




# VIRGINIA BOARD OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

<b>Policy Area:</b> Programs and Services	
<b>Title of Policy:</b> Business Services Requirements	<b>Number:</b> 403-01, Change 1
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## I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategic vision of business service provision in the Commonwealth of Virginia and data collection requirements of Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and American Job Centers (also called Virginia Career Works Centers), which includes all mandated WIOA partners in providing services to business customers. This policy presents required actions of WIOA partners to expand the capacity to provide business services and capture data on business services provided to business customers.

## II. Summary and Impact

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 created a comprehensive workforce development system that places an emphasis on the role of business as a primary customer in the One-Stop Delivery System. Provision of services to businesses is value added to businesses, jobseeker customers, and the community. WIOA mandates that LWDBs develop strategies to establish and sustain lasting partnerships for the delivery of business services that will last beyond changes in One-Stop operators or career services providers. Local areas must establish and develop relationships and networks with employers and their intermediaries; convene or implement industry or sector partnerships; and may also provide other business services and strategies that meet the workforce development needs of their area employers in accordance with partner programs' statutory requirements. All of these strategies must be reflected in the Local Workforce Development Area WIOA Local Plan.

WIOA envisions a high-performance workforce development system – a system that is results-oriented, flexible, and continuously improving. Customized business services may be provided to employers, employer associations, and other organizations. Furthermore, WIOA

regulations state that the delivery of business services is an important component of the one-stop delivery system as a whole.

Virginia's strategic vision for its workforce development system is "every business has access to a highly skilled workforce" and its mission is to "build a strong workforce with skills aligned to employer needs." To help achieve this vision, Virginia will "increase business engagement and deliver value to our business customers" by effectively identifying, engaging and serving businesses; having integrated service delivery; forming sector-based partnerships to address the needs of regional industries; and investing in technology and professional development. Being more responsive to the needs of Virginia's businesses, workforce resources will yield an improved return on investment.

These goals will be accomplished by empowering the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to identify opportunities more effectively to better partner with business in a strategic manner based upon career pathways and sector strategies. This will be implemented utilizing cross-agency, cross-programmatic groups that are designed to provide a comprehensive array of services to maximize the efficiency and expertise of system partners. These groups will create seamless delivery of services to businesses through a single point of contact strategy and be driven by partnership with local, regional, and state economic development entities. The goal should be consistent with the Governor's Strategic Economic Development Plan. Additionally, Virginia's public workforce system seeks to increase the number of businesses participating in workforce development programs and services.

The workforce system will be demand-driven, coherent, and easily accessible to business customers. LWDBs must provide comprehensive services to businesses through American Job Centers (AJCs). Full integration of business services is critical to achieving a high performing workforce development system.

Virginia is committed to the principles of Customer-Centered Design and innovation in its service delivery strategy, including virtual products and services. Specifically, Virginia will build its product and service strategy around both career and business services. The responsive integration of these service delivery methods creates better outcomes for the dual customers of workforce development, the jobseeker and business community.

An integrated approach to business services shall lead to improved skills, credentials and employment attainment in areas driven by business demand. In total, this effort in conjunction with efforts by economic development activities are expected to enhance and grow Virginia's economic advantage in both recruiting and retaining businesses in the Commonwealth.

## References

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Pub L. 113-128)
- Code of Virginia Section 2.2-2472.1.

- United States Department of Labor, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Final Rule, 20 CFR 679.560, Subpart D, Regional and Local Plan
- United States Department of Labor, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Final Rule, 20 CFR 678.435, Subpart B, One-Stop Partners and the Responsibilities of Partners
- Combined State Plan - WIOA State Plan for the Commonwealth of Virginia 2020-2024
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter 19-16: Guidance on Services provided through Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES), as amended by title III of WIOA, and for Implementation of the WIOA Final Rules.
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter 10-16: Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III and Title IV Core Programs

### III. Policy

#### A. Role of WIOA Partners

The WIOA partners shall support the strategic planning and implementation of revitalized or enhanced business engagement activities within the state. Business engagement will be supported by a continued focus on branding the one-stop system, delivering a universal message to identify the one-stop system, and establishing standardized services. Interagency collaboration, forming partnerships, and leveraging resources will be a vital aspect of Virginia's success in meeting business' workforce development needs.

The VBWD role is to establish a state-level business service team to provide guidance and support to the LWDBs (including all WIOA partners) in ensuring implementation of this policy. To ensure a strategic and focused approach to providing coordinated and consistent services to businesses the state-level business services team will consist of cross-agency, cross program leaders. This team will convene regularly to provide a strategic direction, monitor results, provide technical assistance, and recommend changes to program design to enhance service delivery. The VBWD will identify a facilitator for the state-level team.

The composition of the state-level business services team shall include business services leadership from:

- Virginia Community College System
- Virginia Department of Education
- Virginia Employment Commission
- Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services
- Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired
- Department of Corrections
- Virginia Economic Development Partnership
- Department of Labor and Industry
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Veteran Services

- A Local Workforce Development Board Executive Director
- Representative with a leadership role from a local business services team (e.g. local business service team coordinator)
- A business member from a Local Workforce Development Board (will be selected annually)
- A business member from the Virginia Board of Workforce Development (VBWD)
- A State Labor Federations representative from the VBWD

The state-level business services team will be responsible for the following activities:

- Evaluate, identify, and establish appropriate statewide information technology solutions to assist in effective delivery of business services (e.g., a customer relationship management (CRM) tool).
- Encourage State workforce agencies to participate on the Local Workforce Development Board Business Services Team. Recommend local BST membership should largely reflect the state-level BST membership.
- Evaluate promising practices in business services delivery across Virginia and the United States and communicate those practices to local business services teams.
- Analyze and address barriers to collaboration between state, regional, and local business services teams.
- Map business solution assets and provide training to business services staff on standardizing outreach and marketing materials and how to mobilize these resources including peer to peer learning opportunities.
- Provide direction on evaluating business customer satisfaction.
- Determine and provide technical assistance to LWDBs experiencing challenges in partnership maintenance and the delivery of business services.
- Provide an annual report to the Virginia Board of Workforce Development.

## **B. Role of LWDBs and One-Stop Centers (AJCs) in Providing Business Services:**

LWDBs will be responsible for ensuring the coordination of business service delivery to businesses in the local area according to their local plan and the combined state plan.

Coordinated efforts should be focused on creating a streamlined business process and preventing duplicative services and contacts to businesses. LWDBs are expected to execute their role through the convening of a business team and the orderly coordination of the following activities:

- Building relationships with business and business-focused organizations
- Integrating and streamlining business services
- Providing informational resources to businesses
- Assisting businesses in the recruiting process
- Assisting businesses with training needs
- Providing customized services to businesses

## **Business Service Teams**

Per Virginia's WIOA Combined State Plan, each Local Workforce Development Area is required to have a Business Service Team whose responsibility is to drive sector strategies within a locality, provide local employers with human resources solutions, and identify methods to shrink regional skills gaps. Business Services Teams are cross-agency, cross-programmatic groups, comprised of representatives of each of the core partner agencies, economic development, and other partners as appropriate. These teams are designed to ensure a comprehensive array of services are provided to businesses.

Local Workforce Development Boards are encouraged to create a methodology that maximizes the opportunities for businesses to create a relationship with the AJC. Each partner agency in the AJC has statutory requirements for creating relationships with businesses and assisting clients receiving services through their funding in finding employment opportunities. The single point of contact is not intended to be "one individual" responsible for all relationships in the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) through which all businesses must go to access workforce services. All members of the business services teams are expected to create these relationships with businesses in the community in a coordinated and targeted manner.

### **C. Requirements for LWDB Business Services Teams:**

The following minimum standards are required and must be evident and practiced in the delivery of services to business customers in each LWDB. The state-level business service team will facilitate the solutions to ensure these standards are implemented.

1. The LWDB AJC Operations Partner Agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) shall identify the role of each partner and reflect the strategic goals of the LWDB for business services as identified in the WIOA local plan. The agreement must include:
  - a. Standardized timeframes to respond to business inquiries and subsequent contact, in order to deliver specialized and collaborative solutions to meet business customer needs; alternative options must be provided if the LWDB cannot provide an affirmative response to the business customer's initial request.
  - b. The LWDB will implement a business satisfaction tool agreed upon by the state-level business service team to assist in demonstrating continuous improvement.
2. LWDB business service partners must have clear, convenient, and easily accessible content and outreach materials (including web-based content) for business customers that provides:
  - a. A list of all business products and services; and
  - b. Contact information for a business to contact through the identified "single point of contact" protocol
3. Business Service Teams will document the actions and progress they are making towards shared goals.

## D. Business Services Reporting

The LWDBs and state workforce development programs serving business customers are required to track and report the number, type, and size of businesses and services provided. Using a “report template,” each LWDB and participating state agencies (identified in Section A) will collect the business data information from their local or regional areas, and each of these WIOA partners is responsible for sending this information to the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) on a quarterly basis. The VEC will aggregate and compile this information and report it to the VBWD on an annual basis. Quarterly reports are due to the VEC for compilation on the following dates:

Jan. 15th (Activities for Oct-Dec); April 15th (Activities for Jan -Mar); July 15th (Activities for April-June); and Oct 15th (Activities for Jul-Sep). The business services annual report is due to the VBWD in September.

The “report template” will be used to track the following data:

- Number of businesses served
  - Tracked by establishment
- Type of business
  - Tracked using the NAICS Codes (North American Industry Classification System)
- Size of business (for each location)
  - Small (0-249 employees)
  - Other (250+ employees)
- Type of services provided
  - Assessments (Work Keys Profiles, Career Readiness or Foundational Skills Assessments)
  - Recruitment Services (Job Descriptions, Job Postings, Candidate Screenings, Job Fairs, Recruiting Events, Targeted Candidate Recruitment)
  - Labor Market Information
  - Consulting Services
  - Tax Incentives and Credits
  - Layoff Aversion
  - Registered Apprenticeship
  - Training (Examples: Pre-Employment Training, On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, Training in Employment Issues, etc.)

## E. Evaluation

Local BSTs will be evaluated on an annual basis to assess the effectiveness of employer engagement and implementation of this policy. The State BST will deliver an annual report to the VBWD by September 30, beginning 2022, which includes the following:

- Evidence that each LWDA BST works collaboratively to address the workforce needs

of regional businesses, helps businesses access available programs and services, and places job seekers in available positions

- Evidence of regular meetings and opportunities to hear directly from businesses in the region about their workforce needs
- Success stories from businesses within each LWDA
- Summary of achievement of goals from previous year by each LWDA
- Statement of new year's goals by each LWDA
- Data collected from the Client Satisfaction Survey and evidence of a continuous improvement process for the feedback received

In addition, local BSTs shall confirm that the following are in place:

- A shared vision and strategy for business services included in the AJC MOU and aligned with the current LWDB WIOA Plan
- A single point of contact protocol documented in the AJC MOU
- A Written Communication Plan included in the AJC MOU that includes:
  - A unified approach that is focused on the workforce system instead of a program specific approach
  - An outreach plan based on sector strategies identified in the LWDB WIOA Plan
  - Identification of locally available resources, including channels for outreach, and how they will be used
  - The role of each partner in performing outreach activities
  - A method for determining effectiveness of local outreach efforts
  - A description of additional partnerships to assist in communications and outreach to businesses including business roundtables, business advisory councils, or existing business visitation programs through economic development entities
  - Standardized timeframes to respond to business inquiries and subsequent contact, in order to deliver specialized and collaborative solutions to meet business customer needs
- A documented process to ensure partner staff within the AJC are aware of the protocol for business services referrals
- A website which includes SPOC (Standard Point of Contact) protocol including updated contact information for businesses and a list of business services available within the LWDA
- A Client Satisfaction Survey as provided by the State BST