Local 120

Ms. Carolyn O'Connor
Supervisor
Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation

Mr. John Roberts
Project Director
VANTAGE Aging

Mr. Ryan Rogers
Operations Manager
CresCor

Christina Balint
Corporate HR Manager
Universal Metal Products, Inc.

Ms. Gretchen Skok DiSanto
Professor, Business Management and
Director, Entrepreneurship Center, Business
Advisor, Ohio Small Business Development Center
Lakeland Community College

Ms. Barbara Golding
Accountant
MJM Industries, Inc.

Mr. Tim Flenner
Market Executive, OHIO
ERIEBANK

Area 19 Local Workforce Plan

July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2029



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Area 19 Workforce Development Board Roster	
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OMJ Geauga's Creative Programming Guide	
OMJ Portage's Creative Programming Guide	

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This document, the Area 19 Local Workforce Plan (local plan), is submitted as an addendum to the Northeast Ohio Workforce Regional Plan (regional plan) as required in Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Policy Letter 16-03.1. This local plan will remain in effect from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029. Under WIOA, states may establish local plan contents pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and its applicable final rules. This plan fully complies with the requirements outlined in Attachment D of Policy Letter 16-03.1.

The required contents of this local plan are as set forth within ODJFS' WIOAPL 16-03, including Attachment D of the same. ODJFS established the contents of this local plan pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 ("WIOA"), and its applicable final rules, which are set forth within the Code of Federal Regulation.

ODJFS has duly recognized and certified Area 19, and its WDB as the authorized recipients of WIOA funding for Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage counties, pursuant to its Subgrant Agreement with the same. Attached and incorporated to this local plan by this reference are a number of Exhibits, which help to explain the structure of the Area 19 WDB. They include:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| • Exhibit One | Intergovernmental Agreement ("IGA") |
| • Exhibit Two | Bylaws of the NOC COG |
| • Exhibit Three | Roster of Employees of the NOC COG |
| • Exhibit Four | Organizational Chart |
| • Exhibit Five | Bylaws of the Area 19 WDB |
| • Exhibit Six | Multi-Function Agreement |
| • Exhibit Seven | Roster of Board Members of the NOC COG |
| • Exhibit Eight | OMJ Ashtabula's Creative Programming Guide |
| • Exhibit Nine | OMJ Geauga's Creative Programming Guide |
| • Exhibit Ten | OMJ Portage's Creative Programming Guide |

Description of Local Workforce Area

ODJFS has certified Area 19, consisting of Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage counties, as a local workforce region eligible for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding. Area 19 is one of five Workforce Areas in the Northeast Ohio Workforce (NOW) Region which also includes Area 2 (Medina and Summit); Area 3 (Cuyahoga); Area 4 (Lorain); and Area 5 (Lake).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Area 19 had an estimated population of 356,107 residents (2024). This represents a modest increase (.38%) since 2020, reflecting population growth in Portage County while Ashtabula and Geauga counties experienced declines. The Area also has a relatively older population with

20.3% of residents aged 65 or older compared to 18.7% statewide. Ashtabula County's northern border is Lake Erie and its eastern border is the state of Pennsylvania. Geauga is contiguous to Ashtabula on its eastern border and Portage is contiguous to Geauga from its northern border.

Labor Market Information

Full labor market and economic analysis, as required by WIOA Policy Letter 16-03.1, is included in the regional plan. Selected data points specific to Area 19 are highlighted below. These data points utilize labor market information provided by Ohio Department of Job and Family Services which incorporates data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey.

- Employment reached 172,100 workers in 2024, an 8.5% increase (13,500 jobs) since the pandemic low in 2020. While this represents a strong recovery, remains slightly below the pre-pandemic high of 172,800 in 2019.
- The labor force (those employed or actively seeking work) was 179,400 in 2024, a moderate 4.4% increase from the 2021 low of 171,800, and still slightly below the 2019 pre-pandemic level of 180,200.
- The annual unemployment rates in 2024 for each of the counties in Area 2 were 4.3% in Ashtabula County, 3.4% in Geauga County, and 4.3% in Portage County. Geauga's rate was lower than the statewide average of 4.3% while the other two counties matched.
- In the NOW region, the largest share of households falls within the \$50,000 to \$74,999 range (17%) which is also true for Ashtabula County (18.5%). In contrast, Geauga and Portage counties have a higher concentration of households in the \$100,000-\$149,000 range at 20.2% and 17.7%, respectively.
- In the NOW region, Geauga County has the lowest percentage of families living in poverty (3.9%) while Ashtabula has the highest level (13.7%); Portage County falls in between at 7%.
- While the NOW region experienced a slight contraction of jobs over the past five years (-278), Area 19 experienced substantial growth adding 11,938 jobs primarily in Education Services and Transportation, and Warehousing sectors in Geauga and Portage counties.
- Nearly half of all jobs in northeast Ohio are concentrated in Health Care and Social Assistance; Manufacturing; Retail Trade; and Accommodation and Food Services, and the most significant employment gains occurred in Transportation and Warehousing.
- More than half of all jobs in Area 19 are concentrated in Manufacturing (20.1%); Health Care and Social Assistance (13.1%); Retail Trade (12.4%); and Education (10.4%). Between 2018 and 2023, the most significant employment gains occurred in Education which grew by 88% (+5,932) and Transportation and Warehousing which grew by 239% (+2,799). Job posting data for Area 19 indicates the most in-demand jobs are Registered Nurses, First-Line Supervisors of Retail Workers, Heavy/Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers and Retail Salespersons.

Area 19 Workforce Development Board

Mission: Our mission is to bring together local business, labor, education and citizens to assess and develop the workforce and training needs of county employers and job seekers in order to improve the economic future and quality of life for residents and businesses and the state of Ohio.

Please find attached to this plan Exhibit A containing a table of organization to better illustrate Area 19's organizational structure and Exhibit B containing the current roster of WDB members.

Part I: LOCAL PLAN DESCRIPTIONS AS REQUIRED BY ODJFS WIOA POLICY LETTER 16-03.1

1. The Workforce Development System in the Local Area That Identifies the Programs That Are Included in the System and Location of the OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Local Workforce Development Area

Attached and incorporated to this local plan addendum by this reference is an organizational chart. See **Exhibit Four**. As referenced by the organizational chart, the Area WDB is on a horizontal plane with the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments (“NOC COG”).

The NOC COG is a council of governments, a form of local government recognized pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code. The NOC COG is made up of three (3) member representatives, one each from Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage counties. The member representatives are duly elected county commissioners who are appointed to serve by their respective boards of county commissioners.

The NOC COG serves in multiple simultaneous capacities at once for workforce purposes. The NOC COG creates and appoints the WDB, as a standing committee. The NOC COG assigns to the WDB, all of the enumerated rights and responsibilities provided to a WDB by WIOA, its final rules, and all other binding federal and state laws, regulations, policies, etc. The NOC COG reserves to itself all of the enumerated rights and responsibilities assigned to local elected officials, including the Chief Elected Official (“CEO”). Where WIOA, its final rule, and all other binding federal and state laws, regulations, and policies enumerate rights and responsibilities to the CEO for the WDB, those are assigned to the NOC COG and CEO respectively of the same as set forth within the IGA and bylaws of the NOC COG. Where a right or responsibility assigned to the CEO is not assigned by the IGA and/or bylaws specifically to the NOC COG’s members collectively, they are assumed by the CEO for the NOC COG.

Within the IGA and bylaws for the NOC COG, the NOC COG is identified as the agent of the WDB. As the WDB’s agent, the NOC COG conducts the business required to be performed by the WDB. As the WDB’s agent, the NOC COG has the ability to contract with agents and/or to hire employees to perform the duties required of board staff, and a fiscal agent. See **Exhibit One**. The NOC COG adopted a new set of bylaws on September 7, 2016, in which they assigned to employees that the NOC COG employs, the duties of board staff and fiscal agent. See **Exhibit Two**. The identities and contact information for the employees of the NOC COG are set forth within **Exhibit Three**.

The remainder of the WDB staff is managed and supervised by the Executive Director employed by the NOC COG. Up until mid-November of 2020, the NOC COG employed a Financial and Budget Officer, who served as the fiscal agent for the WDB. Following the fiscal agent’s resignation, the Area 19 WDB assigned the fiscal agent duties in part to the Executive Director and the Administrative Assistant, with the remaining being assigned to a third-party contractor, the CPA Office of Salvatore Consiglio. How those fiscal agent duties have been divided is set forth within **Exhibit Three**.

The functional responsibilities of the WDB staff are set forth within Article II. A., of the Multi-Function Agreement. See **Exhibit Six**. The functional responsibilities of the WDB fiscal agent are set forth within Article II. B., of the Multi-Function Agreement, which has been temporarily modified as set forth within **Exhibit Three**. See **Exhibits Three** and **Six**. The WDB staff and share information and work together on all assigned responsibilities to complete all business required of the WDB and NOC COG. See **Exhibits Three** and **Six**.

The WDB staff and fiscal agent report directly to the CEO and members of the NOC COG, which in turn takes direction from the Area 19 WDB. The bylaws of the Area 19 WDB are attached as **Exhibit Five**.

This local plan was drafted pursuant to the direction and oversight provided by the NOC COG, and the Area 19 WDB. The local planning process included planning for how the Area would proceed with securing the provision of the following list of program services, including all of the terms and conditions associated with the same.

In Program Year 2023 (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024), the most recent program year for which there is complete data:

- 11,520 individuals visited the Area 19 OMJ centers. The programs that were available to those OMJ Center visitors is listed within the table on the following page.
- 544 WIOA participants were served (920 Adult; 20 Dislocated Workers; 432 CCMEP Youth)
- 555 businesses were engaged
- 64 recruitment events were held
- \$476,716 for Individual Training Accounts was expended and \$123,574 for Incumbent Worker Training was obligated.

Programs offered within Area 19's comprehensive OMJ center in Ashtabula County and affiliate OMJ centers in Geauga and Portage counties are:

Program	Provider
Adult and Dislocated Workers	• Ashtabula County JFS • Geauga County JFS • Portage County JFS
Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program (CCMEP)/Youth Services	• Ashtabula Technical & Career Center (Ashtabula County) • OhioGuidestone (Gauga County)
Adult Education and Family Literacy	• Ashtabula Technical & Career Center • Auburn Career Center • Maplewood Career Center
Wagner-Peyser Act	• Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Vocational Rehabilitation Program	• Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD)
Trade Adjustment Assistance Jobs for Veterans Unemployment Insurance Program	• Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Post-Secondary Vocational Education (Carl D. Perkins)	• Ashtabula Technical & Career Center • Auburn Career Center
Senior Community Service Employment Services	• VANTAGE Aging
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	• Ashtabula County JFS • Geauga County JFS • Portage County JFS
Community Services Block Grant	• Ashtabula County Community Action Council
Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	• Ashtabula County JFS • Geauga County JFS • Portage County JFS

1.2 Location of OhioMeansJobs Centers in the Workforce Development Area

The Area 19 WDB is committed to directing the operation of at least one OMJ center centrally located based upon the residential pattern of its population, within each of the Area's three (3) counties, assuming that sufficient funding is available for the same to occur.

The Area WDB is committed to competitively procuring the operation of each OMJ center at least every four (4) years as required by ODJFS state policy. In the spring of 2025, the OMJ center operators were procured, for the three OMJ Centers, the locations of which were dictated by the WDB and NOC COG. At the time of the drafting of this plan, the pertinent information regarding each of the Area's three (3) OMJ centers is provided for below, including the Operators competitively selected in the spring of 2025. At this time, the comprehensive OhioMeansJobs center is located at Ashtabula, with the two other centers serving as affiliate centers. The location and selection of the comprehensive vs. affiliate centers can change from year to year, or every two years depending upon the length of the term of the MOU that has been entered into. The OMJ center in Portage County had indicated that it would like to be certified as comprehensive during the next certification cycle, which will occur between July 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025.

OhioMeansJobs Ashtabula County (comprehensive center)
2924 Donahoe Drive
Ashtabula, Ohio 44004
(440) 994-1234

OhioMeansJobs Geauga County (affiliate/satellite center)
12611 Ravenwood Drive, Suite 150
Chardon, OH 44024
(440) 285-9141

OhioMeansJobs Portage County (currently an affiliate/satellite center, but might be upgraded to a comprehensive center between July 1, 2025 and December 31, 2025.)
253 Chestnut St.
Ravenna, OH 44266
(330) 296-2841

2. Explanation of the OhioMeansJobs Delivery System

2.1 How the Local Board Ensures Continuous Improvement of Eligible Service Providers and That Providers Will Meet the Employment Needs of Local Employers, Workers and Jobseekers

The services of every provider will be measured against each of the following measures through a continuous review process by Area 19 board staff and the fiscal agent, and through annual monitoring:

- How each provider's services stack up against the negotiated WIOA and/or TANF performance measures negotiated between ODJFS and the Area 19 WDB.
- How each provider's services stack up against any additional performance measures created by the Area 19 WDB and required contractually by the written contract between the NOC COG and the provider.
- How the OMJ center operator's services and facilities stack up against any of the criteria set forth within the OMJ operator certification and continuous improvement standards negotiated with and established by ODJFS.

2.2 How the Local Board Will Facilitate Access to Services Through Use of Technology or Other Means

In June 2012, ODJFS received twelve million dollars in the form of a Workforce Innovation Fund Grant specifically for the further development of the OhioMeansJobs.com ("OMJ.com website"). In addition to these special grants, ODJFS has made a continuing investment into the development and improvement of the OMJ website using both WIOA and Workforce Investment Act ("WIOA") grant funds. That continuing investment included recent overhaul of the OMJ.com website in the winter of 2020 and spring of 2021. The purpose of the development and recent redesign of the OMJ.com website is to allow employers, the workforce, and youth, to have self-help access to information about the labor market, education providers, the ability to find

job postings and resumes of job seekers, and other miscellaneous workforce information from any location that has access to the internet.

The Area 19 WDB is committed to advancing the use of the OMJ.com website by all Area employers, the workforce, and Area 19 youth. The Area 19 WDB has and will continue to do this via the following methods:

- Educating and requiring all Area workforce entities, including but not limited to providers, to utilize the OMJ.com website as the primary, and in some cases the sole, website to use for the dissemination of information regarding workforce issues.
- Educating at the OMJ centers and within the community at large, all employers, those in the workforce, and youth on how to use the OMJ.com website so that they can access information and search for workforce and employment opportunities on-line.
- Promoting the use by all Area employers of the OMJ.com website, by offering the free service of posting for employers all of their job vacancies on the OMJ.com website.
- Assisting all those in the Area workforce to revise and post their resume and job seeker information onto the OMJ.com website.
- Assisting all of those Area youth, including those in area workforce youth programming, and those in the general population by teaching them how to research in-demand careers and industries, career pathways, and educational opportunities for in-demand careers on the OMJ.com website.

In addition to promoting the use of the OMJ.com website, the Area WDB will review the provision of each OMJ Center's and each provider's technology offered to employers, those in the workforce, and youth periodically. Should the technology for OMJ centers be deemed to be inadequate, the OMJ center provider will be asked to upgrade the technology through future MOU operations budgets, with all partners paying their fair share to improve the same. Should the technology of the providers be deemed to be inadequate, they will be asked to include within their next contractual budget, a proposal for improving upon the same.

Beginning in 2023 the Area started leasing career exploration and training headsets from the vendor VR Transfer within Portage and Ashtabula Counties. We have used this technology with all jobseekers who want to explore different career pathways including high schoolers those enrolled and not enrolled within CCMEP services, and adults of all ages. We have also used technology as a tool to provide occupational skills training for those receiving public assistance, and/or those receiving RESEA and/or WIOA programming assistance. We also plan in the future to have our workforce educators within the Area 19 region review and test this technology as an educational tool, either on its own, or used in conjunction with a training curricula.

2.3 How Entities Within OMJ Delivery System Will Comply With Section 188 of WIOA, if Applicable, and Applicable Provisions of the ADA of 1990 Regarding the Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services, Technology and Materials for Individuals With Disabilities

ODJFS, as part of its OMJ center certification and continuous improvement policies, requires that each OMJ comprehensive center be situated within a location that is deemed by ODJFS Bureau of Civil Rights (BCR), to be compliant with the public accommodation provisions required within the ADA.

In July of 2016, ODJFS Bureau of Civil Rights (BCR), certified that the Area 19 comprehensive OMJ center, located within Ashtabula County, had an ADA physical and programmatic accessibility plan in place that was acceptable to it. Furthermore, at least one staff member of the Ashtabula County comprehensive OMJ center participated in ODJFS' required Windmills training that provides education on the provision of physical and programmatic accessibility for those with disabilities. Acceptable ADA training was also offered to and attended by at least one member of the Area 19 staff, and of each of Area 19's OhioMeansJobs Centers' staff during 2022.

In the last quarter of 2022, the Area engaged in a certification review of all three of its OhioMeansJob Centers. All three OhioMeansJobs centers were certified by the Area 19 WDB, following a report of certification review committees for each OhioMeansJobs Centers. Each of the review committees contained at least one member or more of the Area 19 WDB. Included in the certification was the application of the ODJFS Bureau of Civil Rights ADA survey/checklist to the OhioMeansJobs Geauga County Center. The OhioMeansJobs Geauga County Center moved locations from 12480 Ravenwood Drive, within a building that solely contained the Geauga County Job and Family Services (GCJFS) staff, to Geauga County's new administrative building located at 12611 Ravenwood Drive. GCJFS staff, including the OhioMeansJobs Geauga County Center, and its partner staff occupy part of the first and second floors of that building.

The ADA survey checklist did contain three (3) observations that the ODJFS' Bureau of Civil Rights is expecting to be addressed in some way. As of mid-April of 2023, those three issues are being addressed.

2.4 How the Local Board Will Coordinate With the Regional JobsOhio, Team NEO

The Area 19 WDB had a signed agreement with JobsOhio that was in place until December 31, 2024. The agreement was a partnership that allowed the Area 19 OMJ Centers to partner with JobsOhio and its regional JobsOhio agent Team NEO to provide talent acquisition services to employers receiving JobsOhio funding.

Team NEO, along with the pre-eminent economic development agencies within each of the Area 19 counties, have been and will continue to be partners with the Area WDB and the Area 19's OMJ Centers. Three of these agencies are also business service agents of Team NEO, the JobsOhio agent for Northeast Ohio. Those agencies are as follows:

Economic Development Agency

Portage County Development Board, Inc.
(Serves as Team NEO agent).

Relationship to WDB

Director serves on WDB, and agency has a formal contract to provide business services for OMJ Portage.

Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County
(Serves as a Team NEO agent).

Director serves on WDB, agency does collaborate with OMJ Ashtabula to provide services without a formal agreement.

Geauga County's Economic Development Office
(Not a Team NEO agent, but collaborates).

Director serves on WDB, agency does collaborate with OMJ Geauga to provide services without a formal agreement.

Growth Partnership for Geauga County
(Serves as a Team NEO agent).

Asst. Director serves on WDB as business representative. Agency may bid to provide business services in the near future.

2.5 Roles and Resource Contributions of the OMJ Center Partners

The roles and resource contributions of each OMJ center partner operating within the Area 19 WDB are established by the following:

- The terms and conditions of the WIOA statute and regulations governing each OMJ center partner's program and grant appropriations.
- Ohio's combined state plan which governs and dictates each mandated OMJ center partner's role in workforce development.
- The terms and conditions of each OMJ center partner as negotiated and reduced to writing as part of the Area 19 WDB Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU").

A determination of how those partners are adhering to those roles and responsibilities shall be the joint responsibility of Department of Labor, the State of Ohio as the drafting agent of the combined state plan, ODJFS as the grant issuing authority, the board staff of the Area 19 WDB, and the competitively procured OMJ Center operator. Should issues be determined to exist, they may be addressed by any of the entities listed above.

Should action be required locally by the Area 19 WDB to enforce the roles and/or contributions of partners, it shall do so either in its own right, and/or through its OMJ center operator(s). All actions taken by the Area 19 WDB or its OMJ operators will first seek to mutually resolve any and all disputes through either OMJ center partner meetings, and/or through the mechanisms provided for within the MOU.

3. Description and Assessment of the Type and Availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Services.

Within Area 19, providers will be selected as a result of Sub-grant Agreement negotiations with CDJFS agencies, competitive procurement, and/or through a combination of the same. The list of services that the Area makes available are as follows.

A. Basic Career Services (Non-Triggering)

1. Determinations of whether the individual is eligible to receive WIOA services.
2. Outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling), and orientation to the information and other services available through the workforce development delivery system.
3. Initial assessment of skill levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs.
4. Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, and when needed by an individual, career counseling, including:
 - i. Provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
 - ii. Provision of information on nontraditional employment.
5. Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistical information, which may be found on OhioMeansJobs.com. This service includes the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:
6. Job vacancy listings in such labor market areas;
7. Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs; and
8. Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for such occupations.
9. Provision of performance information and program cost information on the eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers.
10. Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the OhioMeansJobs delivery system and, in appropriate cases, other workforce development programs.
11. Provision of information regarding how the local is performing on the local performance accountability measures and any additional performance information with respect to the OhioMeansJobs delivery system in the local area.
12. Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including:
13. Childcare;
14. Child support;
15. Medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program;
16. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
17. Assistance through the earned income tax credit;

18. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF);
19. Other supportive services and transportation available in the local area.
20. Provision of permitted information and assistance, and referral to ODJFS staff and/or unemployment contact information to individuals seeking assistance on claims for unemployment compensation.
21. Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not funded through WIOA.
22. Group workshops (e.g., interviewing, job search, and resume writing).

B. Individualized, Triggering Career Services

1. Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:
 - Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
 - In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.
2. IEPs are one of the most effective ways to serve individuals with barriers to employment and to coordinate the various services, including training services they may need to overcome these barriers. Therefore, all participants who receive an individualized career service or a training service pursuant to WIOAPL No. 15-09, Training Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers, must receive an IEP. Development of an individual employment plan (IEP) to identify all of the following:
 - Employment goals;
 - Appropriate achievement objectives;
 - Appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals, including providing information on eligible training providers and career pathways to attain career objectives.
3. Group counseling.
4. Individual counseling.
5. Career planning.
6. Short-term prevocational services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training, which include:
 - Development of learning skills;
 - Communication skills;
 - Interviewing skills;
 - Punctuality;
 - Personal maintenance skills; and
 - Professional conduct.
7. Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers.
8. Workforce preparation activities.
9. Financial literacy services.

10. Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance/
11. English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.
12. Provision of job club activities.

C. Training Services

Area 19, in working with its employers and educational providers may consider, but do not have to provide for, all of the following types of WIOA Workforce training services. The training services offered will be controlled by the terms and conditions of the Area 19 policies, and/or any Area 19 Agreements or MOU with providers. Where the precise types of training are not dictated or restricted by policy or by agreement, the provider may exercise its discretion on the provision of the following types of training, at the provider's established terms and conditions.

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
- On-the-job training;
- Incumbent worker training;
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs;
- Training programs operated by the private sector;
- Skill upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training;
- Transitional jobs;
- Job readiness training;
- Adult education and literacy activities; and
- Customized training.

Within Area 19, providers will be selected as a result of Sub-grant Agreement negotiations with CDJFS agencies, competitive procurement, and/or through a combination of the same.

4. Comprehensive Case Management Program (CCMEP)

In 2016, and at least bi-annual since, each of the following was completed within Area 19, as part of its actions to develop a CCMEP plan within each county that would combine WIOA and TANF Youth services.

- Each County Board of Commissioners designated their County Department of Job and Family Services as the lead agency for CCMEP.
- Each CDJFS as lead agency for CCMEP drafted and submitted to ODJFS a local plan addressing how it would address certain terms and conditions of the CCMEP.
- The NOC COG and WDB submitted correspondence and negotiated with ODJFS the terms and conditions of the Area's decision to initially opt into the CCMEP.

- In September of 2016, and with the execution of every Subgrant Agreement since the NOC COG and WDB passed resolutions and submitted correspondence in which they indicated that they were opting into the CCMEP.
- From October of 2016 to January of 2017, the NOC COG, WDB, and/or lead agencies competitively procured and negotiated contracts relating to the provision of pre-enrollment services, framework design and case management services, and program services. In the first quarter of 2022, the competitive procurement was repeated.

Having completed all of the above listed actions, this portion of the local plan is satisfied.

5. Local Board and OMJ Center Operator Coordination to Improve Service Delivery and Avoid Duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act Services

The Area 19 WDB shall address the provision of excellent OMJ center operations in each of the following described ways.

- The issuance of a well thought out competitive procurement solicitation for the operation of each OMJ center.
- The negotiation by the WDB and its OMJ center operators of a well thought out Memorandum of Understanding that addresses these issues.
- Enforcing requirement that each OMJ center operator must actively and regularly engage its partners during partner meetings, and in other forums to address these issues.
- The regular monitoring and review of each OMJ center pursuant to Area monitoring policies, along with the OMJ certification and continuous improvement policies established by ODJFS, and Area policies.
- By working with ODJFS and other partners to secure regular secret shopping done by partner and/or other individuals and addressing any deficiencies discovered as a result of the same.

6. Description of Executed Cooperative Agreements Defining Service Provider Requirements

The Area 19 WDB, through its agent the NOC COG, enters into all of the following agreements which set forth the terms and conditions requiring integration of and access to the entire set of services available in each county's OMJ system.

- All business services work.
- OMJ center operation.
- The provision of basic and individualized career services for each county's workforce.
- The eligibility and case management of all training services for each county's workforce.
- The provision of pre-enrollment, framework design/case management, and program services for all Youth programming.

7. Identification of Area's Fiscal Agent

Within the IGA and bylaws for the NOC COG, the NOC COG is identified as the agent of the WDB. As the WDB's agent, the NOC COG conducts the business required to be performed by the WDB. As the WDB's agent, the NOC COG has the ability to contract with agents and/or to hire employees to perform the duties required of board staff, and as fiscal agent. See **Exhibit One**. The NOC COG adopted a new set of bylaws on September 7, 2016, in which they assigned to employees that the NOC COG employs, the duties of board staff and fiscal agent. See **Exhibit Two**. Since the fall of 2020, the fiscal agent work for Area 19, has been performed in part by NOC COG employed staff and the CPA office of Salvatore Consiglio. See **Exhibits Three, Four, and Six**.

8. Description of the Competitive Process to Award Subgrants and Contracts for WIOA Title I Activities

The board staff will work with the Area 19 WDB, in order to design competitive procurement solicitations that seek requests for proposals ("RFP"), and/or requests for quotes ("RFQ") that are compliant with WIOA, and all applicable provisions of the Code of Federal Regulations. All competitive procurements will involve each of the following elements as set forth within the Area's procurement policy:

1. A pre-competitive solicitation design and planning process that takes into consideration how the services sought should be designed.
2. A pre-competitive solicitation cost analysis that sets forth an estimated range of the expected bids for the provision of goods and/or services.
3. When required by Area 19 policy, the publication within one or more Area media outlets, as well as publication on the Area 19's website of the opportunity to submit proposals, quotes, and/or bids etc.
4. The outreach to those on the Area 19 bidder's list, and/or to those known within the Area to be in the market to offer applicable goods and services.
5. A published RFP, RFQ, or other document that sets forth all of the terms and conditions relating to the information that must be submitted by an interested entity desiring to provide goods or services, including the basis for which the NOC COG and/or WDB will make the decision to award a contract.
6. A decision making process that includes a review of all proposals submitted, including an analysis, and where required, a scoring of the proposals submitted. This will be performed by some or all of the following individuals:
 - Area 19 board staff;
 - The fiscal agent;
 - NOC COG members;
 - WDB members;
 - WDB committee members;

- Those named by the NOC COG and/or WDB who have an interest or expertise in the matters being decided, that does not involve an ethical conflict.
7. A timely notification of the decision of which entities were and were not selected based upon the submission of information, including a period and procedure for those entities to appeal any decisions made.
 8. A negotiation of the final terms and conditions regarding the provision of goods and/or services, with the same reduced to a written agreement where required, that will govern the performance of the parties to the agreement.

All of the following program services were competitively procured sometime between June of, 2021, April 1, 2022, and March 26, 2025:

- All County Account Executive work associated with the Business Resource Network.
- OMJ center operation.
- Possibly some or all of the provision of basic and individualized career services for each county's workforce.
- The provision of pre-enrollment, framework design/case management, and program services for all Youth programming.

All competitive procurements will be handled by the Area 19 board staff and fiscal agent, as these individuals are truly independent administrative staff, that answer to the NOC COG membership and the Area 19 WDB, as required by ODJFS WIOA policy.

9. Board Actions Taken to Become or Remain a High Performing Board

When WIOA went into effect and the NOC COG Board was required to reconstruct the Area 19 WDB into one that was compliant under the terms and conditions of the act and its final rules, the NOC COG Board thoughtfully and diligently redesigned its workforce board into one that had the potential of being a high performing board. This was done by seeking out both workforce administrators and private employer representatives under the following criteria:

- All employers who are represented were deemed to either be in-demand industries or were employed within in-demand occupations.
- All employers who are represented were chosen because the representation of their industry and provided for a unique perspective.
- All employer representatives are managerial level, and in most cases are the most senior of their organization's management.
- The top two officer positions (chairperson and vice-chairperson) are reserved for employer representatives in order to make sure that the WDB is led by those with a perspective for serving the needs of in-demand employers.

- The WDB was designed to include a representative of a community based/interest organization from each County to ensure that we were providing for the needs of our impoverished and most needy citizens (Community Action Council of Ashtabula County; Community Action Council of Portage County; United Way of Geauga County).
- The WDB was designed to include the director of the leading economic development agency within each county, that was also a partner of OhioJob's regional agent Team NEO (Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County; Portage Development Board; Geauga County Economic Development Office, and/or the Growth Partnership for Geauga County). The reason for this is that each of these organizations are widely respected to be the authorities on the challenges and opportunities that each county faces with respect to the development of their economies, and the current and emerging needs of each county's employers with respect to workforce.
- The WDB was designed to include a representative of public transportation as this is one of the Area's greatest workforce challenges.
- All other workforce agencies represented, including those who are guaranteed spots on the WDB, were selected based upon past outstanding representation on the board, and/or because they are recognized leaders within their respective fields.

10. OMJ Center's Commitment to Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management Information Systems

Beginning in April of 2022, ODJFS, as the grant issuing authority of WIOA, provided access and required the use of a redeveloped intake and case management information system ("ARIES") that is also integrated with the fiscal management CFIS system. The transition from the previous OWCMS case management system to the ARIES system involved more than a year of problems and temporary work arounds, but is slowly and steadily been improved.

The Area 19 WDB is fully committed to the use of these systems by its office, and by those contracted to provide program services to employers, the workforce, and youth. The Area 19 WDB will promote and encourage its staff, and those staff contracted to perform program services, to engage in all appropriate training opportunities in order to learn these systems. The NOC COG and Area 19 WDB will require and ensure that all program providers utilize these systems.

The Area WDB will work to identify, from all staff who utilize the same, any issues relating to the use of these systems. WDB staff shall work through the Ohio Workforce Association, and with ODJFS and its system creator/administrator to seek a redress of any and all issues experienced with the usage of these systems.

Part II: AREA 19 WDB WORKFORCE CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

There are two primary workforce development challenges facing Northeast Ohio, including Area 19. Those issues are the labor market gap and the skills gap.

A. The Labor Market Gap

The labor market gap is the numeric gap that exists between the number of workers demanded by regional/local employers and those that are able, willing, and actually are working. The challenge with the labor market gap is that there are not enough able, willing, working individuals to meet the current and projected demand of regional and local employers.

The sub-issues that have caused or contribute to the labor market gap are as follows:

- Stagnant to shrinking population levels.
- Our current stable and skilled workforce is aged and moving towards retirement.
- Exporting our young workforce. A significant portion of our young workforce, regardless of where they are educated after high school do not end up working locally. There is a brain drain to stronger regional economies, Columbus, and Pittsburgh (2 hours or less away), plus a brain drain to stronger national economies, including the east coast, west coast, and pockets of the south including Texas.
- Failure to attract/retain a young workforce. Northeast Ohio has a tremendous post-secondary educational system that educates both our young potential workforce, and the workforce of the rest of Ohio, the nation, and the world. They come and get educated, but do they stay?
- Low worker participation rates. A significant number of those who are able to work, do not necessarily want to work, and/or are not regularly employed in stable, opportunity laden positions of employment.
- Barriers and sobriety issues. A significant number of our workforce have non-vocational skill barriers to working regularly, and or retaining a job in a stable position of employment that allows the individual to be self-sufficient.

At this time, the Area relies on JobsOhio and other State initiatives to grow the State's population.

B. The Skills Gap

The skills gap is the numeric gap that exists between the soft and vocational skills needed/demanded by regional/local employers and those that are possessed by the available workforce, seeking employment. The issue is that there is a misalignment between the skills desired by employers and those possessed by the workforce. Skills gap challenges are both quantitative and qualitative in nature. All of the sub-challenges assigned within this category have to do with both the number of those with degrees and certificates, along with the quality of their degrees, certificates, training, work experience, and soft employment skills.

The skills gap includes both vocational and soft skills.

1. The vocational skills gap. Vocational skills refer to those skills that are needed to do the job from education and experience.
2. The soft skills gap. Soft skills are those skills that are universally desired and expected by employers from their employees. These abilities include:

reliable transportation	limited absences	punctuality
dressed appropriately	attentive/mentally present	sober
willing to work overtime	appropriate interaction with others	

The skills gap issue has a number of contributing sub-issues. Most of the skills gap issues originate during the elementary and secondary education of our Area's youth and continue into their post-secondary education and beyond.

1. Area 19 WDB's goal is to engage high school students along with high school guidance in planning for post-secondary school success prior to their graduation.

Depending upon the economic and resource challenges faced by the school district and the resources available, the Area 19 public school districts vary greatly on the post high school diploma career pathway planning that is provided. Consider the following statistics:

1. Local high school guidance counselors report that they have most of their time absorbed with class scheduling and life issue counseling, as opposed to post-success planning with students.
2. According to the ACCESS post high school success program director in Ashtabula County, only between 30% and 50% of each graduating class has a firm post-secondary career pathway plan in place 6 weeks from graduation. We refer to this as knowing your "E". "E" representing the development of a post high school employment, educational enrollment, enlistment, and/or entrepreneurship plan. The "E" goals are identified below:

<u>"E" Goal</u>	<u>Measure</u>
Enrollment in Education	Accepted with financial aid package
Employment	Conditionally hired and working part-time
Enlistment	Enlisted with a report for basic training date
Entrepreneurship	Business plan or assigned to an apprenticeship

3. According to TEAM NEO's 2019 Aligning Opportunities Report:
 - a. A region of 4.3 million should produce 37,600 BA+ graduates per year.
 - b. Team NEO region produces 31,300 BA+ per year.
 - c. Supply needs to grow 20% per year to meet expectations.
 - d. Ohio continues to struggle on FAFSA completion and capturing of financial assistance for post-secondary education. In 2019 Ohio had \$87 million in unused federal financial

aid due to students not completing the FAFSA. Approximately 45% of students are eligible for Pell Grants each year, which means that 21,600 high school seniors had the potential to receive a grant and did not.

- e. Ohio's Complete to Compete initiative, has concluded that to support Ohio's economy we need to move the percentage of those in the workforce with a post-secondary education of any kind from 47% (where it currently is) to 65% of the working population.

As a result of these issues and the statistics that bear out the same, the Area 19 WDB has concluded that its goal should be to reach out and to offer resources to high schools to help them help their students before graduation form a definite plan with goals to achieve one of the four "Es" of post-high school success.

Assisting high school guidance departments is not done just to better the Area 19 Workforce, it also increases the community profile and recognition of the Area's OMJ Centers. Once H.S. students graduate, they become absorbed within the general population and are difficult to reach as opposed to when they are enrolled within the public education system and they are reachable through the school district. The federal and state educational departments track post-secondary education enrollment and completion, but that is it. The Area OMJ staff struggle with how to interact and help this group after graduation.

How do we get students to plan for a successful post high school career, both prior to and after graduation? The Area Workforce has concluded that the best strategy is to get high school students familiar with their local OMJ Center and staff, and to actively assist high school guidance on helping students to plan for their post-high school success. Some of those strategies are provided for later in Section IV. of this local plan which summarizes programs offered by each of the Area's three (3) OMJ centers.

4. Engaging students to make post high school plans alone is not enough.

Even those high school students that have the grades, aptitude test scores, and have developed post-secondary career pathway plans, do not all necessarily succeed. Many of those that make a pre-graduation plan lose their path along the way or take way longer to complete their education. The sub-issues related to this are as follows:

Sub-Issue #1.	Post-secondary preparation.
Sub-Issue #2.	Post-secondary completion.
Sub-Issue #3.	Post-secondary retention.
Sub-Issue #4.	Significant Cost of Post-Secondary Education.
Sub-Issue #5.	Misalignment Between Supply and Demand.

- a. Sub-Issue #1. Post-secondary preparation.

Ohio is very successful at getting its high school students into post-secondary education. However, one of the more concerning things is the remedial education that is needed by many of those matriculating to the same. The statistics published by Ohio's public post-secondary Baccalaureate and Sub-Baccalaureate educational institutions are as follows:

Sub-Bac. Remediation. 58.5% need educational remediation. Of those:

- 48.1% complete their remediation.
- 24.6% complete remediation and courses on time.
- 6.4% graduate within 3 years for 2 year pathway.

Bac. Remediation. 25% need educational remediation. Of those:

- 56.9% complete their remediation.
- 38.4% complete remediation and courses on time.
- 33.6% graduate within 6 years for 4-year pathway.

While these statistics do not include those admitted into out-of-state schools, private not-for-profit, and/or private for-profit educational institutions, the numbers are a good indicator that post-secondary educational preparation needs to improve.

b. Sub-Issue #2. Post-secondary Education completion.

In addition to these statistics, also concerning is the amount of time it takes for Ohio post-secondary students at our public schools to complete their education. The break-out of every 100 Ohio residents that pursue a 2 or 4-year post-secondary degree at an Ohio public school are as follows:

- About 50% pursue 2-year or less, and 50% pursue 4-year degrees. Only 40% ultimately complete their education, with most needing to go into overtime to complete the same. That means that 60% do not finish at all, and many more need more time to finish.
- Of those pursuing 2-year degrees full-time, only about 16% will complete, with half of those that do complete needing 4-years to complete. Only 7% of those that pursue a 2-year degree, part-time will complete.
- Of those pursuing 4-year degrees, about 64% will complete, with more than half of those that do complete needing 6 to 8-years to complete the same.

c. Sub-Issue #3. Post-secondary retention.

The Team NEO region produces 31,300 BA+ graduates per year. The region, based upon its size, should produce 37,600 BA+ graduates per year. The TEAM NEO 16 county region retains 46.7% or 14,608 BA+ graduates annually. The rest move to another region following graduation. If Team NEO could move the retention rate to 57% annually, the region could retain:

- 3,130 more BA+ grads
- 445 more health care BA+ grads
- 162 more IT BA+ grads
- 263 more Architecture and Engineering BA+ grads per year.

d. Sub-Issue #4. The High Cost of Post-Secondary Education.

Consider the following statistics that all reflect the high cost of post-secondary education and the impact it has on today's workforce.

- Approximately 44.7 million Americans (13.6% of pop.) maintain some type of student loan debt.
- Student loan debt nationwide tops \$1.5 Trillion Dollars. Auto loan debt is around \$1.2 Trillion and Credit Card Debt \$0.8 Trillion Dollars.
- Approximately 56% of millennials with student loans have delayed a major life event—including getting married or having kids—because of their debt. Source: Bankrate Money Pulse survey, July 2015, adults ages 18-29.
- That same percentage of millennials, 56% have student loans.

e. Sub-Issue #4. Misalignment Between Demand and Supply for High Income Jobs in the Region.

For the past decade Team NEO has produced an outstanding report that examines the misalignment between the supply of workforce being produced by post-secondary educational institutions and the region's demand in high paying occupations, broken out by occupations.

Regional occupations fall into an organized division of 96-46-19. There are 96 occupational groups to which you can categorize all workers and professionals in the regional economy. Of those 96 occupational groups there are 46 core demand index occupations that are tied to growing wealth clusters in the regional economy. Of those 46 core occupations, there are 19 that are the most promising based upon factors considering those that show substantial demand, offer family sustaining wages, and hold promise for future employment and income. Of those 19 most promising core occupations, these can be consolidated into 4 categories, Health Care, White Collar Office, Professional/Trades, and Manufacturing. They are listed as follows:

Health Care

Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners

Health Technologists and Technicians
Health Therapist Aides and Support Workers
Nursing and Home Health Aides

White Collar Office

Computer and IT Workers
Financial Clerks & Financial Specialists
Information and Record Clerks
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants
Managers, Professional and Health

Professions/Trades

Architects and Engineering Technicians
Education
Engineers
Life Science Workers

Construction and Trade Workers

Manufacturing
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers
Manufacturing
Metal and Plastics Workers
Skilled Production Workers
Supervisors of Skilled Workers

Unfortunately, many of those emerging from post-secondary education have been prepared for occupations that do not align well with these 19 most promising core occupations. The Team NEO reports for the past four years provide exacting detail of which occupations are over supplied by post-secondary graduates, which occupations have a balanced supply and demand, and which occupations are under supplied compared to demand, and by how much.

Part II: AREA 19 WDB CUSTOMIZED AND SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

The workforce challenges and issues explored within Section III. of this local plan, have been fully analyzed and explored by the Area 19 WDB, and its three (3) OMJ Centers. That analysis gave rise to many of the custom designed programs that follow, which are meant to address many of the skills gap issues existing within Northeast Ohio.

A. Customized and Special Programming Shared by All Three County OMJ Centers.

As you will notice from a summary of each OMJ County Centers' Creative Programming Guide that follows as **Exhibits 8, 9, and 10**, the Area has decided to make a concentrated focus on addressing the labor market gap and the skills gap, by focusing on the Area's high school aged youth. The rationale behind this is that the Area does not have enough workers, and it can be difficult to attract outside workers to the Area.

However, the Area does do a good job of attracting post-secondary students from outside of N.E. Ohio and remains an attractive place to live and work for those that have grown up and have family here. Therefore, the focus of workforce for the Area 19 WDB has to be on retaining our home-grown talent, and those that come to N.E. Ohio that are from outside of the region, for post-secondary education. Improving the educational/career paths of the region's Youth, especially when it comes to helping them select education that will place them in one of the 19 core, well-paying occupations within the region, and connecting those that came here for post-secondary education to local employers, is believed to offer Area 19 and the NOW regional workforce the best opportunity to make meaningful gains against the labor market and skills gaps.

While the programming summarized in Exhibits 8, 9, and 10 include excellent programming, the Area 19 WDB is looking to add to these programs in the coming four years. In addition to the efforts of improving high school student's post-graduation education and career plans, the Area wants to focus on connecting those enrolled within both secondary and post-secondary educational programs with employers for work experience, internship, and apprenticeship placements prior to graduation. The goal of course being to retain as much of our locally educated workforce within the region as possible.

With all of this in mind, the following are the defined goals of the Area 19 WDB:

- To continually identify the challenges opposing workforce and economic development that are slowing the growth of Northeast Ohio's economy.
- To strategically develop, implement, and administer workforce development programming with our secondary and post-secondary educational providers and economic developers that is demand driven by the region's employers.
- To build workforce programming that is dynamic and robust enough to command the participation of the region's in-demand and critical employers in developing, investing, and benefiting from the same.
- To ultimately expand and more importantly focus the number, education, and skills of the region's workforce in such a way to make it an attractive and superior asset that will grow and expand the region's economy.

Part III: ASSURANCES

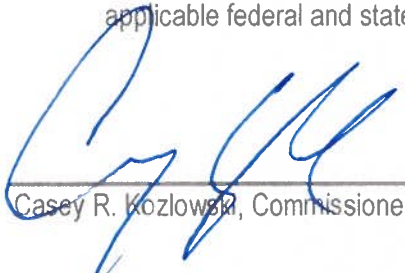
Area 19, through its Officers and designated Agents, makes the following assurances:

- Area 19 has established and will continue to employ fiscal control and fund accounting procedures to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for all funds received through WIOA ("the Act").
- Area 19 shall keep records that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by WIOA and shall maintain all records, including standardized records for all individual participants, and submit such reports as the State may require.
- Area 19 will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the non-discrimination provisions of the Act.
- Area 19 assures that funds will be spent in accordance with WIOA, regulations, written Department of Labor guidance, written Ohio Department of Job and Family Services guidance, and all other applicable Federal and State laws.
- Area 19 assures that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in the Jobs for Veterans Act and 20 CFR Part 1010.
- Area 19 assures it will comply with any grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary which are necessary to enter into contracts for the use of funders under WIOA, but not limited to the following:
 1. General Administrative Requirements – Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 2900.
 2. Assurances and Certifications – SF 424B – Assurances for Non-Construction Programs; 29 CFR Part 31, 32 – Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and Regulation); 29 CFR Part 93 – Certification Regarding Lobbying (and Regulation); 29 CFR Parts 94 and 95 – Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension; Certifications (and Regulation).

Part IV: AREA 19 SIGNATURES

By signing my name below, I hereby attest each of the following for the NOW Regional Plan and the Area 19 Local Plan Addendum, effective from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029:

- All of the Assurances indicated immediately above in Part V. the NOW Regional Plan and of the Area 19 Local Plan Addendum have been met and that this plan represents the Local Area WDB's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs within the planning region.
- The Area 19 WDB will operate the WIOA program in accordance with the regional plan and applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and rules.



Casey R. Kozlowski, Commissioner, Ashtabula County
Date 9/3/25



Craig Sernik, Executive Director, Area 19 Workforce Development Board
Date 8-3-25



Ned Sherry, Chair, Area 19 Workforce Development Board
Date 9/16/2026

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit One: Intergovernmental Agreement (“IGA”)
- Exhibit Two: Bylaws of the NOC COG
- Exhibit Three: Roster of Employees of the NOC COG
- Exhibit Four: Organizational Chart
- Exhibit Five: Bylaws of the Area 19 WDB
- Exhibit Six: Multi-Function Agreement
- Exhibit Seven: Area 19 Workforce Development Board Roster
- Exhibit Eight: OMJ Ashtabula’s Creative Programming Guide
- Exhibit Nine: OMJ Geauga’s Creative Programming Guide
- Exhibit Ten: OMJ Portage’s Creative Programming Guide

**Intergovernmental Agreement for the
Northeast Ohio Consortium
Council of Governments**

This First Amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement (“Agreement”) for the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments (“NOC COG”) is effective by and between Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties of the State of Ohio, on the date that the last of the three counties passes legislation adopting and ratifying the same.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement (“Intergovernmental Agreement”) effective March 1, 2016, the terms and conditions of which governed the establishment of a Workforce Development Board (“WDB”) Area known and referred to as the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments, also known as Ohio Workforce Development Board, Area 19.

WHEREAS, the original Intergovernmental Agreement provides for and defines what business representatives may serve on the WDB, but does not include and allow for organizations representing businesses, even though that type of organization may serve on the WDB as provided for within Section 107 (b) (2) (A) (ii) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (“WIOA”).

WHEREAS, the original Intergovernmental Agreement also does not provide for requirements that at least two of the businesses represented must represent small business as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration. See 20 CFR Section 679.320.

WHEREAS, the consideration supporting this Amendment is the mutual advancement of Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties’ joint interests in the delivery of workforce services as part of the NOC COG.

NOW, THEREFORE, intending to be bound by this Amendment, and in consideration of mutual promises and covenants herein contained, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties hereto agree as follows:

1. **ARTICLE III. (“POWERS OF THE COUNCIL”), Paragraph B. 1. c.** of the original Intergovernmental Agreement shall be stricken in its entirety and in its place shall read:

“c. Appointment of business representatives.

- i. Business representatives must have:
 - 1. an ownership interest in the business, or

2. hold the position of chief executive officer, chief operating officer, or must be a salaried executive with optimum policymaking and/or hiring authority.
- ii. The business must meet the following criteria:
 1. provides a significant number of employment opportunities, or employment opportunities that are highly sought after because starting pay and benefits are better than average;
 2. provides its employees with high quality on the job training and development; and
 3. the business is an industry that is in-demand, and/or it employs individuals in occupations that are in-demand.
 4. At least two of the eighteen businesses represented on the Board, must meet the definition of small employer as provided for within 13 CFR 121.201, the regulations governing the U.S. Small Business Administration.
- iii. All businesses to be represented, and/or the individuals appointed to fulfill a business representative position must be nominated/approved by local business organizations or trade associations, with the representative commissioner selecting whom to nominate to the NOC COG from a list of one or more nominees gathered and vetted by the staff for the NOC COG on behalf of the representative commissioner.
- iv. As an alternative to the representative of an individual business, representatives of organizations that represent the interests of businesses identified herein within Article III. B. 1. c. ii. may be appointed. This could include representatives of economic development organizations, industry and/or trade organizations, chambers of commerce, etc., whose members meet the definition of businesses to be represented on the WDB.

2. All other terms and provisions of the original March 1, 2016 Intergovernmental Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

SIGNATURES ON SEPARATE PAGE

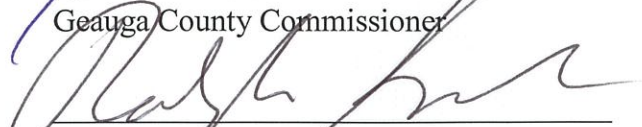
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IN WITNESS THEREOF, the Parties hereto have executed this First Amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement, with the intent to enter into the same. This First Amendment shall be binding once two of three Commissioners for each member county have executed a copy of the signature page for this Agreement.

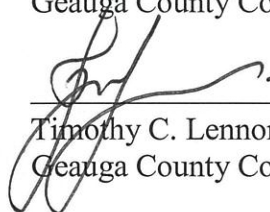
GEAUGA COUNTY:


James W. Dvorak
Geauga County Commissioner

4-21-2020
Date


Ralph Spidaleri
Geauga County Commissioner

4-21-2020
Date


Timothy C. Lennon
Geauga County Commissioner

4/20/2020
Date

Approved to Form:


Geauga County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney

ASHTABULA COUNTY:

Casey R. Kozlowski, President
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

Kathryn L. Whittington, Vice President
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

J.P. Ducro IV, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

Approved to Form:

Ashtabula County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the Parties hereto have executed this First Amendment to the Intergovernmental Agreement, with the intent to enter into the same. This First Amendment shall be binding once two of three Commissioners for each member county have executed a copy of the signature page for this Agreement.

GEAUGA COUNTY:

James W. Dvorak
Geauga County Commissioner

Date

Ralph Spidalieri
Geauga County Commissioner

Date

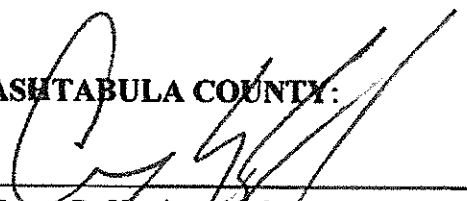
Timothy C. Lennon
Geauga County Commissioner

Date

Approved to Form:

Geauga County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney

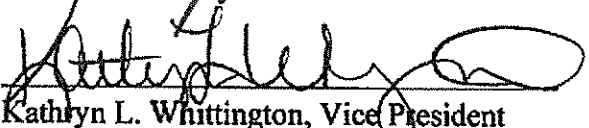
ASHTABULA COUNTY:



Casey R. Kozlowski, President
Ashtabula County Commissioner

3/16/2020

Date



Kathryn L. Whittington, Vice President
Ashtabula County Commissioner

3/16/2020

Date

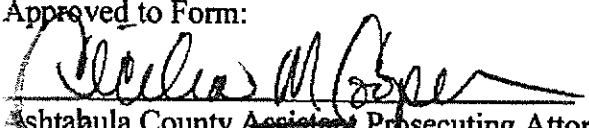


J.P. Ducro IV, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner

3/16/2020

Date

Approved to Form:



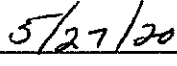
Ashtabula County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney

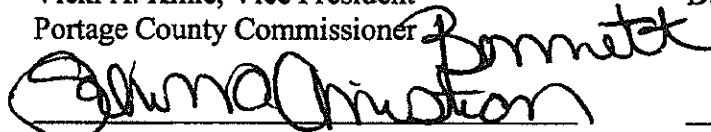
PORTAGE COUNTY:

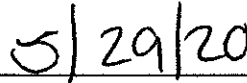
Kathleen Clyde, President
Portage County Commissioner

Date


Vicki A. Kline, Vice President
Portage County Commissioner


Date


Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Board Member
Portage County Commissioner


Date

Approved to Form:


Portage County Assistant Prosecuting Attorney

RESOLUTION

NO. 20-0300

RE: ENTERING INTO AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN GEauga, ASHTABULA AND PORTAGE COUNTIES AND THE NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (NOC COG).

It was moved by Vicki A. Kline, seconded by Sabrina Christian-Bennett that the following Resolution be adopted:

- WHEREAS,** the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement ("Intergovernmental Agreement") effective March 1, 2016, the terms and conditions of which governed the establishment of a Workforce Development Board ("WDB") Area known and referred to as the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments, also known as Ohio Workforce Development Board, Area 19; and
- WHEREAS,** the original Intergovernmental Agreement provides for and defines what business representatives may serve on the WDB, but does not include and allow for organizations representing businesses, even though that type of organization may serve on the WDB as provided for within Section 107 (b) (2) (A) (ii) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ("WIOA"); and
- WHEREAS,** the original Intergovernmental Agreement also does not provide for requirements that at least two of the businesses represented must represent small business as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration. See 20 CFR Section 679.320; and
- WHEREAS,** the consideration supporting this Amendment is the mutual advancement of Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties' joint interests in the delivery of workforce services as part of the NOC COG; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** that the Portage County Board of Commissioners hereby enters into an Intergovernmental Agreement to follow the terms and conditions set forth within WIOA and its regulations; and be it further
- RESOLVED,** that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meeting open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Roll Call vote was as follows:

Vicki A. Kline, Yea;

Kathleen Clyde, Yea;

Sabrina Christian-Bennett, Yea;

I, Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution of the Board of County Commissioners of Portage County duly adopted May 7, 2020 and appearing upon the official records of said Board, Volume 93.


Clerk, Portage County Board of Commissioners

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2020-112 APPROVING AMENDMENT NUMBER ONE (1) TO THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR THE NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (NOC COG) BY AND BETWEEN GEauga, ASHTABULA AND PORTAGE COUNTIES

The Board of County Commissioners of Ashtabula County, Ohio, met on the 16TH day of March, 2020, in regular session at the offices of said Board in the Old Courthouse Building, 2nd Floor, 25 W. Jefferson St., Jefferson, Ohio, with the following members present: Casey R. Kozlowski, Kathryn L. Whittington, J. P. Ducro IV.

WHEREAS, Casey Kozlowski, Board President, has presented an amendment to an agreement for the approval of the board, to-wit:

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement ("Intergovernmental Agreement") effective March 1, 2016, the terms and conditions of which governed the establishment of a Workforce Development Board ("WDB") Area known and referred to as the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments, also known as Ohio Workforce Development Board, Area 19; and

WHEREAS, the original Intergovernmental Agreement provides for and defines what business representatives may serve on the WDB, but does not include and allow for organizations representing businesses, even though that type of organization may serve on the WDB as provided for within Section 107 (b) (2) (A) (ii) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ("WIOA"); and

WHEREAS, the original Intergovernmental Agreement also does not provide for requirements that at least two of the businesses represented must represent small business as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration. See 20 CFR Section 679.320; and

WHEREAS, the consideration supporting this Amendment is the mutual advancement of Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties' joint interests in the delivery of workforce services as part of the NOC COG; now

NOW, intending to be bound by this Amendment, and in consideration of mutual promises and covenants herein contained, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties hereto agree as follows:

1. **ARTICLE III. ("POWERS OF THE COUNCIL"), Paragraph B. 1. c.** of the original Intergovernmental Agreement shall be stricken in its entirety and in its place shall read:

"c. Appointment of business representatives.

i. Business representatives must have:

1. an ownership interest in the business, or
 2. hold the position of chief executive officer, chief operating officer, or must be a salaried executive with optimum policymaking and/or hiring authority.
- ii. The business must meet the following criteria:
1. provides a significant number of employment opportunities, or employment opportunities that are highly sought after because starting pay and benefits are better than average;
 2. provides its employees with high quality on the job training and development; and
 3. the business is an industry that is in-demand, and/or it employs individuals in occupations that are in-demand.
 4. At least two of the eighteen businesses represented on the Board, must meet the definition of small employer as provided for within 13 CFR 121.201, the regulations governing the U.S. Small Business Administration.

iii. All businesses to be represented, and/or the individuals appointed to fulfill a business representative position must be nominated/approved by local business organizations or trade associations, with the representative commissioner selecting whom to nominate to the NOC COG from a list of one or more nominees gathered and vetted by the staff for the NOC COG on behalf of the representative commissioner.

- iv. As an alternative to the representative of an individual business, representatives of organizations that represent the interests of businesses identified herein within Article III. B. 1. c. ii. may be appointed. This could include representatives of economic development organizations, industry and/or trade organizations, chambers of commerce, etc., whose members meet the definition of businesses to be represented on the WDB.

2. All other terms and provisions of the original March 1, 2016 Intergovernmental Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the Board of Commissioners of Ashtabula County, Ohio, that the amendment to the NOC COG agreement is hereby approved in accordance with the copy of said amendment now on file in this office.

MOTION: Whittington moved the adoption, Ducro seconded. **DISCUSSION:** None

VOTE: Yeas: Kozlowski, Whittington, Ducro Nays: None Abstained: None Absent: None

Whereupon the resolution was declared passed unanimously.

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that I, Lisa Hawkins, as Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners of Ashtabula County, Ohio has compared the foregoing copy of the **RESOLUTION NUMBER 2020-112** with the original resolution now on file in this office, which was duly passed by the board of Commissioners of said County of Ashtabula on the 16th day of March, 2020; and that the same is a correct and true copy of said resolution.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this 16th day of March, 2020.



Lisa Hawkins, Clerk of the Board of Ashtabula County Commissioners'



GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

James W. Dvorak Timothy C. Lennon Ralph Spidalieri

470 Center Street • Building 4 • Chardon, Ohio 44024-1071

April 21, 2020

*Craig Sernik
NOC COG
385 Center St., Ste. 100
Chardon, OH 44024*

Dear Mr. Sernik:

Please be advised that during session on April 21, 2020, the Board of County Commissioners took the following action:

Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #20-045 Approving the Amended Intergovernmental Agreement for the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments (NOC COG) by and between Geauga, Ashtabula and Portage Counties.

<i>Roll Call Vote:</i>	<i>Commissioner Dvorak</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Spidalieri</i>	<i>Aye</i>
	<i>Commissioner Lennon</i>	<i>Aye</i>

Very truly yours,

*Christine Blair
Commissioners' Clerk*



GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

James W. Dvorak Timothy C. Lennon Ralph Spidalieri

470 Center Street • Building 4 • Chardon, Ohio 44024-1071

April 21, 2020

Craig Sernik
NOC COG
385 Center St., Ste. 100
Chardon, OH 44024

Dear Mr. Sernik:

Please be advised that during session on April 21, 2020, the Board of County Commissioners took the following action:

Motion: by Commissioner Dvorak, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the amended Intergovernmental Agreement for the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments, under Article III (Powers of Council), Sections ii, 4 and iv.

Roll Call Vote:	Commissioner Dvorak	Aye
	Commissioner Spidalieri	Aye
	Commissioner Lennon	Aye

Very truly yours,

Christine Blair
Commissioners' Clerk

Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

Date: April 21, 2020

Resolution: 20-045

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AMENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR THE NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (NOC COG) BY AND BETWEEN GEAUGA, ASHTABULA AND PORTAGE COUNTIES

WHEREAS, the Geauga County Board of Commissioners met this 21st day of April, 2020, in regular session to consider for approval the following proposed amended Intergovernmental Agreement for the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments (NOC COG Agreement) by and between Geauga, Ashtabula and Portage Counties.

WHEREAS, the amendments proposed for the NOC COG Agreement consist of the addition of paragraphs B(1)(c)(ii)(4) and B(1)(c)(iv) to Article III, which amendments are highlighted in the text below.

Intergovernmental Agreement for the
Northeast Ohio Consortium
Council of Governments

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement ("Intergovernmental Agreement") effective March 1, 2016, the terms and conditions of which governed the establishment of a Workforce Development Board ("WDB") Area known and referred to as the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments, also known as Ohio Workforce Development Board, Area 19.

WHEREAS, the original Intergovernmental Agreement provides for and defines what business representatives may serve on the WDB, but does not include and allow for organizations representing businesses, even though that type of organization may serve on the WDB as provided for within Section 107 (b) (2) (A) (ii) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ("WIOA").

WHEREAS, the original Intergovernmental Agreement also does not provide for requirements that at least two of the businesses represented must represent small business as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration. See 20 CFR Section 679.320.

WHEREAS, the consideration supporting this Amendment is the mutual advancement of Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties' joint interests in the delivery of workforce services as part of the NOC COG.

NOW, THEREFORE, intending to be bound by this Amendment, and in consideration of mutual promises and covenants herein contained, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties hereto agree as follows:

1. **ARTICLE III. ("POWERS OF THE COUNCIL"), Paragraph B. 1. c.** of the original Intergovernmental Agreement shall be stricken in its entirety and in its place shall read:

"c. Appointment of business representatives.

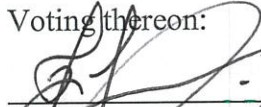
- i. Business representatives must have:
 1. an ownership interest in the business, or
 2. hold the position of chief executive officer, chief operating officer, or must be a salaried executive with optimum policymaking and/or hiring authority.
- ii. The business must meet the following criteria:
 1. provides a significant number of employment opportunities, or employment opportunities that are highly sought after because starting pay and benefits are better than average;
 2. provides its employees with high quality on the job training and development; and
 3. the business is an industry that is in-demand, and/or it employs individuals in occupations that are in-demand.

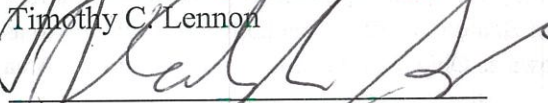
4. At least two of the eighteen businesses represented on the Board, must meet the definition of small employer as provided for within 13 CFR 121.201, the regulations governing the U.S. Small Business Administration.
- iii. All businesses to be represented, and/or the individuals appointed to fulfill a business representative position must be nominated/approved by local business organizations or trade associations, with the representative commissioner selecting whom to nominate to the NOC COG from a list of one or more nominees gathered and vetted by the staff for the NOC COG on behalf of the representative commissioner.
- iv. As an alternative to the representative of an individual business, representatives of organizations that represent the interests of businesses identified herein within Article III. B. 1. c. ii. may be appointed. This could include representatives of economic development organizations, industry and/or trade organizations, chambers of commerce, etc., whose members meet the definition of businesses to be represented on the WDB.

2. All other terms and provisions of the original March 1, 2016 Intergovernmental Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, that the proposed amended NOC COG Agreement, as described herein, is hereby approved.

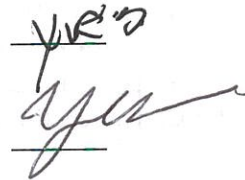
Voting thereon:


Timothy C. Lennon


Ralph Spidalieri


James W. Dvorak

Vote:





I, Christine Blair, Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of a Resolution adopted at a legally convened Board meeting held on April 21, 2020.


Christine Blair, Clerk

**Intergovernmental Agreement for the
Northeastern Ohio Consortium
Council of Governments**

This Intergovernmental Agreement ("Agreement") for the Northeastern Ohio Consortium Council of Governments ("NOC COG") is effective as of this 1st day of March, 2016 (the "Effective Date") by and between Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties of the State of Ohio.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the governing bodies of any two or more political subdivisions may enter into an Agreement establishing a regional council pursuant to the authority set forth within Ohio Revised Code Section 167.

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties originally entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement ("Intergovernmental Agreement") in March of 2004, the terms and conditions of which governed the establishment of a Workforce Investment Board ("WIB") Area known and referred to as the Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Partnership ("GAPP").

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties mutually agreed to terminate the Intergovernmental Agreement governing GAPP, with said termination becoming effective at the conclusion of the day, on June 30, 2013.

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties mutually agreed to terminate and replace the Intergovernmental Agreement that created GAPP which was entered into in March of 2004, by entering into a Governing Agreement, which became effective July 1, 2013, creating the **Northeastern Ohio Consortium Council of Governments**.

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2015, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 ("WIOA"), went into effect, with the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Government entering into a Subgrant Agreement with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services ("ODJFS") for the provision of WIOA workforce services within Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties for Program Year 2015.

WHEREAS, in order to be in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth within WIOA and its regulations, the Subgrant Agreement entered into with ODJFS, and ODJFS' WIOA policies, the NOC COG finds it necessary to terminate on February 29, 2016, the

Governing Agreement that it entered into on July 1, 2013, and enter into this Agreement, effective March 1, 2016.

DEFINITIONS.

A. "Federal, state and local laws" include all federal statutes and regulations; appropriations by the Ohio General Assembly; the Revised Code; uncodified law included in an Act, Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) rules; any federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars that a federal statute or regulation has made applicable to state and local governments; the relevant terms and conditions of any federal awards; as well as any resolutions or policies adopted by the Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Boards of County Commissioners. Federal, state and local laws also include any Governor's Executive Orders to the extent that they apply to counties and any ODJFS Procedure Manuals and Guidance Letters. The term "federal, state and local laws" includes all federal, state and local laws as listed in this paragraph and existing on the effective date of this Agreement as well as those Federal, state and local laws that are enacted, adopted, issued, effective, amended, repealed, or rescinded on or after the effective date of this Agreement.

B. "Grant" includes all funds received through a variety of means, including but not limited to WIOA.

C. "Parties" as in Parties to this Agreement means the Board of Commissioners of Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties.

NOW, THEREFORE, intending to be bound by this Agreement as of February 1, 2016, with said Agreement terminating the July 1, 2013, Governing Agreement and replacing the same in its entirety, and in consideration of foregoing premises and the mutual promises and covenants herein contained, the parties hereto agree as follows.

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE OF AGREEMENT AND COUNCIL.

A. The purpose of this Agreement is to establish the terms, conditions, and requirements governing the implementation, governance, and administration of the Northeastern Ohio Consortium Council of Governments ("NOC COG"). The terms and conditions of this Agreement comply with the requirements of federal and Ohio statute, regulations, and policy, including ODJFS Policy 15-18 regarding Local Workforce Development Area Governance.

B. The NOC COG is created for the express purpose of implementing, governing, and administering any and all workforce and economic development programming, as directed by the NOC COG Workforce Development Board ("WDB"), and as authorized and permitted

pursuant to the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, as amended, and/or any other related and/or similar workforce and/or economic development legislation enacted by federal, state, or local laws.

ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP IN THE COUNCIL.

A. The membership of the NOC COG shall be made up of Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties. Each county shall have a single seat of representation on the COG. The primary representative serving in this seat, shall be one of each of the county's county commissioners. The term of the primary representative for each member county shall be for a period of one (1) to two (2) years, with the length and starting and ending date of the term of representation to be set forth within the resolution or recorded vote passed by each Board of County Commissioners. The right of the appointed Commissioner to serve on the NOC COG shall be recognized immediately upon the publication of the recorded vote by the board of county commissioners upon the NOC COG staff. In all cases, when the representative commissioner elected/appointed ceases being a commissioner in their member county, their term as a representative of the NOC COG shall also cease. Each county representative of the NOC COG shall simultaneously serve in their capacity as a representative of the COG, and as the Local Elected Officials for the Local Area Workforce as set forth, defined, and required within the text of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. As such, the duly elected/appointed representatives of the NOC COG shall be referred to as Local Elected Officials ("LEOs").

B. If the duly appointed county commissioner of the NOC COG cannot attend any regular or special NOC COG meeting or sub-committee meeting, the duly appointed representative commissioner may arrange for a proxy to serve in his or her place. One of the other members of the board of county commissioners, by invitation of the member commissioner, may serve as a proxy to the duly appointed representative of the NOC COG at any time without their board of county commissioners taking any special action. However, a board of county commissioners may declare by resolution which commissioner shall serve as the alternate to the COG.

C. The board of county commissioners of each county may also appoint by any recorded vote, a non-commissioner proxy representative of their choosing to serve when the representative commissioner, and/or the other commissioners of the county, are unable or unwilling to attend and participate in a regularly scheduled or special NOC COG meeting. Upon submission of this recorded vote by the board of county commissioners to the staff of the NOC COG, the NOC COG shall recognize the authority of this proxy to participate in discussions and cast votes on behalf of the member county. The sole requirement for this proxy to serve is that

the proxy is a registered voter and resident of the county for whom s/he serves as a representative. While serving in place of the duly appointed NOC COG representative, the proxy representative will have all the same powers and authorities as that of the duly appointed representative commissioner of the NOC COG.

D. Pursuant to written by-laws adopted by the members of the NOC COG, the NOC COG shall organize at their first regularly scheduled meeting held on or after June 1, of each year, including holding the election of one of the LEOs as the Chief Elected Official (“CEO”), and another as Vice-Chair for a term of one year. If the elected CEO or Vice-Chair ceases to serve on the NOC COG or resigns their position as CEO or Vice-Chair, the NOC COG LEOs shall hold a new vote at its next regularly scheduled meeting to elect one of its members to preside as CEO, and/or Vice-Chair for the remainder of the term. The CEO shall hold all of the powers/authorities granted to the same within the text of the WIOA, its regulations, and/or federal, state, and local policies, unless this Agreement or the NOC COG By-laws expressly provide those powers/authorities to others. Included within those powers shall be the authority to schedule, cancel, and preside over all meetings. In the event that a member county should send multiple commissioners and/or a proxy to a NOC COG meeting and there be a dispute as to who should represent the county, the CEO will recognize the rights of one representative to speak on all issues and vote, in the following ranked order:

1. the appointed primary, representative commissioner;
2. any other commissioner from the county, recognizing of those two other commissioners, the commissioners in the following order:
 - a. the commissioner appointed by the county’s board as an alternate;
 - b. the commissioner invited by the member representative commissioner to serve in his/her place as noticed in writing to the NOC COG staff or CEO;
 - c. the ranking position held by the commissioner on their respective board of commissioners (President, Vice-President, etc.).

E. Any regular or proxy NOC COG representative may resign their position on the COG at any time by giving written notice to the board of county commissioners who made their appointment. Any regular or proxy NOC COG representative may be removed from their position on the COG at any time, with or without cause, by recorded vote of the board of county commissioners who made their appointment. The resignation and/or removal shall take effect at the time specified therein. All representative positions shall be considered vacated upon the death of the individual. Replacements for vacancies on the NOC COG created by removal, resignation, or death shall be addressed by the member county within forty-five (45) days after the position on the NOC COG is vacated.

F. The CEO shall schedule a meeting at least annually, to review the operations, performance, and finances of NOC COG at a time and place convenient to all three Boards of county Commissioners. During this meeting, potential amendments to this Agreement, state and federal performance reports, audits, and individual county performance statistics will be reviewed. The Executive Director for the NOC COG, shall provide an annual report to each Board of county Commissioners detailing the activity, performance, and finances of the NOC COG to be given at the annual meeting. The Executive Director shall provide additional written and/or verbal reports to the collective or individual Board of county Commissioners as they are requested.

ARTICLE III. POWERS OF THE COUNCIL.

A. General Powers. The NOC COG is empowered by each of the respective boards of county commissioners who are members of the same, to take any and all actions consistent with those provided for within Section 167.03 of the Ohio Revised Code, as amended, in furtherance of implementing, governing, and administering any and all workforce and economic development programming authorized and permitted pursuant to the federal Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act of 2014, as amended, and/or any other related and/or similar workforce and/or economic development legislation enacted by federal, state, or local laws.

B. Specific Powers. In furtherance with the General Powers conferred upon the NOC COG by this Agreement and pursuant to Section 167.03 of the Ohio Revised Code, the NOC COG is also empowered with all of the following specific powers.

1. Appointment of the Local Workforce Development Board (“WDB”) representatives.

a. The NOC COG WDB shall consist of thirty-three (33) member representatives, as detailed in **Exhibit A**, which is attached hereto and incorporated in its entirety as part of this Agreement by this reference. Each of the three counties that are represented by the NOC COG shall have a total of ten (10) members appointed to serve on the Area WDB. In addition to these thirty (30) members, the CEO of the NOC COG shall nominate for appointment by the NOC COG to the WDB an additional three (3) at large member representatives as detailed within **Exhibit A**.

b. The commissioner appointed by a county to serve as the member representative on the NOC COG shall consider all individuals recommended or nominated to him or her for inclusion onto the WDB. For all WDB representative positions that are open and to be appointed by the member county, the NOC COG commissioner for that county shall

make a determination of whether the recommended/nominated individuals provided to the commissioner are eligible to serve on the WDB based upon the criteria set forth within this Agreement. From those individuals that are eligible, the commissioner shall nominate to the NOC COG Board a single candidate for appointment to the WDB for each open WDB representative position, that his/her county has the authority to appoint. At any regularly or specialized scheduled meeting of the NOC COG, the NOC COG shall by majority vote agree to accept or reject the commissioner's nomination. Similarly, should a commissioner wish to remove an individual that is serving within a WDB position, s/he may ask the NOC COG Board to remove that individual by majority vote at any regularly or specialized scheduled meeting of the NOC COG. The NOC COG Board shall have the sole authority appoint and/or remove at its will the members to the WDB that each county has the power to appoint in accordance with criteria established under Section 107 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, and as set forth within **Exhibit A**, and as follows within this Agreement.

c. Appointment of business representatives.

- i. Business representatives must have:
 - 1. an ownership interest in the business, or
 - 2. hold the position of chief executive officer, chief operating officer, or must be a salaried executive with optimum policymaking and/or hiring authority.
- ii. The business must meet the following criteria:
 - 1. provides a significant number of employment opportunities, or employment opportunities that are highly sought after because starting pay and benefits are better than average;
 - 2. provides its employees with high quality on the job training and development; and
 - 3. the business is an industry that is in-demand, and/or it employs individuals in occupations that are in-demand.
- iii. All businesses to be represented, and/or the individuals appointed to fulfill a business representative position must be nominated by local business organizations or trade associations, with the representative commissioner selecting whom to nominate to the NOC COG from a list of

nominees gathered and vetted by the staff for the NOC COG on behalf of the representative commissioner.

d. Appointment of labor representatives. All labor representatives will be nominated by local labor federations, if they are present within the WDB Area. If there is no presence of a local labor federation, the nomination of a representative by any other union or any other organization that represents employees will suffice. The individual nominated should have managerial and/or executive authority.

e. Appointment of apprenticeship program representative. The individual will be a member of a labor organization, or a training director from a joint labor-management, registered, apprenticeship program. If no such program exists within the Area, a representative of any registered apprenticeship program will suffice. Eligible individuals will be nominated by the organization that registers apprenticeship programs for the State of Ohio based upon their list of registered apprenticeship programs.

f. Appointment of local community based organization representatives. The organization must have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment needs of individuals with barriers to employment (including but not limited to serving veterans and/or disabled individuals). The individual nominated should have managerial and/or executive authority. Eligible individuals will be nominated by the County Departments of Job and Family Services.

g. Appointment of local youth education, and/or WIOA youth programming representative. The organization must have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of out-of-school, WIOA eligible youth. The individual nominated should have managerial and/or executive authority. Eligible individuals will be nominated by the County Departments of Job and Family Services.

h. Appointment of adult education and literacy activities under Title II, representative, and local vocational education center representative. The organization must have demonstrated experience and expertise in providing Title II adult education and literacy activities. Where there is an organization that also operates a local vocational education center in

addition to providing Title II activities, this organization shall serve as the representative. The individual nominated should have managerial and/or executive authority. Eligible individuals will be nominated by the County Departments of Job and Family Services.

i. Appointment of workforce higher education representative. The organization must be one that is eligible to provide Individual Training Accounts pursuant to the WIOA. The organization will be selected by the CEO for the NOC COG from a list of eligible providers secured by the NOC COG staff. The preferred organization for the Area will be a representative of one of the Kent State campuses, as Kent State is located within each of the WDB's counties. The individual nominated should have managerial and/or executive authority.

j. Appointment of economic development representatives. The organization must be one that is actively engaged in economic development within the county for which they are appointed. No nomination is required. The individual nominated should have managerial and/or executive authority.

k. Appointment of representative from Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services who satisfies the Wagner Peyser and Veterans representative requirement. This individual will be the regional director for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, and appointed by the CEO for the NOC COG.

l. Appointment of representative from the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities. This individual will be the regional director or another member of management for Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, and appointed by the CEO for the NOC COG.

m. Appointment of representative from transportation, housing, public assistance, and/or philanthropic organizations. The organization must have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the needs of individuals with barriers to employment (including but not limited to serving veterans and/or disabled individuals). The individual nominated should have managerial and/or executive authority. Eligible individuals will be nominated by the County Departments of Job and Family Services.

n. Upon the adoption of this Agreement by all three of the member counties' boards of county commissioners, the staff of the NOC COG shall provide to each representative commissioner appointed to serve on the NOC COG a list of those currently serving on the Workforce Board, a copy of this Agreement containing the qualifications for serving on the WDB, and a summary of those currently serving's qualifications. If the individual currently serves on the Workforce Board, that the individual possess the qualifications set forth herein, except s/he need not be nominated as set forth within this Agreement. If the representative commissioner desires to reappoint any qualified individual to a representative spot on the WDB, and that individual indicates that s/he will accept the same, the individual will be appointed for a term running from February 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

o. After each representative commissioner on the NOC COG Board has determined which Workforce Board members it desires to reappoint to the WDB, the representative commissioner will then consider nominations as set forth within to fill all remaining vacant WDB representative seats. Each individual appointed, shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years commencing with the date of appointment provided within their appointment letter. Thereafter, the representative commissioner will appoint individuals to seats on the WDB, as those seats become vacant, for two (2) year terms. There shall be no cap on the total number of terms that an individual may serve on the WDB.

p. All individuals appointed by a member commissioner will continue to serve for the full length of their appointed term unless one or more of the following occurs:

1. The individual is removed from the WDB following the issuance of a written notice of fourteen (14) days to the individual, by and at the sole discretion of the commissioner serving on the NOC COG whose county appointed the individual to serve as representative to the WDB. In the case of the three at-large WDB members, this would be the commissioner who is the CEO.
2. The individual resigns from the WDB.
3. This Agreement is terminated, and/or the WDB is dissolved.

q. The representative commissioner responsible for appointing individuals to serve on the WDB, shall seek to fill all vacant positions within forty-five (45) days from the position becoming vacant.

r. The Executive Director of the NOC COG will keep attendance at all WDB meeting and advise the member commissioners of all representatives who miss two (2) or more consecutively scheduled meetings so that the representative commissioner may determine if they wish to remove that representative and replace the same.

s. The WDB for the Local Area Workforce shall meet at such times and places as necessary to perform the duties of a WDB established pursuant to Section 107 of the Workforce Investment Act. At a minimum, the NOC COG WDB shall meet no less than once every quarter, four (4) times a year. The WDB shall be responsible for advising the NOC COG on all material issues associated with the use and/or investment of WIOA funding, and the NOC COG shall serve as the managerial agent of the WDB in implementing the direction and policies generated by the same.

t. The WDB shall adopt and maintain their own, separate set of by-laws governing its existence and operation. Said by-laws shall address attendance requirements, and the ability of representatives to send a qualified proxy from their organization to attend a meeting, and/or conduct WDB business on his/her behalf.

2. Adoption of By-Laws.

The representative membership of the NOC COG shall adopt a new set of by-laws, by a majority vote of its members, at its first duly noticed public meeting after the Commissioners enter into this Agreement. The by-laws shall at a minimum address all of the following as set forth within Section 167.04 of the Ohio Revised Code:

- Election of NOC COG officers.
- Appointment of fiscal officer/agent as required by Ohio Revised Code Section 167.04.

3. Employment of Personnel.

As set forth and provided within Section 167.05 of the Ohio Revised Code, the NOC COG may employ staff and/or contract for the services of consultants and experts in order to execute its general and specific powers as set forth within this Agreement, as it deems necessary and appropriate in the manner set forth by the by-laws, policies, and procedures drafted and adopted by the NOC COG, and in accordance with all applicable federal and state employment laws. The same shall address at a minimum the following:

- a. job descriptions including qualifications and duties of the same;
- b. terms and conditions of employment;
- c. evaluation process; and
- d. process for discipline and/or termination.

4. Financing of Programs, and Serving as the WDB's Fiscal Agent.

a. It is agreed that the WDB fiscal agent will be responsible for compliance with state and federal fiscal reporting requirements. All OhioMeansJobs operators, contractors and/or sub-grantees will furnish to the fiscal agent, in a timely manner, all fiscal information under their control necessary to complete state and/or federal reporting requirements.

b. It is agreed that all fiscal agreements shall be subject to federal, state, and local laws including, but not limited to, limitations on use of program funds, cost allocation requirements, procurement requirements, reporting requirements, and audit requirements. This shall include but not be limited to drafting the request for proposals, scoring proposals, selecting winning bids, responding to procurement appeals, negotiating with the selected entities, and drafting and awarding the contract for:

- i. the OhioMeansJobs Center Operator;
- ii. Adult and Dislocated Worker services providers;
- iii. Youth Program Services.

c. Upon receiving the advice and direction of the WDB, the NOC COG may by majority vote, either within its by-laws, or by vote, appoint itself as the fiscal agent for the WDB, or in the alternative, will contract with a qualified entity to serve as fiscal agent for the WDB. As such, the NOC COG will maintain final authority over the authorization of all draws and expenditures, including those within and outside of the local Area, and be responsible for participating in all audit procedures. Either the NOC COG, or its duly appointed fiscal agent, may employ such persons, make

or approve such agreements, and establish policies and procedures including, but not limited to, fiscal policies relative to procurement, auditing, fiscal monitoring, and overall fiscal administration and operational procedures as are necessary to conduct business and comply with state and federal laws. Area administrative monies will be used to pay for the costs associated with contracting with and/or employing the fiscal agent. The primary financing for the workforce and economic programming overseen by the NOC COG shall be the funding provided through WIOA, and/or through other federal, state, and local grants secured by the NOC COG. The NOC COG, based upon the advice and counsel provided by the WDB, shall determine, implement, and administer the division of all WIOA and grant funds allocated.

d. With the exception of instances in which grant monies are to be repaid as set forth within this Agreement, it is agreed that the NOC COG may not establish dues or a required contribution that the member counties would have to pay in order to support NOC COG. Should the NOC COG agree by majority vote that additional money is needed from the member counties, it will petition or request each of those member counties within a written request for the provision of the same.

5. Contracting for Goods and Services.

As set forth and provided within Sections 167.05 and 167.08 of the Ohio Revised Code, the NOC COG may purchase or lease supplies, materials, equipment, and facilities in order to execute its general and specific powers as set forth within this Agreement, as it deems necessary and appropriate in the manner and via the procedures established by the by-laws of the NOC COG.

6. OhioMeansJobs Service Delivery.

The NOC COG, as the LEOs for the local workforce area, will listen to the WDB's input, and any standing committee formed by the WDB that addresses OhioMeansJobs issues, and in doing the same, implement its instructions, after providing its own input on each of the following issues:

- a. In what counties OMJ Centers will be located.
- b. Determining what county will contain the location of the comprehensive OMJ Center.
- c. In what location within the county an OMJ Center will be located.

- d. The design of OMJ Centers.
- e. Consulting with the WDB and administering their direction in relation to the request for proposals, scoring proposals, selecting winning bids, responding to procurement appeals, negotiating with the selected entities, and drafting and awarding the contract for OMJ Center operators.
- f. Negotiating and approving the final draft of the Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”), including its budget, and all of its appendices and attachments.
- g. Handling directly or contracting to the OMJ Center operator all issues associated with collecting income from partners, overseeing compensation of the OMJ Center operators for their expenses, and overseeing reconciling and accounting of the same.
- h. Assigning its agents and/or staff to work in conjunction with the WDB to monitor and oversee the OMJ Center operation, including engaging in activities in furtherance of the certification of the OMJ Center’s operations.

The NOC COG has an open door policy and shall require its OMJ Center operators to do the same, and consider the suggestions and requests of all OMJ Center partners and stakeholders during its administration of all of the proceeding OMJ Center matters. In addition to receiving input in this manner, OMJ Center partners and stakeholders may also provide their suggestions and requests at all of the following forums:

- a. WDB meetings;
- b. OMJ Center Standing Committees if the WDB creates the same;
- c. NOC COG meetings;
- d. OMJ Center Operator partner meetings.

7. Performance accountability.

The NOC COG and WDB for the local workforce area shall measure the performance of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Employer services primarily through the performance measures set forth within federal law and regulation, and any performance measures in addition to those established by the State of Ohio, to the extent that those measures are legally valid, enforceable, and not in contradiction of federal law. As WIOA services are provided by different providers within different counties, the Area will monitor performance on a county-by-county basis. At each WDB and NOC COG meeting, performance will be a standing agenda item for discussion. The NOC COG, working in conjunction with

the WDB may implement additional performance measures at its discretion, at any time.

The NOC COG, through its Board staff will engage with ODJFS regarding the negotiation of local performance measures with ODJFS.

8. Serving as the WDB's Agent for Performing the Miscellaneous Duties Provided and Required to the Local Area WDB.

The NOC COG shall serve as the WDB's agent for the purposes of executing and administering the functions of the local area's WDB as set forth within Section 107 of the WIOA. This shall include but not be limited to all of the following:

- a. Development and submission of a regional and local plan.
- b. Engage in research and regional labor market analysis.
- c. Convening local workforce development system stakeholders, and leveraging and brokering resources for the performance of services.
- d. Engaging employers.
- e. Developing career pathways.
- f. Leading efforts to identify and promote proven and promising workforce practices.
- g. Develop strategies using technology to maximize accessibility and effectiveness of the workforce system.
- h. Conduct program monitoring and oversight.
- i. Coordination with education providers.
- j. Engaging in budget and administration.
- k. Assessing physical and programmatic accessibility for individuals with disabilities.
- l. Adhering to Ohio's sunshine and public records' provisions.
- m. Recognizing and avoiding conflicts of interest. Should the NOC COG engage as employees both board staff and the fiscal agent, the NOC COG will administer within its internal fiscal policies and procedures, terms and conditions providing for the simultaneous employment of board and fiscal agent staff, and providing for checks and balances that will adequately address any conflicts of interest, if any, raised by that simultaneous employment.
- n. Negotiating and entering into all contractual agreements with all Grantors, Subgrantees, and other contracting entities.
- o. Establishing policy and procedures that promote all of the preceding.

9. Acting on Behalf of Each Member County and Securing the Input of all Elected Officials of those Member Counties.

Each of the following methods shall allow for each member county's elected commissioners to provide input into workforce decisions:

- a. As each member county is represented on the NOC COG by commissioner representatives, it shall be incumbent upon those commissioners to regularly provide information and to gather input from their fellow county commissioners in order to assist making both regular and special/critical decisions.
- b. As set forth within this Agreement, Article II., Section (F), on at least an annual basis or more often as scheduled by the CEO, the staff of the NOC COG shall make a complete report to a special meeting convened for the benefit of obtaining the input of all nine (9) of the local area's commissioners.
- c. All NOC COG and WDB meetings, and the schedule of the same will be made known to the commissioners of each county, and they will have an opportunity to appear and speak at any of those, should they elect to do so.

ARTICLE IV. ALLOCATION AND RE-ALLOCATION OF AREA FUNDS.

Whenever grant funds are allocated to the Area, the NOC COG shall report the allocation of the same to the NOC COG at the next regularly scheduled or special meeting. It is agreed that where the allocation of funds have been allocated by the granting authority with certain amounts attributed to or designated for a specific entity or geographic jurisdiction, such as a county, the NOC COG's agents and/or staff, including the Fiscal Agent, shall initially assign the allocation of said grants as income and expenditures available for that entity and/or geographic jurisdiction. Where the allocation of funds is not specifically attributed to or designated for a specific entity or geographic jurisdiction, said funds shall be allocated pursuant to the direction provided by the WDB and/or NOC COG based upon a rational division attributed to earning the same or merit, with said division being approved by a majority vote by those NOC COG members in attendance at a regularly scheduled or special meeting.

Each allocated grant received by the NOC COG has a grant term measured from the date that the grant may be spent through the closing date of the grant. During the first half of all grant terms for grants allocated to a specific entity or geographic jurisdiction, the grant funds may not be allocated or made available to other entities or jurisdictions, unless by unanimous vote by those NOC COG members in attendance at a regularly scheduled or special meeting. After the first half of a grant term for grants allocated to a specific entity or geographic jurisdiction has ended, those remaining grant funds that have not been expensed or accrued, maybe made available via reallocation by the Fiscal Agent to other entities or jurisdictions, following a majority vote of those NOC COG members in attendance at a regularly scheduled or special meeting. Consideration shall be given to what funds have been obligated before they are reallocated.

ARTICLE V. LIABILITY.

In the event that a non-performance sanction, disallowed cost, misspent funds, or audit exception resulting in repayment of monies is levied by the State of Ohio against the NOC COG, the CEO, without delay will notify the board of commissioners of each of the NOC COG counties of the sanction, disallowed cost, or audit exception requiring repayment. The CEO will examine the reasons cited for the sanction, disallowed cost, or audit exception and make a recommendation to the three boards of county commissioners on all of the following issues:

- whether the NOC COG should appeal or accept the sanction, disallowed cost, finding of misspent funds or audit exception requiring repayment;
- whether the NOC COG can address the sanction, disallowed costs, or audit exception by returning or paying WIOA or other grant monies, and/or one or more member counties will have to use county funds to repay the same;
- whether the evidence of the liability associated with the performance sanction, disallowed cost, or audit exception requiring repayment supports a conclusion of individual liability for one or more of the member counties, and/or whether the liability cannot be assigned to an individual member county and should be collectively shared; and
- the amounts to be repaid with grant monies or county funds by each member county, based upon a determination of individual and/or collective liability.

Each board of county commissioners will, at their earliest opportunity, resolve to approve or disapprove the recommendation of the CEO and convey their response to the CEO and the other boards of commissioners. If one or more member counties disagrees with the recommendation of the CEO, the CEO shall schedule a special public meeting of the combined boards of commissioners who shall meet to resolve the issue, and the NOC COG shall take action based upon a vote taken at this special meeting. In order for this meeting to occur, a minimum of six

(6) Commissioners must be present. In order for any decision to be binding, any action must receive a majority of the votes by the commissioners assembled. Any decision reached and the reason for the decision will be conveyed in writing to the appropriate governmental entities by the NOC COG.

When the member counties agree with the CEO's determination, and/or the majority of commissioners agree on an action at a special public meeting, the member counties agree to the following with respect to repaying and/or returning monies.

A. Repayment using member county monies where individual county liability has been determined. Where a final determination has been made that one or more counties have to repay grant funding using county funds, either by acceptance of liability by the individual county board of commissioners, or following the special meeting of all member county boards of commissioners, said county must enter into an Agreement with the granting authority and/or the NOC COG to repay said funds to the granting authority within ninety (90) days following the final determination. Failure to do so shall constitute a material breach of this Agreement.

B. Repayment using member county monies where collective liability of two or more member counties has been determined. The member counties agree that in the event that the State of Ohio or federal government levies a performance sanction, disallowed cost, or audit exception, that applies generally to the NOC COG WDB or NOC COG, and not to a specific member county, requiring the payment of county monies; the return shall be based upon the percentage of grant funds received by each member county. The percentage shall be determined by the NOC COG, based upon the percentage of grant funding received by the NOC COG, and allocated to the member counties. If the event requiring the repayment of member county monies occurred with respect to a particular grant line or grant allocation, the percentage of grant monies to be returned or reduced shall be based upon the allocation percentages of that grant. If the event requiring the return or reduction occurred in a particular year or years, the percentage of grant monies to be returned or reduced shall be based upon the allocation percentages of those years. If the event requiring the return or reduction is not related to a particular grant line(s) or grant year(s), the money shall be returned based upon the total of all grants or grant lines awarded to each county, based upon the grant year in which the monies are to be repaid.

C. Where a final determination has been made that two or more counties have to repay grant funding using county funds, either by acceptance of each county board of commissioners of liability, or following the special meeting of all member county boards of commissioners, said county must enter into an Agreement to repay said funds to the granting authority within ninety (90) days following the final determination. Failure to do so shall constitute a breach of this Agreement.

D. Returning or reduction of WIOA or other state or federal grant monies where there is individual liability. Repayment using WIOA grant or other grant monies (non-county monies) where individual county liability has been determined. Where a final determination has been made by acceptance of the member counties, and/or by special vote of all the board of commissioners of the three member counties, that one or more counties have to return or reduce grant funding, the NOC COG shall enter into an Agreement to return or reduce said funds to the granting authority within ninety (90) days following the final determination. The return or reduction of the grant money will be accounted for by the NOC COG fiscal officer and agent by reducing the amount of funds available for each member county by the corresponding amount reduced and/or returned.

E. Returning or reduction of WIA or other State or Federal grant monies where there is no individual liability. The member counties agree that in the event that the State of Ohio or federal government levies a performance sanction, disallowed cost, or audit exception, that applies generally to the NOC COG WDB or NOC COG, and not to a specific member county, requiring the return of allocated funds or reduction of allocated funds after the allocation has occurred, the return shall be based upon the percentage of funds received by each member county. The percentage shall be determined by the NOC COG, based upon the percentage of grant funding received by the NOC COG, and allocated to the member counties. If the event requiring the return or reduction occurred with respect to a particular grant line or grant allocation, the percentage of grant monies to be returned or reduced shall be based upon the allocation percentages of that grant. If the event requiring the return or reduction occurred in a particular year or years, the percentage of grant monies to be returned or reduced shall be based upon the allocation percentages of those years. If the event requiring the return or reduction is not related to a particular grant line(s) or grant year(s), the money shall be returned based upon the total of all grants or grant lines awarded to each county, based upon the grant year in which the monies are to be repaid.

F. The NOC COG shall enter into an Agreement to return or reduce said funds to the granting authority within ninety (90) days following the final determination. The return or reduction of the grant money will be accounted for by the NOC COG Fiscal Agent by reducing the amount of funds available for each member county by the corresponding amount reduced and/or returned.

ARTICLE VI. AGREED UPON PENALTY FOR BREACH OF ARTICLE V., LIABILITY, OF THIS AGREEMENT.

Should any member county commit a material breach of this Agreement as set forth within "Article V. Liability" of this Agreement, the NOC COG may by majority vote, at a regular or specially scheduled meeting, indefinitely suspend all WIOA and related workforce services and

the payment for the same, contracted for by the NOC COG and/or NOC COG WDB within the breaching member county, immediately following the holding of said vote. The NOC COG, will reinstate and arrange for the resumption of all services and payment for the same, by a majority vote, at the next regularly scheduled or special meeting once the material breach is cured.

ARTICLE VII. DISPUTE RESOLUTION.

The parties to this Agreement agree to attempt to resolve all differences amicably first by mediation if so elected by the parties pursuant to the terms and conditions of this Agreement. Should mediation not be elected or not resolve the matters, the parties to this Agreement have agreed to waive any and all interests to engaging in advocacy or litigation before any administrative or court forum, jurisdiction, or tribunal, and instead litigate and resolve all disputes through binding arbitration pursuant to the terms and conditions set forth within this Agreement.

A. Mediation.

The NOC COG will make efforts to resolve all disputes informally and at the earliest time possible. Except for disputes relating to the subjects contained within "Article IV. Liability," when any of the commissioner representatives disagrees with any action or inaction by another party to this Agreement, the parties agree to contact each other in an effort to clarify any misunderstandings and to attempt to resolve disagreements. Any county commissioner may submit a disputed issue, in writing, to the CEO. The LEOs will review the issue, attempt to resolve the issue, and provide a determination in writing. If the commissioner that submitted the issue is not satisfied with the decision, the commissioner may request that the matter be referred to the Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution for further dispute resolution. The matter will be submitted for dispute resolution if a majority of the NOC COG votes to refer the matter. The final decision on all non-liability issues shall be solely determined by the member representatives of the NOC COG by majority vote.

B. Binding Arbitration in Place of Litigation.

The parties to this Agreement agree that in all cases, binding arbitration as set forth within this document, as opposed to litigation in any other court, venue, and/or forum, will be the sole and only means of resolving all disputes, regardless of the outcome of any mediation.

1. If there are any outstanding disputes that cannot be resolved in any manner short of an advocated outcome, any of the parties to this Agreement may submit the matter to final and binding arbitration by submitting notice to the other parties to this Agreement of their intent to arbitrate and select an arbitrator for such dispute.

2. The parties will obtain a seven member arbitrator panel list from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services.
3. The party seeking the arbitration and the remaining parties shall use the alternate strike method from the list of seven (7) arbitrators from the panel of arbitrators. The party requesting the arbitration shall be the first to strike a name and alternate in this manner until one (1) name remains on the list. The remaining name shall be designated as the arbitrator to hear the dispute in question. All procedures relative to the hearing shall be in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.
4. The arbitrator shall hold the arbitration promptly and issue his/her decision within a reasonable time thereafter. The arbitrator shall limit his/her decision strictly to the interpretation, application or enforcement of those specific articles and/or sections of this Agreement in question. The arbitrator's decision shall be consistent with applicable federal and/or Ohio law.
5. The arbitrator shall not have the authority to add to, subtract from, modify, change or alter any provisions of this Agreement; nor add to, subtract from or modify the language therein in arriving at his/her determination on any issue presented that is proper within the limitations expressed herein. The arbitrator shall expressly confine himself/herself to the precise issues submitted for arbitration and shall have no authority to determine any other issues not submitted to him/her or to submit observations or declarations of opinion which are not directly essential in reaching a decision on the issue in question. The arbitrator shall be without authority to recommend any right or relief on an alleged dispute occurring at any time other than the Agreement period in which such right originated or to make any award based on rights arising under any previous agreement, dispute or practices.
6. The decision of the arbitrator and any pre-arbitration settlement shall be final and binding upon all parties. The arbitrator's fee shall be borne by the losing party or parties. Should the decision not affirm the position of either party, the arbitrator shall determine which party shall pay the fee of the arbitrator, or in what proportion the parties shall share the fee.
7. Expenses of any witnesses shall be borne by the party calling the witness. The fees of court reporters shall be paid by the party asking for one: such fees shall be split equally if both parties desire a court report's recording, or request a copy of any transcript.

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENT OR ADDENDUM.

This Agreement may be amended or added to at any time by the written, signed consent of the parties. Amendments to this agreement shall require the passage of a recorded vote or resolution by the board of county commissioners for each county.

ARTICLE IX. TERM OF AGREEMENT.

This Agreement shall take effect upon passage of all three county commissioners' resolutions by each member county approving this Agreement, and shall remain in effect until terminated in accordance with this paragraph or until the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is otherwise repealed, and not replaced with substantively similar workforce legislation.

Any member county may terminate this Agreement with an effective termination date on June 30th of the following year, by a recorded vote to that effect on or before December 31st of the prior year in which termination is to occur. Provision of an application submitted to ODJFS by the commissioners of a member county seeking to be reassigned to another workforce development area, with a copy provided to the other member counties prior to the year in which that new reassignment to occur shall constitute adequate notice, and termination of this Agreement shall be effective June 30, the end of the following Program Year, or on the date set by ODJFS on which workforce development area reassignment is permitted to occur, whichever date is later. Termination of this Agreement shall not affect the liabilities incurred prior to the termination date.

ARTICLE X. ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH TERMINATION.

Upon proper notice of termination of this Agreement, the NOC COG shall continue to exercise its powers until the effective termination date of this Agreement. Following termination of this Agreement, the NOC COG and/or its employees and agents may only exercise such powers as to enable it to pay and discharge all debts, expenses, and charges legally incurred hereunder, and dispose of, divide, and distribute any property required as a result of this Agreement. These powers shall include the ability to sell or otherwise dispose of property, and distribute to the federal, state, and/or local governments such property and funds as lawfully required.

ARTICLE XI. SEVERABILITY AND ENFORCEABILITY.

Nothing contained in this Agreement or any by-laws promulgated pursuant thereto, shall be construed to authorize any action which any party is not authorized by law to undertake. Should

any part, term or provision of this Agreement be decided by an arbitrator or court of competent jurisdiction to be illegal or in conflict with any federal or state laws or regulations, or otherwise be rendered unenforceable or ineffectual, the validity of the remaining portion or provision shall not be affected thereby.

ARTICLE XII. SIGNATURES ACCEPTABLE ON MULTIPLE PAGES.

This document shall be enforceable once it has been signed by at least two of three Commissioners from each member county, following a recorded vote for the county to enter into this Agreement. Signatures on a single or on multiple signature pages shall be acceptable.

EXHIBIT A MEMBERSHIP of NOC COG Workforce Development Board

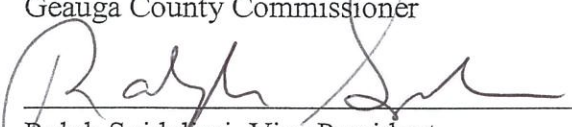
	Appointed by:				
Type of Seat	Geauga County Commissioners	Ashtabula County Commissioners	Portage County Commissioners	Area Chief Elected Official	Total
Business Community Reps.	6	6	6		18
Representatives from Labor		1	1		2
Representative from Apprenticeship	1				1
Representative of Local Community Based Organization.	1	1	1		3
Representative of the Local Education/Youth Agencies			1		1
Representative of the ABLE Program/Vocational Training Center		1			1
Representative of Workforce Higher Education				1	1
Representative of Economic Development	1	1	1		3
Representative from Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services who satisfies the Wagner Peyser and Veterans Representative requirement				1	1
Representative of the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities				1	1
Representative from transportation, housing, public assistance, and/or philanthropic organizations.	1				1
Total	10	10	10	3	33

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the Parties hereto have executed this Governing Agreement, with the intent to enter into the same, effective March 1, 2016. This Agreement shall be binding once two of three Commissioners for each member county have executed a copy of the signature page for this Agreement.

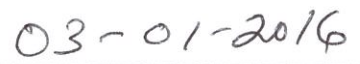


Walter M. Claypool, President
Geauga County Commissioner

Date



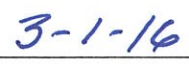
Ralph Spidaleri, Vice President
Geauga County Commissioner



Date



Blake A. Rear, Board Member
Geauga County Commissioner



Date

Peggy A. Carlo, President
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

Daniel R. Claypool, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

Casey Kozlowski, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

Maureen T. Frederick, President
Portage County Commissioner

Date

Vicki A. Kline, Vice President
Portage County Commissioner

Date

Kathleen Chandler, Board Member
Portage County Commissioner

Date

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Walter M. Claypool, President
Geauga County Commissioner

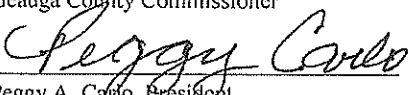
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Ralph Spidalieri, Vice President
Geauga County Commissioner

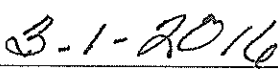
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Blake A. Rear, Board Member
Geauga County Commissioner

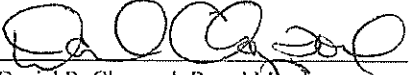
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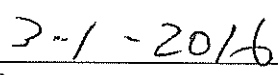
Peggy A. Carlo, President
Ashtabula County Commissioner



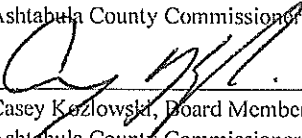
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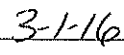
Daniel R. Claypool, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner



Date



Casey Kozlowski, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner



Date

Maureen T. Frederick, President
Portage County Commissioner

Date

Vicki A. Kline, Vice President
Portage County Commissioner

Date

Kathleen Chandler, Board Member
Portage County Commissioner

Date

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Walter M. Claypool, President
Geauga County Commissioner

Date

Ralph Spidalieri, Vice President
Geauga County Commissioner

Date

Blake A. Rear, Board Member
Geauga County Commissioner

Date

Peggy A. Carlo, President
Ashtabula County Commissioner

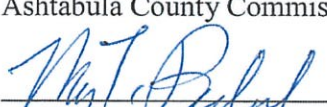
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Daniel R. Claypool, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

Casey Kozlowski, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner

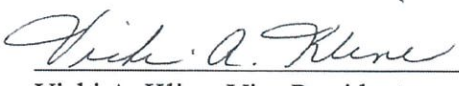
Date



Maureen T. Frederick, President
Portage County Commissioner

3/3/16

Date



Vicki A. Kline, Vice President
Portage County Commissioner

3/3/16

Date



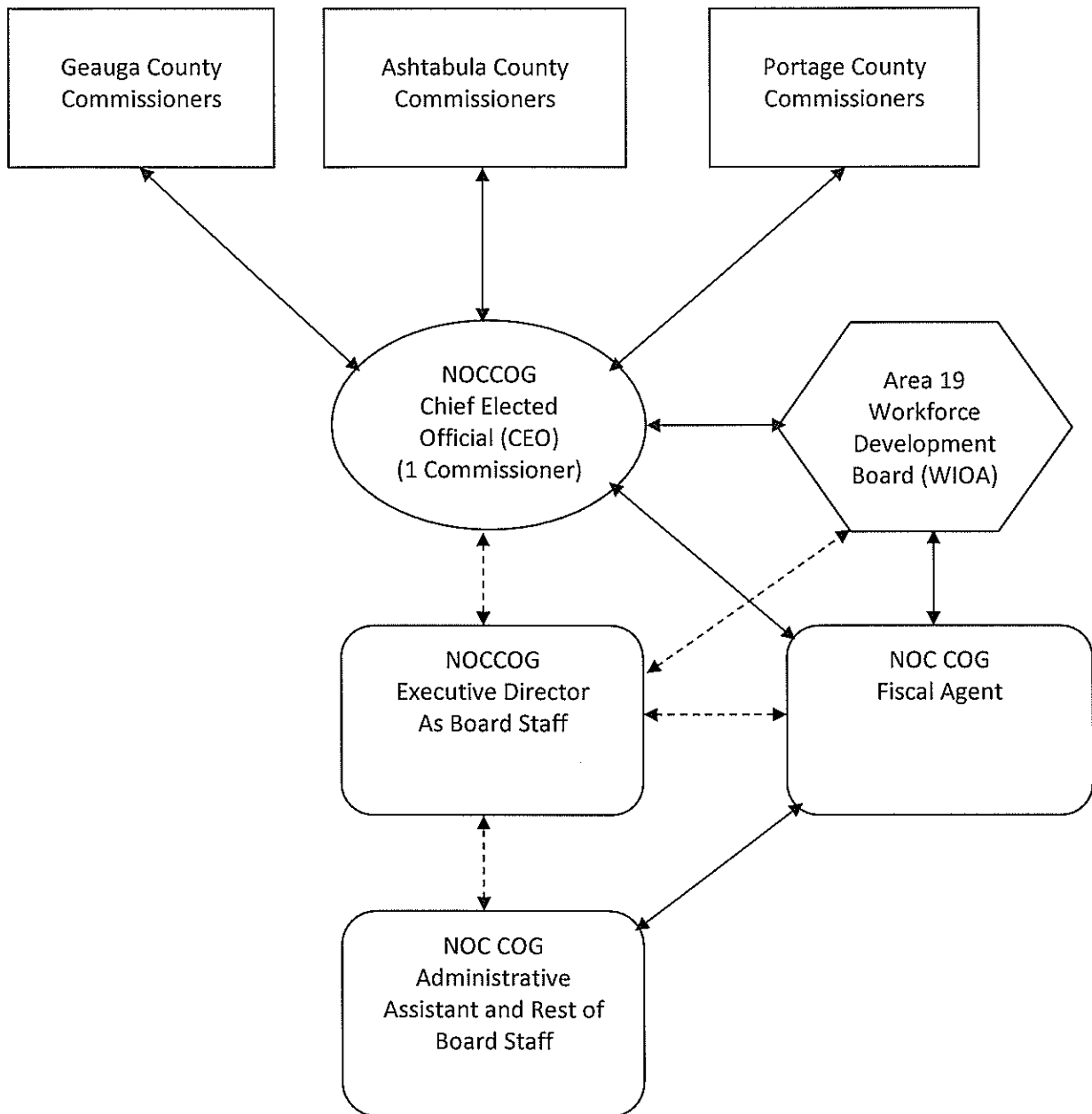
Kathleen Chandler, Board Member
Portage County Commissioner

3/3/16

Date

Appendix Four

Organizational Chart for the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments and Area 19 Workforce Development Board



Board of County Commissioners, Geauga County, Ohio

Date: March 1, 2016

Resolution: #16-029

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FEBRUARY 29, 2016 TERMINATION OF THE NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (NOC COG) GOVERNING AGREEMENT ESTABLISHED ON JULY 1, 2013 AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE ENTRY INTO A INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT COMPLIANT WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS SET FORTH WITHIN WIOA AND ITS REGULATIONS, THE SUBGRANT AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO WITH ODJFS, AND ODJFS' WIOA POLICIES, COMMENCING MARCH 1, 2016.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners for Geauga County authorized the County's entry into a Intergovernmental Agreement for the Northeast Ohio Council of Governments ("Intergovernmental Agreement"), with said Agreement going into effect March 1, 2016;

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Agreement created a regional council of government as recognized pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, to which Geauga County is a member, for the express purpose of implementing, governing and administering workforce and economic development programming;

WHEREAS, the governing bodies of any two or more political subdivisions may enter into an Agreement establishing a regional council pursuant to the authority set forth within Ohio Revised Code Section 167.

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties originally entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement ("Intergovernmental Agreement") in March of 2004, the terms and conditions of which governed the establishment of a Workforce Investment Board ("WIB") Area known and referred to as the Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Partnership ("GAPP").

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties mutually agreed to terminate the Intergovernmental Agreement governing GAPP, with said termination becoming effective at the conclusion of the day, on June 30, 2013.

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties mutually agreed to terminate and replace the Intergovernmental Agreement that created GAPP which was entered into in March of 2004, by entering into a Governing Agreement, which became effective July 1, 2013, creating the **Northeastern Ohio Consortium Council of Governments**.

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2015, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 ("WIOA"), went into effect, with the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Government entering into a Subgrant Agreement with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services ("ODJFS") for the provision of WIOA workforce services within Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties for Program Year 2015.

WHEREAS, in order to be in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth within WIOA and its regulations, the Subgrant Agreement entered into with ODJFS, and ODJFS' WIOA policies, the NOC COG finds it necessary to terminate on February 29, 2016, the Governing Agreement that it entered into on July 1, 2013, and enter into this Agreement, effective March 1, 2016.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

Section 1: The Geauga County Board of Commissioners hereby concludes and ends the term of the Governing Agreement that it entered into on July 1, 2013, pursuant to which it created the NOC COG or the Ohio Area 19 WIB. Geauga County's termination of said Governing Agreement shall be effective at the conclusion of the day on February 29, 2016, thereby concluding Geauga County's duty to perform pursuant to that Governing Agreement thereafter.

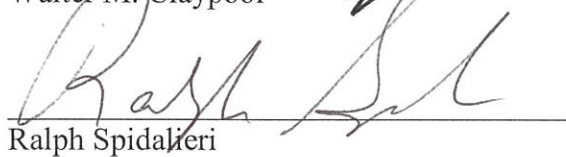
Section 2: The Geauga County Board of Commissioners hereby enters into the Intergovernmental Agreement to be in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth within WIOA and its regulations, the Subgrant Agreement entered into with ODJFS, and ODJFS' WIOA policies, with a copy of the same attached to this resolution. The term of said Intergovernmental Agreement shall commence at 12:01 a.m. on March 1, 2016.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution becomes part of the permanent record of the Board of Commissioners of Geauga County, Ohio.

Voting thereon:


Walter M. Claypool



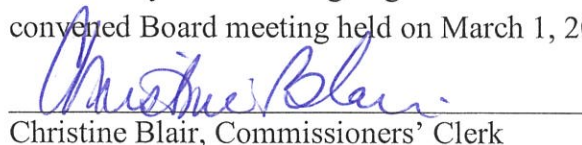

Ralph Spidaleri




Blake A. Rear



I, Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk to the Board of County Commissioners Geauga County, Ohio certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened Board meeting held on March 1, 2016.


Christine Blair, Commissioners' Clerk



GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Walter M. Claypool Blake A. Rear Ralph Spidalieri

470 Center Street • Building 4 • Chardon, Ohio 44024-1071

March 1, 2016

Craig Sernik
NOC COG
385 Center St., Ste. 100
Chardon, OH 44024

Dear Mr. Sernik:

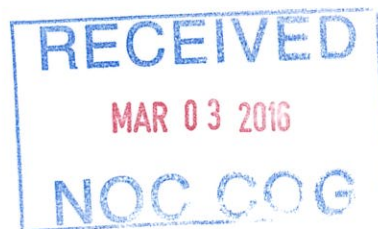
Please be advised that during session on March 1, 2016, the Board of County Commissioners took the following action:

Motion: by Commissioner Rear, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute the Intergovernmental Agreement for the Northeastern Ohio Consortium Council of Governments.

Roll Call Vote:	Commissioner Rear	Aye
	Commissioner Spidalieri	Aye
	Commissioner Claypool	No

Very truly yours,

Christine Blair
Commissioners' Clerk





GEAUGA COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Walter M. Claypool Blake A. Rear Ralph Spidalieri

470 Center Street • Building 4 • Chardon, Ohio 44024-1071

March 1, 2016

Craig Sernik
NOC COG
385 Center St., Ste. 100
Chardon, OH 44024

Dear Mr. Sernik:

Please be advised that during session on March 1, 2016, the Board of County Commissioners took the following action:

Motion: by Commissioner Rear, seconded by Commissioner Spidalieri to approve and execute Resolution #16-029 authorizing the February 29, 2016 termination of the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments (NOC COG) Governing Agreement established on July 1, 2013 and further authorizing the entry into a Intergovernmental Agreement complaint with the terms and conditions set forth within WIOA and its regulations, the Subgrant agreement entered into with ODJFS, and ODJFS' WIOA policies, commencing March 1, 2016.

Roll Call Vote:	Commissioner Rear	Aye
	Commissioner Spidalieri	Aye
	Commissioner Claypool	No

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christine Blair".

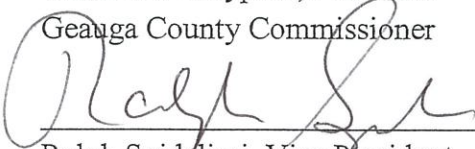
Christine Blair
Commissioners' Clerk

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the Parties hereto have executed this Governing Agreement, with the intent to enter into the same, effective March 1, 2016. This Agreement shall be binding once two of three Commissioners for each member county have executed a copy of the signature page for this Agreement.



Walter M. Claypool, President
Geauga County Commissioner

Date



Ralph Spidaleri, Vice President
Geauga County Commissioner

03-01-2016

Date



Blake A. Rear, Board Member
Geauga County Commissioner

3-1-16

Date

Peggy A. Carlo, President
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

Daniel R. Claypool, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

Casey Kozlowski, Board Member
Ashtabula County Commissioner

Date

Maureen T. Frederick, President
Portage County Commissioner

Date

Vicki A. Kline, Vice President
Portage County Commissioner

Date

Kathleen Chandler, Board Member
Portage County Commissioner

Date

RESOLUTION NO. 2016-80 AUTHORIZING THE FEBRUARY 29, 2016 TERMINATION OF THE NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (NOC COG) GOVERNING AGREEMENT ESTABLISHED ON JULY 1, 2013 AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE ENTRY INTO A INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT COMPLIANT WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS SET FORTH WITHIN WIOA AND ITS REGULATIONS, THE SUBGRANT AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO WITH ODJFS, AND ODJFS' WIOA POLICIES, COMMENCING MARCH 1, 2016.

The Board of County Commissioners of Ashtabula County, Ohio, met on the 1st day of March, 2016, in regular session at the offices of said Board in the Old Courthouse Building, 2nd Floor, Jefferson, Ohio, with the following members present: Daniel R. Claypool, Casey R. Kozlowski, Peggy A. Carlo.

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners for Ashtabula County, on the 4th of June, 2013, pursuant to Resolution No. 2013-159 authorized the County's entry into an Intergovernmental Agreement for the Northeast Ohio Council of Governments ("Intergovernmental Agreement"), with said Agreement going into effect July 1, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Agreement created a regional council of government as recognized pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, to which Ashtabula County is a member, for the express purpose of implementing, governing and administering workforce and economic development programming; and

WHEREAS, the governing bodies of any two or more political subdivisions may enter into an Agreement establishing a regional council pursuant to the authority set forth within Ohio Revised Code Section 167; and

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties originally entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement ("Intergovernmental Agreement") in March of 2004, the terms and conditions of which governed the establishment of a Workforce Investment Board ("WIB") Area known and referred to as the Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Partnership ("GAPP"); and

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties mutually agreed to terminate the Intergovernmental Agreement governing GAPP, with said termination becoming effective at the conclusion of the day, on June 30, 2013; and

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties mutually agreed to terminate and replace the Intergovernmental Agreement that created GAPP which was entered into in March of 2004, by entering into a Governing Agreement, which became effective July 1, 2013, creating the **Northeastern Ohio Consortium Council of Governments**; and

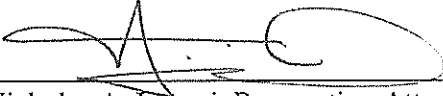
WHEREAS, on July 1, 2015, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 ("WIOA"), went into effect, with the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Government entering into a Subgrant Agreement with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services ("ODJFS") for the provision of WIOA workforce services within Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties for Program Year 2015; and

WHEREAS, in order to be in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth within WIOA and its regulations, the Subgrant Agreement entered into with ODJFS, and ODJFS' WIOA policies, the NOC COG finds it necessary to terminate on February 29, 2016, the Governing Agreement that it entered into on July 1, 2013, and enter into this Agreement, effective March 1, 2016; now

Legal Review

Agreement Title: The INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR THE NORTHEASTERN OHIO CONSORTIUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS between Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties of the State of Ohio.

The above titled agreement is approved to legal form only:

 2/11/14

Nicholas A. Iarocci, Prosecuting Attorney

RESOLUTION NO. 16-0199

RE: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FEBRUARY 29, 2016 TERMINATION OF THE NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (NOC COG) GOVERNING AGREEMENT ESTABLISHED ON JULY 1, 2013 AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE ENTRY INTO A INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT COMPLIANT WITH THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS SET FORTH WITHIN WIOA AND ITS REGULATIONS, THE SUBGRANT AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO WITH ODJFS, AND ODJFS' WIOA POLICIES, COMMENCING MARCH 1, 2016.

It was moved by Kathleen Chandler, seconded by Maureen T. Frederick that the following Resolution be adopted:

- WHEREAS, the Portage County Board of Commissioners, on the first day of March 2016, pursuant to Resolution No. 16-0199, authorized the County's entry into a Intergovernmental Agreement for the Northeast Ohio Council of Governments ("Intergovernmental Agreement"), with said Agreement going into effect March 1, 2016; and
- WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Agreement created a regional council of government as recognized pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, to which Portage County is a member, for the express purpose of implementing, governing and administering workforce and economic development programming; and
- WHEREAS, the governing bodies of any two or more political subdivisions may enter into an Agreement establishing a regional council pursuant to the authority set forth within Ohio Revised Code Section 167; and
- WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties originally entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement ("Intergovernmental Agreement") in March of 2004, the terms and conditions of which governed the establishment of a Workforce Investment Board ("WIB") Area known and referred to as the Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Partnership ("GAPP"); and
- WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties mutually agreed to terminate the Intergovernmental Agreement governing GAPP, with said termination becoming effective at the conclusion of the day, on June 30, 2013; and

RESOLUTION NO. 16-0199

PAGE TWO

WHEREAS, the Boards of Commissioners for Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties mutually agreed to terminate and replace the Intergovernmental Agreement that created GAPP which was entered into in March of 2004, by entering into a Governing Agreement, which became effective July 1, 2013, creating the Northeastern Ohio Consortium Council of Governments; and

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2015, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 ("WIOA"), went into effect, with the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Government entering into a Subgrant Agreement with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services ("ODJFS") for the provision of WIOA workforce services within Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties for Program Year 2015; and

WHEREAS, in order to be in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth within WIOA and its regulations, the Subgrant Agreement entered into with ODJFS, and ODJFS' WIOA policies, the NOC COG finds it necessary to terminate on February 29, 2016, the Governing Agreement that it entered into on July 1, 2013, and enter into this Agreement, effective March 1, 2016; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Portage County Board of Commissioners hereby concludes and ends the term of the Governing Agreement that it entered into on July 1, 2013, pursuant to which it created the NOC COG or the Ohio Area 19 WIB. Portage County's termination of said Governing Agreement shall be effective at the conclusion of the day on February 29, 2016, thereby concluding Portage County's duty to perform pursuant to that Governing Agreement thereafter; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Portage County Board of Commissioners hereby enters into the Intergovernmental Agreement to be in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth within WIOA and its regulations, the Subgrant Agreement entered into with ODJFS, and ODJFS' WIOA policies, with a copy of the same attached to this resolution. The term of said Intergovernmental Agreement shall commence at 12:01 a.m. on March 1, 2016; and be it further

RESOLUTION NO. 16-0199

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RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners finds and determines that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this resolution were taken in an open meeting of this Board and that all deliberations of this Board that resulted in those formal actions were in meeting open to the public in compliance with the law including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

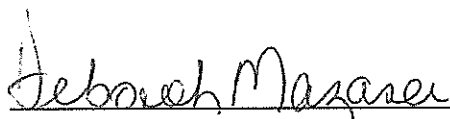
Roll Call vote was as follows:

Maureen T. Frederick, Yea;

Kathleen Chandler, Yea;

Vicki Kline, Yea;

I, Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution of the Board of County Commissioners of Portage County duly adopted March 1, 2016 and appearing upon the official records of said Board, Volume 85, page



Clerk, Portage County Board of Commissioners

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the Board of Commissioners of Ashtabula County, Ohio, on we authorized the County's entry into an Intergovernmental Agreement for the Northeast Ohio Council of Governments ("Intergovernmental Agreement"), with said Agreement going into effect March 1, 2016; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT:

Section 1: The Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners hereby concludes and ends the term of the Governing Agreement that it entered into on July 1, 2013, pursuant to which it created the NOC COG or the Ohio Area 19 WIB. Ashtabula County's termination of said Governing Agreement shall be effective at the conclusion of the day on February 29, 2016, thereby concluding Ashtabula County's duty to perform pursuant to that Governing Agreement thereafter.

Section 2: The Ashtabula County Board of Commissioners hereby enters into the Intergovernmental Agreement to be in compliance with the terms and conditions set forth within WIOA and its regulations, the Subgrant Agreement entered into with ODJFS, and ODJFS' WIOA policies, with a copy of the same attached to this resolution. The term of said Intergovernmental Agreement shall commence at 12:01 a.m. on March 1, 2016.

MOTION: Carlo moved the adoption, Kozlowski seconded. **DISCUSSION:** None

VOTE: Yeas: Claypool, Kozlowski, Carlo Nays: None Abstained: None Absent: None

Whereupon the resolution was declared passed unanimously

This is to certify that I, Lisa Hawkins, as Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners of Ashtabula County, Ohio has compared the foregoing copy of the Resolution Number 2016-75 with the original resolution now on file in this office, which was duly passed by the board of Commissioners of said County of Ashtabula on the 1st day of March, 2016; and that the same is a correct and true copy of said resolution.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this 1st day of March, 2016.



Lisa Hawkins, Clerk of the Board of Ashtabula County Commissioners'

**NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM
REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

**Article 1
Name and Purpose of Bylaws**

Section 1 - Name

The name of this body is the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments (hereinafter "NOC COG") created by an Intergovernmental Agreement ("IGA") entered into on March 1, 2016, between member Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage Counties.

Section 2 - Purpose of Organization

The NOC COG was created pursuant to requirements set forth within federal and state law and regulations and pursuant the IGA entered into by its member governments. A copy of said IGA is attached to these bylaws as **Exhibit B**, with said Agreement incorporated into these bylaws via this reference. Should any of the provisions of these bylaws be found to conflict with the terms and conditions of the IGA, the terms and conditions of the IGA shall trump and be adhered to.

The NOC COG is an organization which allows a single representative for each member county that belongs to the same. The NOC COG was created for the express purpose of implementing, governing, and administering any and all workforce and economic development programming, as directed by the Workforce Development Board for Ohio Local Area 19 ("WDB").

Section 3 – Purpose of Bylaws.

The purpose of these bylaws is to outline the policies and procedures of the operations of the NOC COG.

Section 4 – Functions of the NOC COG.

The NOC COG shall be assisted by the members of the WDB in fulfilling the rights and responsibilities expressly assigned to the Local Elected Officials ("LEO") and Chief Elected Official ("CEO") as outlined in the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014, ("WIOA").

Included within those rights and responsibilities is the appointment of the WDB. The WDB shall consist of thirty-three (33) members, as detailed in **Exhibit B**, and as summarized in the attached **Exhibit A**, which is attached hereto and incorporated in its entirety by this reference. Each of the three (3) counties that are represented by the NOC COG shall have a total of ten (10) members appointed to serve on the Area workforce's development board. In addition to these thirty (30) members, the CEO of the

NOC COG shall appoint an additional three (3) at large member representatives as detailed within **Exhibits A and B**.

The initial term of those individuals appointed will depend upon whether the individual is a hold-over from the Workforce Investment Board, or is a new appointee.

- a. Those individuals that served on the Workforce Investment Board (“WIB”) under the Workforce Investment Act (“WIA”), and who were held over to serve on the WDB, shall serve an initial term from February 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.
- b. All new appointees to the WDB shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years commencing with the date of appointment provided within their appointment letter. Thereafter, the representative commissioner will appoint individuals to seats on the WDB, as those seats become vacant, for two (2) year terms. There shall be no cap on the total number of terms that an individual may serve on the WDB.

Article 2

Composition, Quorum, Passage of All Motions and Compensation.

Section 1 – County Membership and COG Representation.

The membership of the NOC COG shall be made up of (3) three counties, one each from Geauga, Ashtabula, and Portage Counties. Each member county shall elect/appoint one (1) of their member Commissioners of to serve as a representative to the NOC COG. The term of the representative shall be for a period at the discretion of the member County of either one (1) or two (2) years. In all cases, when the representative Commissioner appointed ceases being a Commissioner in their member County, their term as a representative of the NOC COG shall also cease. The membership of the NOC COG shall simultaneously serve in their capacity as a representative of the NOC COG, and as a LEO as set forth and required within the text of WIOA.

If the duly elected/appointed member of the NOC COG cannot attend any regular or special NOC COG meeting or sub-committee meeting, the duly elected member may invite a proxy to serve in his or her place. The other members of the Board of County Commissioners may serve as a proxy to the duly elected/appointed member of the NOC COG at any time. The Board of County Commissioners of each county may also elect/appoint by any recorded vote, an additional proxy representative. While serving in place of the duly appointed elected NOC COG representative, the proxy representative will have all the same powers and authorities as that of the duly elected/appointed NOC COG member.

Any regular or proxy NOC COG representative may resign their position on the NOC COG at any time by giving written notice to the board of county commissioners who made their appointment. Any regular or proxy NOC COG representative may be removed from their position on the NOC COG at any time, with or without cause, by recorded vote of the board of county commissioners who made their appointment. The

resignation and/or removal shall take effect at the time specified therein. All representative positions shall be considered vacated upon the death of the individual. Replacements for vacancies on the NOC COG created by removal, resignation, or death shall be addressed by the member county within forty-five (45) days after the position on the NOC COG is vacated.

Section 2 – Quorum

The presence of two representatives (regular or proxy), both present and in person at any meeting, constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at the meeting. A quorum must exist as a precedent to the transaction of any Board business or vote upon any matters submitted to the Board.

Section 3 – Passage of all Motions and Resolutions.

All business conducted by the NOC COG shall be accomplished by the passage of motions and/or resolutions. In order for a motion or resolution to be discussed, there must first be a motion, and a second. Any member of the NOC COG, including the CEO, and/or member chairing the meeting, may make or second a motion or resolution, and/or vote on the same. In order for all motions or resolutions to pass, they must receive two affirmative votes. The CEO, and/or any member chairing the meeting, may vote for a motion or resolution while chairing the meeting.

Section 4 – Compensation

No NOC COG member will receive compensation by the NOC COG for services as a member. However, should the NOC COG member be asked to attend an event, training, or meeting, other than a regular or special meeting of the NOC COG, the WDB, or a committee for the same; the Director may compensate the NOC COG member for all travel, hotel, and meal expenses if approved in advance or retroactively by the NOC COG, pursuant to the same policies pursuant to which the same expenses for board staff employees are addressed.

Article 3

Workforce Investment Board Officers, Committees, Nominations, Elections

Section 1 – Officers

The officers of the NOC COG shall consist of the Chief Elected Official (“CEO”) and the Vice Chairperson.

The CEO shall be responsible for all of the following, with the Vice Chairperson, serving in his/her place when the CEO is not available:

- Calling and scheduling all special meetings.

- The cancelling of all regular and special meetings.
- Approving the final draft of all meeting agendas.
- Conducting all meetings.

The CEO shall also schedule a meeting at least annually, to review the operations, performance, and finances of the NOC COG at a time and place convenient to all three Boards of County Commissioners. During this meeting, state and federal performance reports, audits, and individual county performance statistics will be reviewed.

Section 2 – Election of CEO and Vice Chairperson

The NOC COG shall organize at their first regularly scheduled meeting held on or after June 1, of each year, including holding the election of one of the LEOs as the Chief Elected Official (“CEO”), and another as Vice Chairperson for a term of one year. If the elected CEO or Vice Chairperson ceases to serve on the NOC COG or resigns their position as CEO or Vice Chairperson, the NOC COG shall hold a new vote at its next regularly scheduled meeting to elect one of its members to preside as CEO, and/or Vice Chairperson for the remainder of the term. The CEO shall hold all of the powers/authorities granted to the same within the text of the WIOA, its regulations, and/or federal, state, and local policies, unless this Agreement or these bylaws expressly provide those powers/authorities to others. Included within those powers shall be the authority to schedule, cancel, and preside over all meetings. In the event that a member county should send multiple commissioners and/or a proxy to a NOC COG meeting and there be a dispute as to who should represent the county, the CEO will recognize the rights of one representative to speak on all issues and vote, in the following ranked order:

1. the appointed primary, representative commissioner;
2. any other commissioner from the county, recognizing of those two other commissioners, the commissioners in the following order:
 - a. the commissioner appointed by the county’s board as an alternate;
 - b. the commissioner invited by the member representative commissioner to serve in his/her place as noticed in writing to the NOC COG staff or CEO;
 - c. the ranking position held by the commissioner on their respective board of commissioners (President, Vice-President, etc.).

Section 3 – Duties of Treasurer and Secretary

The duties that would traditionally be performed by a board treasurer, shall be performed by the Fiscal Agent for the WDB, who shall serve at the pleasure of the NOC COG, either as a contracted for agent, or employee of the same. The duties that would traditionally be performed by a board secretary, shall be performed by the board staff for the WDB, who shall serve at the pleasure of the NOC COG, either as a contracted for agent, or employee of the same.

Section 4 – Committees

The WDB shall be considered a standing committee of the NOC COG. It shall be the responsibility of the NOC COG to take under consideration all motions and/or resolutions passed by the WDB, and to enact and administer the same, unless the members of the NOC COG determine that they are otherwise contrary to the best interests of the collective interests of the counties that are members within the WDB.

Article 4 Regular Meetings, Special Meetings, Notices, Open Meetings, Procedures

Section 1 – Regular Meetings

The NOC COG may regularly meet as often as monthly, but must at a minimum, meet at least four (4) times per year, but may establish a regular meeting schedule, that calls for meetings on a more frequent basis. A schedule of regular meetings of the NOC COG shall be established at the annual NOC COG meeting in June. The NOC COG CEO may call special meetings as needed. Business of the NOC COG may be conducted at either a regular or special meeting.

Section 2 - Special Meetings

Special meetings of the NOC COG may be held at any time at time upon the scheduling of the same by the Chair, or by the Vice Chairperson and the other member; however, a quorum is needed to conduct any business of the NOC COG. An agenda, with all items designated for discussion, must be sent to NOC COG members at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of any special meetings. Items not listed on the agenda cannot be discussed at special meetings.

Section 3 – Annual Meeting

The CEO shall schedule a meeting at least annually, either as part of a regular or special meeting, to review the operations, performance, and finances of NOC COG at a time and place convenient to all three Boards of County Commissioners. During this meeting, potential amendments to this Agreement, state and federal performance reports, audits, and individual county performance statistics will be reviewed. The Executive Director for the NOC COG, shall provide an annual report to each Board of County Commissioners detailing the activity, performance, and finances of the NOC COG to be given at the annual meeting. The Executive Director shall provide additional written and/or verbal reports to the collective or individual Board of county Commissioners as they are requested.

Section 4 - Notice of Meetings

Because the regularly scheduled meetings are scheduled in advance at the June annual meeting and then are posted on the website of the WDB, all NOC COG members are on

actual notice of the regularly scheduled meeting dates at the conclusion of that meeting. The Director of the WDB shall remind each member of the NOC COG of every regular meeting at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to such meeting in writing by email at the same time it issues the draft agenda for any meeting.

Section 5 – Open, Public Meetings

All regular and special meetings of the NOC COG shall be open to the public. All regular and special meetings of the NOC COG must be publicly advertised in the manner and method required by Ohio law.

Section 6 – Procedure at Meetings

All meetings of the NOC COG will follow the procedures as listed in Roberts Rules of Order. Specific items to be discussed at meetings must be placed on the agenda at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the meeting (with the exception of Amendments or Addendums to these bylaws, which must be proposed at least seven (7) days in advance of a regularly scheduled meeting). Any WDB member may place items on the agenda by asking the Director and/or the CEO to place the same on the agenda, up to twenty-four (24) hours prior to the scheduled meeting. A final agenda will be issued to all NOC COG members by email, 3:00 p.m. of the day prior to any meeting. Items that come before the NOC COG without being on regular meeting agenda may be placed on the agenda at any point during the meeting by a two thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members in attendance. No business may be transacted for which a vote must be taken for any items not on the agenda of a special meeting.

At all public meetings, only NOC COG members shall participate, with the following exceptions:

- 1) Non-members who are specifically invited by the NOC COG to present information to the NOC COG meeting.
- 2) Non-members who have made a written request at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting stating the subject and content of their presentation, may be invited to attend at the discretion of the CEO. Written requests should be submitted to the Director to be discussed with the CEO. Public presentations, as approved by the CEO or chairperson of the meeting, will occur under agenda item, Public Comment, or under New Business, if not specifically placed on the agenda.
- 3) A public Comment period will be included at the end of each meeting, following new business, unless otherwise placed differently on the agenda. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes, unless additional time is approved by the CEO and/or Chairperson.

The NOC COG will make available to the public, on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings, information about the activities of the same.

Section 7 – Executive Sessions

Should the NOC COG need to address issues that require strict confidentiality, the meeting will be interrupted to allow the NOC COG to convene in Executive Session to discuss and act upon the issue that warranted the session. To go into Executive Session, there must be a motion stating the general business to be discussed during Executive Session, and who is invited to participate in the same other than NOC COG members. Otherwise, only NOC COG members will be allowed to be present during the Executive Session. A simple majority of those present is sufficient to move into Executive Session. Immediately upon the conclusion of the Executive Session the NOC COG meeting will be reconvened and any relevant action that can be made public will be reported at that time.

Article 5

Appointment of Administrative Agent, and Fiscal Officer/Agent.

Section 1 – Administrative Agent.

The NOC COG and its employed and/or contracted for staff, shall serve as the WDB Board staff for the WDB, pursuant to WIOA. The WIOA board staff shall be responsible for all of the following:

- A. All work assigned it at the direction of the NOC COG, and the WDB.
- B. Engage in budgeting, planning, and local grant administration.
- C. Contracting for and the supervision and monitoring of the provision of OMJ Center services within the WDB geographic area.
- D. Development of local policy manuals and procedures.
- E. Provide or arrange for technical assistance and training for local program operators, service providers, OMJ Center operators, and others as needed.
- G. Conduct oversight for all WDB programs and activities.
- H. Support of local information technology infrastructure.
- I. Procurement and inventory control.
- J. Human resources functions.
- K. Negotiate performance measures with the State of Ohio, the Department of Labor and/or all other regulatory agencies.
- L. Any and all others duties as identified by the NOC COG and the WDB.

Section 2 – Fiscal Officer/Agent.

The NOC COG and its employed and/or contracted for staff, shall serve as the fiscal agent for the NOC COG, and the fiscal agent for the purposes of the WDB, pursuant to WIOA. The fiscal agent shall be responsible for all of the following:

- A. Do all work directed by the NOC COG, and the WDB.
- B. Engage in budgeting, fiscal planning, and local grant administration.
- C. Maintain and administer the accounting system of record for the NOC COG and the WDB, including tracking the amounts that the WDB, and each member county has allocated to it, when including all expenses, accrued expenditures, obligations, and encumbrances.
- D. Maintain and administer the reporting of the NOC COG's financial information to the NOC COG, the Boards of County Commissioners, and to those from whom the NOC COG receives grant funding.
- E. Draw down grant monies as requested and needed in order to pay expenses associated with WIOA and non-WIOA grants.
- F. Pay all grant related expenses as needed.
- G. Maintain, administer, and on a monthly basis reconcile the bank accounts of the NOC COG and WDB.
- H. Conduct financial oversight and monitoring for all WIOA and non-WIOA grants.
- I. Others duties as identified by the NOC COG and the WDB.

Article 6

Conflict of Interest

Section 1 – Conflict of Interest

A Conflict of interest is any situation in which a NOC COG member, employee or agent, (or that person's family or friends) stands to benefit personally, or, could appear to benefit from any action taken by the NOC COG.

Each NOC COG member or NOC COG employee or agent is solely and personally responsible to disclose to the NOC COG and then to each County Board of Commissioners any situation that he or she perceives to be a conflict or potential conflict of interest. This disclosure will be recorded in the appropriate committee or Council minutes. No NOC COG member, employee or agent, shall participate in any discussion of any matter without prior disclosure to the NOC COG of the person's interest and/or concern.

All members, employees, and agents of the NOC COG are required to sign a Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest statement as prepared by the NOC COG and/or WDB. A copy of the signed Code of Conduct shall remain on file in the NOC COG Office during the term of each NOC COG member.

All members of the NOC COG must adhere to all the Ohio Ethics Laws O.R.C 102, et al.

Each Board member and WDB employee or contractor is solely and personally responsible to disclose to the WDB Chairperson/ and/or LEO's any situation that he or she perceives to be a conflict or potential conflict of interest. This disclosure will be recorded in the appropriate committee or Board minutes.

Section 2 – Abstaining from a Vote

Whenever a matter to be voted on by a NOC COG member would involve him/her in a conflict of interest, he/she shall declare the conflict of interest to the CEO at the beginning of the discussion of the topic during the meeting. Following such announcement, the NOC COG member shall abstain from discussion, decision-making and voting on such matter.

When a member abstains from voting due to a conflict of interest, the minutes shall both reflect the abstention and the reason for the abstention as being due to conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest.

Article 7 Dispute Resolution Procedure

The NOC COG will make efforts to resolve all disputes informally and at the earliest time possible. Except for disputes relating to the subjects contained within “Article IV. Liability,” when any of the representatives of the NOC COG disagrees with any action or inaction by another party, the parties agree to contact each other in an effort to clarify any misunderstandings and to attempt to resolve disagreements. Any County Commissioner may submit a disputed issue, in writing, to the CEO. The LEOs will review the issue, attempt to resolve the issue, and provide a determination in writing. If a Commissioner is not satisfied with the decision, the Commissioner may request that the matter be referred to the Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution for further dispute resolution. The matter will be submitted for dispute resolution if a majority of the NOC COG votes to refer the matter. The final decision on all non-liability issues shall be solely determined by the member representatives of the NOC COG.

Article 8 Indemnification, Amendment of Bylaws, Miscellaneous

Section 1 – Indemnification

All NOC COG members, to the extent allowed by law, will be provided defense and indemnification in accordance with ORC 2744.07.

Section 2 – Amendments

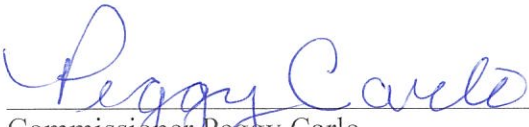
These bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new bylaws adopted by a two-thirds majority of the members of the NOC COG present at a regularly scheduled meeting. Proposed changes to the bylaws must be submitted to each member of the NOC COG, in writing, at least seven (7) days before any vote on the proposed amendment.

Section 3 -- Miscellaneous

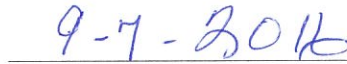
When acting upon the NOC COG's behalf, no member, employee or other agent shall discriminate against any person because of race, religion, color, creed, sex, national origin or handicap.

If any provision or Article of these bylaws is ever judicially determined to be invalid or unenforceable, such determination shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision or article of these bylaws.

THE BYLAWS FOR THE NOC COG ARE HEREBY APPROVED: September 7, 2016



Commissioner Peggy Carlo
Ashtabula County Commissioner
Member of the NOC COG



Date



Commissioner Blake Rear
Ashtabula County Commissioner
Member of the NOC COG



Date



Commissioner Vicki Kline
Portage County Commissioner
Member of the NOC COG



Date

EXHIBIT A
Membership of the Area 19 WDB

Type of Seat	Appointed by:				Total
	Geauga County Commissioners	Ashtabula County Commissioners	Portage County Commissioners	Area Chief Elected Official	
Business/Emp. Community Reps.	6	6	6		18
Representatives from Labor		1	1		2
Representative from Apprenticeship Program	1				1
Representative of Local Community Based Organization.	1	1	1		3
Representative of the Local Education/Youth Agencies			1		1
Representative of the ABLE Program/Vocational Training Center		1			1
Representative of Workforce Higher Education				1	1
Representative of Economic Development	1	1	1		3
Representative from Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services who satisfies the Wagner Peyser and Veterans Representative requirement				1	1
Representative of the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities				1	1
Representative from transportation, housing, public assistance, and/or philanthropic organizations.	1				1
Total	10	10	10	3	33

Roster of Employees and Contracted for Third Party Staff of the NOC COG

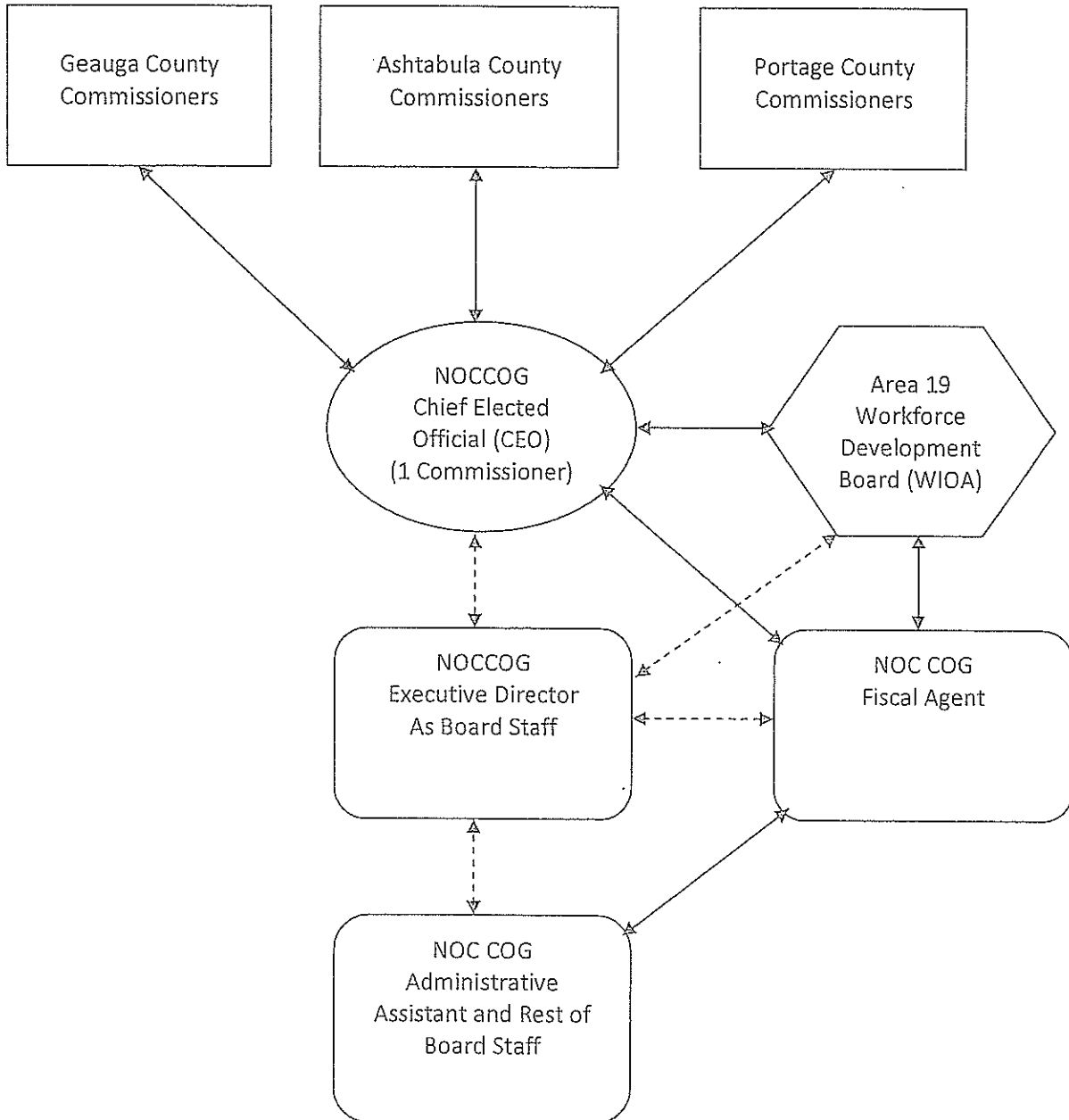
Board and Fiscal Agent Staff	NOC COG Position Title	Employee Since
Craig Sernik 385 Center St. Suite 100 Chardon, OH 44024 (440) 285-5046 craigsernik@neohio.twcbc.com	Executive Director	June 1, 2009
Denise Gehring 385 Center St. Suite 100 Chardon, OH 44024 (440) 285-5842 dgehring@neohio.twcbc.com	Administrative Assistant	December 11, 2007

Additional Contracted for Fiscal Agent Staff

Salvatore Consiglio
Salvatore Consiglio, CPA, Inc.
14129 State Road
North Royalton, Oh 44133
(440) 877-9870 Phone
(440) 877-9237 Fax
(440) 590-1768 Cell
sal@salcpa.com

Effective as of July 1, 2024

Organizational Chart
for the
Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments
and
Area 19 Workforce Development Board



BYLAWS OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (“WDB”) FOR OHIO LOCAL AREA 19

Article 1 Name and Purpose of Bylaws

Section 1 - Name

The name of the organization for which these bylaws apply is the Workforce Development Board (“WDB”) for Ohio Local Area 19.

Section 2 - Purpose of Organization.

The WDB was created pursuant to requirements set forth within federal and state law and regulation, pursuant to an Intergovernmental Agreement (“IGA”) entered into, effective March 1, 2016, between Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage Counties. A copy of said Intergovernmental Agreement is attached to these bylaws as **Exhibit B**, with said Agreement incorporated into these bylaws via this reference. Should any of the provisions of these bylaws be found to conflict with the terms and conditions of the IGA, the terms and conditions of the IGA shall trump and be adhered to.

The terms and conditions of the same IGA also created the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments (“NOC COG”). The NOC COG is an organization which allows a single representative for each member county that belongs to the same. The NOC COG was created for the express purpose of implementing, governing, and administering any and all workforce and economic development programming, as directed by the NOC COG Workforce Development Board, (a.k.a. the WDB for Ohio Local Area 19).

The WDB exists to provide strategic and operational oversight, and to assist in the achievement of the strategic and operational goals in the areas of economic and workforce development for the area and regional jurisdictions to which it is assigned.

Section 3 – Purpose of Bylaws.

The purpose of these bylaws is to outline the policies and procedures of the operations of the WDB.

Section 4 – Functions of WDB.

The WDB shall assist the members of the NOC COG in fulfilling the functions outlined in the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014, hereinafter “WIOA”. Functions of the WDB expressly include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- Develop and submit local and regional plans.
- Conduct workforce research and regional labor market analysis.
- Convene local workforce development system stakeholders to assist in the development of the local plan and identify non-Federal expertise and resources to leverage support for workforce development activities.
- Lead efforts to engage a diverse range of employers and other entities in the region.
- Lead efforts to develop and implement career pathways.
- Lead efforts in the local area to identify and promote proven and promising strategies and initiatives for meeting the needs of employers, workers and job seekers.
- Conduct oversight of the adult, dislocated worker and youth programs and the entire OhioMeansJobs delivery system, ensure the appropriate use and management of WIOA funds, and ensure the appropriate use, management and investment of funds to maximize performance outcomes.
- Negotiate and reach agreement on local performance measures with the chief elected officials and the State.
- Negotiate with the chief elected official and required partners, in order to maintain the OhioMeansJobs delivery system through the Memorandum of Understanding.
- Competitively procure provider(s) of youth program services, provider(s) of adult and dislocated worker career services, and the OhioMeansJobs center operator
- Ensure there are sufficient numbers and types of providers of career services and training services in the local area.
- Coordinate activities with education and training providers in the local area
- Develop a budget for the activities of the board.
- Assess, on an annual basis, the physical and programmatic accessibility of all OhioMeansJobs centers in the local area, in accordance with section 188 of WIOA (pertaining to nondiscrimination), if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- Certify the OhioMeansJobs centers in the local area.

Article 2

Composition, Quorum, Term, Compensation, Resignations, Removal, Vacancies

Section 1 – Composition

The WDB shall consist of thirty-three (33) members, as detailed in **Exhibit B**, and as summarized in the attached **Exhibit A**, which is attached hereto and incorporated in its entirety by this reference. Each of the three (3) counties that are represented by the WDB shall have a total of ten (10) members appointed to serve on the same. In addition to these thirty (30) members, the duly elected CEO of the NOC COG shall appoint an additional three (3) at large member representatives as detailed within **Exhibits A and B**.

Section 2 – Term

- a. Those individuals that served on the Workforce Investment Board (“WIB”) under the Workforce Investment Act (“WIA”), and who were held over to serve on the WDB, shall serve an initial term from February 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.
- b. All new appointees to the WDB shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years commencing with the date of appointment provided within their appointment letter. Thereafter, the NOC COG will appoint individuals to fill seats on the WDB, as those seats become vacant, for additional two (2) year terms. There shall be no cap on the total number of terms that an individual may serve on the WDB.

Section 3 – Compensation for Services and Expenses.

No WDB member will receive compensation for services as a WDB member. However, should a WDB member be asked to attend an event, training, or meeting, other than a regular or special meeting of the WDB, or a committee for the same; the Director may compensate the WDB member for all travel, hotel, and meal expenses if approved in advance or retroactively by the WDB and/or the NOC COG, pursuant to the same policies and procedures pursuant to which the same expenses for board staff employees are addressed.

Section 4 – Resignation

Any WDB member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Director of the WDB. The resignation shall take effect at the time specified within the written notice.

Section 5 – Removal

Should a commissioner wish to remove an individual that is serving within a WDB position, s/he may ask the NOC COG Board to remove that individual by majority vote at any regularly or specialized scheduled meeting of the NOC COG. The NOC COG Board shall have the sole authority appoint and/or remove at its will, the members to the WDB that each county has the power to appoint in accordance with criteria established under Section 107 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, and as set forth within **Exhibits A and B**, and as follows within this Agreement.

Otherwise, an individual shall remain a member of the WDB until one of the following occurs:

1. The term of the member ends and s/he is not duly reappointed.
2. The individual resigns from the WDB.

3. The individual experiences a change in circumstances (i.e. no longer works for the employer that s/he was appointed to represent) and is therefore no longer deemed qualified, and as a result either resigns or is removed by a NOC COG Board vote.
4. The IGA is terminated, and/or the WDB is dissolved.

Section 6 – Vacancies

The NOC COG shall seek to fill all vacant positions within forty-five (45) days from the position becoming vacant.

Article 3 Meetings and Procedure Relating to the Same

Section 1 – Regular Meetings

Each WDB member is expected to attend in person, or virtually all regularly scheduled board meetings, or send a proxy from their organization to represent that organization instead. The WDB shall strive to meet quarterly, four (4) times per year per the schedule established by the WDB at the June annual meeting, and will hold at least three (3) regular meetings per year. The WDB may call special meetings as needed. Business of the WDB may be conducted at either a regular or special meeting. The WDB shall see that the meeting schedule is sent to all WDB members within ten (10) days after the schedule is approved, and/or within ten (10) days after any change in the schedule is made. When the agenda is sent to the WDB members, they will be provided with specific instructions of how they may participate remotely, should they elect to do so. Those same instructions will be made available on the WDB's website.

Section 2 - Special Meetings

Special meetings of the WDB may be held at any time at time upon the call of the Chair, the Vice-Chair if the Chair is unavailable, or by notice to the Director of the WDB by ten (10) of the members of the WDB of the desire to have a meeting at a specific time on a specific date. A quorum is needed to conduct any business of the WDB. An agenda, with all items designated for discussion, must be sent to WDB members at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of any special meetings. Items not listed on the agenda cannot be discussed at special meetings.

Section 3 - Location of Meetings

The primary meeting location for regular and special meetings, unless otherwise noticed will be Room A-334, located at 12611 Ravenwood Dr., Chardon, OH 44024. The WDB authorizes its members to attend all regular and/or special meetings in person, and/or remotely via interactive video conference, teleconference, or a combination thereof, in lieu of attending the meeting in person. All meetings will be open to the public, thereby allowing the public to attend and participate in person or remotely.

Section 4 – Quorum

- a. The WDB's quorum of all those present in person or remotely combined is established as nine (9) members. Of those nine (9) members, a minimum of three (3) members, plus at least one member of the WDB's Board Staff, must be present in person to conduct the meeting.
- b. A quorum must exist as a precedent to the transaction of any Board business or vote upon any matters submitted to the Board. Whether or not a quorum exists, a majority of the Board (present and in person) may convene or adjourn any meeting at any time. However, without quorum, no business may be transacted for which a vote must be taken.

Section 5 – Special Considerations for All Meeting that Include a Remote Attendance Option

Those WDB members that remotely attend a board meeting by teleconference must be at their own location, and not in the presence of any other WDB members. The location from which they participate must be within the continental United States, and cannot be outside of the same.

Any and all materials to be discussed during the meeting, including but not limited to the agenda, will be sent to all WDB members no later than the close of business the day before a meeting is scheduled to occur. If materials need to be discussed that were not distributed timely, copies may be distributed to those in attendance in person, and will be shared with those attending virtually via email, or via publishing the same on the virtual or remote meeting platform.

Should a regular or special meeting occur by teleconference without a visual medium, the WDB member will only be able to participate via a confidential conference telephone number and password sent in advance to that person.

It shall be the responsibility of the WDB staff and the WDB Chairperson to ensure that if there are any WDB members participating remotely as part of an interactive video conference, and/or teleconference, that there is a clear video and audio connection established, that enables all meeting participants (including both WDB members and members of the public) at the primary meeting location, and who are participating remotely to see and/or hear each other. If such a clear video and/or audio connection cannot be established, the meeting will be recessed temporarily or permanently until it can, or it will proceed if there is sufficient quorum in person at the meeting.

Section 6 - Notice of Meetings

Because the regularly scheduled meetings are scheduled in advance at the June annual meeting and then are posted on the website of the WDB, all WDB members are on actual notice of the regularly scheduled meeting dates at the conclusion of that meeting. The

Director of the WDB shall remind each member of the WDB of every regular meeting at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to such meeting in writing by email at the same time it issues the draft agenda for any meeting.

The Chairperson of the WDB shall cause each member to be notified of every special meeting at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to such meeting in writing by email.

Section 7 – Public Nature of Meetings

All regular meetings, special meetings, and/or committee meetings to which the WDB has provided final decision making authority are open to the public. Except where the WDB has by vote at a regularly or specially scheduled meeting by vote expressly authorized a committee to take action on its behalf, without further action by the WDB, all committee meetings shall involve a discussion of matters, followed by recommendations to the full WDB, and/or NOC COG Board, and will require action by that full WDB. Only those committee meetings where the committee has been provided with final decision making authority shall be treated as public meetings, and be open to the public. All other committee meeting shall generally be closed to the public, except to those committee members, or invitees, invited by the committee chairperson.

At all public meetings, only WDB members shall participate, with the following exceptions:

- 1) Non-members who are specifically invited by the WDB to present information to the WDB meeting.
- 2) Non-members who have made a written request at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting stating the subject and content of their presentation, may be invited to attend at the discretion of the Chairperson. Written requests should be submitted to the Director of the Board to be discussed with the Chairperson. Public presentations, as approved by the Chairperson, will occur under agenda item, public comment, or under new business, if not specifically placed on the agenda.
- 3) A public comment period will be included at the end of each meeting, following new business, unless otherwise placed differently on the agenda. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes, unless additional time is approved by the Chairperson.

The WDB will make available to the public, on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings, information about the activities of the WDB.

The Area WDB's public advertisement, or its website shall provide information regarding how members of the public may participate remotely or in person at any regular or special meeting.

Section 8 – Procedure at Meetings

All meetings of the WDB will follow the procedures as listed in Roberts Rules of Order. Specific items to be discussed at regular meetings will be placed on the draft agenda, which will be provided to all members, at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of the meeting. Any WDM member may place items on the agenda by asking the Director and/or the Chairperson to place the same on the agenda, up to twenty-four (24) hours prior to the scheduled meeting. A final agenda will be issued to all WDB members by email, 3:00 p.m. of the day prior to any meeting. Items that come before the WDB without being on regular meeting agenda may be placed on the agenda at any point during the meeting by a two thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the WDB members in attendance. No business may be transacted for which a vote must be taken for any items not on the agenda of a special meeting.

Section 9 – Voting

Each WDB member has one (1) vote. The presiding officer of a meeting (Chairperson or Vice Chairperson) shall not vote except to break a tie. In the event of a conflict of interest, the WDB member must declare that conflict for the record and recuse themselves from any relevant discussion and/or voting on that matter. Further, no conflicted WDB member shall chair that portion of the meeting, engage in discussion, or vote on any matter which has a direct bearing on services to be provided by that member or the organization that the member represents.

Unless otherwise stated herein, all votes shall be decided by a simple majority of the WDB members present.

Section 10 – Proxy Representation

Each WDB member may send an individual that is from the organization which they represent on the WDB to serve in their place, as if they were the appointed representative, for the purposes of a regular meeting, special meeting, and/or committee meeting pursuant to the terms and conditions below:

- a. The proxy must actively belong and/or be employed by the same organization.
- b. The proxy must be a member of management of the same.
- c. The WDB member must send notice twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the scheduled meeting to the Director of the identity of the proxy, including their name, position, phone number, and email.
- d. The proxy may attend no more than two regular and/or special meetings in a year in the place of the appointment WDB member.

Section 11 – Executive Sessions

Should the WDB need to address issues that require strict confidentiality, the Board Meeting will be interrupted to allow the WDB to convene in Executive Session to discuss and act upon the issue that warranted the session. To go into Executive Session, there must be a motion stating the general business to be discussed during Executive Session, and who is invited to participate in the same other than WDB members. Otherwise, only WDB members will be allowed to be present during the Executive Session. A simple majority of those present is sufficient to move into Executive Session. Immediately upon the conclusion of the Executive Session the WDB meeting will be reconvened and any relevant action that can be made public will be reported at that time.

Section 12 – Cancellation of Meetings

The Chairperson, or the Vice Chairperson in his/her place should the Chairperson not be available, shall have the authority to cancel any scheduled meeting at any time, for any reason, including but not limited to the most common reasons such as anticipated lack of quorum, bad weather, lack of business on the agenda, etc.

Article 4 Officers and Elections of the Same

Section 1 – Officers

The officers shall consist of a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. In the event that the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are not available to conduct a meeting, any member of Executive Committee present shall conduct the meeting. If there is a dispute amongst the Executive Committee members present as to who will chair the meeting, the WDB shall take a vote to appoint a Chairperson pro tempe, or temporary chairperson for the purposes of the meeting.

A. The Chairperson shall:

1. Be a representative of business.
2. Preside at all meetings of the WDB.
3. Provide leadership to the WDB in carrying-out its collective responsibilities.
4. Have general delegation of authority to act on behalf of the WDB in emergency circumstances to initiate any action which requires WDB attention or relates to WDB responsibilities and which action shall be subject to later consideration by the WDB.
5. Generally perform all other miscellaneous duties required by the WDB

B. The Vice Chairperson shall:

1. Be a representative of business.
2. Assist the Chairperson in the performance of his/her responsibilities to the extent that the Chairperson may request.
3. In the absence of the Chairperson, or in the event of his or her inability to act, perform the duties of the Chairperson, and, when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to the restrictions of the Chairperson.
4. Perform such further duties and acts as usually pertain to this office or that are assigned by the Chairperson or the Board.
5. If the office of Chairperson shall become vacant, the Vice Chairperson shall assume all duties of the Chairperson for the remainder of the Chairperson's term.
6. A special election shall be called for at the next regularly scheduled meeting to replace the Vice-Chairperson.
7. Should both positions become vacant at the same; a special election shall be held to fill both positions for the remainder of the positions' terms.

C. Duties of Treasurer and Secretary Performed by Staff.

1. The duties that would traditionally be performed by a Board Treasurer, shall be performed by the Fiscal Agent for the WDB, who shall serve at the pleasure of the NOC COG, either as a contracted for agent, or employee of the same.
2. The duties that would traditionally be performed by a Board Secretary, shall be performed by the board staff for the WDB, who shall serve at the pleasure of the NOC COG, either as a contracted for agent, or employee of the same.

Section 2 – Election of Officers and Executive Committee.

Nominating Committee

At the September meeting of the WDB, or the next regularly or specially scheduled meeting of the WDB should a September meeting not occur, the current Chairperson shall appoint a nominating committee who shall meet and nominate a candidate or candidates for the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson, and two additional members of the executive committee.

Election of Officers and the Executive Committee

The election of officers and executive committee members shall take place at the regularly scheduled December meeting of the WDB. The slate of nominated officers shall be mailed, faxed or emailed to all WDB members at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the occurrence of the December meeting. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the December meeting, prior to the vote on any officers and/or the executive committee.

Any member may serve or be elected as an officer for an unlimited number of consecutive or non-consecutive terms.

Article 5 Committees

Section 1 – Standing Committees

Standing committees are an option of the WDB to provide information and assist with carrying our responsibilities under WIOA, including identification of strategies for better meeting the needs of individuals with barriers to employment.

The membership of the standing committees will be decided upon by the WDB. The Chairperson of the WDB shall have the ability to appoint individuals to the standing committees in addition to or instead of the WDB, where the WDB has not taken action appointing membership to these committees.

Unless expressly authorized by the WDB to take action upon its behalf pursuant to a voted upon motion, the reports and actions taken by standing committees must be approved by the WDB, and receive concurrence from the NOC COG, or their designee, prior to implementation.

Except for the executive committee, all other committees, can and should include appointees from within the community who could contribute to the same, who are not members of the WDB.

A. Executive Committee.

The executive committee is the working committee of the full WDB, created to develop recommendations for actions, and/or actions to be taken by the full WDB. Its purpose for existence is to handle sensitive, confidential, and/or general matters that are better handled by a smaller sub-group of the WDB.

Members of the executive committee include the WDB Chairperson, the WDB Vice Chairperson, the Chief Local Elected Official of the NOC COG, one (1) elected WDB member that represents either (Labor, Apprenticeship Programs, Community Based Organizations, Local Education and/or Youth Agencies); any other one (1) elected WDB member. The WDB Chairperson will serve as Chairperson of the Executive Committee.

B. OMJ Center Committee

The OhioMeansJobs center committee will provide information and assist with operational and other issues relating to the OMJ delivery systems. Members of the OhioMeansJobs center committee will include representatives of the OMJ center partners.

C. Youth Committees

The youth committee will provide information and assist with planning, operational and other issues relating to provision of services to youth. Members of the youth committee will include some representatives of Community Based Organizations with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth.

D. Ad Hoc Committees

The Chairperson of the WDB, and/or the WDB may appoint or authorize the appointment of other ad hoc committees as deemed necessary to carry out the responsibilities and due diligence of the WDB. The ad hoc committee shall serve for the time period set forth within the motion that created the same. If no time period was set forth, the Chairperson and/or the WDB may terminate the service of the ad hoc committee at any time by motion, or by announcement of the same into the record.

Section 2 – General Rules Regarding Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

As required by WIOA, all standing committees will be chaired by a member of the WDB and will be comprised of WDB members, and/or other individuals appointed by the WDB or Chairperson who are not WDB members.

The Chairpersons of standing committees are appointed by the Board Chairperson, after consultation with the WDB. Committee membership does not have a term limitation. The committee chairpersons will determine regular meeting schedules for their committees.

Committee meetings, unless specifically authorized to take action on behalf of the WDB, are private, not public meetings. Only those where the committee is expressly authorized to act on behalf of the Board are public meetings. In cases where the committee has been expressly authorized to act on behalf of the WDB, the committee chairperson will work with the WDB staff to make sure that the meeting is publicly noticed and advertised. All private, non-public committee meetings may be held in person, or using some other electronic method, including the telephone.

All committees must have a minimum of five (5) appointed committee members, and the quorum for all committee meetings no matter how many individuals are appointed, is the presence of at least three (3) committee members.

Article 6 Conflict of Interest

Section 1 – Conflict of Interest

A WDB member must not participate in or vote on the provision of services by such member (or any organization which the member directly represents), nor on any matter

which would provide any direct financial benefit to that member, a member of his/her immediate family, or the organization he/she may represent.

All members of the Board must adhere to all the Ohio Ethics Laws O.R.C 102, et al.

Each WDB member and employee or contractor is solely and personally responsible to disclose to the WDB Chair/ and/or LEO any situation that he or she perceives to be a conflict or potential conflict of interest. This disclosure will be recorded in the appropriate committee or WDB minutes.

No WDB member, employee or contractor, shall participate in any discussion of any matter without prior disclosure to the WDB Chair/ members and/or LEOs of the person's interest and/or concern.

All members of the WDB and/or any committee are required to sign a Code of Conduct or Conflict of Interest statement as prepared by the WDB. A copy of the signed Code of Conduct shall remain on file in the WDB staff office during the term of each WDB member.

Section 2 – Abstaining from a Vote

Whenever a matter to be voted on by a WDB member or committee member would involve him/her in a conflict of interest, he/she shall declare the conflict of interest to the chairperson of the WDB or committee at the beginning of the discussion of the topic during the meeting. Following such announcement, the WDB or committee member shall abstain from discussion, decision-making and voting on such matter.

When a member abstains from voting due to a conflict of interest, the minutes shall both reflect the abstention and the reason for the abstention as being due to conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest.

Section 3 – Raising Questions of Conflicts of Interest

Whenever a WDB member or committee member has cause to believe that a matter to be voted upon would involve any other WDB member or committee member in a conflict of interest, he/she must raise such question with the WDB Board Chairperson or committee chairperson prior to the next meeting, or with the entire WDB or committee during the meeting. The question so raised shall be decided by a majority vote of the WDB or committee members present, excluding any WDB or committee member present who has been disqualified from voting on the issue because of his/her own conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest is found to exist, the WDB member or committee member shall abstain from discussion, decision-making and voting on such matter.

Article 7

Indemnification, Amendment of Bylaws, Miscellaneous

EXHIBIT A
Membership of the Area 19 WDB

Type of Seat	Appointed by:				Total
	Geauga County Commissioners	Ashtabula County Commissioners	Portage County Commissioners	Area Chief Elected Official	
Business/Emp. Community Reps.	6	6	6		18
Representatives from Labor		1	1		2
Representative from Apprenticeship Program	1				1
Representative of Local Community Based Organization.	1	1	1		3
Representative of the Local Education/Youth Agencies			1		1
Representative of the ABLE Program/Vocational Training Center		1			1
Representative of Workforce Higher Education				1	1
Representative of Economic Development	1	1	1		3
Representative from Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services who satisfies the Wagner Peyser and Veterans Representative requirement				1	1
Representative of the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities				1	1
Representative from transportation, housing, public assistance, and/or philanthropic organizations.	1				1
Total	10	10	10	3	33

Section 1 – Indemnification

All WDB members will be provided defense and indemnification in accordance with ORC 2744.07.

Section 2 – Amendments

These bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new by-laws adopted by a two-thirds majority of the members of the WDB present at a regularly scheduled meeting, who cast an affirmative or negative vote on the motion to amend, excluding all abstentions. Proposed changes to the by-laws must be submitted to each member of the WDB, in writing, at least seven (7) days before any vote on the proposed amendment. Any amendments passed by the WDB must be forwarded to the NOC COG.

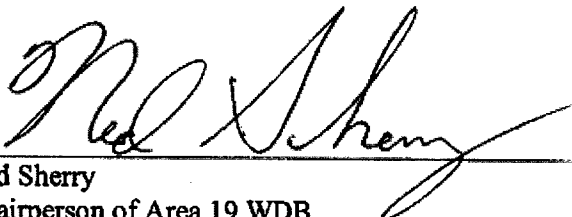
Section 3 -- Miscellaneous

When acting upon the WDB's behalf, no WDB member, officer, employee or other agent shall discriminate against any person because of race, religion, color, creed, sex, national origin or handicap.

If any provision or Article of these bylaws is ever judicially determined to be invalid or unenforceable, such determination shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision or Article of these bylaws.

APPROVED: September 16, 2016

AMENDED: September 28, 2022


Ned Sherry
Chairperson of Area 19 WDB

10-28-2022
Date


Commissioner James Dvorak
NOC COG CEO

11-3-22
Date

**MULTI-FUNCTION AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
THE AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
AND
THE NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**

This Multi-Function Agreement (“Agreement”) is effective as of this 1st day of July, 2024, (the “Effective Date”) by and between the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments (“NOC COG”), and the Area’s Workforce Development Board (“WDB” currently referred to by the State of Ohio as WDB Area 19).

RECITALS

WHEREAS, this Multi-Function Agreement has been drafted and entered into as required by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (“ODJFS”) policy WIOAPL 15-18.1, as a requirement relating to the administration of Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (“WIOA”).

WHEREAS, WIOAPL 15-18.1 sets forth that a single entity may perform multiple functions relating to the administration of a Title I WIOA program.

WHEREAS, WIOAPL 15-18.1 sets forth that should an entity or organization be selected or otherwise designated to perform more than one administrative function, that it must enter into a multi-function agreement in which the parties to the same set forth how they will respectively perform the legal responsibilities required of each function as required by WIOA, all other applicable federal statutes, regulations, and policies, relevant OMB circulars, and applicable conflict of interest policies.

WHEREAS, Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage Counties formed the NOC COG pursuant to an Intergovernmental Agreement (“IGA” attached as **Appendix One**) entered into between the parties on March 1, 2016, in order to serve as a governmental agent in order to conduct the business of the WDB.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ohio law, the NOC COG is a special division of local government, which is governed by a representative body which includes an appointed commissioner from each of its member counties.

WHEREAS, the IGA entered into between the member counties sets forth that pursuant to Section 167.05 of the Ohio Revised Code, the NOC COG may employ staff and/or contract for the services of consultants and experts in order to execute its general and specific powers as set forth within this Agreement.

WHEREAS, the IGA entered into between the member counties sets forth that upon receiving the advice and direction of the WDB, the NOC COG may by majority vote, either within its bylaws (attached as **Appendix Two**), or by a separate vote, appoint itself as the fiscal agent for the WDB.

WHEREAS, the NOC COG adopted new bylaws at its regular meeting on September 7, 2016, in which it appointed itself as the fiscal agent.

WHEREAS, the NOC COG has in the past employed, and continues to employ the staff identified within the attached **Appendix Three**, as the Executive Director and Administrative Assistant, who serve as the WDB staff.

WHEREAS, the NOC COG has in the past employed, and continues to employ the staff identified within the attached **Appendix Three**, who serve as the fiscal agent for the WDB.

WHEREAS, in order to be in compliance with WIOAPL 15-18.1, the parties to this Agreement now set forth how the NOC COG will carry out its legal responsibilities required of its board staff and fiscal agent, as required by WIOA, the final code of regulations, relevant OMB circulars, and the applicable conflict of interest policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, intending to be bound by this Agreement, and in consideration of mutual promises and covenants herein contained, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is hereby acknowledged, the parties hereto agree as follows.

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE OF THE SUBGRANT/SUBGRANT DUTIES

The purpose of this Agreement is to establish the terms, conditions, and requirements governing the multiple roles filled by the NOC COG in serving as both the board staff and the fiscal agent for the WDB.

ARTICLE II. DIVISION AND SHARING OF FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WDB STAFF AND FISCAL AGENT

- A. As set forth within the NOC COG bylaws, the WDB staff shall be responsible for all of the following:
1. All work assigned it at the direction of the NOC COG, and the WDB.
 2. Engage in budgeting, planning, and local grant administration.
 3. Contracting for and the supervision and monitoring of the provision of OMJ Center services within the WDB geographic area.
 4. Development of local policy manuals and procedures.
 5. Provide or arrange for technical assistance and training for local program operators, service providers, OMJ Center operators, and others as needed.

6. Conduct oversight for all WDB programs and activities.
 7. Support of local information technology infrastructure.
 8. Procurement and inventory control.
 9. Human resources functions.
 10. Negotiate performance measures with the State of Ohio, the Department of Labor and/or all other regulatory agencies.
 11. Any and all other duties as identified by the NOC COG and the WDB.
- B. As set forth within the NOC COG bylaws and the IGA creating the NOC COG, the WDB fiscal agent shall be responsible for all of the following:
1. Do all work directed by the NOC COG, and the WDB.
 2. Engage in budgeting, fiscal planning, and local grant administration.
 3. With the assistance of its Subgrantees, maintain and administer the accounting system of record for the NOC COG and the WDB, including tracking the amounts that the WDB, and each member county has allocated to it, when including all expenses, accrued expenditures, obligations, and encumbrances.
 4. Maintain and administer the reporting of the NOC COG's financial information to the NOC COG, the Boards of County Commissioners, and to those from whom the NOC COG receives grant funding.
 5. Draw down grant monies as requested and needed in order to pay expenses associated with WIOA and non-WIOA grants.
 6. Pay all grant related expenses as needed.
 7. Maintain, administer, and on a monthly basis reconcile the bank accounts of the NOC COG and WDB.
 8. Conduct financial oversight and monitoring for all WIOA and non-WIOA grants.
 9. Be responsible for participating in all fiscal monitoring and audits of the NOC COG, the WDB, and its Subgrantees.
 10. Make or approve such agreements, and establish policies and procedures including, but not limited to, fiscal policies relative to procurement, auditing, fiscal monitoring, and overall fiscal administration and operational procedures as are necessary to conduct business and comply with state and federal laws.
 11. Other duties as identified by the NOC COG and the WDB.

ARTICLE III. ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE THE NOC COG, WDB, STAFF, FISCAL AGENT, AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SAME.

- A. Attached and incorporated to this Agreement by this reference is an Organizational Chart, referred to as **Appendix Four**. As referenced by the Organizational Chart, the Area WDB is on a horizontal plane with the NOC COG. The NOC COG is Council of Governments as recognized pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code. The Council of Governments is made up of member representatives, one representative, who is duly elected/appointed county commissioner for each of the member counties of Ashtabula, Geauga and Portage. The NOC COG serves in multiple simultaneous capacities at once for workforce purposes. The

NOC COG creates and appoints the WDB, as one of its standing committees. The NOC COG assigns to the WDB, all of the enumerated rights and responsibilities provided for to a WDB by WIOA, its final rule, and all other binding federal and state laws, regulations, policies, etc. The NOC COG reserves to itself all of the enumerated rights and responsibilities assigned to local elected officials, including the Chief Elected Official (“CEO”). Where WIOA, its final rule, and all other binding federal and state laws, regulations, policies, etc. enumerate rights and responsibilities to the CEO for the WDB, those shall be assigned to the NOC COG and CEO respectively of the same as set forth within the IGA and bylaws of the NOC COG. Where a right or responsibility assigned to the CEO is not assigned by the IGA and/or bylaws to the NOC COG’s members specifically, they shall be assumed by the CEO for the NOC COG.

- B. Within the IGA and bylaws for the NOC COG, the NOC COG is identified as the agent of the WDB. As the WDB agent, the NOC COG conducts the business required to be performed by the WDB. As the WDB agent, the NOC COG has the ability to contract with agents and/or to hire employees to perform the duties required of board staff, and as fiscal agent. See **Appendix One**. The NOC COG adopted a new set of bylaws on September 7, 2016, in which they assigned to employees that the NOC COG employ the duties of board staff and fiscal agent. See **Appendix Two**. The identities and contact information for the employees of the NOC COG are set forth within **Appendix Three**.
- C. The remainder of the WDB staff is managed and supervised by the Executive Director employed by the NOC COG
- D. The functional responsibilities of the WDB staff are set forth within Article II A, of this Agreement. The functional responsibilities of the WDB fiscal agent are set forth within Article II B, of this Agreement. The WDB staff and fiscal agent shall share information and work together on all assigned responsibilities in order to complete all business required of the WDB and NOC COG.
- E. The NOC COG and WDB have worked together to draft financial policies and procedures providing for a sufficient number of internal controls recognized by generally accepted accounting principals, in an attempt to best protect the financial interests of the NOC COG and WDB from being intentionally or unintentionally harmed by the actions of employees and/or third parties. Those policies will be adhered to at all times by WDB board staff and the fiscal agent in the performance of their functional duties. Those policies include procedures and banking restrictions that prohibit the WDB staff, and the fiscal agent, either singularly or together from making a disbursement or paying an expenditure to a third party in the form of a transfer or negotiable instrument. All proposed transfers and negotiable instruments are prepared by the fiscal agent, approved by the Executive Director as appropriate payments, and then submitted to one of the NOC COG members to approve the same either electronically in the case of transfers, or for execution in the case of the issuance of all negotiable instruments. A copy of those policies is attached to this Agreement at **Appendix Five**, and are incorporated as part of this Agreement by this reference.

- F. It is agreed that the WDB fiscal agent employed by the WDB serves in a fiduciary capacity to the WDB and NOC COG. See the promise to serve in a fiduciary capacity by the WDB fiscal agent, attached as **Appendix Six**. As a fiduciary of the same, the fiscal agent acknowledges and agrees that s/he has a duty and responsibility to the NOC COG and WDB to at all times perform all functional responsibilities assigned to the position of fiscal agent in a method and manner that is in the best joint interests of the WDB and NOC COG. This fiduciary duty requires the fiscal agent to act in the best interest of the WDB and NOC COG, ahead of all other interests, including in any instance in which the interests of the WDB and NOC COG contrast and conflict with the interests or instructions of any federal or state agency or agent, and/or those of the Executive Director employed by the NOC COG. As a fiduciary of the NOC COG and the WDB, the fiscal agent acknowledges and agrees as set forth within **Appendix Six**, that s/he is duty bound to report and provide directly to the NOC COG and/or the WDB, any and all fiscal information about which they have a need to know in order to perform the rights and responsibilities afforded those entities under the law. This duty to report information by the fiscal agent to the WDB and NOC COG includes the duty to report to them directly, without any interference or editorial comment from the WDB staff, including the Executive Director, unless the same is requested of the fiscal agent and/or WDB and NOC COG. In other words, as acknowledged and agreed within **Appendix Six**, the fiscal agent can and should provide any information needed by the WDB and NOC COG, either during regular or special meetings, or executive sessions for the same, or through correspondence to the WDB and/or NOC COG's leaders, without having to first receive permission to do so, or regarding the content of the same from WDB staff, including the Executive Director. The fiduciary agent duty of the fiscal agent is also acknowledged and agreed to include the responsibility of the fiscal agent to report to the WDB and/or NOC COG any and all acts of fiscal or other work related malfeasance committed by the Executive Director that concern the interests of the WDB and/or NOC COG.

ARTICLE IV. HANDLING OF BUDGETS AND BUDGETARY AUTHORITY.

- A. Administrative Budget. Prior to, or no later than within the first seven (7) days of the second quarter of the program year, the NOC COG shall approve an administrative budget that accounts for all of the administrative income and expenditures of the WDB staff and fiscal agent.
1. The single administrative budget shall be prepared jointly by the WDB staff and fiscal agent, and submitted to the NOC COG board at a regularly or specially scheduled meeting.
 2. While the administrative budget will provide for all of the anticipated administrative income, it will specifically categorize all estimated direct fiscal agent expenditures as separate line-item expenditures. Furthermore, for all indirect expenditures experienced in relation to the employment of all staff (e.g. rent, utilities, supplies, etc.) the estimated expenditures for the same will be divided

between WDB staff and fiscal agent staff on a pro-rated share, with the numerator of the share to be the number of employees employed as WDB staff versus fiscal agent staff, and the denominator set by the total number of WDB staff plus fiscal agent staff.

3. During the program year, and following the closure of the same, the fiscal agent will account for and monitor realized administrative revenues and expenditures as compared to budgeted for revenues and expenditures. This information will be made available to the NOC COG on an as-needed or requested basis. Should the NOC COG determine that its revenues or any line item from the administrative budget will differ more than ten percent (10%) from what was budgeted, it shall advise the NOC COG of the same, and ask them to consider revising/amending the budget to account for the same.

- B. Accounts and Budgets of Sub Areas. See the IGA, **Appendix One**. Whenever grant funds are allocated to the Area, the NOC COG shall report the allocation of the same to the NOC COG at the next regularly scheduled or special meeting. It is agreed that where the allocation of funds have been allocated by the granting authority with certain amounts attributed to or designated for a specific entity or geographic jurisdiction, such as a county, the NOC COG's agents and/or staff, including the fiscal agent, shall initially assign the allocation of said grants as income and expenditures available for that entity and/or geographic jurisdiction. Where the allocation of funds is not specifically attributed to designated for a specific entity or geographic jurisdiction, said funds shall be allocated pursuant to the direction provide by the WDB and/or NOC COG based upon a rational division attributed to earning the same or merit, with said division being approved by a majority vote by those NOC COG members in attendance at a regularly scheduled or special meeting.

Each allocated grant received by the NOC COG has a grant term measured from the date that the grant may be spent through the closing date of the grant. During the first half of all grant terms for grants allocated to a specific entity or geographic jurisdiction, the grant funds may not be allocated or made available to other entities or jurisdictions, unless recommend by the WDB and by unanimous vote by those NOC COG members in attendance at a regularly scheduled or special meeting. After the first half of a grant term for grants allocated to a specific entity or geographic jurisdiction has ended, those remaining grant funds that have not been expensed or accrued, maybe made available via reallocation by the fiscal agent to other entities or jurisdictions, following a recommendation by the WDB, and majority vote of those NOC COG members in attendance at a regularly scheduled or special meeting. Consideration shall be given to what funds have been obligated before they are reallocated.

- C. Programming/Contractual Budgets. Prior to, or no later than within seven (7) days following the completion of the term of a program year and/or any Subgrant or other programmatic contract, the WDB and/or NOC COG shall approve contractual expenditure budgets based upon the anticipated programmatic revenues on hand and to be received from all formula and special WIOA and other grants, with said contractual expenditure

budgets to set forth for the term of the anticipated contract how much can be spent in total, and per line item if so specified what can be expended by each subgrantee, provider, contractor, etc.

ARTICLE V. MANAGEMENT OF PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.

Because of the existence of the generally accepted accounting principal and banking internal controls put into place by the NOC COG, neither the NOC COG nor the WDB are aware of any actual conflicts of interest that exist in relation to the organizational and management structure of the same. However, the parties do acknowledge that there are two instances in which someone ignorant of the internal policy and procedural controls put into place by the NOC COG and WDB, might perceive a potential conflict of interest. Those two instances, and how they have been and will be addressed by the NOC COG and WDB on a going forward basis, is set forth below.

Potential Perceived Conflict of Interest #1: The Executive Director is in a position of managerial and supervisor responsibility over individuals who perform fiscal agent work. There could be a concern that the Executive Director either intentionally or unintentionally, could use that position of authority to order those performing fiscal agent work to undertake actions that are not in the best interests of the NOC COG and/or WDB.

Remedial Policies Addressing Potential Perceived Conflict of Interest #1: Pursuant to the organizational structure (see **Appendix Four**), and the fiduciary covenant signed by each individual performing fiscal agent work (see **Appendix Six**), those employees or agents agree to serve in a fiduciary capacity to that of the NOC COG, and as such are required to take all action that advance the best interest of the NOC COG and WDB, even if they conflict with an order or instructions provided by the Executive Director. In addition, the organizational structure and fiduciary covenant signed by those performing fiscal agent duties make it clear that those performing fiscal agent work are to directly report to the NOC COG and/or the WDB all information that those Boards of Trustees need to know, without having to go through any board staff, including the Executive Director. Furthermore, should those performing fiscal agent duties discover an act of malfeasance performed by board staff, and/or are instructed to take actions that are contrary to the best interests of the NOC COG and/or WDB, by entering into the fiduciary duty covenant, those individuals promise to disclose such information to the NOC COG and/or WDB. Upon the disclosure of actions, or instructions to act in a manner, that are contrary to the best interest of the NOC COG and/or WDB, those performing the duties of a fiscal agent will take instruction of the NOC COG and/or the WDB on how to resolve and potential conflict of interest.

Potential Perceived Conflict of Interest #2: The Executive Director, the Administrative Assistant, and contracted for third-party staff retained by the NOC COG, currently serve as the fiscal agent for the NOC COG and WDB, with each individual performing separate and shared fiscal agent duties and services. Each of these individuals are responsible in part for handling the budgets, income, and expenditures relating to the administrative budgets of the board staff and the fiscal agent staff. Unlike with program grant budgets awarded to Sub-grantees, there are no independent Sub-Area staff to double check these expenditures.

Remedial Policies Addressing Potential Perceived Conflict of Interest #2: It is agreed that the administrative budget for the board staff and fiscal agent staff will be maintained within one, single budget. However, all direct expenditures in the administrative budget relating to board staff plus fiscal agent staff (i.e. wages, benefits, etc.) will be broken into separate categories of expenditures, thereby showing the cost of the same for board staff plus the fiscal agent staff. Furthermore, all indirect expenditures in the administrative budget (i.e. cost of the lease, utilities, supplies) will be listed in line-item expenditure lines.

Pursuant to guidance provided by the ODJFS, the financial monitoring performed by ODJFS, and the yearly financial audit performed by the Ohio State Auditor's office, shall serve as an adequate internal control and check over the fiscal agent's handling of the administrative budget.

ARTICLE VI. INTERNAL FISCAL MONITORING AND PARTICIPATION IN MONITORING AND AUDITING BY THIRD PARTIES.

- A. It is agreed that at all times the NOC COG shall ensure that the fiscal agent adheres and participates with all monitoring and auditing to which it is required under federal and state law, regulation, policy, along with the terms and conditions of all subgrants, and/or contracts which govern the terms and conditions of any and all grants received by the NOC COG and/or WDB.
- B. It is agreed that the additional responsibilities of the fiscal agent as an auditee under OMB Circular include, but are not limited to:
 - 1. Proper identification of federal awards received.
 - 2. Maintenance of appropriate internal controls.
 - 3. Preparation of appropriate financial statements, including a schedule of federal awards expended.
 - 4. Proper performance and timely submission of an OMB Super Circular audit report.
 - 5. Follow-up on audit findings, including the preparation of a summary schedule of prior audit findings and corrective action, if necessary, and the preparation of a corrective action plan.
- C. It is agreed that the fiscal agent will take prompt action to correct any and all problems identified in an audit.

ARTICLE VII. TERM OF THE AGREEMENT

This Agreement will be in effect from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2028, unless this Agreement is suspended or terminated pursuant to Article IX., prior to the above termination date. This Agreement may be renewed or extended beyond that period only upon written agreement of the parties hereto.

ARTICLE VIII. RECORDS

The board staff and fiscal agent must maintain documentation conforming to all requirements prescribed by ODJFS or by federal, state and local laws, regulations, and policies. The board staff and fiscal agent must prepare and maintain documentation to support all transactions and to permit the reconstruction of all transactions and the proper completion of all reports required by federal, state and local laws, and which substantiates compliance with all applicable federal, state and local laws.

ARTICLE IX. SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION, BREACH AND DEFAULT

This Agreement may be terminated in accordance with the following terms and conditions prior to the conclusion of the term of this Agreement:

- A. The parties may mutually agree to a termination by entering into a written termination agreement that is signed by the CEO of the NOC COG and an authorized officer of the WDB. An agreement to terminate is effective on the later of the date stated in the agreement to terminate or the date it is signed by all parties.
- B. Either party may terminate after giving thirty (30) days written notice of termination to the other party by registered United States mail, return receipt requested. The effective date is the later of the termination date specified in the termination notice or the 31st day following the receipt of the notice by the other party.

ARTICLE X. AMENDMENT

This document constitutes the entire agreement between the parties with respect to all matters herein. This Agreement may be amended only pursuant to a written document signed by both parties. The parties agree that any amendments to laws or regulations cited herein will result in the correlative modification of this Subgrant Agreement without the necessity for executing written amendments.

ARTICLE XI. MISCELLANEOUS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- A. Choice of Law; Partial Invalidity. This Subgrant Agreement will be governed, construed, and enforced in accordance with the laws of the State of Ohio. Should any portion of this Subgrant Agreement be found unenforceable by operation of statute or by administrative or judicial decision, the remaining portions of this Subgrant Agreement will not be affected as long as the absence of the illegal or unenforceable provision does not render the performance of the remainder of the Subgrant Agreement impossible.

- B. Construction. Nothing in this Agreement is to be construed as providing an obligation for any amount or level of funding, resources, or other commitment that is not specifically set forth in state and federal law.

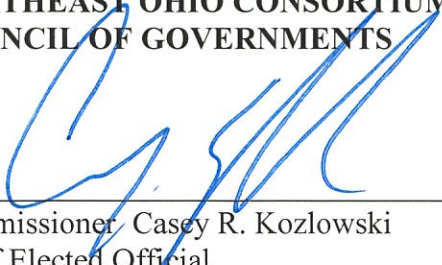
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Agreement to be effective as of July 1, 2024.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD



Ned Sherry
Chairperson

**NORTHEAST OHIO CONSORTIUM
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**



Commissioner Casey R. Kozlowski
Chief Elected Official

Appendix One
Copy of Intergovernmental Agreement

Appendix Two
Bylaws of NOC COG

Appendix Three

Roster of Employees and Contracted for Third Party Staff of the NOC COG

Board and Fiscal Agent Staff	NOC COG Position Title	Employee Since
Craig Sernik 385 Center St. Suite 100 Chardon, OH 44024 (440) 285-5046 craigsernik@neohio.twcbc.com	Executive Director	June 1, 2009
Denise Gehring 385 Center St. Suite 100 Chardon, OH 44024 (440) 285-5842 dgehring@neohio.twcbc.com	Administrative Assistant	December 11, 2007

Additional Contracted for Fiscal Agent Staff

Salvatore Consiglio
 Salvatore Consiglio, CPA, Inc.
 14129 State Road
 North Royalton, Oh 44133
 (440) 877-9870 Phone
 (440) 877-9237 Fax
 (440) 590-1768 Cell
sal@salcpa.com

Effective as of July 1, 2024

Appendix Four
Organizational Chart
For the Northeast Ohio Consortium Council of Governments
and Area 19 Workforce Development Board

Appendix Five
Fiscal Policies for the WDB

Appendix Six

Covenant by those Providing Fiscal Agent Services To Serve as a Fiduciary Agent Capacity in Order to Protect the Best Interests Of the WDB and NOC COG

By signing this document, I acknowledge and agree that as an employee or third party contractor of the NOC COG, that performs fiscal agent duties for the NOC COG and Area 19 WDB, that I shall serve at all times in that capacity as a fiduciary of the same. As a fiduciary agent, I hereby promise to at all times, and in all actions, perform my functional duties in a method and manner that are not contrary to binding laws or enforceable contractual obligations, and to advance the best interests of the NOC COG and WDB over the interests of all others. This includes any instances in which the interests of the WDB and NOC COG contrast and/or conflict with the interests or instructions of any other agency or individual, including but not limited to federal or state agencies or agents, and/or those of the board staff, or my own. In all instances in which I have been asked or instructed to do something that is not in the best interests of the NOC COG and/or WDB, I will inform the appropriate leaders of the same so that they can resolve the issue with the agency, agent, or individual that gave such contrary instructions. This is especially important with respect to instructions provided by federal or state agencies that are contrary to the interests of the NOC COG and/or WDB, so that legal counsel can be consulted if necessary, and so that the NOC COG and/or WDB can advance its interests in a legal method and manner, that is also consistent with their contractual obligations.

As a fiduciary agent of the NOC COG and the WDB, I acknowledge and agree that I am duty bound to report and provide directly to the leadership of the NOC COG and/or the WDB, any and all programmatic or fiscal information about which they have a need to know, in order to perform the rights and responsibilities afforded those entities under the law. This duty to report information by myself to the WDB and NOC COG includes the duty to report to them directly, without any interference or editorial comment from the WDB staff, including the Executive Director or anyone else to whom I am supervised by as part of my employment or report to as part of a services contract. I acknowledge and agree that I can and should provide any information needed by the WDB and NOC COG, either during regular or special meetings, or executive sessions for the same, or through private correspondence or telephone calls to the WDB and/or NOC COG's leaders (the contact information for the same is attached), without having to first receive permission from WDB staff to make that contact or to reveal the content of the same. I also acknowledge and agree that I shall report to the WDB and/or NOC COG any and all acts of fiscal or other malfeasance committed by the Executive Director, board staff, and/or contracted for agents that concern the interests of the WDB and/or NOC COG.

Signature of Employee or Agent of the NOC COG

Date

Contact Information for NOC COG and WDB Leaders

NOC COG CEO:

Commissioner Casey R. Kozlowski
Ashtabula County Commissioners
25 W. Jefferson Street
2nd Floor, Old Courthouse
Jefferson, Ohio 44047
Phone: (440) 567-3750

Workforce Development Board Chairperson:

Ned Sherry
Kinetico, Inc.
11015 Kinsman Road
Newbury, Ohio 44065
Phone: (440) 564-4263

Exhibit Seven

Area 19 Workforce Development Board Roster

July 2025

CJ Bobbitt Control System Engineer/Field Service Team Leader GMR Technologies Zehrco- Giancola Composites Inc. Premix-Hadlock Composites LLC	Lynn Hartman Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities	Phil Rath President Compass Packaging
Eric Davis Training Director Warren Electrical JATC	Gina M. Hofstetter Director Geauga County Community & Economic Development	Ted St. John Founder & Chief Executive Hope Town
Nicole Deligianis Business Manager LiUNA Local 245	Alissa Holdson Executive Director Ashtabula County Community Action Agency	Mike Sherman Owner SW&E, LLC.
Mike DeLuke Staff Representative AFSCME Ohio Council 8	Kelley Hollander Human Resources Manager Viking Forge	Ned Sherry Vice President Information Technology Kinetico, Inc.
Brad Ehrhart President Portage Development Board	Kenny Lohr Production Manager SpringSeal	Teresa Simons Executive Director Alliance for Working Together
Dawn Farrell Executive Director Geauga Metropolitan Housing Authority	Gregory J. King Human Resources Generalist Plastpro	Dr. Angela Spalsbury Dean & Chief Administrative Officer Kent State University – Geauga
Jonathan Forbes Human Resources Director ARMC Healthcare System	Greg Myers Executive Director Growth Partnership for Ashtabula County	Scott Wludyga Superintendent Ashtabula County Technical & Career Center
Mark Frisone Executive Director Family & Community Services	Alec Raffa Senior VP & General Manager Molded Fiber Glass (MFG)	Keith Wyatt Chief Operating Officer Grand River Rubber & Plastics
Mark Goffinet Program Delivery Manager ODJFS		



Ashtabula County Ohio Means Jobs - 2025

Job and Career Fairs – Mock Interviewing

OhioMeansJobs in Ashtabula, Ohio, contributed to providing high school students from Ashtabula County Technical and Career Campus (A-Tech), Lakeside High School, Geneva High School, Grand valley High School, Pymatuning Valley High School, Jefferson High School, and Conneaut High School with valuable career preparation experiences, including mock interviews. These interviews help students develop confidence, refine their communication skills, and gain insights into employer expectations. By participating, students receive constructive feedback, allowing them to improve their responses and professional etiquette. This initiative strengthens the bridge between education and employment, ensuring young job seekers are better equipped for the workforce.

Ashtabula County, Ohio, participated in job fairs to connect residents with employment opportunities, including events tailored for high school students. High school job fairs, such as those hosted by ACCESS Ashtabula County, provide juniors and seniors with a chance to explore career paths, meet industry professionals, and gain insights into the local job market. The high schools hold dedicated fairs to help students transition into the workforce.

Ashtabula Ohio Means Jobs hosted a seminar at Happy Hearts Academy, a facility dedicated to providing specialized education for students with developmental disabilities. This seminar aimed to connect job seekers with valuable resources, offering guidance on employment opportunities, skill development, and career advancement within the community. By partnering with Happy Hearts, the event underscored a commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that individuals of all abilities had access to meaningful employment pathways. Attendees benefited from expert-led discussions, networking opportunities, and practical advice tailored to the evolving job market in Ashtabula County.

Additionally, Ashtabula Ohio Means Jobs attends community job fairs, such as Guyreino's Deli career fair and ARMC's Community Connection fair, providing a connection for individuals to engage with local employers, explore career paths, and gain valuable insights into the job market. These events foster a sense of community participation, allowing job seekers to network, refine their skills, and take meaningful steps toward their professional goals. Whether someone is searching for their first job or aiming for career advancement, these fairs serve as a bridge between talent and opportunity in Ashtabula.

Employer Services

OhioMeansJobs Ashtabula County is a vital resource for local employers, offering comprehensive support through various workforce development initiatives. The agency provides space for employers to hold their

own hiring events, helping businesses connect with qualified candidates while giving job seekers direct access to opportunities. Recently, REM Community Services held several career fairs at Ashtabula Ohio Means Jobs' facility. Employers from key industries such as manufacturing and healthcare, frequently post job openings through OhioMeansJobs Ashtabula County. Manufacturing companies seek skilled workers for production and engineering roles, while healthcare providers look for professionals in nursing, administration, and patient care. Through On-the-Job Training (OJT), businesses receive financial incentives to train new hires, equipping them with essential skills for success. Additionally, Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) helps employers upskill their current workforce, keeping businesses competitive in evolving industries. Glenbeigh has participated in this program and benefited from funding to train workers in specialized skills relevant to its operations. By facilitating these services, OhioMeansJobs Ashtabula County strengthens the local economy and fosters meaningful employment opportunities.

Reentry Services

OhioMeansJobs in Ashtabula plays a vital role in supporting reentry efforts for individuals transitioning from incarceration, particularly those from the Lake Erie Correctional Institution. One of the key initiatives is the Reentry Job and Resource Fair, which provides returning citizens with direct access to employment opportunities, vocational training, and essential community resources. These fairs bring together local businesses, service providers, and workforce development professionals to help individuals secure stable jobs and reintegrate successfully.

Additionally, reentry seminars offer guidance on resume building, interview preparation, and career planning, ensuring that participants are equipped with the skills needed to thrive in the workforce. OhioMeansJobs also collaborates with correctional facilities to provide specialized employment services, including job placement assistance and training programs tailored to industry demands. These efforts contribute to reducing recidivism and fostering economic growth in the community.

The youthOPPORTUNITIES! (yO!) Program



youthOPPORTUNITIES! (yO!) is the Comprehensive Case Management and Employment Program for Ashtabula County. The program is contracted out to the Ashtabula County Technical & Career Center (A-Tech). The yO! Program is a holistic, youth-driven program that serves Ashtabula County youth ages 14-24.

The **yO!** Program provides all the following programming for low-income and highly barriered youth:

- objective and educational skill assessments,
- career exploration activities, work experiences,

- after-school tutoring,
- secondary vocational training, postsecondary education support,
- alternative education and dropout recovery, clothing, tools and fees for training,
- job searches and employment, peer mentoring, leadership training, career counseling,
- support in maintaining employment,
- access to drug/alcohol and mental health counseling,
- assistance with short and long-term goal setting, (which often serve as reality checks),
- transportation services,
- postsecondary application and financial aid assistance,
- assistance with finding temporary and permanent housing including referrals to domestic violence and homeless shelters,
- assistance transitioning from foster care, home or domestic violence situations and assistance in dealing with the court system (pre-entry) as well as an ex-offender.

The following are key statistics relating to the demographics of the yO! participants:

- Eight two (82%) of the youth are enrolled in an educational programs (secondary or post-secondary education)
- Twenty (20%) percent of the youth are homeless (couch-surfing, homeless shelter, hotels, cars, tents, etc.) or in foster care.
- More than forty percent (40%) of our youth are parenting.
- More than seventy percent (70%) report transportation concerns (in the largest county in the state.).
- Twenty percent (20%) of our youth report substance abuse concerns.
- Forty-nine (49%) percent are ex-offenders.
- Forty-eight (48%) percent are individuals with disabilities.

The Youth Program is broken into the following essential sub-programs:

The BRIDGES Program.

The “Bridges to Success” Program has a holistic, youth-centered and youth-developed approach that it is geared to directly address the needs of any Ashtabula County youth in transition, whether they are in or out of school, an ex-offender, transitioning from foster care or just transitioning to life itself as a responsible adult. This program is structured so it can adapt, easily, to suit the needs of each individual youth and/or group being served. Youth face many challenges from different situations such as a lack of education or low skills, homelessness, abandonment by parents/family, the death of parents, dropping out of school, lack of skills, and/or unable to pass standardized high school testing. The program is centered on the Building Bridges concept. The youth will build a healthy relationship with a life skills coaches, trained Youth Navigators, peers, and community during the Bridges program. Together, as a team, they will develop a concrete step-by-step plan to help the youth participants develop successful life skills and goals. Throughout the program the youth, peers, and life skills coach will shift the focus from personal relationships to personal accomplishments and achievements. Currently the Bridges program has three different locations. Every Monday night a Bridges group meets at the Youth Training Center. Between thirty and fifty (30-50) youth attend Bridges weekly. Dinner is always served family style, and the youth spend

two hours building healthy relationships, resilience skills, teamwork, etc. Many nights community members also attend Bridges to add a mentorship element.

B.E.S.T. (Benefit Every day from Successful Training)

The B.E.S.T. program offers a variety of soft skills training sessions that are available independently or concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

The B.E.S.T. program:

- assist participants in conducting career research to identify career-options in which they are most interested,
- offer participants an opportunity to “shadow” in an adult workforce training program or programs,
- works in conjunction with Ashtabula County Job & Family Services to determine training eligibility (ITA),
- assists participants to identify and understand other available financial aid options and their pros and cons (Pell Grants, Loans, etc.),
- provides financial literacy,
- provides a contextualized educational opportunity to prepare participants for and support during postsecondary training, and
- prepares participants for and assist them to conduct an internship or job search during and after completion of training.

Sixty percent (60%) of youth enrolled in the program gain unsubsidized employment or are enrolled in post-secondary education.

Accelerated Career Education (A.C.E.)

The focus of the program has always been two-fold: academic preparation and career research leading to obtaining a high school equivalency diploma or increased basic skills. The A.C.E. program also serves the growing need of assisting youth that struggle with on-line schooling. The A.C.E program for out-of-school and online youth meets at that Ashtabula County Ohio Means Jobs Monday-Thursday from 8:45 to 10:45am. In the last academic program year, thirty-three (33) youth completed portions of the High School Equivalency exam and eleven (11) youth from the A.C.E program passed their High School Equivalency exam. YO! Staff provide tutoring at the Youth Training Center weekly for in-school youth that attend college, secondary, and post-secondary training (such as CNA test prep). Life Skill coaches also provide tutoring at all school districts in Ashtabula County.

Gain Experiential Training (G.E.T.) Opportunities

The G.E.T. Opportunities program screens, trains and successfully places Ashtabula County youth, creating real, meaningful work experiences. CCMEP participants referred to the G.E.T. Opportunities Program for job skills directly related to employment, a work experience, a paid/unpaid internship, summer employment, job shadowing or a pre-apprenticeship opportunity, participate in a three-step process:

Step 1 WORK PREP.

- At least 30 hours of soft-skills training includes workplace communication, problem-solving, job etiquette and employer expectations. The GET training uses the Big Six curriculum that was developed by yO! youth, work experience placement employers, and yO! staff that focuses on the six most important things every youth should know when entering employment; attitude, cell phone, social media, initiative, drugs, and relationships.
- Career exploration using OhioMeansJobs.com and interviewing with G.E.T. staff helps to identify the participants, interests and aptitudes as well as special considerations such as location, transportation, child-care, accommodations, etc. This could also include a half day job shadowing or interview at the potential worksite to ensure a proper “fit” for all concerned.
- Completion of the Future Plans Assessment and Career Coaching
- Registration with A-Tech’s third-party payroll administrator.

Step 2 PLACEMENT.

- Placement at an A-Tech Board of Education approved monitored work experience or internship site by G.E.T. staff.
- Placement will include the setting of three (3) to five (5) mutually-agreed-upon and measurable goals/skills for the participant to focus on during their placement.
- The G.E.T. Opportunities Job Coach who monitors for stability and progress on goals as well as troubleshoot any issues that arise will conduct weekly monitoring.

Step 3 JOB SEARCH.

- As the participant’s G.E.T. activity proceeds, the Job Coach will begin to prepare them for a structured job search. This will be a structured and monitored search for gainful and sustainable employment. Depending on the individual, it could include all of the following activities: registration with area staffing agencies, an update of their Ohio Means Jobs account to include recent skill trainings and/or work experience and an updated resume, as well as revised job search parameters, completion of training on how to conduct an effective job search: applications, letters/e-mails, phone contacts, interviewing, follow-up etc.
- Participate in weekly phone-in or face-to-face appointments with the Job Coach and/or the CCMEP case manager during job search.

From October 2023-September 2024 yO! youth worked over thirty-seven thousand hours (37,000) making over four hundred and fifty thousand (\$450,000) dollars in wages. Many of these youth were able to assist their families in paying bills, providing clothing and supplies for school, paying phone bills, assisting with transportation, and paid school sports fees.

S.T.A.R. (Steps Towards Achievement and Reward) Program

The S.T.A.R program is a youth leadership program that is designed and facilitated by a Youth Navigator and a Life Skills Coach. The program is focused on leadership skills, entrepreneurship skills, peer navigation, mentoring, empowerment, and community involvement. Each week the youth learn and practice leadership skills such as public speaking, facilitating meetings, advocating for other youth in the community, assertiveness training, communication styles, crisis intervention, and empowerment training. The goal of the program is to help youth become agents of change in their city, county, state, nation, and world! Over forty (40) youth navigators have completed training since the beginning of the S.T.A.R youth navigation program.



The youth are achieving amazing things!

- yO! staff, in partnership with Catholic Charities, was able to respond to the need by forming the Housing Stabilization program. Over thirty (30) youth have participated in the program and twenty-eight (28) youth have been able to establish stable independent housing.
- Last Summer yO! partnered with the GRIT project and over 120 youth participate in summer training. This included Entrepreneurship, Manufacturing, STNA and aviation. Each class ended with the youth receiving a certification. This Summer we will be offering Aviation, Hospitality, Welding, Entrepreneurship, Environmental Sustainability and CNA classes.



- In the last full program year, the yO! Program served over seven hundred (700) youth in Ashtabula County
 - More than two-hundred fifty (250) youth have gained some form of unsubsidized employment.
 - More than (40) graduated in June of 2024 from high school. All of them had post-secondary plans and they received over \$30,000 in scholarships
 - More than fifty (50) youth obtain their driver's license yearly with the help of yO!

- In May 2025 yO! youth and staff were invited to travel to Columbus. We had the incredible opportunity to meet with the Lieutenant Governor, as well as numerous State Representatives and Senators, giving our youth a chance to share their voices and stories directly with state leadership. One of the most impactful moments was testifying before the State Health Committee about the GRIT program, highlighting the real-world impact it's having on young people in our community. The trip was a powerful reminder of the importance of advocacy and the strength of youth-led change.



Individual Youth Success Story: Junior Valeriano

We had the honor of celebrating two major milestones with one of our yO! youth, J.V. — his high school graduation and his recent completion of military boot camp. His coach shared this heartfelt reflection:

“Over time, I had the opportunity to watch J.V. grow. I helped him with homework, monitored his job placements, took him to football practices, and supported him through many important moments. Eventually, J.V. expressed interest in joining the military. In May 2022, I proudly attended his high school graduation — a moment that filled me with pride.

We spent time studying for the ASVAB together, researching different military branches, and exploring his options. Though he wasn't always certain about the path ahead, he never stopped trying to find the right fit.

Now, J.V. has completed boot camp, and we couldn't be prouder of his achievement. His journey is a powerful reminder to our youth that there is hope beyond graduation. Even when you're unsure, your dreams are still possible.

J.V.'s story is one of perseverance, patience, and thoughtful decision-making. He now believes he's made the best decision of his life and is proud to share his journey with others. He hopes that his success can inspire fellow youth not to give up, to keep believing in themselves, and to continue striving toward their goals.”



Geauga County

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OhioMeansJobs Geauga (OMJ Geauga), is Geauga County's Workforce Division. Our mission is to develop and strengthen our local workforce by empowering and connecting jobseekers with employers to grow the economic stability of our community. In addition to the typical programming you'd find in an OhioMeansJobs Center (WIOA, CCMEP) Geauga County enhances the services available to our customers by incorporating a variety of innovative initiatives. Below is an outline of some of these initiatives over the past 10 years:

Business Services

Through the talents of our Employment and Employer Services Representative, Mandy Vacik, OMJ Geauga is able to provide Recruitment and Talent Acquisition with no charge for these services.

Some of the services under development:

- Job Description Development
- Job Evaluations
- Job Advertisement Service (online, Job Boards in OMJ Career Center and local libraries)
- Assistance targeting desired candidates
- Resume Searches
- Recommend salary/wage (market-driven)
- Interview Assistance – Interview guides, panel member
- Incumbent Worker Training

Virtual Services

Through Microsoft Teams, our Career Advisors have the ability to successfully meet with clients through a virtual option. The talents of our Career Advisors at OMJ Geauga are able to provide job searching services such as resume writing, mock interviewing, job searching and other appointments to clients providing an additional alternative to meeting their job search needs.

Virtual Workshops

Utilizing the YouTube platform, OMJ Geauga County has developed the OhioMeansJobs Geauga County Career Center channel that allows job seekers the ability to view workshops from the privacy of their own home. OMJ Geauga Staff have created and narrated workshops that include but are not limited to Resume Writing; How and Why to use LinkedIn; Job Readiness Seminar; Interview Tips; How to Conduct a Job Search; Job Resources for over 50 and more.

Summer Manufacturing Institute (SMI) Camps

Alliance for Working Together (AWT) Foundation, iSTEM, Auburn Career Center and OhioMeansJobs Geauga host two weeks of the Summer Manufacturing Institute (SMI) camps for Lake & Geauga County 5th & 6th graders. The campers are introduced to the basics of manufacturing, engineering, and what it takes to create and build things.

The focus of the camps has included: *Robotics and Automation * Bio-Medical Engineering & Manufacturing * Science of Manufacturing Food Week * Mad Scientist Week * Robotech * and more

Geauga County School Districts & Workforce Solutions

Workforce is charged with assisting our local schools and the students choosing a pathway using one of the 4 E's (Education, Employment, Enlistment, Entrepreneur).

Career Fair

Career Fairs have been deployed and have about 70 businesses and education providers providing career guidance and job opportunities in different business sectors to Middle and High School students.

Over the years, partners include ESC of the Western Reserve, AWT (Alliance for Working Together), Kent State Geauga, Middlefield Means Business, Chardon Chamber of Commerce, Middlefield Chamber of Commerce, Auburn Career Center, Kent State Geauga Campus.

All County High School Job Fair

Auburn Career Center, Berkshire, Cardinal, Chardon, Kenston, Newbury, West Geauga High Schools, Notre Dame Cathedral Latin, Home-Schooled, Amish, Kent State Geauga and more have all been invited to attend the All County High School Job Fair being hosted at various high schools in Geauga County.

Partners include AWT (Alliance for Working Together), Kent State Geauga, Middlefield Means Business, Chardon Chamber of Commerce, Middlefield Chamber of Commerce and Auburn Career Center.

Typically, 50 employers, representing multiple business sectors, have the opportunity to meet mostly high-school aged seeking employment opportunities, ranging from full-time, part-time positions to seasonal work and internships.

Auburn Career Center Reverse Job Fair

Students set up tables; employers walked around to students.

Programs represented included: Manufacturing, Health Care, IT, HVAC, Welding, Electrical, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Business, Landscape Horticulture, Automotive, Construction and Architecture, Maintenance, and Teaching Professions.

Students have resumes plus project samples and are ready to talk with employers. Employers had two hours to meet and talk to as many students as possible. Employers gathered students' resumes and provided students with employment applications.

About 200 businesspeople representing 125 companies attended the Reverse Job Fair.

Rapid Response

Rapid Response (RR) resources are dedicated to averting layoffs and reemployment after layoffs. We serve two customers: employers and their workforce. We achieve our goals by offering layoff aversion and early intervention services to employers who are facing downsizing or layoff, as well as reemployment solutions to employers and their workforce who have been impacted by permanent layoff or closure. Some of our services may include customized workshops, training, up-skilling, retooling, certifications or skill matching.

Citizen Circle

A citizens circle is a tool used to assist those released from incarceration to make a successful reentry into the community. Offenders and their families develop relationships with members of the community

and together develop a plan to help the offender become accepted as a productive citizen and member of the community. OMJ Geauga is a founding member of the geauga County Citizen Circle.

Fast Track Training Program - CDL drivers

OhioMeansJobs Geauga and Great Lakes Truck Driving School (GLTDS) partnered for a specialized Commercial Drivers License (CDL) training for more than 25 low income, laid off seasonal, laid-off, unemployed, under-employed workers and displaced homemakers Geauga County residents.

There were two cohort trainings created which included: tuition for a Monday through Friday 6-week training class, weekly transportation to and from GLTDS, overnight accommodations and all meals, testing fees, work boots, job placement assistance, job fair and an interactive soft skills class.

A Reverse Job Fair was held for each of the CDL classes at Kent State University-Gauga Campus. We also extended invitations to other Geauga residents who wanted to participate in the job fair.

Employers had the opportunity to circulate among the students and introduce themselves to see if the student's talents met the employer's needs.

This unique model provides a forum for marketing the students to employers while also creating an atmosphere that allows the employers to interview them without financial cost and logistical burdens. Many of our students were hired by our local Geauga employers!

United Way Services Income Collaborative - Fast Track Training Program – STNA

OMJ Geauga is an active member of the United Way Services Income Collaborative and "Bridges" program.

In the past, through the Income Collaborative partners, Kent State University Geauga developed an STNA training tailored to be convenient for those with families, children, and work schedules. The class was available for a maximum of 8 students.

Students learned basic nursing skills including infection control, personal care skills, mental health and social service needs, safety and emergency needs, basic restorative services and resident's rights. This class gave students the ability to sit for the STNA test.



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As the workforce division of Portage County Job & Family Services, our mission is to develop and strengthen our local workforce by empowering and connecting jobseekers with employers to grow the economic stability of our community. In addition to the typical programming you would find in any OhioMeansJobs Center, Portage County enhances the services available to our customers by incorporating a variety of innovative initiatives. Those initiatives are listed below.

Workforce Opportunities & Readiness Knowledge for Students (W.O.R.K.S.)

W.O.R.K.S. began as a pilot program with one local high school in Portage County in 2015. This program was designed to be a proactive approach to serving our youngest jobseekers and helping to prepare them for higher education and the workforce after graduation. Now, the program offers a menu of workshops that bring job coaches into the classroom to educate students and/or educators on a wide range of subjects, such as softskills, resume writing, mock interviewing and dressing for success. We also offer an overview of the OhioMeansJobs.com website for students or the data reporting tool for administrators. New in 2025, we have also begun integrating W.O.R.K.S. into our local juvenile detention center, offering the same services for youth as they prepare to reenter the community.

Career Connections Expo

Initially, OMJPC used the Career Connections Expo as an opportunity for students in 7th-12th grade, to explore and connect with future career opportunities. Now, through our partnership with our local development board, we offer localized Job Fairs (Expos) at each local school district across the county that is interested. Local employers amongst a variety of industries are represented and encouraged to provide hands-on activities that give students the opportunity to gain an understanding of what careers in that industry look like. In addition to the employers, we also provide a variety of higher education providers—from colleges and universities to trade schools and credential programs. The idea is that students can explore careers and then make immediate connections with the education needed to reach their employment goals. Also, for the students slated to graduate and enter the workforce directly or for those students looking for summer work, employers on hand are willing to accept applications and make connections with students interested in the positions they have to offer. Additionally, representatives from the armed forces are on hand to talk with students interested in pursuing military options.

Job Fairs-All Jobseekers Welcome, with an Emphasis on Honoring Veterans

Each year, OMJPC hosts a job fair with the goal of connecting our jobseekers with local employers in need of workforce. In November, we hold a job fair event that is open to all jobseekers. However, we honor local veterans who attend. Any veteran who pre-registers for the event is afforded VIP access that allows them to get into the event an hour early to meet with employers. Additionally, we offer them light refreshments, free haircuts and a clothing voucher for interview attire from Goodwill.

Manufacturing Internship Program

In 2018, a program was created that offered individuals manufacturing training and a certification from Kent State University as part of a new initiative. Manufacturing is one of the most in-demand industries in Portage County and OMJPC was excited to help assist local businesses with a talent pipeline. What started as a focus group with local manufacturing employers and several training providers, developed into a customized training program that offered curriculum based on the employer's specific requests and real-world work experience for program participants. Operating a 3/2 schedule, participants would spend two days out of the week in the classroom with Kent State University where they learn manufacturing principles, while the other three days were spent with a participating employer through hands-on experience. In addition to the paid work experience, participants can earn incentives and receive the support of a Case



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Manager, as well as assistance with employment needs such as transportation and clothing vouchers for work shoes and uniforms.

STNA Pilot with Stark State

OMJPC is always looking for opportunities to create pipeline programs that supply in-demand industries within our area. Among one of those industries is health care. One entry level position that we chose to focus on was Certified Nursing Assistant ("CAN / STNA"). In partnership with Stark State College, we sent a cohort of individuals through their training program that allowed them to finish with the CNA credential. What was unique about this program was that among the participants in the program were high school students, currently enrolled in CCMEP, that used this credential as a pathway to graduation. The month-long program consisted of 10 training sessions, 16 hours of clinicals, and skills labs that offered countless hours of hands-on experience. A final exam allowed each individual to earn the CNA / STNA. Upon graduation from the program half a dozen employers were willing to interview all of the individuals who successfully obtained the credential.

Educator to Business Bus Tour

OhioMeansJobs Portage County hosts opportunities for local educators to learn more about the workforce within our community. One example of this would be our Educator to Business Bus Tour. These bus tours allow educators, guidance counselors, principals, and higher education student advisors to gain an insider's account of in-demand job opportunities available within Portage County and the skills needed to be successful in those positions. Past agendas begin the day with Team NEO, an economic development group for Northeast Ohio that helps attract business to the region, speak to the group about their annual report titled Aligning Opportunities. The report addresses the supply and demand imbalance in the area with regard to the credentials needed for in-demand employment sectors and what degrees and certifications students are actually receiving after they graduate. The report also identified three job sectors considered to be in-demand in our area: manufacturing, information technologies (IT), and healthcare. After learning about workforce and in-demand industries, the group tours local employers from these three sectors within our county. This offers educators a first-hand perspective of the jobs available in our county as well as an opportunity to networking with local employers. Additionally, it also allows educators the chance to start thinking about the students they work with that could fit into these positions

Guidance Counselor Breakfast

OhioMeansJobs Portage County hosts an annual Guidance Counselor Breakfast. We invite guidance counselors and administrators from across all school districts within the county the opportunity to attend. The goal of the breakfast is to educate our local schools on the programs and services available through the OhioMeansJobs Centers that serve our youngest and/or future job seekers--high school students. Additionally, OMJPC provides speakers from places like the Department of Education's Career Connection Department, Office of Workforce Development--OMJ.com Training, etc. to share information on ways school can collaborate with OMJ. We also use the time to update the districts with any special programming that will be coming up in the future as well as giving updates on work-based learning opportunities, trainings available for school staff and information on the OMJ Readiness Seal. This has turned into a phenomenal way to network and also outreach to schools regarding the CCMEP Programs and services.

W.O.R.K.S. Newsletter

High School students are the youngest jobseekers we serve at OMJPC. We recognize these youth represent our future workforce, and we share a common goal with our educators of ensuring they are skilled, educated and prepared for employment upon graduation. Because of these shared commonalities, the OMJ WORKS Newsletter was developed. The



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newsletter which is published periodically throughout the school year was designed to connect educators to the workforce information they needed to prepare their students for higher education and careers following high school. Additionally, the newsletters boast labor market information (LMI), In-Demand Jobs within the county as well as programs and services available to students and families.

High School Job Coaches

OMJPC has taken an innovative glance at helping to prepare high school students for the workforce by implementing a job coaching pilot program. Each OMJ center has a resource room open to universal jobseekers that can offer free job searching, resume development, job readiness workshops as well as connections to community agencies, programs and services. Through this pilot, we make our resource rooms mobile and take them into any local school district within our county. For up to four hours per week a job coach monitors the mobile resource room and can assist students who are in need of guidance pertaining to their educational and employment goals.

Re-Entry Program for Justice-Involved Individuals

OMJPC developed a formal Re-Entry Program to serve the justice-involved individuals within our community. This program offers a three-pronged approach to serving those re-entering the workforce following incarceration. On the first Tuesday of each month, we participate in the Video In-Reach Program. This is a monthly webinar that allows the OMJ team, along with community partners, to pro-actively prepare individuals slated for release from prison with resource information before, prior to their exit. Additionally, the OMJPC Re-Entry team members participate regularly in Job Fairs at our local prisons. By attending these events, they are building relationships with individuals who they may later work with upon release. Citizen Circle is the third program that the OMJPC team regularly attends each month. Citizen Circle allows community agencies, clergy and other necessary resource providers to meet with individuals just released from prison or who are out on parole. The group acts as a support system and can educate this population on employment options following release and other community resources they are interested in (housing, food assistance, etc.) with hopes of giving them the best chance of being successful after they reintegrate into the community.

Re-Entry Fair

OMJPC recognizes the intense challenges that individuals recently reintegrating into the community face—challenges that extend far beyond simply serving time. These individuals often confront barriers such as limited access to stable employment, navigating complex legal obligations, rebuilding fractured relationships, and overcoming societal stigma. To address these multifaceted needs, OMJPC hosts an annual Re-Entry Fair, a collaborative event that brings together employers, social service agencies, and community organizations in one accessible space. This fair provides justice-involved individuals with resources and personalized support, including assistance with child support obligations, reinstating driver's licenses, exploring fine repayment options, and securing meaningful employment opportunities. By fostering these connections, OMJPC aims to empower returning community members to rebuild their lives with dignity, reduce recidivism, and strengthen the social fabric of our community.

Benefit Bridge

OMJPC has partnered with ODJFS to pilot a program designed to support individuals receiving public assistance as they transition into employment—especially when earning a wage affects their benefits. Often, individuals who secure jobs struggle to maintain them because the loss of essential benefits for food and housing creates a financial gap they cannot afford. To address this “benefits cliff,” the Bridge program provides incentives to encourage job retention and offers supportive services that help cover housing, utilities, and transportation costs. Additionally, all participants receive access



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to valuable resources such as peer counseling, financial literacy training, and personalized case management to promote long-term stability and success.

Virtual Services

Through Microsoft Teams, our Case Managers have the ability to successfully meet with clients through a virtual option. Participants are able to work with Case Managers right from their home to provide job searching services such as resume writing, mock interviewing, job searching and other appointments to clients providing an additional alternative to meeting their job search needs.

Toolbox Workshops

Toolbox Workshops are offered weekly to help address the needs of jobseekers in our community. Jobseekers are welcome to drop in to any Toolbox Workshop to help with things such as in-person resume writing, interview preparation, OhioMeansJobs.com job search needs, and more. This workshop is often tailored to the individuals needs and has been incredibly successful in helping individuals secure independent employment.

Rapid Response

Rapid Response resources are dedicated to averting layoffs and reemployment after layoffs. We serve two customers: employers and their workforce. We achieve our goals by offering layoff aversion and early intervention services to employers who are facing downsizing or layoff, as well as reemployment solutions to employers and their workforce who have been impacted by permanent layoff or closure. Some of our services may include customized workshops, training, up-skilling, retooling, certifications or skill matching.

CCMEP Holiday Party

Beginning in 2023, the CCMEP team identified a growing need for our youth to gather in a supportive community environment and share in the joy of the holiday season. Recognizing the importance of connection and celebration, OMJPC partnered with Family & Community Services (FCS) to create an event that goes beyond festive fun—combining holiday cheer with valuable career awareness and mentoring opportunities. Throughout the day, attendees participated in a wide range of engaging activities, including interactive games, creative crafts, and a delicious lunch complemented by tempting desserts, fostering a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Thanks to the generous contributions of local businesses, we were able to provide gift cards and exciting prizes, adding an extra layer of excitement and reward to the festivities. This event not only allowed youth to celebrate together but also helped build meaningful relationships, boost confidence, and inspire hope for their futures.

CCMEP Work Experience Fair

In order to help boost participation in worksites throughout Portage County, we have begun hosting a CCMEP Work Experience Fair. This allows youth to meet with employers, complete their HR paperwork on-site, and even leave with confirmed start dates for summer employment. This summer, participants can work up to 20 hours per week at a rate of \$13/hour. Additionally, Portage County opts into the PRC Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) funding each year that ODJFS offers it to counties, which helps offset the influx of youth joining the CCMEP program for summer work experience.