

CFWDB

**Cape Fear Workforce Development Board  
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act  
Comprehensive Four-Year Title I Plan  
July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2028**

North Carolina Department of Commerce  
Division of Workforce Solutions  
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120  
4316 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

## Introduction and Instructions

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires each Workforce Development Board (WDB) to develop and submit, in partnership with the chief local elected official (CLEO), a comprehensive four-year plan.

The WIOA Comprehensive Four-Year Title I Plan is to provide current information and be effective July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2028 and will include required current WDB policies. The Cape Fear Area Plan will support the alignment strategy described in the 2024-2025 NC Unified State Plan in accordance with WIOA Section 102(b)(1)(E), and otherwise be consistent with the NC Unified State Plan. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's mission is to ensure North Carolinians are better educated, healthier, and have more money in their pockets so that they can live more abundant, purposeful lives. The cornerstone to achieving this goal is to help people get good-paying jobs to support themselves and their families. Through NC Job Ready, Governor Cooper's workforce development initiative, North Carolina is working to build a stronger and better workforce. NC Job Ready is built on three core principles: education and skills attainment are the foundation to a strong and resilient workforce; an employer-led workforce development system is key to the growth of a highly skilled and job ready workforce; and local innovation is critical to a dynamic and effective workforce system. In addition, WDBs shall comply with WIOA Section 108 in the preparation and submission of the plan.

The NCWorks Commission developed the strategic vision and mission for North Carolina's Workforce System based on Governor Cooper's NC Job Ready Initiative. This vision is to build a job-ready workforce to strengthen North Carolina companies, attract new businesses, and ensure our state can adapt to a changing economy. The mission of the state's workforce development system is to ensure North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity, and to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership to prepare workers, and supporting and scaling local innovation.

Plans are reviewed by the Division of Workforce Solutions and NCWorks Commission staff. Upon completion of Plan reviews and the resolution of any concerns, as applicable, fully compliant Plans will be given Final Approval. Approval letters are distributed through Workforce Information System Enterprise (WISE). WDBs must have a compliant workforce board in place to receive Final Plan Approval and distribution of formula WIOA program year funding. [WIOA Section 108(e)]

## **Federal and State Requirements for Local Administration of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act**

WDBs should reference the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Public Law 113-128, enacted July 22, 2014. Additional information is available at the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration website: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta>.

North Carolina policy information is available at: <https://www.commerce.nc.gov/jobs-training/workforce-professionals-tools-resources/workforce-policies>. WDBs should reference the North Carolina WIOA Unified State Plan to be posted March 2024.

### **Cape Fear Plan Submission and Due Date**

The Cape Fear Plan must be submitted through Workforce Information System Enterprise (WISE), the Division's web-based financial system.

**The Program Year 2024 - 2028 Plan is Due:  
May 1, 2024**

Each attachment must be clearly labeled in either Word or PDF format. Forms requiring original signatures may use DocuSign® (or similar) and may be uploaded in WISE.

If original signatures are obtained, forms may be mailed (and must be uploaded in WISE) to the Cape Fear WDB's assigned Planner at:

Division of Workforce Solutions  
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120  
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# I. Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) Overview

*The Cape Fear WDB Overview provides important contact information that is used throughout the Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS). It is important that this section remain current during the Program Year. Updates should be submitted to the Cape Fear WDB's assigned DWS Planner when changes occur.*

*In the first section and anywhere else in the Cape Fear Plan, please include the appropriate salutation along with Titles such as Dr., The Honorable, Chairperson, and Judge.*

1. Provide the **Cape Fear WDB's** official (legal) name as it appears on the local Consortium Agreement established to administer the WIOA or, if not a Consortium, in the formal request for Cape Fear designation.

Cape Fear Workforce Development Consortium

- If the Cape Fear is a Consortium, attach a copy of the current Consortium Agreement.
  - Name document: Cape Fear Workforce Development Board *Consortium Agreement*.
- If the Cape Fear is not a Consortium, attach a copy of the formal request for Cape Fear designation.
  - Name document: N/A
- If the Cape Fear WDB officially changed its name, please attach a copy of the Status of Incorporation, attorney's letter, or other document. N/A

2. List the counties served by the Cape Fear WDB.

Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender

3. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number, and email address of the **CFWDB Director**.

Name: Ginger Brick

Title & Salutation: CFWDB Director

Organization Name: Cape Fear Council of Governments

Address: 1480 Harbour Drive  
Wilmington, NC 28401

Phone Number: (910) 395-4553

Email Address: gbrick@capefearcog.org

4. Provide the name, elected title, local government affiliation, address, phone number, and email address of the **Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO)**.

Name: Mike Forte	Elected Title & Salutation: Vice Chair
Government Affiliation: Brunswick County Board of Commissioners	Address: P.O. Box 249 Bolivia, NC 28422
Phone Number: (910) 253-0217	Email Address: commissioner.forte@brunswickcountync.gov

5. Provide the name, title, business name, address, phone number, and email address of the **individual authorized to receive official mail for the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO)**, if different than question 4.

Name: N/A	Title & Salutation: Click here to enter text.
Business Name: Click here to enter text.	Address: Click here to enter text.
Phone Number: Click here to enter text.	Email Address: Click here to enter text.

6. Provide the name, address, phone number and email address of the **Administrative/Fiscal Agent responsible for disbursing Cape Fear WIOA grant funds**. This is the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. [WIOA Sections 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) and 108(b)(15)].

Name: Dawn Tucker	Title & Salutation: Finance Director
Organization Name: Cape Fear Council of Governments	Address: 1480 Harbour Drive Wilmington, NC 28401
Phone Number: (910) 274-0337	Email Address: dtucker@capefearcog.org

7. Provide the name, title, organization name, address, phone number and email address of the **Administrative/Fiscal Agent's signatory official**.

Name: Allen Serkin	Title & Salutation: Executive Director
Organization Name: Cape Fear Council of Governments	Address: 1480 Harbour Drive Wilmington, NC 28401
Phone Number: (910) 274-0341	Email Address: aserkin@capefearcog.org

8. Attach a copy of the **Administrative Entity/Fiscal Agent's organizational chart** with an 'effective as of date'.

- Name document: *Cape Fear Council of Governments Organizational Chart*.

9. Provide the **Administrative Entity's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)** number and assurance that the 'System for Award Management' (SAM) status is current. Administrative Entities must register at least annually on the SAM website <https://sam.gov/content/home> to receive Federal funding [required by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Section 4.11 and Section 52.204-7].

SAM UEI: L6YMW8MBEU23 Status: Current Expiration: 1/11/2025

10. Provide the name of the **Cape Fear WDB's Equal Opportunity Officer** who shall be responsible for assuring that discrimination does not occur in its programs or projects. (CPS 10-2021, Change 1)

Brian Jackson

- Composition of the Cape Fear WDBs shall comply with WIOA Section 107. Cape Fear WDB Membership Requirements have been provided as a reference at [Appendix D](#).

11. Provide each **Cape Fear WDB members'** name, business title, business name and address, phone number and email address on the provided form. The first block is reserved to identify the Cape Fear WDB chairperson (*form provided*). Indicate all required representation and indicate if vacant. [WIOA Section 107(b)(2)].

- Name document: *Cape Fear Workforce Development Board List*.
- If a Cape Fear WDB list is not in compliance, please provide the current list and state the expected date that a compliant list will be provided (detailing vacant positions). Do not change required category names except to clarify those representing multiple categories. When determining the total number of members, representatives serving in more than one category must be counted and listed only once on the form. Identify any names representing a dual category with an asterisk (\*).

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**Notes:**

- *Please complete the entire form. Check the block on the last page of the form certifying compliance with required WIOA Cape Fear WDB business nomination process.*
  - *Representatives with expired terms will not be included in the counted list of Board members. Board member terms must stated in a month/date/year format.*
  - *Plans that do not have a compliant workforce Board will not receive Final Approval. Formula funds will not be awarded until the WDB has a compliant workforce Board. Exceptions are allowed only when realignment is occurring in the upcoming program year.*
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12. Briefly describe how the Cape Fear WDB works with local elected officials to ensure viable local business representatives are appointed to the Cape Fear WDB in compliance with WIOA Section 107.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) and the Chief Elected Officials representing the Cape Fear Workforce Development Consortium collaborate closely with Economic Development staff and various professional associations. Key personnel like the CFWDB Director and Business Engagement Manager regularly engage with these entities, as well as partner groups like Chambers, across the four-county region. The Business Engagement Committee also plays a crucial role in identifying potential private-sector nominees for the CFWDB. Committee members recommend representatives identified as "from high growth industries" or "small business," based on data provided by the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager. Additionally, nominations may come directly from Consortium members who prioritize industries important to their county's constituents. While the board's structure considers the entire WDB Region, the CFWDB emphasizes hearing from local businesses, ensuring equitable representation from each county in the Consortium region. Nominations for board membership are submitted via a form to either the Clerk for the Cape Fear Council of Governments or the CFWDB Coordinator. These nominations are then electronically sent to the respective Chief Elected Official of the nominee's county of representation. After approval, new members are notified and orientation is scheduled.

*The Chief Local Elected Official must establish bylaws consistent with applicable local, state, and federal laws to include WIOA Final Rules and Regulations 679.310(g). The WDB shall submit by-laws that clearly demonstrate all WIOA and North Carolina required elements described in [Appendix A](#). Additional by-laws guidance/template and electronic meeting formats have been provided in [Appendix B](#) and [Appendix C](#).*

13. Attach the Cape Fear WDB By-Laws including date adopted/amended. By-Laws must include the required elements found in [Appendix A](#).

- Name document: *Cape Fear Workforce Development Board By-Laws*.

14. To demonstrate that the CFWDB By-Laws comply, complete By-Laws Required Elements – Crosswalk chart (form provided).

*Sunshine Provision – The Cape Fear WDB shall make available to the public, on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings, information regarding the activities of the Cape Fear WDB, including information regarding the Cape Fear Area Plan prior to submission of the Plan, and regarding membership, the designation and certification of one-stop operators, and the award of grants or contracts to eligible providers of youth workforce investment activities, and on request, minutes of formal meetings of the Cape Fear WDB. [WIOA Section 107(e)]*

15. Describe how the Cape Fear WDB will make copies of the proposed Cape Fear Area Plan available to the public. If stating the Cape Fear Plan will be on the WDB website, provide link, as well as individual's contact information for distribution of Plan. [WIOA Section 108(d) and 108(b)(20)]

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) provides access to its Area Plan and subsequent updates through the Cape Fear Council of Governments (COG) website at [www.capefearcog.org](http://www.capefearcog.org). The CFWDB Plan can also be viewed in printed form at the Cape Fear COG office during business hours at 1480 Harbour Drive, Wilmington, NC 28401. Requests for viewing should be made via email and addressed to [UHarris@CapeFearCoG.org](mailto:UHarris@CapeFearCoG.org). The CFWDB Area Plan and all official updates remain accessible for a minimum of thirty days.

*Public Comment – The Cape Fear WDB shall make copies of the proposed Cape Fear Plan available to the public through electronic and other means, such as public hearings and local news media; allow for public comment not later than the end of the 30-day period beginning on the date the proposed Cape Fear Plan is made available; and, include with submission of the Cape Fear Plan any comments that represent disagreement with the Cape Fear Plan. [WIOA Section 108(d) and 108(b)(20)]*

16. Attach a copy of the Cape Fear WDB's organizational chart with an 'effective as of date.' Include position titles, names, and contact information.

- Name document: *Cape Fear Workforce Development Board Organizational Chart.*

17. Complete the following chart for the PY2024 CFWDB's planned meeting schedule to include, date, time, location, and virtual link (if applicable). (Expand form as needed)

Date	Time	Location (include address, room # and virtual link)
August 21,2024	3:30 pm – 5:00pm	2045 Enterprise Dr NE, Leland, NC 28451/Zoom
October 16, 2024	3:30 pm – 5:00pm	2045 Enterprise Dr NE, Leland, NC 28451/Zoom



December 18, 2024	3:30 pm – 5:00pm	2045 Enterprise Dr NE, Leland, NC 28451/Zoom
February 19, 2025	3:30 pm – 5:00pm	2045 Enterprise Dr NE, Leland, NC 28451/Zoom
April 16, 2025	3:30 pm – 5:00pm	2045 Enterprise Dr NE, Leland, NC 28451/Zoom
June 18, 2025	3:30 pm – 5:00pm	2045 Enterprise Dr NE, Leland, NC 28451/Zoom

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*Note: All Cape Fear WDB meetings shall be held in accessible facilities. All materials and discussions should be available in an accessible format upon request as indicated under North Carolina specific requirements detailed in [Appendix A](#).*

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*The Comprehensive Four-Year Plan is developed in partnership with the chief local elected official and approved by the Cape Fear WDB. This approval should be reflected in the Cape Fear WDB meeting minutes as an Action item.*

18. Provide the Month and Date of the Cape Fear WDB meeting that the Comprehensive Four-Year Plan was approved. Attach a copy of the Cape Fear WDB minutes that reflect this action item.

- Name document: *Cape Fear Workforce Development Board Plan Approval Minutes.*

The Cape Fear Area Plan is approved at the June CFWDB meeting. Draft minutes will be submitted until June minutes are approved at the August CFWDB meeting, upon which the approved minutes shall be submitted.

19. Attach a copy of the signed ‘Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters – Primary Covered Transactions’ Form (*form provided*). [Required by the Regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 2 CFR 180, participants’ responsibilities.]

- Name document: *Cape Fear Workforce Development Board Certification Form.*

Document must have the original signature or DocuSign® (or similar) of the Administrative Entity signatory official. If using original signatures, mail the signed Certification form to the assigned DWS Planner at:

N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions  
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120  
4316 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

20. Submit the original Cape Fear WDB and Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) Signatory Page (*form provided*), bearing the original signatures of the CLEO(s) and the Cape Fear WDB Chairperson, and attach a copy of the signed document if not using DocuSign® (or similar).

- Name document: *Cape Fear Workforce Development Board Signatory Page*.

If using original signatures, mail the Signatory Page to the assigned DWS Planner at:

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## II. Cape Fear WDB Strategic Planning

*The Cape Fear WDB is required to keep the Cape Fear Area Plan up to date and adaptable as events and funding changes occur, which may require Cape Fear WDB responses. Cape Fear Area Plans will require an annual modification. North Carolina has implemented integrated services delivery with an enhanced emphasis on regional planning and services. This approach is consistent with federal, state, and regional initiatives and opportunities. North Carolina's workforce development system includes businesses, organizations, agencies, employed and unemployed persons, training and educational institutions, adults, and youth. To enhance services to all constituents, aligning workforce development planning and services with regional labor markets is both effective and productive. North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's NC Job Ready Initiative is built on three core principles: skills and education attainment are the foundation to a strong and resilient workforce; an employer-led workforce development system is key to the growth of a highly skilled and job ready workforce; and local innovation is critical to a dynamic and effective workforce system.*

*WDBs are creatively working to address the new challenges of job growth and expansions within their board regions. Employers in the Cape Fear WDB area continue to have a shortage of lower-wage, entry-level and middle-skilled level workers. As a WDB and workforce system, Cape Fear WDB is leveraging resources and engaging in new partnerships that include the business community, economic developers, chambers of commerce, NCWorks Career Center agencies, community colleges, public schools, and other community partners. Working together, Cape Fear WDB is paving the way for an even stronger economy through sector partnerships and career pathways initiatives.*

1. Provide a description of the Cape Fear WDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an in-demand industry-driven, educated, and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment. Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance and how it aligns with regional economic growth, industry sectors, and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(E)]

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) is dedicated to fostering a well-informed labor market to drive regional economic growth and prosperity. This is achieved through strategic partner relationships, data analysis, and relevant, intentional sharing of key information with staff and stakeholders.

Specifically, CFWDB emphasizes:

- Labor Market Information (LMI) training for all NCWorks staff. Staff are encouraged to be well-versed on job orders to essentially think like a recruiter when providing career guidance to clients, identifying transferable skills and opportunities for additional credentialing or work-based learning.

- Building cooperative relationships with business and economic development partners to remain

knowledgeable of existing and emerging in-demand skills for small businesses and high-growth industries, and to support credentialing programs that equip the workforce with the skills to meet industry needs.

- Building cooperative relationships with community-based organizations that serve specialized populations to ensure better access to NCWorks services and to promote inclusivity and better opportunities for clients with significant barriers to employment or those simply struggling to engage in the workforce. NCWorks staff provide appropriate tutoring and study skills services, aligning with Individualized Education Program (IEP) and program goals.

- Building cooperative relationships with k-12 educators, community colleges, UNCW, and CBOs that support educational attainment for Opportunity Youth to promote engagement with NCWorks programs for credential attainment, work experience, and other leadership development opportunities.

- Updating the CFWDB's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) with high-demand training programs, offering more meaningful opportunities for jobseekers, career changers, and youth entering the workforce. All approved training programs lead to credentials that demonstrate measurable skills gain and help customers find employment in their desired career fields.

The CFWDB values its NCWorks staff and provides training on the relationship between federal performance indicators and career advising. The CFWDB supports a human-centered approach to working with clients and holds NCWorks staff accountable for utilization of the IEP in working toward goals and achieving board performance. Post-program exit, NCWorks staff assist jobseekers in maintaining employment or finding new employment, if needed. Staff routinely provide labor market and wage information so clients are able to make informed decisions, ultimately leading to self-sufficiency as they navigate their lifelong career.

North Carolina continues to be a top state for business, and the CFWDB region continues to grow in population and business saturation. Underskilled workers must be upskilled to meet the growing needs of business. By capitalizing on strategic partner relationships and emphasizing the services available through NCWorks, the CFWDB can cultivate a job-ready workforce necessary for regional economic growth.

2. Provide a description of how the Cape Fear WDB, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the Cape Fear WDB will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable. Include how these strategies will be a result of regional economic and employer-driven priorities. [WIOA Section 108(b)(3)]

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) enhances access to services through its network of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandatory partners, encouraged by the Governor, NCWorks Commission, and Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) staff to collaborate with WDBs. Leveraging data from the four-county region, the CFWDB develops Certified Career Pathways aligned with

regional labor objectives and the credentialing goals of myFutureNC. Participants are guided to enroll in programs and services that support their individual goals in alignment with economic projections.

CFWDB NCWorks Career Center staff are trained to guide jobseekers toward credentials relevant to high-growth industries. Recognizing the symbiotic relationship between economic growth and workforce development, the CFWDB prioritizes meeting immediate employer needs while also focusing on long-term regional workforce training goals.

Data from sources such as the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager, Lightcast, NCLEAD, as well as anecdotal input from partners and businesses, informs training for NCWorks staff, enabling them to provide meaningful career advisement that leads to credential attainment. This comprehensive approach ensures that individuals receive tailored support to achieve their career objectives while contributing to the overall economic vitality of our local region.

For clients who require additional support to participate in training and career activities, supportive services are provided under the CFWDB Supportive Services policy. Supportive services may include transportation reimbursement, child care cost reimbursement, or items required for said activities.

3. Considering the analyses described in the Regional Strategic Planning Section III, describe strategies to work with the entities that carry out the core programs that align resources available to the Cape Fear to achieve the strategic vision and goals. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(F)]

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board is dedicated to fulfilling the legislative purposes outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) by integrating core programs and providing integrated service delivery through the NCWorks Career Centers across the region. These centers serve as hubs for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth WIOA services, which are seamlessly integrated with Title III WIOA Wagner Peyser staff.

In Brunswick, Columbus, and Pender counties, the NCWorks Career Centers are strategically located or have satellite locations on local Community College campuses, ensuring easy access to both Title II and Title III services and staff. Additionally, these centers and access points are deeply connected within each community to strengthen referrals and braid services for clients. The New Hanover Career Center, centrally located in Wilmington, is conveniently accessible via public transportation, facilitating clients' access to WIOA services. Title II services are available through the career centers and by referral as needed with the local community college and the Cape Fear Literacy Council. Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation WIOA services are available through the career centers and by referral as needed.

These core programs are aligned to address in-demand occupations within the CFWDB region, aiming to bridge workforce skills-gaps and facilitate the transition of various groups, including Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth, Individuals with Basic Skills Deficiencies, Individuals lacking literacy skills, and Individuals with Disabilities, towards skill gains leading to self-sufficient employment.

CFWDB utilizes all virtual services available through NCWO. The CFWDB aims to further leverage virtual platforms for training, meetings, job fairs, and other activities as needs fluctuate across the region.

4. Provide a description of strategies concerning maximizing coordination of services provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act and services provided in the Cape Fear through the NCWorks Career Center system. Include how this coordination of services improves service delivery and avoids duplication of services. [WIOA Section 108(b)(12)]

The NCWorks Career Center is enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness through staff cross-training initiatives, which include both WIOA Title I and Title III (Wagner Peyser) staff. This collaborative approach aims to maximize coordination and bolster services for both job seekers and employers. By utilizing the NCWorks Online system across all staff providing services, the duplication of services is minimized. This system also enables comprehensive tracking of services provided to all registered clients, facilitating informed decision-making as additional services are planned for each client.

Under the WIOA framework, Title III Wagner Peyser career center staff share the same performance goals as WIOA Title I staff. This fosters a teamwork atmosphere, as everyone is aligned in pursuing the same outcomes for both jobseeker clients and employer customers. Additionally, participants are required to be enrolled in both programs, ensuring a holistic approach to service delivery.

5. Describe how the Cape Fear WDB implements **each** of the following initiatives: incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, layoff aversion, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other employer services and strategies, designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the regional strategy to meet the needs of businesses. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(B)]

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) utilizes Incumbent Worker Training grants to bolster businesses and support the stabilization of their employees, with a particular emphasis on small businesses. For IWTGs, the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager capitalizes on strong relationships with SBTDC, SBAs, Chambers of Commerce, Customized Training, local and regional Economic Development, and other partners for referrals. By enabling small businesses to expand, the CFWDB aims to stimulate growth in the regional economy of Cape Fear.

NCWorks WIOA Title I staff are well-versed in On-the-Job Training (OJT). For business-facing staff, it is imperative that they speak the language of business and share the benefits and responsibilities of OJT. For jobseeker-facing staff, it is imperative that clients are prepared for OJT, whether combined with credential training or as a stand-alone option for faster career growth. The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager works with NCWorks to share OJT opportunities and to help cultivate OJT clients from caseloads. OJT opportunities are managed through contracts with Title I providers. Other NCWorks Career Center partners are equipped with basic information on OJT to share with their business contacts, with further follow-up provided by NCWorks Title I program staff. Adequate funding is crucial for the program's effective operation, with participation levels fluctuating based on unemployment rates and the availability of talent in the region.

The CFWDB maintains relationships with Customized Training staff within each of the three community colleges within our board region. Customized Training staff and the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager often work in tandem to maximize resources for business and industry. Customized Training staff cross-refer business clients with the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager, as appropriate.

To further engage with specific industries, the CFWDB adopts Sector Strategies, focusing on high-growth industries to sustain and expand the regional economy. Notably, the CFWDB played a key role in establishing

a sector strategy in Advanced Manufacturing, with ongoing involvement in supporting the success of business partners through participation in steering committees. The momentum from the Cape Fear Manufacturing Partnership has prompted interest from other sectors, with groundwork initiated in two additional sector partnerships. The CFWDB also lends support to sector partnerships founded by community partners. The region boasts two certified NC Works Career Pathways in Construction and Healthcare. Periodic sector meetings are convened to maintain relationships forged during the development and implementation of these pathways. These gatherings serve as forums to address challenges faced by each sector in hiring talent.

The CFWDB prioritizes business growth and stability, and layoff aversion is at the forefront to support a healthy labor market. The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager, and Director, are engaged with business and industry leaders, as well as business-facing partners, to identify businesses in need of layoff aversion support. If more intensive services are required than the CFWDB can provide via NCWorks, ITWGs, and partner services, a referral is made to NC Commerce, DWS layoff aversion staff.

CFWDB is comprised of business leaders from across the region who set policy and advise staff on improving government-funded processes to better support the needs of business and industry. The CFWDB recognizes the changing economy of the region and utilize concrete and anecdotal data to improve service delivery.

6. Provide a description of how the Cape Fear WDB coordinates workforce investment activities – including strategies for enhancing services, promoting participation in training programs, and avoiding duplication of services – carried out in the Cape Fear region with the provision of Adult Education and Literacy activities. [WIOA Section 108(b)(13)]

The CFWDB emphasizes literacy as a foundational skill for all other learning. Therefore, NCWorks Career Center leadership prioritize collaboration with post-secondary education partners and literacy councils to ensure seamless cross-referrals between education and employment services. This partnership guarantees that eligible Adult Education and Literacy clients are directed to Title I employment programs, and that Title I clients are directed toward Adult Education and Literacy Activities, aligning supportive services and addressing participants needs effectively.

Partnerships with local colleges, literacy councils, and the University of North Carolina Wilmington, are strengthened through representation on the CFWDB. This collaboration aims to coordinate resources and education initiatives at a regional level, enhancing the support available to individuals seeking employment or career advancement.

The CFWDB Programs Manager works closely with K-12 partners to develop strategies for dropout prevention and expand access to work-based learning opportunities. Youth-friendly career information is provided to K-12 CTE and counseling staff, with encouragement to utilize the NCBCE's Navigator and participation in board-supported events with partners that offer career exposure.

By actively engaging in local initiatives and fostering effective coordination among regional stakeholders, the CFWDB prevents duplication of services and identifies opportunities for synergy among partners. This collaborative approach maximizes the impact of workforce development efforts and ensures that resources are utilized efficiently to meet the needs of the community.

The CFWDB emphasizes the importance of up-to-date soft skills development for job seekers, offering onsite courses to enhance communication skills and improve employability. Ongoing communication with Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs, Title II-funded nonprofit organizations, and NCWorks Career

Centers ensures a comprehensive approach to addressing literacy barriers to employment, particularly for ESL individuals and adults with insufficient literacy skills. Through these collaborative efforts, the CFWDB aims to provide holistic support to individuals seeking to improve their skills and achieve their career goals.

7. Describe the Cape Fear’s workforce development system. Identify the following: the programs that are included in the system, how the Workforce Development Board will work with the entities administering core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment and provision of services, and the programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.). [WIOA Section 108(b)(2)]

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) prioritizes collaboration with the community college system, public schools, and other core program subrecipients to ensure alignment and provision of services across various core programs. For adults and dislocated workers, the CFWDB facilitates access to programs offered by local community colleges aimed at attaining certificates, diplomas, and two-year degrees. These programs equip individuals with essential skills and training necessary for workforce readiness and advancement.

Additionally, the CFWDB supports both In-School and Out-of-School Youth Programs, which encompass core programs such as Human Resources Development (HRD), GED preparation, Adult Basic Education (ABE), pre-employment classes, and dual enrollment opportunities through community colleges. These initiatives are designed to prepare youth for successful entry into the workforce or further education.

The CFWDB ensures collaboration with Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs within the CFWDB public schools to create a seamless pathway for individuals to access education, training, and employment opportunities. By working together with educational institutions and core program providers, the CFWDB aims to foster a skilled and competitive workforce in the Cape Fear region

The Cape Fear Workforce Development System comprises various organizations and programs aimed at supporting adults, dislocated workers, and youth:

**For Adult and Dislocated Worker:**

- Wagner Peyser services (Title III of WIOA)
- Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Workforce Programs (Title I of WIOA)
- NC Community College System programs, including adult basic skills (includes Title II of WIOA)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (includes Title IV of WIOA)
- Veterans Services programs

**Partners in Youth Services:**

- Public school systems, particularly Career and Technical Education Programs funded under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006
- Community college programs
- Vocational Rehabilitation

**Youth Programs:**

- Out-of-school youth programs, operated through public school systems in the CFWDB region, closely affiliated with Career and Technical Education departments



- Focus on providing career guidance to low-income youth with barriers to employment, encouraging high school graduation, and facilitating the attainment of post-secondary credentials leading to higher-wage employment opportunities
- Emphasizes close affiliation with Career and Technical Education, focusing on dropout recovery, career planning, high school graduation, and post-secondary credential attainment
- The CFWDB contracts with experts to deliver services targeted at eligible youth/young adults aged 16-24. These expert agencies provide career coaching, pre-employment training, and work experience opportunities to prepare for employment.

**Career and Technical Education Directors are involved via the following:**

- Active participation in strategies to support targeted sectors, including participation in work groups for the development of sector partnerships and career pathways
- Efforts include developing career pathways, education articulation agreements, promoting apprenticeships, and encouraging youth to consider high-skilled careers in high-growth occupations
- Community colleges supplement these efforts through Carl Perkins Act funds, providing additional assistance to students and attracting more students with diverse backgrounds into programs

8. Provide a description of (a) cooperative agreements, as defined in WIOA Section 107(d)(11), between the Cape Fear WDB and other local entities described in Section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of service to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts to include cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Section 108(b)(14)]

Cooperative agreements between the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) and other local entities, as defined in WIOA Section 107(d)(11), aim to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and other individuals. These agreements foster cooperation, collaboration, and coordination among stakeholders to ensure comprehensive and effective service delivery. Key components of these cooperative agreements include:

1. **Cross Training of Staff:** The Cape Fear WDB collaborates with local entities described in Section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to provide cross-training opportunities for staff members. This includes training sessions on disability awareness, reasonable accommodations, effective communication strategies, and other relevant topics to better serve individuals with disabilities. This is conducted via local and regional partners.
2. **Technical Assistance:** The WDB and partner entities offer technical assistance to address challenges and improve service delivery. Local and regional VR staff offer guidance on best practices, compliance with disability-related regulations, troubleshooting issues, and support in implementing effective strategies.
3. **Use and Sharing of Information:** Cooperative agreements facilitate the collection, analysis, and sharing of information related to the employment and training needs of individuals with disabilities. This includes data on employment outcomes, barriers to employment, available resources, emerging trends in the labor market, and other pertinent information to inform decision-making and program planning. The CFWDB exchanges information with local and regional staff to enhance outcomes for clients.
4. **Cooperative Efforts with Employers:** The WDB and partner entities collaborate to engage employers in hiring individuals with disabilities and creating inclusive workplaces. This may involve joint outreach efforts, development of disability-inclusive hiring practices, facilitation of connections between employers and job seekers with disabilities, and promotion of disability awareness among employers.
5. **Other Efforts for Cooperation, Collaboration, and Coordination:** Cooperative agreements encompass various other efforts aimed at promoting cooperation, collaboration, and coordination among stakeholders. This may include joint planning and decision-making, participation in committees and

working groups, alignment of resources, and implementation of innovative strategies to enhance service delivery and outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Overall, cooperative agreements between the Cape Fear WDB and other local entities play a crucial role in fostering partnerships, leveraging resources, sharing expertise, and enhancing the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and other individuals in the community. These agreements promote inclusive workforce development practices and contribute to improved employment outcomes and economic opportunities for all.

9. Provide a brief description of the actions the Cape Fear WDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing Cape Fear WDB, consistent with the factors developed by the NCWorks Commission. [WIOA Section 108(b)(18)]

To become or remain a high-performing Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB), the following actions will be undertaken, aligning with the factors developed by the NCWorks Commission:

1. **Strategic Planning:** The Cape Fear WDB will continue to engage in ongoing strategic planning to align its activities with the goals and priorities outlined by the NCWorks Commission. This will include evaluation of established objectives, performance metrics, and regularly evaluating progress towards established targets, and the overall impact of board practices on the CFWDB region.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement:** The WDB will continue to actively engage with stakeholders, such as business and industry, education and training providers, community based organizations, and government -funded agencies, to ensure that workforce development efforts are responsive to the needs of the local economy. This will include continuous improvement activities via feedback and maximizing resources through partner collaboration.
3. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** The CFWDB utilizes labor market information and data from NCLEAD, Lightcast, and other sources to make informed decisions regarding resource allocation and program development. CFWDB will continue to adapt its strategies by analyzing trends and identifying emerging needs as the region continues to grow and change.
4. **Performance Accountability:** CFWDB will continue to implement rigorous performance standards in monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of its workforce development programs. The CFWDB will continue to track outcomes, assess effectiveness, and use data to gauge process improvement.
5. **Innovation and Continuous Improvement:** CFWDB embraces innovation as the region continues to grow and change. CFWDB will continue to fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and explore new approaches, technologies, and best practices to enhance the delivery of workforce services. Through relevant training for NCWorks staff, the CFWDB can remain agile and responsive to changing economic conditions and workforce dynamics.
6. **Equity and Inclusion:** The CFWDB embraces its responsibility for ensuring equity and inclusion in all aspects of workforce development and will continue to prioritize efforts that address disparities and barriers faced by underserved and marginalized populations. This includes promoting diversity in program participation, removing systemic barriers to access and opportunity, and advancing initiatives that promote economic mobility and social equity for all residents of the Cape Fear region.

10. Discuss the increase and expansion of service delivery and awareness efforts to reengage individuals with barriers to include dislocated workers, opportunity youth/ youth who have left school without graduating, women, people of color in hard-to-reach communities, individuals with disabilities, and justice involved individuals to reconnect the disconnected workforce. More importantly, clarify how success is measured.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) aims to increase and expand service delivery and awareness efforts to reengage all individuals as listed above.

Success is measured through:

1. **Outreach and Engagement:** CFWDB will continue outreach campaigns that raise awareness of NCWorks services and resources available to individuals with barriers. Social media marketing, presence at community events, and strong partnerships with local organizations will continue to provide connections with marginalized populations and encourage participation in programs.
2. **Service Accessibility:** CFWDB will continue to ensure that services are accessible and inclusive to individuals with diverse needs and backgrounds. CFWDB NCWorks Career Centers provide accommodations, language support, and culturally sensitive assistance to overcome barriers to participation. The CFWDB evaluates accessibility by tracking the number of individuals served from underrepresented groups and assessing their satisfaction with the services received via feedback.
3. **Tailored Support:** The CFWDB will continue to provide personalized support and wraparound services to address the specific needs and challenges faced by individuals with barriers to employment. CFWDB NCWorks Career Centers offer job readiness training, skills development, case management, transportation assistance, childcare support, and referrals to supportive services. The ultimate measure of success is gainful employment within a high-growth occupation. The CFWDB also monitors progress towards employment, retention in jobs, and advancement in careers.
4. **Partnership Collaboration:** The CFWDB will continue to collaborate with community-based organizations, service providers, business and industry, and other relevant groups to leverage resources and expertise in supporting individuals with barriers to employment. Success is measured by assessing the effectiveness of strategic partner relationships and the ability to increase access to services, reduce systemic barriers, and achieve positive outcomes for the people we serve.
5. **Continuous Improvement:** The CFWDB will continue to routinely evaluate the effectiveness of services through feedback from participants and partners, data analysis, and stakeholder engagement. The CFWDB will continue to evaluate NCWorks programs and One Stop Operations against economic changes to emphasize the needs of specialized populations who are necessary to our growing economy.

Overall, success in reengaging the disconnected workforce is measured by the number of individuals served, their progress towards employment and economic stability, and their overall satisfaction with the support received. Additionally, success is reflected in the increased participation and representation of individuals with barriers in the workforce, contributing to a more inclusive and resilient local economy.

11. Provide a description of how the Workforce Development Board coordinates workforce investment activities carried out in the Cape Fear Region with:

- a. statewide rapid response activities as described in WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A).
- b. specifically describe the coordination and delivery of services to businesses to include systems that are used to determine economic trends and partners within your Early Warning Network to help identify those businesses that are expanding and/or struggling. [WIOA Section 108(b)(8)]

a. **Coordination with Statewide Rapid Response Activities:** The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) coordinates rapid response activities within the four-county region to effectively respond to layoffs, business closures, and economic downturns so that dislocated workers receive timely and comprehensive support to transition to new employment opportunities. CFWDB staff coordinate Rapid Response that includes a NC Commerce DWS Rapid Response representative, a NC Commerce DES Rapid Response representative, any relevant labor union, and other stakeholders.

The coordination process involves:

- **Timely Notification:** CFWDB receives notifications of impending layoffs or closures through the state's early warning system or directly from affected employers.

- **Needs Assessment:** CFWDB conducts rapid needs assessments to determine the scale and scope of the layoffs and the needs of affected workers.
- **Resource Mobilization:** CFWDB mobilizes resources, such as job training, career counseling, job placement assistance, and supportive services, to support dislocated workers in transitioning to new employment or career opportunities.
- **Partnership Engagement:** CFWDB collaborates with local service providers, educational institutions, economic development agencies, and other stakeholders to coordinate the delivery of services and maximize resources.
- **Follow-Up Support:** CFWDB provides ongoing support to dislocated workers to ensure successful reemployment and adjustment to their new jobs.

**b. Coordination with Business:**

- **Early Warning Network:** CFWDB engages with other organizations that support the needs of business. This Early Warning Network consists of other government agencies, industry associations, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and other agencies. Through engagement with this network, the CFWDB can readily identify businesses that are experiencing challenges or opportunities, such as expansions, contractions, or workforce needs. The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager relies on partnerships to maximize support across the region.
- **Data Analysis:** CFWDB utilizes labor market data, economic indicators, and industry reports to analyze economic trends and identify emerging workforce needs. This data-driven approach helps inform workforce development strategies and priorities.
- **Business Outreach:** CFWDB proactively reaches out to businesses to learn workforce challenges, skills requirements, and other hiring needs. The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager and Director promote services through business associations and business support organizations to gain awareness.
- **Customized Services:** CFWDB offers services to meet the specific needs of businesses. Through our network of NCWorks and Community College programs, we provide recruitment assistance, customized training, apprenticeship opportunities, and workforce retention strategies, and IWTGs.
- **Partnership Collaboration:** CFWDB collaborates with economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, industry associations, and educational institutions to strengthen the talent pipeline, support business growth, and foster economic prosperity in the region. This collaborative approach ensures that workforce investment activities are aligned with broader economic development goals and priorities.

12. Provide an overview of how the region partners with NC Community Colleges, UNC institutions, and independent colleges in the Cape Fear region to prepare workers to succeed by using skills and education attainment with a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

The Cape Fear WBD partners closely with various educational institutions, including NC Community Colleges, UNC institutions, and independent colleges, to prepare workers for success through skills development and education attainment.

**1. NC Community Colleges:**

- The region collaborates with local community colleges to offer workforce training programs, certificate courses, and associate degree programs tailored to meet the needs of employers and industry sectors.
- These programs often focus on in-demand skills and emerging industries within the Cape Fear region, ensuring that workers receive relevant and up-to-date training.
- Community colleges also provide adult basic education, GED preparation, and English language courses to enhance the educational attainment of individuals from diverse backgrounds.

**2. UNC Institutions:**

- The region partners with UNC institutions, such as UNC Wilmington, to offer bachelor's and advanced degree programs in fields like business, engineering, healthcare, and education.
- UNC institutions contribute to workforce development through research, innovation, and the development of specialized programs that align with industry needs.
- These institutions also offer resources for professional development, continuing education, and lifelong learning opportunities for workers seeking to advance their careers.

**3. Independent Colleges:**

- Independent colleges and universities in the Cape Fear region provide additional options for higher education, offering a diverse range of degree programs and majors.
- These institutions often focus on specialized fields of study, including arts, humanities, social sciences, and professional disciplines.
- Partnerships with independent colleges can help expand access to higher education and provide opportunities for individuals with unique educational goals and interests.

**4. Focus on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility:**

- The region prioritizes diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in all educational initiatives, ensuring that programs and services are accessible to individuals from diverse backgrounds and communities.
- Efforts are made to remove barriers to education and training, including providing accommodations for individuals with disabilities, offering culturally competent services, and promoting inclusive practices.
- Outreach and recruitment efforts target underserved and underrepresented populations, including women, people of color, individuals with disabilities, and veterans, to ensure equitable access to educational opportunities and workforce development programs.
- Training programs and curriculum development efforts incorporate diversity and inclusion principles to prepare workers for success in diverse and multicultural workplaces.

13. Based on the history of economic development projects in the Cape Fear, how many projects does the Cape Fear WDB expect to engage in during the upcoming program year? Please indicate the type of services the Cape Fear WDB expects to provide.

The Cape Fear WDB anticipates engaging in a variety of new or expansion economic development projects during the upcoming program year. While the specific number of projects may vary based on factors such as funding availability, labor availability, and regional economic conditions, CFWDB expects to provide the following types of services:

1. **Workforce Training and Development:** CFWDB will continue to collaborate with local businesses and industries to identify workforce training needs and develop customized training programs to upskill workers and meet employer demands.
2. **Business Expansion Support:** CFWDB will continue to provide assistance to businesses looking to expand or relocate to the Cape Fear region, offering support services such as workforce analysis, recruitment assistance, and access to training incentives.
3. **Entrepreneurship Support:** CFWDB may offer resources and support to entrepreneurs and startups, including business planning assistance, access to financing options, and networking opportunities.
4. **Sector Partnership Development:** CFWDB will continue to foster collaboration among key industry stakeholders through sector partnerships, working to address workforce needs and promote industry growth in sectors such as manufacturing, healthcare, technology, and hospitality.
5. **Talent Attraction and Retention:** CFWDB will continue to work to attract and retain talent in the region by promoting career pathways, offering layoff aversion services, and supporting workforce development initiatives that enhance career opportunities for residents.
6. **Virtual Reality:** CFWDB will administer the virtual reality career exploration modules in our NCWorks Career Centers to expose younger jobseekers to in-demand careers within the region that they would otherwise not have an opportunity to explore.

14. Provide a description of how the WDB is employing sector strategies by creating industry-led sector partnerships to facilitate engagement of employers and better coordinate workforce development services, training, and economic development activities. Include a brief example(s) of existing industry sector initiatives / partnerships or describe the strategy to implement them for evidence-based in-demand industry sectors for the region [WIOA Section 106 (c)(1)(C), Section 107 (d)(4)(D)]

CFWDB recognizes the value of sector strategies for engaging employers and coordinating workforce development services, training, and economic development activities. These partnerships are designed to address the specific needs and demands of key industries in the region, ultimately leading to improved workforce outcomes and economic growth.

CFWDB supported the creation of the Cape Fear Manufacturing Partnership. This partnership brings together ownership and leadership from our regional manufacturing companies to strategize solutions on industry challenges. Public supporters include educational institutions, workforce development agencies, and other stakeholders, who listen to the CFMP conduct business and offer program services formally through the CFMP Steering Committee. This partnership expands the exchange of industry knowledge and streamlines the delivery of information from public organizations. Through regular meetings and working groups, members of the partnership identify workforce needs, develop training programs, and advocate for policies that support the growth of the manufacturing sector.

The CFWDB considers Sector Partnerships a primary task in supporting the charge to be demand-driven. The CFWDB embraces “NextGen” sector partnership, which includes Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) as part of the holistic model, which was created by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. This enables the CFWDB to collaborate with other organizations using other models.

By employing sector strategies and fostering industry-led partnerships, the Cape Fear WDB is working to strengthen the regional workforce, support business growth, and promote economic prosperity in the community.

**15. Identify the Career Pathways developed by the Cape Fear. Complete the chart below.**

<b>Pathway Name</b>	<b>Partner WDBs</b>	<b>Year the pathway was developed</b>	<b>Number of trainees (to date) who have utilized the pathway</b>
Construction Technology	N/A	2018	160
Healthcare	LRWDB	2017	684

16. In addition to facilitating the development of career pathways, also describe the review process for in-demand career pathways to determine if new pathways are needed, or if current pathways should be updated or removed based on the needs of the industry.

- a. Include plans for new career pathways.
- b. Explain how career pathways in the Cape Fear are in alignment with other partners/stakeholders' (Department of Public Instruction (DPI), community colleges, myFutureNC, universities, etc.) existing pathways or if they are duplicates.
- c. Describe the strategy to avoid duplication efforts.
- d. Describe the strategy to promote pathways and recruit participants.

CFWDB does not consider "Certified Career Pathways" to be duplicative. Pathways are heavily researched and developed by experts in education, based on all possible careers. The CFWDB evaluates these educational pathways against existing and emerging careers to determine whether to certify across the CFWDB region. Prior to acceptance as a Certified Career Pathway, data is reviewed for job projections and overall career growth. Stakeholders, such as company representatives and education experts, are convened to provide expertise. Certified Career Pathways involve a systematic review process for in-demand careers to assess the value of existing career pathways or consider the development of a more meaningful pathway, based on industry demands. This process involves ongoing engagement with key stakeholders, including employers, industry associations, educational institutions, and workforce development partners. CFWDB monitors labor market data, conducts industry surveys, and collaborates with Sector Partnerships to identify emerging occupations and evolving skill requirements. Both CFWDB CCPs are under currently under review due to changes within the industry as well as education options. Likewise, additional CCPs that have been in process are under review due to the high growth within the CFWDB region, changes to economic conditions in rural parts of the CFWDB, and remote work options in business and education post-pandemic. Based on this analysis of pathways measured against the needs of business, the CFWDB certifies its support for a career pathway in the region.

- a. CFWDB is developing CCPs in a quickly-changing market. Jobseekers are now changing jobs more frequently, and portable skills/credentials that cross careers are changing the way we consider the value of

pathways. The pathways currently being considered by the CFWDB provide foundational and advanced skills for access points for multiple careers within related fields.

- b. CFWDB aligns its pathway consideration with all relevant education stakeholders, and allied organizations that rely on CCPs, such as myFutureNC. In the Certification process, education partners share the pathways developed under their expertise. To avoid duplication efforts, the CFWDB conducts assessments of existing career pathways to identify any redundancies or gaps in the offerings as they relate to employment. This may involve comparing pathway curricula, credentialing requirements, and outcomes data to ensure consistency and relevance. This is measured against the current needs of business by convening business leaders to provide insight regarding in-demand skills and credentialing requirements.
- c. The relationship between education partners, business partners, and the use of data in driving discussion all reduce duplication yet increase alignment of educational career pathways for certification.

d. CFWDB promotes pathways and recruits participants via targeted outreach to raise awareness and generate interest among individuals, employers, educators, and community organizations. The CFWDB leverages various channels, including digital marketing, social media, industry events, career fairs, and community workshops, to showcase the benefits of career pathways and highlight available opportunities. Additionally, the CFWDB collaborates with local schools, colleges, and training providers within and across counties to integrate pathway information into career counseling sessions, classroom instruction, and educational materials. By engaging stakeholders and leveraging diverse outreach methods, the CFWDB aims to attract a diverse pool of participants and ensure equitable access to career pathways across the Cape Fear region.

17. Provide a description of the Cape Fear WDB's capacity to provide workforce investment activities to address (a) education attainment and skill needs of high-demand fields (b) strategies for awareness and cultivation efforts to increase access to education and postsecondary credentials and certificates, availability of learn-and-earn opportunities (internships, apprenticeships, summer employment) and (c) supportive services for hard-to-reach communities. (d) Explain strategies that include NextGen, NCCareers.org and any awareness models for success. (e) Explain strategies to align work across the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and (DPI) to increase youth apprenticeships or assist businesses in hiring youth apprentices.

a. The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) has robust capacity to address the education attainment and skill needs of high-demand fields in the region. This includes conducting labor market analysis to identify in-demand occupations and skill requirements, collaborating with employers and industry associations to understand workforce needs, and aligning workforce training programs with industry standards. The WDB works closely with education and training providers, such as the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), to develop and deliver relevant training programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials and certificates in high-demand fields.

b. To increase access to education and postsecondary credentials, as well as learn-and-earn opportunities such as internships, apprenticeships, and summer employment, the CFWDB implements strategies for awareness and cultivation, including outreach efforts to underserved communities, career counseling and guidance services, and partnerships with employers to create work-based learning opportunities. CFWDB promotes awareness of available programs and opportunities through various channels, including digital platforms, community events, and targeted marketing campaigns, and highly competent NCWorks staff.



- |  |
|--|
| <p>c. The CFWDB recognizes the importance of providing supportive services for hard-to-reach communities to ensure equitable access to workforce investment activities. This may include providing transportation assistance, childcare services, language interpretation services, and other forms of support to remove barriers to participation. The CFWDB collaborates with community-based organizations, social service agencies, and faith-based organizations in rural and urban sections of the four-county region to identify and address the unique needs of each population and connect them with available resources and services.</p>  |
| <p>d. The WDB employs strategies that leverage NextGen* and NCCareers.org to increase awareness and promote success in workforce development activities. NextGen initiatives focus on engaging youth and young adults through innovative approaches, such as digital platforms, gamification, and interactive tools. NCCareers.org serves as a comprehensive resource for career exploration, education planning, and job search assistance, providing users with access to valuable information and resources to support their career goals. All CFWDB NCWorks staff are trained in using this tool to inform and support clients.<br/><i>*NextGen is the NC brand for WIOA Youth services and is not to be confused with the NextGen sector partnership model.</i></p> |
| <p>e. The Cape Fear WDB works collaboratively with the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to increase youth apprenticeships and assist businesses in hiring youth apprentices. This includes facilitating partnerships between employers and educational institutions to develop apprenticeship programs, providing technical assistance and guidance to employers interested in participating in apprenticeship initiatives, and promoting the benefits of youth apprenticeships to both employers and students. By aligning work across NCCCS and DPI, the WDB aims to create seamless pathways for youth to gain valuable skills and experience while pursuing education and training opportunities.</p>  |

### III. Regional Strategic Planning:

North Carolina is defined by an expansive geography that covers over 53,000 square miles and spans from the mountains in the west, to the piedmont region in the state's center to the coastal plain region in the east. This expansive geography contributes to the state's diverse mix of rural communities, small towns, cities, metropolitan areas, and regional economic centers, each with its own unique industrial composition. Part of North Carolina's economic development strategy includes organization of the state's 100 counties into eight multi-county regions called Prosperity Zones, which are intended to help ensure economic growth across all areas of the state, by leveraging regional economic, workforce, and educational resources. Overlaying the eight prosperity zones are North Carolina's 20 WDBs that facilitate the delivery of workforce services to the state's citizens and employers.

WDBs are to continue, or begin, formal interaction based on these regional geographies. The following regional configurations will be used for submission of this Regional Plan:

- *Western Region: Southwestern, Region C (Foothills), and Mountain Area WDBs;*
- *Northwest Region: High Country, Western Piedmont, and Region C (Foothills) WDBs;*
- *Piedmont Triad Region: Piedmont Triad Regional and GuilfordWorks WDBs;*
- *Southwest Region: Centralina, Charlotte Works, Region C (Foothills), and Gaston County WDBs;*
- *North Central Region: Kerr-Tar, Durham County, Turning Point, Mid-Carolina, and Capital Area WDBs;*
- *Sandhills Region: Cape Fear, Lumber River and Mid-Carolina WDBs;*
- *Northeast Region: Rivers East, Northeastern, and Turning Point WDBs; and*
- *Southeast Region: Eastern Carolina and Cape Fear WDBs.*

1. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions to include: a) existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; as well as conditions that contribute to potential layoffs and closures and, b) knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include sources used and business involvement in determining needs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(A)(i)(ii) and (B)].

The CFWDB region is rich in diverse occupations that serve rural and urban environments. Along with a rising population of potential jobseekers, entrepreneurship is on the rise in tech, healthcare, and hospitality. Unemployment remains low in all four counties, with slightly higher rates in Brunswick and Columbus counties. Manufacturing has increased across product lines, with changes to transportation and logistics necessitated by the pandemic. The demand for nurses remains high within the healthcare sector, with a continued demand for allied health workers. While not as profound, there is increasing demand for workers skilled in biotech. Columbus County has experienced a higher number of closures; however, most dislocated workers are able to move into similar vacancies quickly.

The CFWDB works with employers across sectors to identify universal, or *soft*, skills. CFWDB NCWorks staff utilize assessments and training modules to strengthen the talent pool for all industries. More advanced skills, that are specific to a business or industry, are offered via short and long-term training. CFWDB has seen an increase in demand for CNC machining, construction skills, and information technology skills across the region. Hospitality, tourism, and retail continue to be in demand along the coastal communities, with businesses competing for workers to fill those jobs.

CFWDB capitalizes on the relationships of its private-sector businesses members to increase engagement penetration in high-growth industries, leading to better understanding of the immediate and emerging needs of

business and industry. Data compiled from NCLEAD and Lightcast provide a framework for business services. This is measured against anecdotal data shared by business and industry at roundtable meetings, career pathways meetings, sector strategy meetings, and other routine convenings of business in the Cape Fear WDB region, to better understand existing and emerging jobs and how to enhance the talent pipeline.

## 2. Describe how the regional strategic vision aligns with the NCWorks Commission's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.

Aligning the regional strategic vision with the NCWorks Commission's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan involves ensuring that the goals, priorities, and initiatives of both the regional workforce development efforts and the state-level strategic plan are mutually supportive and complementary. Here's how the regional vision aligns with the NCWorks Commission's plan:

1. **Goal Alignment:** Reviewing the overarching goals and objectives outlined in the NCWorks Commission's plan and identifying areas where they intersect with the priorities of the Cape Fear region. This could include aligning efforts to promote workforce development, economic growth, talent attraction, and employer engagement.
2. **Priority Areas:** Identifying specific priority areas or focus areas outlined in the NCWorks Commission's plan, such as addressing skills gaps, increasing access to training and education, supporting underrepresented populations, and fostering industry partnerships. The regional strategic vision would incorporate similar priorities tailored to the unique needs and opportunities of the Cape Fear region.
3. **Collaboration Opportunities:** Exploring opportunities for collaboration and partnership between the Cape Fear WDB and state-level agencies, organizations, and stakeholders involved in implementing the NCWorks Commission's plan. This could involve participating in statewide initiatives, sharing best practices, leveraging resources, and coordinating efforts to maximize impact.
4. **Data and Metrics:** Ensuring that data collection, performance metrics, and outcomes tracking efforts in the Cape Fear region align with the indicators and benchmarks established in the NCWorks Commission's plan. This would facilitate consistent reporting and evaluation of progress towards shared goals and objectives.
5. **Continuous Improvement:** Committing to ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and refinement of strategies and initiatives based on feedback, lessons learned, and evolving priorities outlined in the NCWorks Commission's plan. This iterative process ensures that the regional strategic vision remains responsive to changing economic conditions and workforce dynamics.

By aligning the regional strategic vision with the NCWorks Commission's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan, the Cape Fear region can leverage statewide resources, leverage best practices, and contribute to broader efforts to enhance workforce development, economic prosperity, and opportunity for all North Carolinians.

## 3. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(C)].

### **Analysis of Workforce in the Cape Fear Region**

The workforce in the Cape Fear region is characterized by a low unemployment rate, robust growth in key industries, and significant demand for specific job skills. However, barriers to employment such as disabilities, veteran status, language barriers, transportation issues, and childcare responsibilities pose challenges that need to be addressed to enhance workforce participation and economic development in the region.

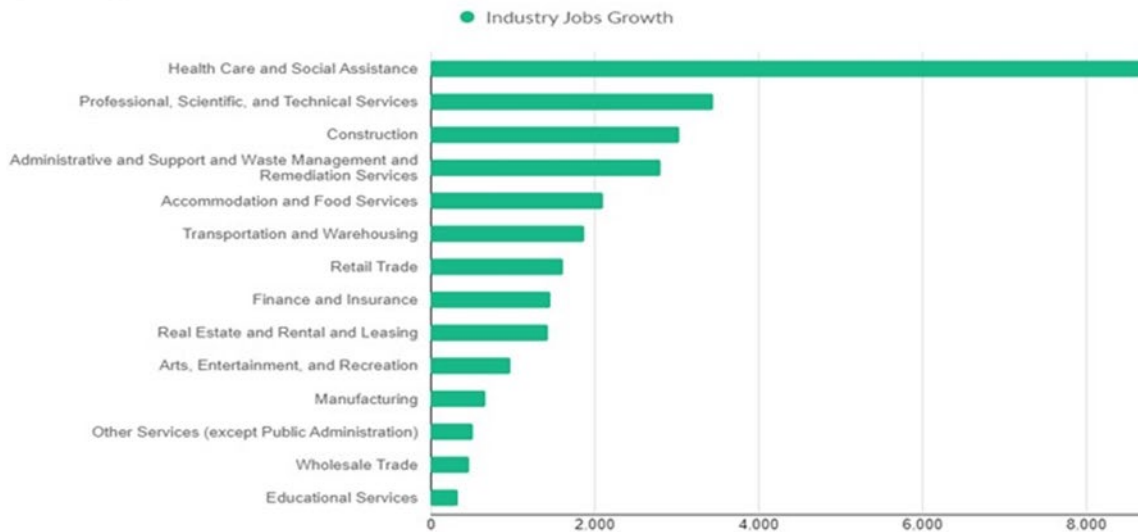
## Current Labor Force Employment and Unemployment Data

According to the Labor & Economic Analysis Division, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Program, the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) region—encompassing Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender counties—has an unemployment rate of 3.8%. The region's labor force consists of 246,575 individuals, of which 237,175 are employed.

## Labor Market Trends

The Lightcast Economy Overview report identifies the top growing industries in the CFWDB region as Health Care and Social Assistance, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, and Construction. From 2018 to 2023, these industries have demonstrated significant growth, as shown in Chart 1.

Top Growing Industries



- **Health Care and Social Assistance:** This sector comprises 30,534 jobs in the region, which is higher than the national average of 28,361 jobs. The sector has grown by 8,756 jobs between 2018 and 2023.

SOC	Description	2022 Jobs	2022 Hires	2023 Jobs	2023 Hires	2022 - 2023 Openings	2022 - 2023 % Change	2022 - 2023 Change	2023 Turnover Rate
19-5011	Occupational Health and Safety Specialists	100	88	104	84	14	3%	3	66%
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	766	374	788	383	87	3%	21	46%
29-1299	Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners, All Other	115	13	120	14	11	4%	5	11%
29-2099	Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	297	106	298	106	23	0%	1	41%
29-9021	Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	39	<10	40	<10	<10	3%	1	Insf. Da
29-9099	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Workers, All Other	54	12	55	40	<10	2%	1	19%
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	3,872	3,720	4,018	3,833	725	4%	146	90%
31-9099	Healthcare Support Workers, All Other	181	133	184	134	27	2%	3	72%
		5,425	4,455	5,608	4,604	896	3%	182	77%

- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services:** This sector includes 14,716 jobs in the region, slightly below the national average of 15,664 jobs. It has seen an increase of 3,448 jobs over the same period.

SOC	Description	2022 Jobs	2022 Hires	2023 Jobs	2023 Hires	2022 - 2023 Openings	2022 - 2023 % Change	2022 - 2023 Change	2023 Turnover Rate
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	3,065	1,073	3,100	1,058	316	1%	35	33%
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	40,544	23,661	41,855	24,114	6,049	3%	1,311	55%
		43,609	24,734	44,955	25,172	6,365	3%	1,346	54%

- Construction:** This sector comprises 12,264 jobs, compared to the national average of 9,929 jobs, with an increase of 1,234 jobs between 2018 and 2023.

SOC	Description	2022 Jobs	2022 Hires	2024 Jobs	2024 Hires	2022 - 2024 Openings	2022 - 2024 % Change	2022 - 2024 Change	2023 Turnover Rate
11-9021	Construction Managers	2,362	1,025	2,521	1,140	498	7%	159	45%
47-2061	Construction Laborers	3,888	2,485	4,146	2,717	933	7%	259	59%
47-2111	Electricians	1,239	929	1,348	1,025	330	9%	109	66%
47-2141	Painters, Construction and Maintenance Helpers--	1,151	347	1,184	335	231	3%	33	27%
47-3011	Brickmasons, Blockmasons, Stonemasons, and Tile and Marble Setters	11	24	12	27	<10	7%	1	215%
47-3014	Helpers--Painters, Paperhangers, Plasterers, and Stucco Masons	<10	<10	<10	<10	0	Insf. Data	Insf. Data	Insf. Data
47-3019	Helpers, Construction Trades, All Other	40	68	42	74	11	6%	2	173%
47-4011	Construction and Building Inspectors	251	108	264	114	71	5%	12	41%
47-4098	Miscellaneous Construction and Related Workers	123	143	129	145	29	5%	6	119%
		9,066	5,130	9,648	5,579	2,106	6%	582	53%

### Educational and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Chart 2 displays the job skills in demand within these industries, highlighting a significant need for Customer Service skills across sectors. Additional skills in demand include Technical Writing, Occupational Therapy, GIS Analysis, Tax Preparation, Welding, and general Construction Worker skills.

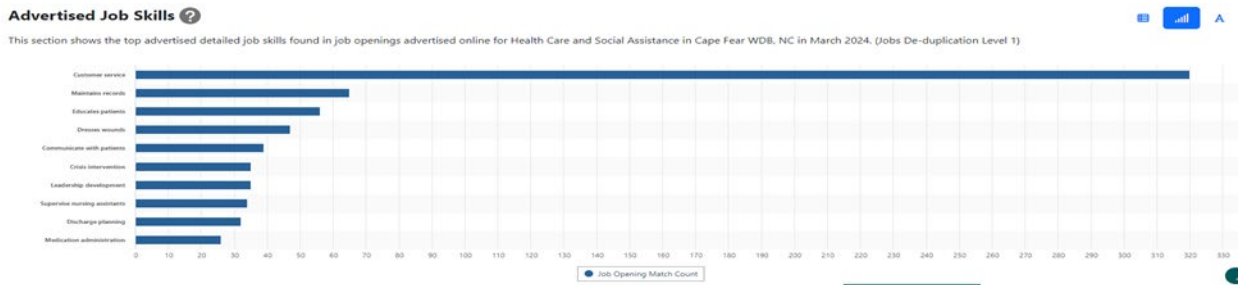
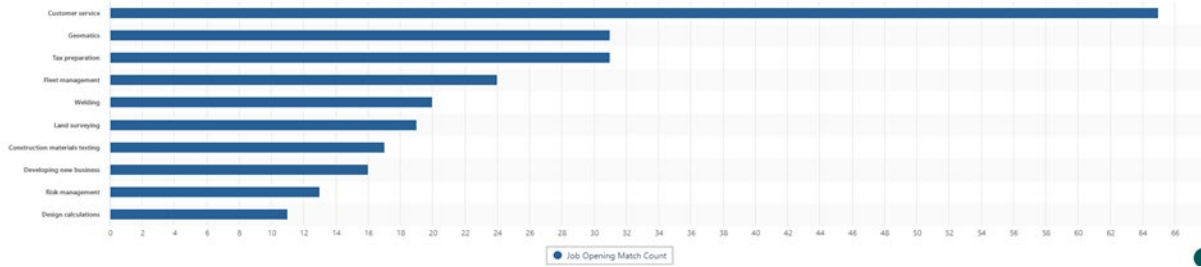


Chart 3 displays the job skills advertised online for Professional, Scientific and Technical Services. Customer Service appears in 65 job openings, GIS analyst skills appear in 31 job openings and Tax preparation appears in 31 job openings.

## Advertised Job Skills <sup>?</sup>

This section shows the top advertised detailed job skills found in job openings advertised online for Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services in Cape Fear WDB, NC in March 2024. (Jobs De-duplication Level 1)



## Barriers to Employment

The table below presents three primary categories of barriers to employment in the Cape Fear Region as gathered from Lightcast software: Social, Transportation, and Childcare barriers. These barriers impact individuals' ability to secure and maintain employment and include persons with disabilities, Veteran status, language barriers, transportation issues, and childcare responsibilities.

Indicators of Barriers to Employment								
Cape Fear Workforce Development Board Region								
Social Indicators			Transportation			Childcare Issues		
County Name	% Disabled Population	% Veteran Status	% of People Living in Non-English-Speaking Households	% of Commuters Carpooling to Work	% of Commuters Commuting by Other Means	% of Commuters Taking Public Transport to Work	% Female Householder, No Spouse/Partner Present, Family Households	% Male Householder, No Spouse/Partner Present, Family Households
New Hanover County, NC	12.1%	7.3%	7%	7.3%	1.0%	0.3%	30.6%	19.0%
Brunswick County, NC	15.2%	11.6%	4%	9.1%	1.7%	1.0%	23.8%	13.4%
Pender County, NC	16.0%	11.4%	7%	10.7%	0.7%	0.6%	23.9%	17.0%
Columbus County, NC	17.4%	7.1%	6%	8.4%	0.6%	0.2%	32.2%	19.8%

- **Social Indicators:**

- The percentage of the disabled population is highest in Columbus County at 17.4%.
- Veterans status is most prominent in Brunswick and Pender Counties, with 11.6% and 11.4% respectively.
- The percentage of individuals living in non-English speaking households is highest in New Hanover and Pender counties, both at 7%.

- **Transportation Indicators:**

- This indicator is compiled by metrics suggesting individuals do not use personal vehicles for commuting, implying a barrier due to lack of personal transportation. Pender County has the highest percentage of commuters carpooling to work at 10.7%, with all counties exceeding 7% in this category.

- **Childcare Indicators:**

- Childcare issues are indicated by the percentage of family households with a single householder without a spouse/partner present. This suggests that the primary caregiver lacks another adult to assist with childcare, thus hindering their ability to work.

4. Describe strategies, used to facilitate engagement of businesses and other employers, including small employers and in-demand industry sector occupations. Describe methods and services to support the workforce system in meeting employer needs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(i)(ii)].

To facilitate engagement of businesses and employers, including small employers and those in high-demand industry sectors, the Cape Fear WDB employs several strategies and methods:

1. **Employer Outreach:** The CFWDB conducts targeted outreach campaigns to businesses across various industries, emphasizing the benefits of workforce development programs and services that aid in hiring and upskilling. This outreach includes direct communication, presentations at industry events, and participation in business forums.
2. **Industry Partnerships:** The CFWDB establishes partnerships with industry associations, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and sector-specific groups. These partnerships provide opportunities to understand industry needs, foster collaboration, and tailor workforce solutions to meet employer demands.
3. **Employer Needs Assessment:** Conducting regular assessments and surveys to identify the specific skill needs, hiring challenges, and workforce gaps faced by businesses in the region. This data-driven approach ensures that workforce programs and services are aligned with employer demands. The CFWDB supports the statewide Employer Needs Survey and hosts employer forums with businesses for continuous improvement.
4. **Customized Training Programs:** Developing customized training programs in collaboration with employers to address specific skill requirements and industry standards. These programs may include on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and sector-based initiatives designed to meet the workforce needs of key industries. CFWDB works closely with out three local community colleges to connect employers with customized training opportunities.
5. **Small Business Support:** Offering specialized assistance and support services tailored to the needs of small businesses, including access to training resources, assistance with recruitment and hiring, and guidance on navigating workforce development programs and incentives offered by business-facing partner organizations.
6. **Talent Pipeline Development:** Implementing strategies to develop a robust talent pipeline for in-demand occupations, including initiatives to recruit, train, and retain skilled workers in key sectors. This may involve partnerships with educational institutions, career pathways development, and promoting work-based learning opportunities. The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager provides guidance to NCWorks staff on in-demand credentials, skills, and hiring practices.
7. **Workforce System Navigation:** Providing employer-friendly resources and assistance to help businesses navigate the workforce system, access available services, and connect with relevant partners and programs. This includes facilitating access to job posting platforms, recruitment events, and workforce training funds offered under NCWorks and partner organizations.



8. Feedback Mechanisms: Establishing feedback mechanisms to solicit input from employers on the effectiveness of workforce programs and services. The CFWDB uses Salesforce to track business engagement and determine repeat clients or gaps in services. This feedback is used to continuously improve and refine strategies to better meet employer needs and expectations.

By employing these strategies, the Cape Fear WDB aims to foster strong partnerships with businesses, address workforce challenges, and support economic growth and prosperity in the region.

## 5. Describe strategies and services used to coordinate workforce development programs and economic development. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(iii)].

CFWDB understands and supports the symbiotic relationship between workforce development and economic development and employs several strategies for enhanced coordination across the region:

1. Strategic Planning: Engaging in collaborative strategic planning efforts that involve key stakeholders from both workforce development and economic development sectors. This ensures alignment of goals, priorities, and resources to maximize impact and address regional needs comprehensively.
2. Industry Partnerships: Establishing partnerships and collaborative initiatives with industry associations, chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, and other relevant organizations. These partnerships facilitate the identification of workforce needs, industry trends, and opportunities for growth and investment.
3. Sector Strategies: Developing and implementing sector-specific strategies that align workforce development efforts with the needs of key industries in the region. This may involve conducting industry research, identifying skill gaps, and designing targeted workforce programs to support industry growth and competitiveness.
4. Business Engagement: Actively engaging with businesses to understand their workforce needs, challenges, and growth plans. This includes conducting employer surveys, hosting industry forums, and providing customized workforce solutions tailored to meet the needs of local employers.
5. Talent Pipeline Development: Collaborating with educational institutions, training providers, and industry partners to develop a skilled workforce pipeline aligned with the needs of target industries. This may involve designing career pathways, work-based learning programs, and apprenticeship initiatives to prepare individuals for high-demand occupations.
6. Business Attraction and Retention: Working with economic development agencies and local governments to attract new businesses to the region and support the expansion of existing businesses. This may include providing workforce development incentives, talent recruitment assistance, and customized training programs to meet the workforce needs of prospective and current employers.
7. Data Sharing and Analysis: Establishing mechanisms for sharing labor market data, economic indicators, and workforce trends between workforce development and economic development entities. This enables informed decision-making, resource allocation, and strategic planning to address emerging challenges and opportunities.
8. Resource Alignment: Aligning funding streams, resources, and initiatives across workforce development and economic development sectors to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. This may involve leveraging federal, state, and local funding sources to support joint initiatives, collaborative projects, and shared services that benefit both sectors.

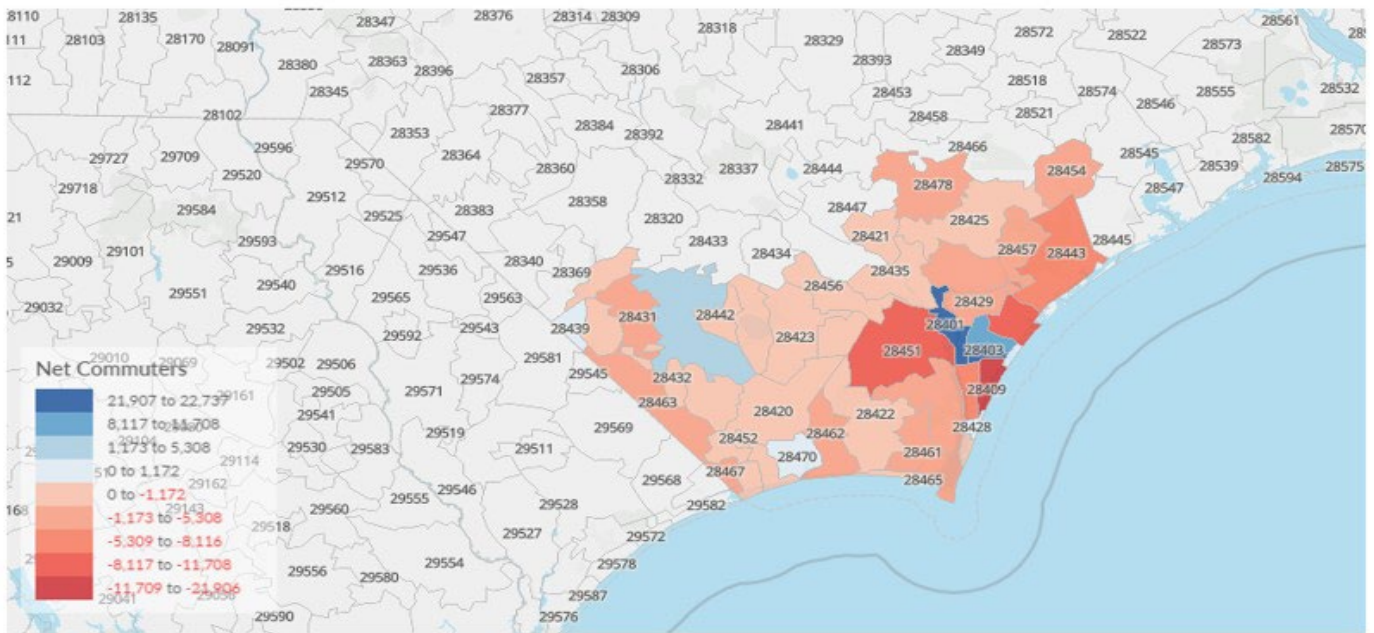
By implementing these strategies and services, the Cape Fear WDB ensures close coordination between workforce development programs and economic development efforts, fostering economic growth and prosperity for businesses and jobseekers across the CFWDB region.

6. Outline regional transportation issues related to workforce development and ways the region is/will address needs identified. Include a description *and* map of the regional commuting patterns. [WIOA Section 108(b)(11)].

In the Cape Fear region, transportation challenges significantly impact workforce development, with issues including limited public transportation, insufficient infrastructure, lack of accessible options for those with disabilities or older workers, and prevalent traffic congestion. These challenges hinder employee access to job centers, particularly in rural areas and during peak hours. The average commute time is around 25 minutes, though this increases in congested areas. A detailed map showing these commuting flows, especially into Wilmington, illustrated key areas for potential public transit enhancements. CFWDB works with local economic developers and community colleges to address transportation needs within each county and for underserved areas.

**Place of Work vs Place of Residence**

Understanding where talent in the region currently works compared to where talent lives can help you optimize site decisions. For example, the #1 ranked ZIP for employment ranks #2 for resident workers. The top ZIP for resident workers is 28412.



**Where Talent Works**

ZIP	Name	2023 Employment
28403	Wilmington, NC (in New Hanover)	40,800
28401	Wilmington, NC (in New Hanover)	35,575
28405	Wilmington, NC (in New Hanover)	24,634
28412	Wilmington, NC (in New Hanover)	15,134
28472	Whiteville, NC (in Columbus coun)	10,502

**Where Talent Lives**

ZIP	Name	2023 Workers
28412	Wilmington, NC (in New Hanover)	21,608
28403	Wilmington, NC (in New Hanover)	18,893
28451	Leland, NC (in Brunswick county)	18,681
28411	Wilmington, NC (in New Hanover)	18,451
28409	Wilmington, NC (in New Hanover)	17,353

7. Briefly provide a description of how the Cape Fear WDB will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out in the Cape Fear with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Section 108(b)(10)].

The Cape Fear WDB coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs through several key strategies:

1. **Partnership Development:** Establishing partnerships with local secondary schools, community colleges, universities, and other educational institutions to align workforce development efforts with education programs. This involves regular communication, collaboration, and joint planning to ensure that education and training programs meet the needs of employers and students.
2. **Career Pathways Development:** Collaborating with educational institutions to develop and expand career pathways that provide students with clear routes from education to employment in high-demand industries. This includes aligning curriculum, credentials, and work-based learning opportunities with workforce needs identified by local employers.
3. **Dual Enrollment Programs:** Supporting dual enrollment programs that allow high school students to earn college credits while still in high school. By participating in these programs, students can gain early exposure to postsecondary education and career opportunities, enhancing their readiness for the workforce.
4. **Work-Based Learning Opportunities:** Facilitating work-based learning experiences, such as internships, apprenticeships, and co-op programs, in partnership with educational institutions and employers. These opportunities allow students to gain hands-on experience in real-world work environments, develop relevant skills, and make informed career decisions.
5. **Alignment of Curricula:** Ensuring that secondary and postsecondary education curricula are aligned with industry standards and workforce needs. This involves regular review and updating of course offerings, instructional materials, and teaching methods to reflect current industry trends and technology advancements.
6. **Data Sharing and Analysis:** Establishing mechanisms for sharing data and information between education and workforce development partners to inform decision-making and program improvement efforts. This includes sharing labor market data, student outcomes, and employer feedback to identify areas for collaboration and improvement.

By coordinating education and workforce investment activities in these ways, the Cape Fear WDB enhances services, avoids duplication of efforts, and ensures that individuals are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to succeed in the local labor market.

8. Briefly describe how the NCWorks Career Centers serve military veterans.

NCWorks Career Centers serve military veterans by providing specialized employment services tailored to their unique needs. These services may include:

1. **Veterans Priority of Service:** Ensuring that veterans receive priority access to employment and training services, as mandated by federal law.
2. **Veteran Employment Representatives:** Designating staff members as veteran employment representatives who are trained to assist veterans with job search activities, resume writing, interview preparation, and other employment-related needs.
3. **Veterans Workshops and Events:** Hosting workshops and events specifically for veterans, covering topics such as transitioning to civilian employment, translating military skills to civilian jobs, and accessing veteran-specific resources and benefits.
4. **Referrals to Veteran Services:** Connecting veterans with additional support services available through partner organizations, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs), and community-based veteran service providers.
5. **Veterans Resources and Information:** Providing access to resources and information tailored to veterans, including information about VA benefits, disability compensation, education and training opportunities, and healthcare services.
6. **Collaboration with Veteran-Focused Organizations:** Collaborating with local veteran-focused organizations, employers with veteran hiring initiatives, and military installations to enhance employment opportunities for veterans and facilitate their transition to civilian careers. CFWDB utilizes community college veterans' offices and the UNCW veterans' staff as referral partners, providing veterans with direct access to NCWorks training and career services.

Overall, NCWorks Career Centers strive to ensure that military veterans receive comprehensive support and assistance to help them successfully reintegrate into the civilian workforce and achieve their career goals.

9. Explain the strategic plan for how the region will respond to national emergencies or weather-related disasters to serve victims (such as lay-off aversion activities) and utilize special grants efficiently throughout the recovery period.

The strategic plan for responding to national emergencies or weather-related disasters in the region involves a multi-faceted approach to serve victims and efficiently utilize special grants throughout the recovery period. After a disaster:

1. **Preparedness and Planning:** The region establishes comprehensive emergency preparedness plans in collaboration with relevant agencies and stakeholders. This includes identifying potential risks, establishing communication protocols, and outlining response procedures.
2. **Rapid Response Activities:** The region activates rapid response activities to provide immediate assistance to affected individuals and businesses. This may include deploying mobile NCWorks Career Centers to impacted areas, conducting outreach to displaced workers, and offering lay-off aversion services to at-risk employers.
3. **Coordination with Federal and State Agencies:** The region coordinates closely with federal and state agencies, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Labor, to access resources and funding available for disaster recovery efforts. This may involve applying for special grants and leveraging federal assistance programs to support workforce development initiatives.
4. **Utilization of Special Grants:** Special grants allocated for disaster recovery are efficiently utilized to address the immediate and long-term needs of affected individuals and businesses. These may include

funding for job training programs, reemployment services, and supportive services to help individuals regain employment and stability.

5. **Community Outreach and Engagement:** The region engages in extensive community outreach and engagement efforts to ensure that affected individuals are aware of available resources and services. This may involve collaborating with local media outlets, community organizations, and faith-based groups to disseminate information and facilitate access to assistance programs.
6. **Long-Term Recovery Planning:** In addition to immediate response efforts, the CFWDB coordinates with Long-term Recovery Groups (LTRGs) to develop recovery plans to support the economic revitalization of affected communities. This may include infrastructure investments, workforce development initiatives, and targeted assistance programs to support business retention and expansion. LTRGs exist within each county and maintain structure for better agility if/when a disaster occurs.

Overall, the strategic plan for responding to national emergencies or disasters emphasizes proactive preparedness, rapid response, collaboration with stakeholders, and efficient utilization of resources to support the recovery and resilience of the region's workforce and economy.

## IV. NCWorks Commission

*The NCWorks Commission recommends policies and strategies which value diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility while enabling the state's workforce to compete in the current and future global economy. The commission leads, builds partnerships, forms alliances, and is accountable for strengthening North Carolina's innovative, inclusive, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system.*

*The Commission is designated as the state's WDB under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Led by a private sector chair, the 37-member Commission includes representatives from the business community, heads of state workforce agencies, educators, and community leaders. All members are appointed by the Governor.*

*Mission of the NCWorks Commission: To ensure North Carolina has an innovative, relevant, effective, and efficient workforce development system that develops adaptable, work-ready, skilled talent to meet the current and future needs of workers and businesses to achieve and sustain economic prosperity; and to ensure North Carolinians are ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow by increasing access to education and skills training, fostering employer leadership to prepare workers, and supporting and scaling local innovation.*

*After extensive stakeholder work and programmatic reviews, the following systemwide goals and objectives were created for the workforce development system:*

- Prepare workers to succeed in the North Carolina economy by increasing skills and education attainment.*
- Create a workforce system that is responsive to the needs of the economy by fostering employer leadership.*
- Promote replication of creative solutions to challenging workforce problems by supporting local innovation.*
- Promote system access, alignment, integration, and modernization.*

1. Briefly describe how the Cape Fear WDB engages with local employers and informs them of the wide array of business services offered. Include how the Cape Fear WDB (a) ensures collaboration with other employer-facing workforce program representatives, such as (b) Vocational Rehabilitation, (c) Agriculture Services, (d) Foreign Labor, (e) Re-Entry, and (f) Veterans Services, through processes and procedures for information sharing and efficient employer customer service delivery.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) actively engages with local employers through a variety of channels to inform them of the wide array of business services offered. This includes:

(a) Ensuring collaboration with other employer-facing workforce program representatives, such as:

- Vocational Rehabilitation: The CFWDB collaborates with Vocational Rehabilitation representatives to provide coordinated services to employers and individuals with disabilities, ensuring that employer needs are met effectively.
- Agriculture Services: Partnerships with agriculture services agencies enable the CFWDB to offer specialized support to employers in the agricultural sector, addressing their unique workforce needs.
- Foreign Labor: The CFWDB works with agencies handling foreign labor to provide information and resources to employers seeking to hire foreign workers, facilitating streamlined processes and compliance.

- **Re-Entry:** Collaboration with re-entry programs allows the CFWDB to support employers in hiring individuals with criminal backgrounds, providing assistance with workforce reintegration and reducing recidivism.
- **Veterans Services:** The CFWDB partners with Veterans Services representatives to offer specialized support to employers interested in hiring veterans, connecting them with skilled and qualified candidates from the veteran community.

(b-f) Processes and procedures for information sharing and efficient employer customer service delivery:

- **Regular Meetings:** The CFWDB organizes regular meetings and events where representatives from various workforce programs, including those focused on vocational rehabilitation, agriculture services, foreign labor, re-entry, and veterans services, can collaborate and share information with employers.
- **Coordinated Outreach:** The CFWDB coordinates outreach efforts with partner agencies to ensure that employers are informed of the full range of services available to them, including those provided by other workforce programs.
- **Referral Networks:** The CFWDB establishes referral networks and protocols to facilitate seamless communication and coordination between different workforce programs, ensuring that employers receive comprehensive and efficient customer service.
- **Integrated Service Delivery:** The CFWDB promotes integrated service delivery approaches, where representatives from different workforce programs work together to address employer needs holistically, maximizing the impact of available resources and support services.

Overall, the CFWDB prioritizes collaboration and coordination with various employer-facing workforce program representatives to ensure that employers are informed of and have access to the diverse range of business services offered, resulting in more efficient and effective customer service delivery.

2. Please provide a brief overview of the business services team within the Cape Fear. Please identify the individual staff roles the Cape Fear WDB utilizes to conduct business services (that is Business Services Representative (Cape Fear WDB staff), contractor staff, Business Engagement Coordinator, NCWorks Career Center Manager, DWS staff, Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, identify who makes regional and local employer referrals to Agricultural Services and/or Foreign Labor staff, etc.).

The business services team within the Cape Fear region consists of various staff roles dedicated to engaging with employers and facilitating workforce development initiatives. Here's a brief overview of the key roles:

1. **Business Services Representative (Cape Fear WDB staff):** These representatives serve as primary points of contact for businesses within the region. They conduct outreach, assess employer needs, and connect them with relevant workforce development services and programs.
2. **Business Engagement Manager:** This role is responsible for coordinating engagement efforts with local businesses, organizing outreach events, and fostering partnerships between employers and workforce development agencies.
3. **NCWorks One Stop Operator:** The One Stop Operator is the lead manager among partner organizations and thereby oversees the operations of the NCWorks Career Center. They work closely with the business services team to ensure seamless service delivery to employers and job seekers.
4. **DWS WIOA Title III Staff:** The Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) staff members play a vital role in providing employment-related services to businesses, including job orders, job matching, recruitment assistance, and labor market information. These staff are a primary partner on the NCWorks business services team.

5. **DWS Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Staff:** DVOP staff members specialize in assisting disabled veterans with employment-related needs. They may provide outreach to local businesses to promote hiring initiatives for veterans.
6. **Agricultural Services and Foreign Labor Staff:** These staff members focus on providing workforce services to employers in the agricultural sector and managing foreign labor programs. They may receive referrals from the business services team or other workforce development partners.
7. **WIOA Title I Staff:** The CFWDB may utilize Title I staff to support business services initiatives, such as conducting specialized training programs or providing technical assistance to employers.
8. **Contract:** In some cases, CWFDB may utilize consultants to support business needs.
9. **Other Community Partners:** CFWDB maintains productive relationships with SBTDC, SBAs, local economic development partners, chambers of commerce, and CBOs with business-facing staff. These partners are frequently included as part of the CFWDB business services team to reduce redundancy when engaging with business leadership.

Overall, the business services team comprises a diverse set of roles aimed at effectively engaging with employers, addressing their workforce needs, and fostering economic growth within the Cape Fear region.

3. Briefly describe how the Cape Fear WDB plans to increase NCWorks brand awareness at the local level (consult NCWorks Commission 2023-2025 Strategic Plan).

To increase NCWorks brand awareness at the regional level, the Cape Fear WDB focuses on community engagement, digital outreach, and partnerships. This includes:

1. **Community Engagement Events:** Hosting local events, job fairs, and workshops to promote NCWorks services directly to residents and businesses within the Cape Fear region.
2. **Digital Marketing Campaigns:** Leveraging digital platforms such as social media, email newsletters, and website advertising to raise awareness of NCWorks programs and resources among the local population.
3. **Collaboration with Community Partners:** Partnering with local organizations, educational institutions, and community centers to expand the reach of NCWorks services and promote brand awareness through collaborative initiatives and outreach efforts.
4. **NCWorks Commission Strategic Plan Alignment:** Aligning local outreach strategies with the goals and priorities outlined in the NCWorks Commission's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan to ensure consistency and effectiveness in promoting the NCWorks brand.

By implementing these strategies, the Cape Fear WDB aims to enhance NCWorks brand recognition in each county, increase access to workforce development services, and ultimately support economic growth and employment opportunities within the community.

*Communities across North Carolina are developing strong local models of workforce development. North Carolina should build on those successes and replicate them in more places to continue building and expanding innovative solutions.*



4. Describe how the Cape Fear WDB and the partners identify, address, and provide new and innovative solutions to support the job growth and business expansions of the local workforce system while including Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) and its partners employ a strategic approach to identifying, addressing, and providing new and innovative solutions to support job growth and business expansions within the local workforce system, while also prioritizing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA). Here's how they accomplish this:

1. Needs Assessment: The CFWDB conducts thorough needs assessments in collaboration with local partners to identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities within the local workforce system. This includes analyzing labor market trends, employer needs, and the demographics of the local workforce.
2. Stakeholder Engagement: The CFWDB actively engages stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, including employers, community organizations, educational institutions, and workforce development agencies. This ensures that the solutions developed are inclusive and responsive to the needs of all stakeholders.
3. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Lens: The CFWDB integrates a DEIA lens into all aspects of its work, ensuring that policies, programs, and initiatives are designed to promote equity and inclusion for all individuals, including those from underrepresented or marginalized communities. This may involve targeted outreach, culturally sensitive programming, and accessibility accommodations.
4. Innovative Solutions: The CFWDB encourages creativity and innovation in developing solutions to address workforce challenges. This may involve piloting new programs or initiatives, leveraging technology to enhance service delivery, or exploring alternative models of workforce development.
5. Collaboration and Partnerships: The CFWDB collaborates with a wide range of partners, including local businesses, educational institutions, government agencies, and community organizations, to leverage resources and expertise in addressing workforce needs. This collaborative approach fosters innovation and allows for the development of comprehensive solutions.
6. Training and Skill Development: The CFWDB prioritizes training and skill development initiatives that are responsive to the evolving needs of the local labor market. This includes providing training in emerging industries, supporting upskilling and reskilling efforts, and promoting career pathways that offer opportunities for advancement and economic mobility.
7. Continuous Improvement: The CFWDB regularly evaluates the effectiveness of its programs and initiatives and seeks feedback from stakeholders to identify areas for improvement. This commitment to continuous improvement ensures that the workforce system remains agile and responsive to changing needs and priorities.

By following these principles and approaches, the CFWDB and its partners are able to identify, address, and provide innovative solutions to support job growth and business expansions within the local workforce system, while also promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility for all individuals in the community.

*The U.S. Departments of Commerce and Labor have jointly identified Recruitment and Hiring; Benefits; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility; Empowerment and Representation; Job Security and Working Conditions; Organizational Culture; Pay; and Skills and Career Advancement as the eight key principles of a good job. Refer to Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 07-22 for details.*

5. Describe the Cape Fear WDB's strategy for:

- a. incorporating job quality principles into ongoing workforce development activities, to assist with identifying and creating long-term partnerships with employers offering good jobs;
- b. creating strategic, flexible career pathways to good jobs that respond to local labor market needs.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) has developed a comprehensive strategy to incorporate job quality principles into ongoing workforce development activities and create strategic, flexible career pathways to good jobs that respond to local labor market needs. Here's how they approach each aspect:

a. Incorporating Job Quality Principles into Ongoing Workforce Development Activities:

- Partnership Development: The CFWDB actively seeks out and cultivates partnerships with employers who offer good jobs that align with job quality principles. This includes engaging with employers who provide competitive wages, benefits, opportunities for advancement, and a positive work environment.
- Employer Engagement: The CFWDB collaborates closely with employers to understand their workforce needs, including their requirements for job quality. By building strong relationships with employers, the CFWDB can better align its workforce development activities with the needs of the local job market.
- Workforce Training Programs: The CFWDB designs and implements workforce training programs that focus not only on developing technical skills but also on enhancing soft skills, workplace culture, and job satisfaction. These programs are tailored to meet the needs of employers offering good jobs, ensuring that participants are prepared for success in quality employment opportunities.
- Quality Job Metrics: The CFWDB tracks and monitors key metrics related to job quality, such as wages, benefits, job satisfaction, and retention rates. By collecting and analyzing this data, the CFWDB can assess the effectiveness of its workforce development activities in creating and sustaining good jobs within the local economy.

b. Creating Strategic, Flexible Career Pathways to Good Jobs:

- Labor Market Analysis: The CFWDB conducts ongoing analysis of the local labor market to identify emerging industries, high-demand occupations, and career pathways with good job prospects. This analysis informs the development of strategic career pathways that respond to current and future labor market needs.
- Skills Development: The CFWDB designs career pathways that prioritize skills development and credential attainment in high-growth industries and occupations. These pathways are flexible and adaptable, allowing individuals to acquire the skills and credentials needed to access good jobs and advance in their careers over time.
- Supportive Services: The CFWDB provides supportive services, such as career counseling, mentorship, and financial assistance, to help individuals overcome barriers to employment and succeed in their chosen career pathways. These services are tailored to the needs of individuals and are designed to promote equity and inclusion.
- Employer Partnerships: The CFWDB collaborates with employers to develop and validate career pathways that lead to good jobs within their industries. This includes engaging employers in the design of training programs, providing work-based learning opportunities, and facilitating connections between job seekers and employers offering quality employment opportunities.

By incorporating job quality principles into ongoing workforce development activities and creating strategic, flexible career pathways to good jobs, the CFWDB is able to support the long-term economic success and prosperity of the Cape Fear region while promoting job quality and equity for all residents.

6. Describe how the Cape Fear WDB ensures that individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities have equitable access to the services of the workforce system and the jobs created in the economic growth spurred by federal investments.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) prioritizes equity and inclusivity to ensure individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities have equitable access to the services of the workforce system and the jobs created in the economic growth spurred by federal investments. Here's how the Cape Fear WDB achieves this:

1. Targeted Outreach and Recruitment: The Cape Fear WDB implements targeted outreach efforts to reach underserved and underrepresented communities, including rural areas and communities of color. This may involve collaborating with community organizations, faith-based groups, and local leaders to spread awareness of available services and opportunities.

2. **Culturally Competent Services:** The Cape Fear WDB ensures that its services are culturally competent and accessible to individuals from diverse backgrounds. This includes offering language interpretation services, providing materials in multiple languages, and training staff on cultural sensitivity and awareness.
3. **Barrier Mitigation:** The Cape Fear WDB identifies and addresses barriers that may prevent individuals from underserved communities from accessing workforce services and employment opportunities. This could involve providing transportation assistance, childcare support, or addressing digital literacy gaps to ensure equitable access to resources.
4. **Tailored Support Services:** The Cape Fear WDB offers tailored support services to meet the unique needs of underserved populations. This may include specialized job training programs, mentorship initiatives, or targeted assistance for individuals with disabilities or those reentering the workforce from incarceration.
5. **Collaboration with Community Partners:** The Cape Fear WDB collaborates with community-based organizations, non-profits, educational institutions, and other stakeholders to leverage resources and expertise in serving underserved communities. This collaborative approach helps to address systemic barriers and promote economic mobility for all residents.
6. **Equity in Program Design:** The Cape Fear WDB embeds principles of equity and inclusion into the design and implementation of its programs and initiatives. This ensures that services are accessible, equitable, and responsive to the needs of diverse populations.
7. **Data Monitoring and Evaluation:** The Cape Fear WDB regularly monitors and evaluates its programs and services to ensure equitable outcomes for all participants. This includes collecting data on demographics, participation rates, and outcomes to identify disparities and inform continuous improvement efforts.

By implementing these strategies, the Cape Fear WDB strives to ensure that individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities have equitable access to the services of the workforce system and the opportunities created by federal investments, ultimately fostering greater economic inclusion and prosperity for all residents.

#### 7. Describe how the Cape Fear WDB is engaged in work-based learning projects with local employers.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) is actively engaged in work-based learning projects with local employers to provide valuable hands-on experiences for job seekers and students while meeting the workforce needs of businesses. Here's how the Cape Fear WDB participates in work-based learning initiatives:

**Apprenticeship Programs:** The Cape Fear WDB collaborates with local employers to develop and implement registered apprenticeship programs. These programs combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction, allowing participants to earn while they learn and acquire industry-recognized credentials.

**Internship Opportunities:** The Cape Fear WDB works with businesses to create internship opportunities for students and job seekers. These internships provide valuable work experience and exposure to different industries, helping participants develop relevant skills and expand their professional networks.

**On-the-Job Training (OJT) Programs:** The Cape Fear WDB facilitates OJT programs in partnership with employers to train individuals in specific job roles. Employers receive reimbursement for a portion of the wages paid to OJT participants, incentivizing them to provide training opportunities for job seekers.

**Work Experience Programs:** The Cape Fear WDB coordinates work experience programs that allow individuals to gain practical experience in a real-world work environment. These programs may target youth, adults, or individuals with barriers to employment, providing them with valuable skills and confidence to enter

the workforce.

**Sector-Specific Training Initiatives:** The Cape Fear WDB collaborates with employers to design sector-specific training initiatives tailored to the needs of local industries. These initiatives may include boot camps, workshops, or short-term training programs focused on developing in-demand skills.

**Industry Partnerships:** The Cape Fear WDB fosters partnerships with industry associations, chambers of commerce, and business networks to identify workforce needs and develop work-based learning opportunities. By engaging with employers directly, the WDB ensures that work-based learning projects align with industry demands.

**Support Services:** The Cape Fear WDB provides support services to employers participating in work-based learning projects, including assistance with program design, recruitment of participants, and navigation of funding opportunities. This support helps employers effectively implement and sustain work-based learning initiatives.

Overall, the Cape Fear WDB's involvement in work-based learning projects with local employers helps bridge the gap between education and employment, equipping individuals with the skills and experience needed to succeed in the workforce while meeting the talent needs of businesses in the region.

8. Briefly describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(A)]

The local board ensures continuous improvement of eligible service providers through the workforce system by:

1. **Performance Monitoring:** Regularly monitoring the performance of eligible providers to assess their effectiveness in meeting the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers.
2. **Data Analysis:** Analyzing data on provider performance, including placement rates, retention rates, and participant outcomes, to identify areas for improvement and inform decision-making.
3. **Quality Assurance:** Implementing quality assurance mechanisms, such as audits, evaluations, and site visits, to ensure that providers adhere to program guidelines and deliver high-quality services.
4. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Soliciting feedback from employers, workers, and job seekers about their experiences with service providers to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
5. **Professional Development:** Offering professional development opportunities and training to eligible providers to enhance their skills and knowledge in serving the needs of the local workforce.
6. **Collaboration and Coordination:** Facilitating collaboration and coordination among eligible providers, local employers, and other stakeholders to align services with labor market demands and emerging industry trends. By implementing these strategies, the local board ensures that eligible providers continuously improve their services to meet the evolving employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of the workforce system.

## V. NCWorks Career Centers

*North Carolina's workforce system includes multiple agencies, programs, and funders. Collaboration, policy alignment, systemic communication, integration, and modernization of the workforce system will ensure a strong and healthy workforce system that can adapt to a changing economy.*

*For any documents that are missing or are unnecessary based on the response provided, please state, "No document is loaded and/or it will be loaded by a specific date".*

1. Identify PY 2024 NCWorks Career Center location(s) including Comprehensive and Affiliate Sites; On-site partners; how NCWorks Career Center operator(s) are designated; provider(s) of WIOA career services and method of selection; whether youth service provider is on-site and, if so, youth services offered. Use the PY 2024 NCWorks Career Center Chart. [WIOA Section 121(b)(1)(A) and (b)(1)(B)]

- Name document: Cape Fear Name PY 2024 NCWorks Career Centers.

2. Provide the name(s) of the current One-Stop provider(s), date, and process for when the competitive procurement of the One-Stop Operator(s) occurred. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to four years and the current year the contract is (e.g., two of three years). [WIOA Section 108(b)(16)]

The OSO RFP was released in January 2023. This procurement failed to yield One Stop Operator services for Brunswick, New Hanover, and Pender counties. One Stop Services are provided through the Cape Fear Council of Governments through June 2024. For Columbus County, Southeastern Community College was awarded the One Stop Operator contract from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. In the Spring of 2024, the One Stop Operator procurement again failed for the aforementioned counties and the CFCOG maintains the OSO responsibility for an additional year. The Southeastern Community College OSO contract was renewed for an additional year. The CFWDB has recommended the One Stop Operator service be procured as part of the Adult and Dislocated Worker RFP, released in the Spring of 2025 to begin July 1, 2025. CFWDB (under the CFCOG) contracts are set for the duration on one year, with an option to extend up to two additional years.

3. Provide a brief description of how Career and Training Services are provided. [WIOA Section 121(e), 134(c)]

- Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to adults.
  - Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to dislocated workers.
  - Provide a description of how Career and Training services are provided to youth.
- a. Career and Training Services for Adults: Career and training services for adults under WIOA are provided through the NCWorks Career Centers and other eligible service providers. Adults receive comprehensive career assessments, counseling, and job search assistance to help them identify their skills, interests, and goals. They may also access skills development and training opportunities, including short-term courses, certifications, and on-the-job training programs, to enhance their employability and advance in their careers. Additionally, adults may receive supportive services such as transportation assistance, childcare,

and work-related expenses to overcome barriers to employment and successfully enter or re-enter the workforce.

- b. **Career and Training Services for Dislocated Workers:** Dislocated workers receive specialized career and training services tailored to their unique needs and circumstances. These services may include rapid response assistance to help them cope with job loss, career counseling, and skills assessment to identify suitable career pathways. Dislocated workers may also access training programs to upgrade their skills, pursue new career opportunities, or transition to in-demand industries. Supportive services such as relocation assistance, income support, and healthcare benefits may also be available to help dislocated workers overcome financial hardships and successfully re-enter the workforce.
- c. **Career and Training Services for Youth:** Youth receive comprehensive career and training services designed to support their educational and employment goals. These services may include career exploration, work readiness training, and job placement assistance to help youth gain valuable work experience and develop essential skills for the workplace. Youth may also participate in internships, apprenticeships, or summer employment programs to gain hands-on experience in their chosen field. Additionally, youth may receive academic support, mentoring, and guidance to help them stay on track academically and prepare for post-secondary education or training opportunities. Overall, career and training services for youth aim to equip them with the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to succeed in the workforce and achieve long-term career success.

#### 4. Describe how the CFWDB determines the need for enrollment in Training Services.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) determines the need for enrollment in training services through a comprehensive assessment process that considers individual circumstances, career goals, and labor market demands. Here's how the determination is typically made:

1. **Individual Assessment:** WDB staff conduct thorough assessments of individuals seeking training services to evaluate their skills, education level, work experience, career interests, and barriers to employment. This assessment helps identify the specific training needs of each individual and informs the development of a personalized career plan.
2. **Labor Market Analysis:** The WDB analyzes local labor market trends, industry demand, and emerging job opportunities to identify in-demand occupations and industries that offer promising career pathways. This analysis helps align training programs with the needs of employers and the job market, ensuring that individuals receive training in fields with high growth potential and ample employment opportunities.
3. **Career Counseling:** WDB staff provide career counseling and guidance to individuals to help them explore various training options, understand the potential outcomes of different training programs, and make informed decisions about their career paths. Career counselors help individuals assess the relevance of training programs to their career goals and ensure that they select programs that align with their interests and abilities.
4. **Skills Gap Analysis:** The WDB assesses the skills gap between the qualifications of job seekers and the requirements of employers in key industries. By identifying areas where there is a mismatch between the skills of the workforce and the needs of employers, the WDB can prioritize training programs that address these gaps and equip individuals with the skills needed to succeed in the workforce.
5. **Industry Input:** The WDB engages with local employers, industry associations, and workforce partners to gather input on the skills and qualifications needed for success in specific occupations and

industries. By soliciting feedback from employers, the WDB ensures that training programs are relevant, up-to-date, and responsive to the evolving needs of the local labor market.

Overall, the Cape Fear WDB's determination of the need for enrollment in training services is based on a comprehensive assessment of individual needs, labor market demand, career goals, and industry input. By considering these factors holistically, the WDB aims to ensure that individuals receive training that equips them with the skills and credentials needed to succeed in the workforce and meet the needs of local employers

5. Describe how follow-up services are provided through the NCWorks Career Centers. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

Follow-up services provided through the NCWorks Career Centers involve ongoing support and assistance to individuals after they have initially accessed workforce development services. These services are designed to ensure continued progress toward employment or career goals and may include:

1. **Monitoring Progress:** Career Advisors or case managers track the progress of individuals who have received services to ensure they are meeting their employment or training objectives.
2. **Addressing Barriers:** If individuals encounter barriers or challenges during their job search or training program, follow-up services involve providing assistance and resources to overcome these obstacles. This may include referrals to supportive services such as childcare, transportation assistance, or counseling.
3. **Job Placement Assistance:** NCWorks Career Centers offer continued support in job search activities, including assistance with resume writing, interview preparation, and connecting individuals with job opportunities through job matching services and employer referrals.
4. **Skills Development:** Individuals may receive additional training or skill-building opportunities to enhance their qualifications for employment in high-demand occupations.
5. **Retention Support:** After individuals secure employment, follow-up services may include providing support to help them maintain their jobs and advance in their careers. This could involve assistance with workplace communication, conflict resolution, or accessing further training or education opportunities for career advancement.

Overall, follow-up services provided through the NCWorks Career Centers are tailored to meet the individual needs of participants and support them throughout their journey toward sustainable employment and career success.

6. Describe how:

- a. New NCWorks Career Center staff (Title I, Title III, and partner staff) are trained in the integrated service delivery system model (include a training timeline).
- b. How long after the initial start date does staff have full access to NCWorks.gov?
- c. The staff development activities reinforce and improve the initial training efforts.
- d. Describe the specific training that staff receive around diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

a.

Training Timeline for New NCWorks Career Center Staff:

- Week 1: Introduction to NCWorks System and Integrated Service Delivery Model
- Week 2-3: Hands-on Training on NCWorks Online System and Case Management Tools

- Week 4-5: Role-specific Training (Title I, Title III, Veterans, Partner Staff) on Service Delivery Processes and Procedures
  - Week 6-8: Cross-Training on Interdisciplinary Collaboration and Case Coordination
  - Ongoing: Continuous Professional Development and Refresher Trainings on NCWorks Updates and Best Practices
- b. Full Access to NCWorks.gov: Staff typically have full access to NCWorks.gov within 1-2 weeks after their initial start date. This allows them to familiarize themselves with the platform and begin utilizing its resources and tools to assist job seekers and employers.
- c. Reinforcement of Initial Training Efforts: Staff development activities, such as team meetings, workshops, and peer learning sessions, are conducted regularly to reinforce and improve upon the initial training efforts. These activities provide opportunities for staff to share experiences, troubleshoot challenges, and stay updated on best practices in service delivery.
- d. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Training: Staff receive specific training on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility to ensure that they provide inclusive and equitable services to all individuals. This training covers topics such as cultural competency, unconscious bias, language access, accommodation strategies, and sensitivity to diverse backgrounds and identities. Training modules may include interactive exercises, case studies, and discussions to promote understanding and awareness of issues related to diversity and inclusion in the workforce system. Additionally, staff are encouraged to continuously educate themselves on these topics through ongoing professional development opportunities and resources provided by the organization.

7. Briefly explain coordination with the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services. Please include specific details on how case managers for WIOA and TAA programs coordinate to provide seamless services to eligible participants.

When implemented, coordination with the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is crucial for maximizing resources and preventing duplicative services within the workforce system. Here's how the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) has ensured seamless coordination between WIOA and TAA programs to provide efficient and effective services to eligible participants:

1. Clear Referral Pathways: The WDB establishes clear referral pathways between WIOA and TAA programs to ensure that eligible participants are seamlessly connected to the appropriate services. Case managers from both programs are trained to identify individuals who may be eligible for TAA assistance and refer them to the program for further evaluation and support.
2. Joint Case Management: Case managers from WIOA and TAA programs collaborate closely to provide joint case management for eligible participants. This collaboration allows for comprehensive assessment of participants' needs, development of individualized service plans, and coordination of services to address barriers to employment and training.
3. Coordinated Service Delivery: WIOA and TAA programs coordinate service delivery to avoid duplication and ensure that participants receive the most appropriate and beneficial services. This may include sharing information on available training opportunities, supportive services, job placement assistance, and other resources to help participants achieve their employment goals.
4. Regular Communication and Collaboration: Case managers from WIOA and TAA programs engage in regular communication and collaboration to discuss participant progress, share updates on available services, and address any challenges or barriers that may arise. This ongoing collaboration ensures that participants receive seamless and coordinated support throughout their participation in both programs.



Overall, by establishing clear referral pathways, providing joint case management, coordinating service delivery, and fostering regular communication and collaboration, the Cape Fear WDB ensures that WIOA and TAA programs work together effectively to maximize resources and provide comprehensive services to eligible participants.

8. Briefly describe how the NCWorks Career Center serves persons with disabilities.

The NCWorks Career Center serves persons with disabilities by providing a range of tailored services and accommodations to ensure equal access to employment opportunities. This includes:

1. **Accessibility:** The Career Center is designed to be accessible to individuals with disabilities, with features such as wheelchair ramps, accessible restrooms, and assistive technology.
2. **Disability Resource Specialists:** Trained staff members, including Disability Resource Specialists, are available to provide specialized assistance and support to individuals with disabilities. They offer guidance on disability-related services, accommodations, and resources available in the community.
3. **Accommodations:** The Career Center offers accommodations to individuals with disabilities to facilitate their participation in services and activities. This may include assistive technology, alternative formats for materials, sign language interpreters, or other reasonable accommodations as needed.
4. **Disability Navigators:** Some Career Centers may have Disability Navigators who specialize in assisting individuals with disabilities navigate the workforce system. They provide one-on-one support, advocacy, and referrals to disability-specific services and programs.
5. **Job Matching:** Career Center staff work closely with individuals with disabilities to identify job opportunities that match their skills, abilities, and career goals. They provide job search assistance, resume development, interview preparation, and support throughout the employment process.

Overall, the NCWorks Career Center strives to create an inclusive and supportive environment for persons with disabilities, offering tailored services, accommodations, and resources to help them achieve their employment goals and participate fully in the workforce.

9. Briefly describe the integrated service delivery strategy for serving employers and how the Cape Fear WDB staff and staff within the NCWorks Career Center coordinate outreach strategies and services to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services.

The integrated service delivery strategy for serving employers involves close coordination between the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) staff and staff within the NCWorks Career Center to provide seamless and comprehensive services. Here's how they coordinate outreach strategies and services to maximize resources and prevent duplicative services:

1. **Unified Approach:** WDB staff and NCWorks Career Center staff adopt a unified approach to serving employers, ensuring that they receive consistent and coordinated support throughout the workforce system.
2. **Cross-Training:** Staff members from both entities undergo cross-training to familiarize themselves with each other's roles, services, and resources. This enables them to provide comprehensive assistance to employers and seamlessly refer them to appropriate services as needed.
3. **Joint Outreach Efforts:** WDB and Career Center staff collaborate on outreach efforts to engage employers in the community. This may include participating in job fairs, industry events, networking opportunities, and employer forums to promote workforce services and resources.

4. Shared Resources: Both entities share resources and information to maximize resources and prevent duplication of services. This may include sharing employer databases, job postings, labor market information, and best practices in employer engagement.
5. Referral Networks: WDB and Career Center staff establish referral networks with other workforce partners and community organizations to ensure that employers receive comprehensive support beyond the services offered by the WDB and Career Center. This includes referrals to vocational rehabilitation services, small business development resources, economic development initiatives, and other relevant programs.

Overall, by adopting an integrated service delivery approach, the Cape Fear WDB and NCWorks Career Center staff work together to effectively serve employers, maximize resources, and prevent duplicative services. Their coordinated efforts ensure that employers receive seamless and comprehensive support to meet their workforce needs and contribute to the economic growth of the community.

10. Describe Cape Fear WDB strategies and services that will be used to strengthen linkages between Cape Fear WDBs and the NCWorks Career Center system and unemployment insurance programs. [WIOA Section 108(b)(4)(A)(iv)]

To strengthen linkages between Cape Fear WDBs and the NCWorks Career Center system and unemployment insurance (UI) programs, several strategies and services can be implemented:

1. Co-location: Co-locating Cape Fear WDB staff and UI program representatives within NCWorks Career Centers facilitates direct communication and collaboration between the two entities. This physical proximity enables seamless coordination of services and timely exchange of information.
2. Joint Training and Workshops: Organizing joint training sessions and workshops for Cape Fear WDB staff, NCWorks Career Center staff, and UI program representatives fosters a shared understanding of each other's roles, services, and processes. This enhances collaboration and promotes effective service delivery to job seekers and employers.
3. Information Sharing: Establishing protocols for sharing relevant data and information between Cape Fear WDBs, NCWorks Career Centers, and UI programs ensures that all stakeholders have access to comprehensive information about job market trends, workforce needs, and available resources. This information sharing facilitates better decision-making and resource allocation.
4. Referral Mechanisms: Developing streamlined referral mechanisms between Cape Fear WDBs, NCWorks Career Centers, and UI programs enables seamless transitions for individuals seeking employment and training services. Job seekers accessing UI benefits can be promptly referred to NCWorks Career Centers for employment assistance, while those identified through NCWorks can be referred to UI programs for additional support.
5. Outreach and Engagement: Collaborating on outreach efforts to reach job seekers and employers enhances the visibility and accessibility of both Cape Fear WDB services and UI programs. Joint outreach events, employer forums, and community partnerships can help raise awareness about available resources and encourage utilization of services.
6. Coordinated Service Delivery: Coordinating service delivery processes between Cape Fear WDBs, NCWorks Career Centers, and UI programs ensures that individuals receive comprehensive support that addresses their employment and training needs. This may involve aligning eligibility criteria, service offerings, and case management processes to provide integrated and holistic assistance to job seekers.

By implementing these strategies and services, Cape Fear WDBs can strengthen linkages with NCWorks Career Centers and UI programs, fostering collaboration and alignment to better serve job seekers, employers, and the broader community.

11. Attach a flowchart for services – flowchart must include:

- a. initial one-on-one interviews with customers,
- b. skills assessments, and
- c. determination of the need for further services.

- Name document: *Cape Fear WDB Services Flowchart 2024*.

12. Attach the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Cape Fear WDB and partners concerning operation of the NCWorks Career Center system. [WIOA Section 121(c)(1)(2)(A)]

- Name document: *Cape Fear WDB NCWorks Career Center MOU*.

13. Describe the Cape Fear WDB’s method for providing oversight to include:

- a. the review process and the frequency of review for the NCWorks Career Center system in the Cape Fear, including processes for ensuring quality customer service; and
- b. the roles and any resource contributions of the NCWorks Career Center partners. [WIOA Section 121(a)(3)] [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(D)]

a. Oversight of the NCWorks Career Center system in the Cape Fear region involves a structured review process to ensure quality customer service and effective program delivery. The Cape Fear WDB conducts regular reviews of the Career Center system, including site visits, performance evaluations, and feedback mechanisms. These reviews are typically conducted on a quarterly or biannual basis, although the frequency may vary based on program requirements and funding cycles; however, reports are reviewed by CFWDB on a monthly basis to promote accountability and identify areas for improvement.

During the review process, the Cape Fear WDB evaluates various aspects of the Career Center system, including:

- Compliance with program guidelines and regulations.
- Delivery of core services to job seekers and employers.
- Accessibility and accommodation for individuals with disabilities.
- Staff training and proficiency in service delivery.
- Customer satisfaction and feedback mechanisms.

The review process also includes gathering input from stakeholders, including job seekers, employers, community partners, and Career Center staff, to assess the effectiveness of services and identify areas for improvement. The Cape Fear WDB utilizes this feedback to inform decisions regarding resource allocation, training needs, and program enhancements to ensure that the Career Center system meets the needs of the local workforce.

b. The NCWorks Career Center partners play essential roles in the delivery of workforce services and contribute resources to support program operations. These partners may include:

- State and local government agencies responsible for workforce development, such as the Department of Commerce or Department of Labor.
- Educational institutions, including community colleges, universities, and technical schools, providing training and education programs.
- Nonprofit organizations offering supportive services, job readiness training, and specialized assistance to specific populations.

- Economic development agencies facilitating employer engagement, business services, and workforce planning initiatives.

Each partner contributes resources such as staff expertise, funding, facilities, and technology to support the operation of Career Centers and the delivery of comprehensive workforce services. Additionally, partners collaborate with the Cape Fear WDB and Career Center staff to align service delivery, coordinate outreach efforts, and leverage resources to maximize the impact of workforce development initiatives in the region.

14. Describe how the Cape Fear WDB facilitates access to services provided through the NCWorks Career Center delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means. [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(B)]

The Cape Fear WDB employs various strategies to facilitate access to services provided through the NCWorks Career Center delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology, and other means:

1. **Mobile Career Centers:** The Cape Fear WDB may deploy mobile career centers equipped with computers, internet access, and other resources to remote or underserved areas within the region. These mobile units bring workforce services directly to communities that may have limited access to traditional Career Center facilities.
2. **Virtual Services:** Utilizing technology platforms, such as online portals, virtual workshops, and video conferencing, enables individuals to access Career Center services remotely. Job seekers can receive assistance with resume writing, job search strategies, skills assessments, and career counseling from anywhere with an internet connection.
3. **Telephonic Support:** Providing toll-free helplines or dedicated phone lines allows individuals to access Career Center services remotely by speaking with trained staff members who can offer guidance, information, and referrals to resources based on their needs.
4. **Outreach Events:** Hosting outreach events, job fairs, and workshops in remote areas or community centers increases awareness of Career Center services and provides opportunities for individuals to engage with workforce development staff and access resources in their local communities.
5. **Partner Collaboration:** Collaborating with community organizations, libraries, educational institutions, and other stakeholders expands the reach of Career Center services into remote areas. Partnerships enable shared access to facilities, technology, and expertise to better serve individuals in underserved locations.
6. **Flexible Service Delivery:** Offering flexible service delivery options, such as evening or weekend hours, accommodates individuals with scheduling constraints and ensures that Career Center services are accessible to a diverse range of participants.
7. **Access Points:** The CFWDB maintains access points for business and jobseeking clients who cannot conveniently meet at a comprehensive career center. These access points may include community college sites, community libraries, or CBOs who are considered hubs within a community.

By employing these strategies, the Cape Fear WDB ensures that individuals across the region, including those in remote areas, have equitable access to the comprehensive services provided through the NCWorks Career Center delivery system. This commitment to accessibility promotes inclusivity and supports the workforce development needs of the entire community.

15. Describe how NCWorks Career Centers are using virtual technology to provide integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information systems for programs carried out under WIOA including

youth programs, and programs carried out by NCWorks Career Center partners. What software are NCWorks Career Centers using? [WIOA Section 108 (b)(21)]

NCWorks Career Centers are leveraging virtual technology to provide integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information systems for programs carried out under WIOA, including youth programs, and programs carried out by NCWorks Career Center partners. This is in accordance with WIOA Section 108(b)(21), which emphasizes the importance of utilizing technology to streamline service delivery and enhance accessibility.

The software used by NCWorks Career Centers varies based on the specific needs and preferences of each center, as well as any state or regional requirements. However, commonly used software platforms for integrated intake and case management in workforce development settings include:

1. **NCWorks Online:** This is the primary platform used by NCWorks Career Centers to manage client information, track services provided, and facilitate communication between staff members and clients. NCWorks Online allows for the integration of various programs and services, including those funded under WIOA and youth programs.
2. **Case Management Systems:** Many NCWorks Career Centers utilize specialized case management software tailored to the needs of workforce development programs. These systems typically include features for tracking client progress, documenting services rendered, generating reports, and ensuring compliance with program requirements.
3. **Virtual Meeting Platforms:** NCWorks Career Centers utilize virtual meeting platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or Webex to conduct remote intake interviews, case management meetings, and workshops with clients. These platforms enable staff to connect with clients virtually, regardless of their location, and provide real-time support and guidance.
4. **Data Integration Tools:** Some NCWorks Career Centers leverage data integration tools to streamline the exchange of information between different systems and programs. These tools ensure data accuracy, reduce duplication of efforts, and enhance collaboration among partner organizations.

By leveraging these virtual technologies and software platforms, NCWorks Career Centers are able to provide seamless and efficient intake and case management services to clients, while also promoting collaboration and information sharing among partner organizations. This ultimately enhances the effectiveness and accessibility of workforce development programs carried out under WIOA and other initiatives.

16. Describe how entities within the NCWorks Career Center system, including Career Center operators and partners, will comply with Section 188, if applicable, and provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. [WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(C)]

Entities within the NCWorks Career Center system, including Career Center operators and partners, comply with Section 188, if applicable, and provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. This adherence is mandated by WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(C), which emphasizes the importance of ensuring equal access and nondiscrimination for individuals with disabilities. To comply with these requirements, NCWorks Career Centers and their partners implement the following measures:

1. **Physical Accessibility:** Career Center facilities are designed and maintained to be accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes providing wheelchair ramps, accessible parking spaces, elevators, and signage with Braille and large print options. Facilities are regularly inspected to ensure compliance with ADA standards.

2. **Programmatic Accessibility:** Career Center programs and services are designed to be inclusive and accessible to individuals with disabilities. Staff receive training on disability awareness, reasonable accommodations, and effective communication strategies to ensure that all clients receive equitable access to services.
3. **Technology Accessibility:** NCWorks Career Centers utilize technology solutions that comply with accessibility standards, such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). This may include ensuring that websites, online portals, and digital materials are compatible with screen readers, magnification software, and other assistive technologies used by individuals with disabilities.
4. **Training and Awareness:** Staff members and partners receive training on ADA requirements and best practices for serving individuals with disabilities. This training covers topics such as providing reasonable accommodations, communicating effectively with individuals with disabilities, and addressing accessibility barriers in programs and services.
5. **Reasonable Accommodations:** NCWorks Career Centers and their partners make reasonable accommodations to ensure that individuals with disabilities can fully participate in programs and services. This may include providing alternative formats for materials, offering sign language interpreters or assistive listening devices for meetings and workshops, and modifying program requirements as needed.
6. **Continuous Improvement:** Career Center operators and partners regularly evaluate their facilities, programs, and services to identify and address accessibility barriers. Feedback from clients with disabilities is solicited and incorporated into improvement efforts to ensure ongoing compliance with ADA requirements.

By implementing these measures, entities within the NCWorks Career Center system uphold their commitment to providing equal access and nondiscrimination for individuals with disabilities, in alignment with the mandates of WIOA Section 108(b)(6)(C) and other relevant regulations.

## VI. Employer Services

1. Please describe the efforts of the Cape Fear WDB staff, Employer services staff and Career Center staff have made to deliver business services on a regional basis in the following areas:
    - a. Utilizing regional and local economic data to inform priorities [WIOA Section 108 (b)(1)(A)(i)(ii) and (B)].
    - b. Collaborating with employer-facing partners such as Agricultural Services, Foreign Labor and Veteran Services to meet employer needs and jobseeker recruitment efforts.
    - c. Providing local and regional Rapid Response services, including identifying struggling and at-risk businesses and providing services to help avert layoffs. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(8)]
    - d. Coordinating with DWS TAA and Business Services staff to provide Rapid Response assistance and appropriate career and training services to workers for whom a petition has been filed. (20 CFR 618.816)
    - e. Including Historically Underutilized Businesses (OG 20-2021)
- |  |
|--|
| a. CFWDB Staff and NCWorks Career Center Staff utilize LMI to identify growing industries within our region when prioritizing and planning. As a strategic approach to develop Sector Partnerships The Business Engagement Manager provides industry specific regional and local labor market data to Economic Development partners and area employers to aid in informed decision-making using NC LEAD, Bureau of Labor and Statistics, and Lightcast software.   |
| b. Referrals are made, as needed, across NCWorks partner lines within each career center. In Addition, partner agencies participate in planning and implementation of career fairs and targeted offerings for special populations  |
| c. The CFWDB Deputy Director and the NCWorks Career Center Operators coordinate with The Cape Fear WDB Business Engagement Manager and other center partners to identify struggling businesses and provide Rapid Response and/or Layoff Aversion services. These services include providing support services such as job-search assistance, retraining opportunities, and unemployment benefits information to affected or potentially affected individuals. This proactive approach aims to mitigate the impact of layoffs and help workers transition smoothly to new employment opportunities.  |
| d. The CFWDB Deputy Director and the NCWorks Career Center Operators coordinate with DWS TAA (Trade Adjustment Assistance) and Business Services staff to provide Rapid Response assistance ensures seamless support for workers affected by trade-related layoffs. When a petition for Trade Adjustment Assistance is filed, the board collaborate with Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) and Business Services staff to deliver Rapid Response services tailored to the needs of TAA-eligible workers. This may include career counseling, training opportunities, and access to job search assistance programs to help workers re-enter the workforce or pursue alternative career paths. |
| e. The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager and ARPA Business Services Representative connect with HUBs via specialized organizations, such as minority business councils, small business associations, etc. that support the success of HUBs. The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager participates in meetings of HUB- eligible companies and follows-up to identify relevant services in addition to identifying HUB businesses and connecting them to the HUB offices to become certified as a HUB business.   |

2. Please describe employer-focused partnership efforts in the areas of education and training and economic development in the following areas:

- a. Enhancing the use of On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities to support the regional economy and individuals' career advancement.
- b. Coordinating and promoting entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(5)]
- c. Participating in regional economic strategic planning and economic development recruitment, retention and expansions with employers, education partners and economic developers. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(4)(A)(iii)].

a. Enhancing the use of On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities is essential for supporting the regional economy and individuals' career advancement. By promoting these work-based learning initiatives, the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board facilitates the acquisition of new skills and competencies by job seekers and incumbent workers. OJT programs allow individuals to learn new skills while earning a paycheck, IWT programs enable existing employees to upgrade their skills to meet changing industry demands, and apprenticeships provide structured training and mentorship in high-demand occupations. These initiatives not only benefit individuals by enhancing their employability and career prospects but also strengthen the regional economy by ensuring a skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers.

b. The CFWDB has identified coordination and promotion of services to small and micro-businesses as crucial for fostering entrepreneurship and small business development in our region. The CFWDB sought and obtained additional grant funding to provide access to entrepreneurial skills training programs, workshops, and resources for these populations which can empower individuals to start and grow their own businesses. Additionally, identifying resources which support services such as access to capital, technical assistance, and mentorship assists small business owners succeed and contribute to job creation and economic growth. By promoting entrepreneurial skills, the CFWDB seeks to diversify the economy, create new opportunities for individuals, and support the growth of small businesses.

c. The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager Participates in regional economic strategic planning and economic development activities with employers, education partners, and economic developers. The Board views this strategy as vital for aligning workforce development efforts with broader economic goals. By collaborating with key stakeholders, the board can identify emerging industry trends, workforce needs, and economic development opportunities in the region. This collaboration enables CFWDB to tailor programs and services to meet the current and future needs of employers and industries, ensuring a skilled workforce that drives economic growth and prosperity. Additionally, participating in regional economic strategic planning allows the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board to leverage resources, coordinate efforts, and maximize impact across the region.



## VII. Performance

U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has the following WIOA Performance Indicators:

- Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit
- Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit
- Credential Attainment Rate
- Measurable Skill Gains
- Effectiveness in Serving Employers (system-wide measure, not program specific)

1. Examine the Cape Fear WDB’s current Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth performance on the Federal Primary Indicators of Performance for PY 2022-2023 and prior Program Years. (Reports available via FutureWorks BI.) What are some factors that have impacted performance levels both positively and negatively in the current program year?
  - a. Provide at least two examples of positive factors and two examples of negative factors with an explanation of each. Some examples to consider include:
    - unemployment rate
    - factory closures/openings
    - economic development recruitment
    - retention and expansion efforts
    - regional industry growth priorities
    - weather events and natural disasters that may have impacted the area
    - internal operational factors
  - b. Are there any factors that you anticipate will impact your performance during the upcoming program year(s) either positively or negatively?

### A. Positive Factors

#### 1. Economic Development Recruitment:

- Proactive recruitment efforts by economic development entities have been crucial in attracting new businesses to the area. These initiatives often include tax incentives, support for site development, and tailored workforce training programs that make the region attractive to potential employers. As new companies establish operations, they create jobs and stimulate local economies, contributing to lower unemployment rates and broader economic growth.

#### 2. Regional Industry Growth Priorities:

- The Cape Fear region has identified specific industries for growth such as advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and technology. Focusing on these sectors has helped align educational programs and workforce training with the needs of these high-demand fields. By prioritizing these industries, the region ensures that workforce development efforts support sustainable economic sectors and enhance job creation.

### Negative Factors

#### 1. Factory Closures:

Factory closures, like those experienced in Columbus County, can have a devastating impact on local economies, especially in communities where a single employer provides a significant portion of the jobs. These closures often lead to high unemployment rates, reduced consumer spending, and economic downturns. The ripple effects can be felt across local businesses and services, increasing the need for retraining and workforce redeployment initiatives.

2. Weather Events and Natural Disasters:

The Cape Fear region is susceptible to hurricanes and other severe weather events which can disrupt local economies. Natural disasters can cause significant damage to infrastructure and businesses, leading to temporary or permanent job losses and economic instability. The aftermath of such events often requires substantial investment in rebuilding and can strain local resources, diverting attention from long-term economic development and workforce training.

- B. A prolonged economic downturn can lead to decreased consumer spending and business investment, resulting in slower economic growth or contraction. This environment may increase unemployment rates as companies lay off workers or freeze hiring. For workforce development, this means a higher demand for retraining and employment services, potentially straining our resources and capacities.

In addition, inflation impacts the cost of living, reducing the real income of consumers and increasing operational costs for businesses, including training and development programs. Higher costs may lead to reduced training budgets and fewer opportunities for upskilling, affecting our ability to provide high-quality training programs. The childcare shortage continues to disrupt education attainment and prolong and job placement until childcare becomes available.

2. What strategies and methods are in place to meet or exceed performance goals? Include information about tracking performance, ensuring accountability of positive performance outcomes, and training. Consider including the following information:

- Who is responsible for tracking performance?
- Which reporting resources are used?
- Is FutureWorks BI employed? If so, how, and how often?
- How often is training provided to staff?

The Cape Fear WDB Superuser provides service providers with monthly NCWorks Online Reports and Future Works Predictive Reports. Performance data is discussed at weekly staff meetings utilizing CFWDB dashboards as a basis for data. CFWDB staff meet with program managers monthly to review specific performance data and progress toward goals utilizing these dashboards and reports. Strategies for performance improvement are discussed and implemented as needed at these meetings, which may include training and technical assistance. Ultimate responsibility for performance management and positive performance outcomes lies with the service provider for their specific contracted area.

CFWDB staff provides monthly desk reviews of case files based on monthly invoices for cost reimbursement and NCWO reports. If errors are detected, they are documented and shared with service providers to be corrected by case management staff. Program staff are encouraged to manage their cases and track performance independently and compare their results to those of CFWDB staff to ensure effectiveness and accountability for each client case file.

Quarterly performance data is provided to Cape Fear WDB committees and full board meetings for discussion. Monitoring reports conducted by board staff are shared in committee meetings for contract

performance. All reports and dashboards are used to hold staff accountable for tracking and maintaining quality controls to produce good outcomes for performance from the Board to the subrecipient. Annual performance training is conducted for all staff, with routine technical assistance opportunities offered.

3. Discuss what corrective action steps are in place if, at any point during the program year, the Cape Fear WDB is not on track to meet or exceed yearly performance indicator goals.

This question is intended to be hypothetical and is seeking what plan the Cape Fear WDB has in place to address failing performance, if it were to occur. Answers should address how the Cape Fear WDB:

- monitors performance,
- communicates with staff,
- makes changes to Cape Fear WDB performance and training strategies based on reporting data,
- and utilizes follow-up accountability measures.

The Cape Fear WDB would recognize this to be a data management error and will retrain program staff to enter data and support documentation as part of their routine duties. If it is determined that poor data management has been a result of time constraints, Cape Fear WDB staff would work with the One Stop Operator/ WIOA Title I staff on process improvements for their NCWorks Career Center.

The following are utilized within our board region:

Board staff uses NCWorks Online Reports and Futureworks Predictive reports to conduct a random sampling of file audits in NCWorks. Quarterly internal monitoring is conducted and WIOA staff is sent a copy of the internal monitoring report to make the necessary and appropriate corrections. Corrections of file audits are made in a timely manner and updates are provided to the CFWDB Super User on any corrections or findings that need to be addressed.

Staff are held accountable for making the necessary corrections within the appropriate amount of time. Planning is provided by contractor and board staff are made available via in person meetings, webinar, and recorded session for reference.

4. How is performance information shared throughout the hierarchy of staff? Please detail how the Cape Fear WDB addresses performance data in its relationship with its service provider(s) and how case managers are using performance data to drive Cape Fear WDB performance.

Consider including the following information:

- a. How is performance tracked in your organization?
- b. How is performance information communicated with staff?
- c. How are staff/contractors held accountable?
- d. How is training provided in your organization?

CFWDB staff provide technical assistance training to NCWorks staff to ensure the importance of meeting all performance goals and outcomes. The CFWDB staff recognize this may be a data management error and retrain program staff to enter data and supportive documentation as part of their routine duties. Board staff work with WIOA Title I staff to ensure that the appropriate information is being entered into the NCWorks system. Program managers and supervisors are responsible for checking files that are in our performance pool to capture the necessary performance outcome data to meet our goals. Also, One-Stop Operators are involved in the process to ensure that center staff are working together to find ways to help meet the local area's performance goals. If it is determined that poor data management has been a result of time constraints, Cape Fear WDB staff would work with the One Stop Operator on process improvements for their NCWorks Career Center.

Cape Fear WDB members are given performance dashboard reports at bimonthly Cape Fear WDB meetings. Time is allotted during the Cape Fear WDB meeting for program and One Stop Operator staff to explain and address any issues impacting positive and/or negative performance.

Performance information is also shared at Cape Fear WDB team meetings, One Stop Operator meetings, youth meetings, and functional team meetings. Data is disseminated to case managers/career advisors via their immediate supervisor via email. The Super User sends performance reports and information to all service providers on a monthly basis. Performance management, data management, and fiscal management are three of the four pillars of program oversight that are routinely discussed at all levels.

5. Discuss the factors that contribute to the Cape Fear WDB's credential attainment indicator.
  - a. What are the challenges that the Cape Fear WDB faces in achieving its credential attainment goal?
  - b. What are some of the strategies that contribute to the Cape Fear WDB's success in achieving its credential attainment goal?
  - c. How do case managers make use of NCcareers.org and the NC Workforce Credentials list?

Clic The credential attainment indicator is a critical metric for the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB), reflecting its effectiveness in equipping individuals with qualifications that are recognized and valued by employers in the region. The list below outlines contributing factors, challenges, and strategies related to this indicator:

- a. Challenges in Achieving the Credential Attainment Goal:
  1. Economic and Social Barriers: Participants in workforce programs often face various barriers including financial instability, lack of transportation, or family responsibilities, which can impact their ability to complete training programs.
  2. Alignment with Industry Needs: Ensuring that the training programs and credentials offered are in line with current and emerging industry demands is a continuous challenge. Misalignment can lead to credentials that are less valued by employers, affecting job placement rates.
  3. Participant Engagement and Retention: Maintaining participant engagement and retention in training programs is crucial. Challenges such as lack of motivation, inadequate support systems, or perceived irrelevance of the training can lead to high dropout rates.
- b. Strategies for Success in Credential Attainment:
  1. Increased Partnerships with Employers and Educators: Strong collaboration with local employers and educational institutions ensures that the training programs are tailored to meet the skills needs of the market, enhancing the relevance and attractiveness of the credentials.
  2. Focused Support Services: Offering support services such as career coaching, job placement assistance, transportation subsidies, and childcare to help mitigate barriers to completion, boosting credential attainment rates.
  3. Data-Driven Program Development: Utilizing labor market data to continually adjust and develop programs that focus on high-demand skills and sectors ensures that credentials remain relevant and aligned with employer needs.
- c. Utilization of NCcareers.org and NC Workforce Credentials List by Career Advisors:
  - NCcareers.org: Career Advisors use this tool to help customers understand career pathways, explore occupations, and identify the educational requirements and potential earnings associated with different roles. This resource is crucial for guiding participants toward choosing the most beneficial credentials for their career goals.
  - NC Workforce Credentials List: Career Advisors help participants select credentials from this list to enhance their employability in desired sectors. The list helps in aligning training offerings with recognized and high-value

credentials.

By addressing these challenges with effective strategies and utilizing available resources like NCcareers.org and the NC Workforce Credentials List, the Cape Fear WDB will improve its performance on the credential attainment indicator, ultimately leading to better employment outcomes for participants and meeting regional workforce needs. [k here to enter text.](#)

**6. When selecting an eligible training provider from the State Eligible Training Provider List to certify for local use, what is the review process the Cape Fear WDB uses to make this decision? How does the Cape Fear WDB ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training providers? In other words, how are customers advised that they have options in choosing their provider? [WIOA Section 108(b)(19)]**

As of July 1, 2022, the state approves all training providers and programs. WDB Staff certifies the training providers and programs from the state's Eligible Training Provider List for the Cape Fear Region. Staff review training programs to determine if they meet the criteria of the Eligible Training Provider Policy, such as projected business needs and occupations that are high in-demand for the CFWDB region. The CFWDB Superuser reviews labor market, including jobs that are available to customers now and in the future. Programs that lead to a credential are supported. Customers are informed of the ETPL after they have been determined eligible for WIOA Title I services, and assessments have determined the need for training. Career Advisors discuss the ETPL with customers that are interested in going to school as a part of their Individual Employment (IEP).

**7. Indicate whether the Cape Fear WDB has additional requirements for training providers above and beyond those requirements stated in the State ETPL policy. Does the Cape Fear WDB make use of USDOL's trainingproviderresults.gov website in its evaluation of which training providers to certify for Cape Fear use? If so, how?**

As of July 1, 2022, the state approves all training providers and programs. WDB Staff certifies the training providers and programs from the state's Eligible Training Provider List for the Cape Fear Region. Staff review training programs to determine if they meet the criteria of the Eligible Training Provider Policy, such as projected business needs and occupations that are high in-demand for the CFWDB region. The CFWDB Superuser reviews labor market, including jobs that are available to customers now and in the future. Programs that lead to a credential are supported.

- **Name Document:** Cape Fear WDB ETPL Policy.

## VIII. Equal Opportunity

1. Describe processes to ensure individuals are not discriminated against based on age, disability, sex, race, color, or national origin. [WIOA Section 188]

The CFWDB has developed policies and procedures to ensure that individuals are not discriminated against. Specific processes are outlined in the local area policy P-WDB-001-2018 (Nondiscrimination Policy and Procedures). The CFWDB assures that the language contained in 29 CFR Part 38.25 is included in each application for financial assistance through contractual obligations with this Local Area. WIOA contractors are also required to include the required language in all applications as well.

CFWDB specific Assurances include:

- Veterans will be afforded employment and training activities;
- Compliance with the confidentiality requirements of 29 CFR 38.45;
- That no WIOA funds will be used to assist, promote, or deter union organizing;
- Compliance with all of the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA Section 188, including the assurance that a Nondiscrimination has been developed and implemented under 29 CFR 38.54;
- Proper data collection and maintenance necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA section 188. The CFWDB will ensure that contractors are complying and will comply with the requirements regarding the review of job trainings, contracts, and policies and procedures by:
  - Ensuring each training provider seeking eligibility includes the equal opportunity assurance in its application for financial assistance under Title I of WIOA;
  - By incorporating the EO assurance into each cooperative agreement, contract, or other arrangement whereby federal financial assistance under Title I of WIOA is made available;
  - Assuring each approved training provider, contractor, and NCWorks Career Centers and affiliated sites are able to provide programmatic and architectural accessibility as required;
  - Ensuring the procedures of job trainings, contract assurances and other similar agreements entered into by contractors are both nondiscriminatory and contain required language regarding nondiscrimination and equal opportunity.
- Reviewing/revising CFWDB WIOA Title I program policies to ensure they are nondiscriminatory in intent or effect.

As part of the monitoring process, samples of job trainings, contracts, and other agreements are reviewed to ensure nondiscrimination and contain the required language regarding nondiscrimination and equal opportunity.

2. Attach the Cape Fear WDB's current Equal Opportunity (EO) Complaint Grievance Procedure to address EO requirements [29 CFR 38.35].

- Name document: *Cape Fear WDB EO Complaint Grievance Procedure*.

3. Describe the methods used to ensure local Equal Opportunity procedures are updated.

The CFWDB's Equal Opportunity Officer is responsible for directing and implementing the Equal Opportunity (EO) Program. The EO Officer, in collaboration with the Workforce Development Director, develops reporting and monitoring procedures to ensure compliance with the Equal Opportunity requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as administered by the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board. The Equal Opportunity Officer is responsible for coordinating a WIOA recipient's obligations and has developed the area's Nondiscrimination. The Nondiscrimination follows eight elements as outlined in 29 CFR 38.



## IX. Adult and Dislocated Worker Services

1. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of existing Adult and Dislocated Worker education and training services.
  - a. Include how services are provided and the capacity to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers.
  - b. Describe plans to address any weaknesses identified. [WIOA Section 108(b)(1)(D)]

a.

1. **Targeted Support:** Adult and Dislocated Worker programs provide targeted support to individuals who may face barriers to employment. This includes adults seeking to improve their skills for better job opportunities and individuals who have lost their jobs due to layoffs, plant closures, or other economic factors.
2. **Customized Services:** These programs offer customized services tailored to the specific needs of participants. This may include skills assessment, career counseling, job search assistance, training opportunities, and support services like transportation and childcare to help individuals overcome obstacles to employment.
3. **Employer Engagement:** Adult and Dislocated Worker programs actively engage with employers to understand their hiring needs and connect participants with job opportunities. By fostering partnerships with local businesses, these programs can ensure that training programs align with industry demands, increasing participants' chances of securing meaningful employment.
4. **Reemployment Assistance:** For dislocated workers, these programs offer reemployment assistance to help individuals transition back into the workforce quickly and efficiently. This may include rapid response services, job placement assistance, and access to unemployment benefits to support individuals during their job search.
5. **Skill Development:** Adult and Dislocated Worker programs focus on skill development to enhance participants' employability and competitiveness in the labor market. This includes providing access to training programs, certifications, and other educational opportunities that align with high-demand industries and occupations.
6. **Supportive Services:** In addition to skill development, these programs offer supportive services to address participants' holistic needs. This may include assistance with housing, healthcare, financial literacy, and other resources to stabilize individuals and families while they pursue their career goals.

Overall, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs play a crucial role in supporting individuals' career advancement and economic stability by providing targeted services, fostering employer partnerships, and promoting skill development in alignment with current labor market demand

b.

1. **Limited Accessibility:** One weakness of Adult and Dislocated Worker programs is that they may not be easily accessible to all individuals who could benefit from their services. Barriers such as eligibility criteria, lack of awareness, language barriers, and geographic limitations may prevent some individuals from accessing the support they need.
2. **Insufficient Funding:** Another weakness is the potential for insufficient funding to adequately meet the demand for services. Limited resources can result in program cutbacks, reduced staff capacity, and a decrease in the availability of training opportunities and supportive services, hindering the programs' effectiveness in assisting participants.
3. **Lack of Coordination:** Adult and Dislocated Worker programs may operate in silos, leading to a lack of coordination among service providers. This fragmentation can result in duplication of efforts, gaps



in service delivery, and challenges in effectively addressing the diverse needs of participants, particularly those with multiple barriers to employment.

4. **Outdated Training Programs:** Programs may struggle to keep pace with rapidly evolving labor market needs, resulting in the provision of outdated or irrelevant training programs. Without regular updates and alignment with current industry trends, participants may not acquire the skills necessary to secure employment in high-demand fields.
5. **Limited Employer Engagement:** Some Adult and Dislocated Worker programs may face challenges in effectively engaging employers. This could stem from a lack of understanding of employer needs, limited employer outreach efforts, or inadequate partnerships with local businesses. As a result, participants may not have access to job opportunities aligned with their skills and interests.
6. **Inadequate Support Services:** While supportive services are essential for addressing participants' holistic needs, programs may face limitations in providing comprehensive support. Factors such as limited funding, restricted eligibility criteria, and insufficient community resources may result in gaps in access to services such as transportation, childcare, and healthcare, which are crucial for participants' success in the program.

Addressing these weaknesses requires strategic reforms, such as improving accessibility, increasing funding, enhancing coordination among service providers, updating training programs, strengthening employer engagement efforts, and expanding access to supportive services. By addressing these challenges, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs can better serve individuals seeking to improve their skills and regain employment opportunities.

## 2. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Cape Fear. [WIOA Section 108(b)(7)]

In the Cape Fear region, adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities encompass a variety of programs and services designed to support individuals in obtaining and maintaining gainful employment. These activities are typically facilitated by the local workforce development board, community colleges, vocational training centers, and other partner organizations. Here's a description and assessment of the type and availability of these activities:

### 1. **Career Counseling and Assessment:**

- **Description:** Career counseling and assessment services help individuals identify their skills, interests, and career goals. This includes aptitude testing, interest inventories, and one-on-one consultations with career advisors.
- **Assessment:** These services are often readily available through the local American Job Center and community colleges, providing participants with valuable guidance in navigating their career paths.

### 2. **Training and Education Programs:**

- **Description:** Training and education programs offer participants opportunities to acquire new skills and credentials that are in demand by employers. These programs may include vocational training, certificate programs, apprenticeships, and adult education classes.
- **Assessment:** Availability varies depending on funding, partnerships, and demand. While some programs may have waiting lists or limited capacity, efforts are made to align training programs with local labor market needs to enhance participants' employability.

### 3. **Job Search Assistance and Placement Services:**

- Description: Job search assistance and placement services help individuals with resume writing, interview preparation, job search strategies, and connecting with potential employers. These services may also include job fairs, networking events, and recruitment sessions.
- Assessment: These services are typically widely available through the American Job Center and community-based organizations, offering personalized support to help participants secure employment opportunities suited to their skills and preferences.

**4. Supportive Services:**

- Description: Supportive services address barriers to employment by providing assistance with transportation, childcare, work attire, tools, and other essential needs. These services aim to remove obstacles that may prevent individuals from participating in training or securing employment.
- Assessment: Availability of supportive services may vary depending on funding sources and eligibility criteria. Efforts are made to maximize resources and leverage partnerships to meet the diverse needs of participants.

**5. On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Work Experience Programs:**

- Description: OJT and work experience programs provide participants with opportunities to gain practical skills and experience in real-world work environments. Employers receive wage subsidies or incentives to hire and train individuals, allowing participants to earn while they learn.
- Assessment: Availability of OJT and work experience programs depends on employer participation and funding availability. These programs offer valuable pathways for individuals to gain hands-on experience and transition into sustainable employment.

**6. Retention and Advancement Support:**

- Description: Retention and advancement support services help individuals maintain employment and progress in their careers. This may include ongoing coaching, skills upgrading, mentorship programs, and access to further training opportunities.
- Assessment: While initial focus is often on securing employment, efforts are made to provide ongoing support to help individuals thrive in the workplace and pursue advancement opportunities. Availability of these services may depend on program funding and participant needs.

Overall, the Cape Fear region offers a range of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities aimed at enhancing participants' skills, employability, and economic self-sufficiency. While availability may vary based on factors such as funding, partnerships, and demand, efforts are made to provide comprehensive support services tailored to the needs of individuals seeking to enter or re-enter the workforce. Ongoing assessment and collaboration among stakeholders are key to ensuring that programs remain responsive to evolving labor market demands and participant needs.

3. Provide the date and process for the competitive procurement of the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs that ensures an arm's-length relationship between the Cape Fear WDB and service delivery. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to three years and the current year status of the contract (e.g., two of three years). Identify any service provider contract extensions. [WIOA Section 108(b)(16), CPS 04-2022]

The competitive procurement process for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs in the Cape Fear region typically occurs on a periodic basis to ensure an arm's-length relationship between the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) and service delivery providers.

Dates:

Adult and Dislocated Worker RFP was released in January 2023. Providers were approved in April 2023 for one year.

Process:

1. **Request for Proposals (RFP):** The Cape Fear WDB issues an RFP, soliciting proposals from qualified service providers to deliver Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. The RFP outlines the scope of services, program requirements, evaluation criteria, and submission deadlines.
2. **Proposal Evaluation:** A selection committee reviews and evaluates the proposals received based on predetermined criteria such as experience, qualifications, approach to service delivery, and cost-effectiveness. The committee ensures fairness and transparency throughout the evaluation process.
3. **Contract Award:** Following the evaluation process, contracts are awarded to selected service providers whose proposals best meet the needs of the Cape Fear WDB and align with program objectives. Contracts typically have an expected length of one to three years.
4. **Contract Execution:** Upon contract award, the Cape Fear WDB and service providers execute contracts outlining the terms, conditions, and expectations for service delivery. This includes performance metrics, reporting requirements, and financial arrangements.
5. **Service Delivery:** Service providers deliver Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs in accordance with the terms of the contract, providing participants with access to training, education, job placement assistance, and supportive services.
6. **Contract Monitoring and Evaluation:** The Cape Fear WDB monitors contract performance to ensure compliance with contractual obligations and program requirements. Regular evaluations assess the effectiveness of service delivery and identify areas for improvement.

CFWDB (under CFCOG) limits contracts to one year, with an option to extend up to two additional years.

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*Note: While Final Regulations Section 679.410 (b) and (c) provide exceptions to the competitive procurement process, Cape Fear WDBs must have an arm's-length relationship to the delivery of services.*

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4. Attach the Cape Fear WDB's Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider list effective July 1, 2024 using the PY 2024 Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List provided.

- Name document: *Cape Fear WDB PY 2024 Adult/Dislocated Worker Service Provider List.*

5. Describe the Cape Fear WDB's vision for serving the WIOA eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers to include (a) high level goals, (b) outreach strategies, (c) services delivery, and (d) expected outcomes.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) has a comprehensive vision for serving WIOA-eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers, encompassing high-level goals, outreach strategies, service delivery methods, and expected outcomes:

a. **High-Level Goals:**

- **Employment Advancement:** The CFWDB facilitates the advancement of WIOA-eligible adults and dislocated workers into gainful employment by providing them with access to efficient training and education, leading to relevant career development opportunities.
- **Skill Development:** The CFWDB aligns skills and competencies with the demands of the labor market to increase jobseeker competitiveness in securing quality employment.
- **Economic Stability:** The CFWDB promotes economic stability for individuals and families by assisting participants in obtaining sustainable employment that offers living wages, benefits, and opportunities for career growth.
- **Workforce Alignment:** CFWDB aligns workforce development efforts with the needs of employers, ensuring that training programs and services are responsive to industry demands and facilitate a skilled workforce pipeline.
- **Staff Expertise:** CFWDB provides professional development opportunities for NCWorks staff to better understand the needs of regional business, leading to expert career guidance that enhances opportunities for adult and dislocated worker clients, as well as promotion of the NCWorks brand.

b. **Outreach Strategies:**

- **Targeted Communication:** The CFWDB employs targeted communication strategies to reach WIOA-eligible individuals, utilizing multiple channels such as social media, community events, local media outlets, and partnerships with community organizations and service providers.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Outreach efforts include awareness campaigns to inform eligible individuals about available services, eligibility criteria, and the benefits of participating in workforce development programs.
- **Partnership Engagement:** The CFWDB collaborates with local agencies, educational institutions, employers, and other stakeholders to expand outreach efforts and leverage existing networks for reaching WIOA-eligible populations.

c. **Service Delivery:**

- **Individualized Career Services:** The CFWDB provides individualized career services tailored to the unique needs and circumstances of each participant. This may include skills assessments, career counseling, job search assistance, and referrals to training programs.
- **Training and Education:** Participants have access to a range of training and education opportunities, including vocational training, apprenticeships, adult education classes, and on-the-job training programs.
- **Supportive Services:** The CFWDB offers supportive services such as transportation assistance, childcare subsidies, and access to healthcare resources to address barriers to employment and ensure participants' success in training and employment.
- **Job Placement Assistance:** Assistance with job placement and job retention is provided to help participants secure and maintain employment in line with their career goals and aspirations.

d. **Expected Outcomes:**

- **Employment Placement:** The primary outcome expected is increased employment placement rates among WIOA-eligible adults and dislocated workers, leading to greater economic self-sufficiency and stability.
- **Skill Attainment:** Participants are expected to attain new skills and credentials that are recognized and valued by employers, enhancing their employability and earning potential.
- **Retention and Advancement:** Successful participants are anticipated to retain their employment and have opportunities for career advancement, contributing to their long-term success in the workforce.
- **Employer Satisfaction:** The WDB aims to foster strong partnerships with employers and achieve high levels of satisfaction among employers who hire participants, reinforcing the value of workforce development programs in meeting their workforce needs.

Overall, the Cape Fear WDB's vision for serving WIOA-eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers is centered on empowering individuals through comprehensive support services, skill development opportunities, and strategic partnerships to achieve sustainable employment and economic well-being.

6. Describe the Cape Fear WDB's method for ensuring that a sufficient number of adults receiving individualized career and training services in the Cape Fear are from one of the following priority of services categories: public assistance, low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. [134(c)(3)(E), 3(24)]

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) employs several methods to ensure that a significant portion of adults receiving individualized career and training services in the Cape Fear area come from priority of services categories, including public assistance recipients, low-income individuals, and those who are basic skills deficient. These methods typically include:

1. **Outreach and Awareness Campaigns:** The CFWDB conducts targeted outreach campaigns to raise awareness among individuals in priority categories about the availability of career and training services. This outreach may involve collaborating with social service agencies, community organizations, and local government entities to reach individuals who are eligible for these services.
2. **Partnerships with Service Providers:** The CFWDB establishes partnerships with service providers that work directly with priority populations, such as public assistance agencies, community colleges, adult education centers, and nonprofit organizations. These partnerships facilitate referrals and streamline the process for individuals in priority categories to access career and training services.
3. **Targeted Recruitment Efforts:** The CFWDB implements targeted recruitment efforts to specifically reach individuals in priority categories. This may involve conducting outreach events in low-income neighborhoods, public housing complexes, or other locations where priority populations are likely to be concentrated.
4. **Needs Assessments and Referrals:** The CFWDB conducts needs assessments to identify individuals who meet the criteria for priority services categories, such as low-income individuals or those with basic skills deficiencies. Once identified, these individuals are referred to appropriate career and training services tailored to their needs.
5. **Specialized Training Programs:** The CFWDB develops and coordinates specialized training programs designed to address the unique needs of priority populations. These programs may include adult education classes, literacy and numeracy training, job readiness workshops, and other initiatives aimed at improving the employability of individuals in priority categories.
6. **Data Tracking and Reporting:** The CFWDB implements robust data tracking and reporting systems to monitor the demographic composition of individuals accessing career and training services. By analyzing demographic data, the CFWDB can assess whether a sufficient number of individuals from priority categories are being served and make adjustments to outreach and service delivery strategies as needed.

Overall, the Cape Fear WDB employs a multifaceted approach to ensure that a sufficient number of adults receiving individualized career and training services in the area come from priority categories. By prioritizing outreach, partnerships, targeted recruitment, specialized programs, and data-driven decision-making, the CFWDB aims to effectively serve individuals who may face barriers to employment and skill development.

7. Describe follow-up services provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

Follow-up services provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers are crucial for ensuring their continued success and integration into the workforce. These services typically encompass a range of supports aimed at promoting job retention, career advancement, and long-term economic stability. Here's a description of common follow-up services:

1. **Employment Retention Assistance:** Service providers offer ongoing support to help individuals maintain their employment. This may include check-ins, counseling, and problem-solving assistance to address any challenges or barriers that arise in the workplace.
2. **Career Advancement Guidance:** Individuals are provided with guidance and resources to advance in their careers. This may involve identifying opportunities for promotion, skill development, further education, or career pathway planning to achieve long-term career goals.
3. **Skills Upgrading and Training:** Service providers may offer opportunities for individuals to upgrade their skills or pursue additional training to stay competitive in the labor market. This could involve access to workshops, certifications, or specialized training programs tailored to industry needs.
4. **Job Search Assistance:** For individuals seeking new employment opportunities, follow-up services may include job search assistance, resume updating, interview preparation, and networking support to facilitate successful job transitions.
5. **Supportive Services:** Continued access to supportive services such as transportation assistance, childcare subsidies, and healthcare resources is essential for maintaining employment stability. Service providers may help individuals navigate available resources and address any ongoing needs.
6. **Financial Counseling and Budgeting:** Assistance with financial planning and budgeting can help individuals manage their income effectively, build financial stability, and plan for future career goals.
7. **Referral to Community Resources:** Service providers may connect individuals with community resources and support networks to address broader needs such as housing assistance, legal aid, mental health services, or substance abuse treatment.
8. **Follow-up Assessments and Monitoring:** Regular follow-up assessments and monitoring help service providers track individuals' progress, identify any emerging needs or challenges, and adjust support strategies as necessary to ensure continued success.

*Per Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 19-16 and Section 134(C)(2)(A), funds described shall be used to provide career services, which shall be available to individuals who are adults or dislocated workers through the one-stop delivery system and shall, at a minimum, include - (xiii) follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce investment activities authorized under this subtitle who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.*

8. Please describe the process for monitoring the service provider(s) in the Cape Fear WDB. Include details such as how it is conducted, who is involved, and how often.

The process for monitoring service providers in the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) involves systematic assessments to ensure that contracted programs and services meet established standards and objectives. Here's an overview of the monitoring process:

1. **Establishment of Monitoring Criteria:** The Cape Fear WDB establishes clear criteria and performance metrics that service providers are expected to meet. These criteria may include program

outcomes, participant satisfaction, compliance with contractual obligations, and adherence to relevant regulations and policies.

2. **Selection of Monitoring Team:** A monitoring team is assembled, typically comprising staff members from the Cape Fear WDB, including program managers, Deputy Directors, and other relevant stakeholders. The team may also include external experts or consultants with expertise in program evaluation or workforce development.
3. **Development of Monitoring Tools:** The monitoring team develops standardized monitoring tools and checklists to guide the assessment process. These tools are designed to systematically evaluate key aspects of service delivery, such as program effectiveness, participant outcomes, financial management, and compliance with regulatory requirements.
4. **Onsite Visits and Reviews:** Periodic onsite visits are conducted to review service provider operations and observe program delivery firsthand. During these visits, the monitoring team interviews staff, interacts with participants, reviews program documentation, and assesses program facilities to ensure they meet required standards.
5. **Data Review and Analysis:** The monitoring team collects and analyzes relevant data, including participant demographics, program enrollment, performance outcomes, and financial records. This data-driven approach helps identify trends, strengths, and areas for improvement in service delivery.
6. **Documentation Review:** The monitoring team reviews documentation provided by the service provider, such as program reports, participant files, financial records, and compliance documentation. This helps ensure that the service provider is maintaining accurate records and fulfilling reporting requirements.
7. **Stakeholder Feedback:** Feedback from stakeholders, including program participants, employers, and community partners, is solicited and incorporated into the monitoring process. This feedback provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of service delivery and areas for enhancement.
8. **Reporting and Recommendations:** Following the monitoring visit, the monitoring team prepares a comprehensive report summarizing their findings, observations, and recommendations. This report is shared with the service provider and relevant stakeholders, and any corrective actions or improvement plans are discussed and agreed upon.
9. **Follow-Up and Continuous Improvement:** The monitoring process is iterative, with ongoing follow-up and continuous improvement efforts. Service providers are supported in implementing recommended changes, and additional monitoring visits may be scheduled to track progress and ensure compliance over time.

The frequency of monitoring visits may vary depending on factors such as program size, complexity, and risk level. Typically, service providers are monitored on a regular basis, with visits occurring annually or semi-annually, supplemented by ongoing data analysis and performance reviews.



## X. Youth Services

*USDOL provides funds to states who in turn provide local workforce areas resources to deliver a comprehensive array of youth services that focus on assisting out-of-school youth and in-school youth with one or more barriers to employment, prepare for post-secondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or skills training credentials, and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities. USDOL and North Carolina's priorities are:*

- *Out-of-School Youth (OSY) – A minimum of 75% of the Youth funds allocated to Cape Fear WDBs, except for the Cape Fear WDB expenditures for administration, must be used to provide services to OSY;*
- *Work Experience – Not less than 20% of Youth funds allocated to the Cape Fear WDB, except for the Cape Fear WDB expenditures for administration, must be used to provide paid and unpaid work experiences; and a*
- *Focus on Partnering – Co-enrollment encouraged where appropriate with Title II and IV.*

1. Provide a general overview of the local current total population (within five years) of the Title I WIOA eligible youth by Local Workforce Development Board area. Include the following general information:

### **In-School Youth Analysis**

- a. Approximately, what number of the Youth are ages 14-21?
- b. Approximately, what percentage of these youth are low-income (eligible for WIOA In-school program)?
- c. Approximately, what number of these Youth are in the current school dropout statistics?

### **Out-of-School Analysis**

- a. Approximately what number of Youth ages 16-24 of the current total population (within five years) make up the population?
- b. Youth ages 16-24 represent what % of the population?
- c. What are the general educational levels of this age group?
- d. What is the general employment status of this age group?

### **Summary of Title I WIOA Eligible Youth in the Cape Fear Region**

The Cape Fear region faces significant educational and employment challenges among its youth population. WIOA programs are crucial for addressing these issues, with a focus on re-engagement, skill development, and employment opportunities, particularly for Opportunity Youth who have not completed high school and face high unemployment rates.

### **In-School Youth Analysis**

#### **a. Number of Youth Aged 14-21**

- In the Cape Fear region, there are approximately 30,000 youth between the ages of 14-21.

## **b. Percentage of Low-Income Youth**

- Approximately 18% of the youth population are considered low-income and eligible to receive WIOA services.

## **c. Number of Youth in School Dropout Statistics**

- Current statistics for the region indicate that approximately 4.9% of students drop out of school for various reasons.

### **Out-of-School Youth Analysis:**

- **Youth Ages 16-24:**
  - Total population: 57,881
  - Distribution: Brunswick (9,821), Columbus (6,193), New Hanover (36,015), Pender (5,852)
  - Percentage of total population: 11.8%
- **Educational Levels:**
  - 25.2% have not completed high school.
  - 49.5% have completed secondary school.
  - 5.2% have some post-secondary education.
- **Employment Status:**
  - Approximately 71% of youth aged 16-24 are unemployed.

## **Out-of-School Youth Analysis**

### **a. Approximately what number of Youth ages 16-24 of the current total population (within five years) make up the population?**

- The total number of youth aged 16-24 in the Cape Fear region is 57,881. The distribution across the counties is as follows:
  - Brunswick County: 9,821
  - Columbus County: 6,193
  - New Hanover County: 36,015
  - Pender County: 5,852

### **b. Youth ages 16-24 represent what percentage of the population?**

- Youth aged 16-24 make up approximately 11.8% of the total Cape Fear population (57,881 out of 490,238).

### **c. What are the general educational levels of this age group?**

- The educational levels of youth aged 16-24 in the region are varied:
  - 25.2% have not completed high school.
  - 49.5% have completed secondary school.
  - 5.2% have some form of post-secondary education.

**d. What is the general employment status of this age group?**

- Approximately 71% of youth aged 16-24 are unemployed.

*\*NC Division of Labor and Economic Analysis Division (LEAD) is a data resource.*

**2. Based on the analysis in question 1, does the local Workforce Development Board plan to serve In-School Youth?**

The CFWDB serves a limited number of In-School Youth as part of the broader efforts to support workforce development initiatives for youth. The In-School Youth program, which is part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), aims to provide career guidance, work readiness training, and employment opportunities to youth who are currently enrolled in school.

The specific strategies and services offered to In-School Youth may vary depending on the needs of each local community and the resources available. However, common components of In-School Youth programs may include:

1. **Career Exploration and Guidance:** Providing youth with exposure to different career pathways, industries, and occupations through career assessments, job shadowing, and informational interviews.
2. **Work Readiness Training:** Offering workshops and training sessions on essential workplace skills such as communication, teamwork, time management, and professionalism.
3. **Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences:** Facilitating opportunities for youth to gain hands-on work experience through internships, summer jobs, part-time employment, or volunteer positions.
4. **Educational Support:** Providing academic support services such as tutoring, study skills workshops, and assistance with homework or college applications to help youth succeed in school.
5. **Mentoring and Coaching:** Pairing youth with adult mentors or coaches who can provide guidance, support, and encouragement as they navigate their educational and career pathways.
6. **Leadership Development:** Offering leadership training, youth councils, and community service projects to help youth develop leadership skills and become active contributors to their communities.

By engaging and supporting In-School Youth, the CFWDB supports the success of a new generation of workers, strengthening the overall economic vitality of the community.

**3. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce activities in the Cape Fear WDB, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. Include identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities being used and/or planned. [WIOA Section 108 (b)(9)]**

<b>Youth Workforce Activity</b>	<b>Activities For Persons with Disabilities?</b>	<b>Brief Assessment/Model Used</b>	<b>Success Rating</b>
Job Referrals, Job Readiness Preparation & Assistance, and Resume Preparation	Referrals to agencies for further services such as mental health agencies,	CASAS assessment is being used to assess the youth’s basic skills deficiency levels in reading and math. Using	<b>58 enrollments</b> <b>9.81% success rate</b>

	vocational rehabilitation, and services for the blind.	virtual career fairs has been most successfully in exposing youth to new employment opportunities.	
Paid Work Experiences/Internships and OJT opportunities	Place youth on jobs that will employ youth with disabilities and accommodate their needs based on their job skills set.	The Objective Assessment and IEP are used as fluid documents to identify the needs of the youth customers. Working with more private sector employers during the pandemic has been found to be more helpful in getting youth customers placed at worksites that are willing to hire youth once WEX is over through direct placement.	<b>WEX 37 /OJT 0 enrollments WEX - 4.99% success rate OJT- 0% success rate</b>
Occupational Skills Training ETPL	The youth's learning needs are identified prior to them applying for a training institution. Referrals are made to the literacy council and vocational rehabilitation for further services if customer is determined basis skills deficient in the area of reading/math.	The Objective Assessment and IEP are used as fluid documents to identify the needs of the youth customers. Referrals are sent to WIOA program for youth customers in need of services.	<b>40 enrollments 5.47% success rate</b>
Enrolled in Traditional Secondary School	The youth's learning needs are identified by using the CASAS assessment to determine if any other further needs are necessary. Referrals are made to the literacy council and vocational rehabilitation for further services if customer is determined basis skills deficient in the area of reading/math. Also, tutoring services are provided by the WIOA program and student's teacher.	The Objective Assessment and IEP are used as fluid documents to identify the needs of the youth customers. Referrals are sent to WIOA program for youth customers in need of services.	<b>2 enrollments .25% success rate</b>

Alternative Secondary School Services	The youth’s learning needs are identified by using the GED pretest to determine if any other further services are required and can be provided by WIOA.	The Objective Assessment and IEP are used as fluid documents to identify the needs of the youth customers.	2 enrollments .38% success rate
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4. Describe how the Cape Fear WDB’s Young Adult (NextGen) Program design is unique to include:
- a. providing objective assessments;
  - b. supportive services needed; and
  - c. developmental needs of each participant, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(A)]
- a. Cape Fear WDB’s broad young adult (NextGen) program design includes providing youth customers with objective assessments such as CASAS to help them identify their basic skills levels in reading and math. This will help career advisors to understand how to better serve youth in the program and to make the appropriate referrals to the Literacy Councils and Basic Skills labs at the community college for further assistance and services. Other assessments can be utilized from partner agencies to also help identify the needs of the youth. Additionally, the Cape Fear WDB, in partnership with the Eastern Carolina WDB, uses Traitify, a picture-based, two-minute assessment, which provides insight to the participant’s interests and long-term career ideas. This fun assessment provides a basis for useful dialogue between the youth participant and the adult Career Advisor but also has capabilities to assist in identifying training and employment goals.
  - b. The Cape Fear WDB continues to strive for ways to connect youth to the available resources to them within through local community by providing supportive services via vouchers for transportation and childcare assistance on a case by case basis. For the most part an attempt by the customer to secure supportive services through other partner agencies will be made first and documented by the career advisor to show that an effort has been made to secure supportive services from other agencies other than WIOA Title programs. Customers will be provided referrals to seek partner agencies such as Department of Social Services, Child Care Resource and Referral, Smart Start and the Transportation System within each county to apply for the services they need. Once it is determined that the customer is unable to secure supportive services with the partner agency then WIOA Title I program will seek ways to assist the customer with getting their needs meet.
  - c. The Cape Fear WDB makes referrals to partner with agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Mental Health services for individuals that are most need of these services. Career Advisors will be required to establish and maintain a working relationship with these agencies to follow up on the progress of the youth customer. In addition, relationships with the Public School system to serve this population will also be established with the Career and Technical Education departments in the schools to work with customers that have developmental needs and learning disabilities to ensure their success of completing high school and pursuing a career path that is suitable for them. The Cape Fear WDB Youth Program Manager sits on the Advisory Board for Brunswick County Schools CTE Advisory Council, Pender County CTE Steering Committee,

CC4S/Carolina Across 100 Project Steering Committee, and on the myFuture NC Cape Fear Steering Committee.

NCWorks Title I staff rely heavily on the IEP as a living document that addresses the changing needs of the participant. Using eligibility barriers, objective assessment, and ongoing interaction with the participant, the Career Advisor is better equipped to identify appropriate services. Quality career advisement is based on the relationship the participant develops with their Career Advisor. Board staff provide and encourage training for Career Advisors on youth-centered approaches to building a successful plan that includes relevant, effective services that will enable the participant to set benchmarks and attain goals. Career Advisors make available the 14 youth elements to provide linkages to other services through partner agencies so that the participant has an arsenal of tools for success. Career Advisors use labor market information to advise participants on high-growth occupations and career pathways that will allow the participant various points of access to an industry as their skills progress.

5. How does the Cape Fear WDB ensure the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) identifies appropriate services based on the objective assessment and is linked to youth performance indicators, career pathways, and program elements? [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(B)] How does the provider ensure the ISS is unique to the individual?

When determined eligible for services, youth participants start with the objective assessment completion with the Career Advisor in order to find out what services the individual may need in addition to career guidance. The next step is for the participant to complete the ISS/IEP with the career advisor to lay out their career plan to determine what services will be incorporated as objectives to help them reach their eventual career/employment goals. The Cape Fear requires at a minimum for the career advisor to follow up with each youth participant on a monthly basis to get updates on their career/employment progress, along with quarterly ISS/IEP updates as the youth completes their objectives.

6. Describe the Cape Fear WDB's strategy to ensure Youth (NextGen) Program activities lead to a high school diploma or its equivalent or a recognized post-secondary credential and post-secondary education and training opportunities. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(C)]

The Cape Fear WDB will provide the training and funding that is needed for youth and young adults to be able to enter post-secondary education and attain a recognized industry credential for a high growth job that is high demand. The occupational skills training will be offered to those youth and young adults that can best benefit from participating in a training program to gain employment. Customers will be able to enroll in short-term, two-year training programs, and online classes to complete their educational goals. Utilizing the traditional secondary school settings, alternative school settings, and occupational skills training will help the Cape Fear meet its credential rate and measurable skills gain goal.

Through traditional secondary school settings, alternative school settings, and occupational skills training the Cape Fear will provide youth and young adults with the necessary information to make an informed decision about their educational goals. NCWorks Career Center staff will provide customers with the necessary information to allow them the opportunity to explore career paths that will benefit them the most based on their career interest.

Services are made available to youth to provide them with the tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies. In addition, for those

individuals that wish not to remain in a traditional school setting can seek alternative school secondary. Youth customers are referred to community college's Basic Skills Lab for tutoring assistance in all academic areas. The Lab is open to those that wish to attain their high school diploma or equivalency per week to help the customer meet their academic goals. Utilizing the basic skills labs helps to accommodate work and/or family schedules of the youth or young adults attending classes.

7. Describe how follow-up services will be provided for (NextGen) youth. [WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(xiii)]

The provision of follow-up services to youth participants after exiting the WIOA Title I program demonstrates a commitment to their continued success and development. These services are designed to address individual needs and provide ongoing support as youth transition into employment or further education. Here's a breakdown of the types of follow-up services available to youth participants:

1. Referral to Community Resources: Connecting youth with additional support services and resources available in the community, such as housing assistance, healthcare services, or counseling programs.
2. Tracking Progress on the Job: Monitoring the youth's performance and progress in their job placement to ensure successful integration into the workforce.
3. Work Related Peer Support Group: Providing opportunities for youth to engage with peers facing similar challenges in the workplace and offering mutual support and encouragement.
4. Assistance Securing Better Paying Job: Assisting youth in advancing their careers and securing higher-paying employment opportunities through skills development, networking, and job search strategies.
5. Career Development and Further Education Planning: Supporting youth in setting and achieving their career and educational goals through personalized planning and guidance.
6. Assistance with Job/Work Related Problems: Offering guidance and assistance to youth facing challenges or issues in their employment, such as workplace conflicts or job-related stress.
7. Adult Mentoring: Pairing youth with adult mentors who can provide guidance, advice, and support as they navigate their career paths.
8. Provided Support Services: Offering various supportive services to address individual needs, such as transportation assistance, childcare support, or access to work attire.
9. Financial Literacy Education and Follow-up: Providing education and guidance on managing finances, budgeting, and financial planning to promote financial stability and independence.
10. Provide Labor Market and Employment Information During Follow-up: Offering information and updates on labor market trends, job opportunities, and employment prospects to help youth make informed decisions about their careers.

These follow-up services are delivered by subrecipient staff who maintain regular contact with youth participants to assess their progress and address any ongoing needs or challenges. The duration and intensity of services are tailored to each individual's needs, ensuring personalized support and assistance. All follow-up activities and services provided to youth are documented in NCWorks to track progress and outcomes, facilitating ongoing monitoring and evaluation of program effectiveness. Overall, these follow-up services play a vital role in supporting youth participants as they transition into adulthood and pursue their career aspirations.

*Note: All youth participants must receive some form of follow-up for a minimum duration of 12 months.*

8. Where does the Cape Fear WDB plan to serve the young adults (NextGen): NCWorks Career Centers Specialized Centers, Services Provider Offices, or Hybrid situations? Explain if it is both NCWorks Career Centers and Provider Offices or some other option.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) has developed a plan to serve young adults in the NextGen program within the local NCWorks Career Centers across various counties, with the exception of Pender County. In Pender County, the WDB has established access points for youth customers to receive services in designated locations throughout the county, ensuring accessibility for all youth, including those in rural areas or those lacking transportation options.

Youth participating in the NextGen program will have the opportunity to choose a Tier 1 Career Center of their preference for service delivery. This approach ensures flexibility and convenience for youth participants while maintaining a high level of service quality. The Cape Fear WDB Youth Standing Committee continuously identifies access points to better serve rural youth or those facing transportation challenges, demonstrating a commitment to inclusivity and accessibility.

While NCWorks Career Centers serve as the primary access points for NextGen services, the Cape Fear WDB also leverages partnerships with local libraries, community-based organizations, colleges, and other entities to expand access to NCWorks services. For instance, in Columbus County, the NCWorks Career Center is housed on the campus of Southeastern Community College (SCC), which also serves as the WIOA youth service provider. This strategic partnership enhances service delivery and ensures seamless access to workforce development resources for youth in the region.

By establishing multiple access points and fostering collaborations with various community partners, the Cape Fear WDB aims to maximize the reach and impact of the NextGen program, ensuring that all youth have equitable access to the resources and support needed to achieve their career and educational goals.

9. Attach the Cape Fear WDB Youth Service Provider's chart, effective July 1, 2024, using the PY 2024 Youth Service Provider List provided. Complete each column to include specifying where Youth Services are provided.

- Name the document: *PY 2024 Cape Fear WDB Youth Service Provider List.*

10. Provide the date and process for the competitive procurement of the Youth Programs that ensures an arm's-length relationship between the Cape Fear WDB and service delivery. Include the expected length of the contract(s) (one to three years and the current year status of the contract (e.g., two of three years). Identify any service provider contract extensions. [WIOA Section 108(b)(16), CPS 04-2022]

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board adheres to federal and state guidance for the procurement of grant-funded services, ensuring a transparent and competitive process.

Date:

The CFWDB Youth RFP was released in January 2023. Procurement failed for New Hanover and Pender counties. A RFP was released for those counties in March 2023. The award for Brunswick and Columbus counties was approved in April



2023, with contracts taking effect July 2023. For New Hanover and Pender counties, awards were approved in May 2023, with contracts taking effect July 2023.

Process:

1. **Advertisement of Requests for Proposals (RFPs):** The Cape Fear WDB advertises the release of RFPs for grant-funded services through local news media outlets across the four counties in the Cape Fear region. Additionally, RFPs are shared with an established bidders list and bidder lists acquired from other Workforce Development Boards.
2. **Bidders Conference and Letter of Intent to Bid:** Bidding agencies are encouraged to attend a bidders' conference. To participate in the bidding process, agencies must submit a Letter of Intent to Bid, indicating their interest in providing the requested services.
3. **Question and Answer Period:** After the release of RFPs, a period is provided for agencies to submit questions. Cape Fear WDB staff compiled a Q&A document based on the questions received, which is shared with all agencies that submitted a Letter of Intent to Bid.
4. **Proposal Submission and Compliance Check:** Bidding agencies submit their proposals by the specified deadline, as listed in the RFPs and posted on the Cape Fear WDB website. Cape Fear WDB staff review each proposal for general compliance, ensuring all required documentation, forms, and signatures are included.
5. **Evaluation by Review Committees:** Proposals that pass the compliance check are then shared with review committees comprised of Cape Fear WDB members. Each proposal is individually scored by review committee members, and committees meet to discuss recommendations for funding.
6. **Confirmation of Funding Recommendations:** The Finance Committee of the Cape Fear WDB evaluates the recommendations made by the review committees to confirm the allocation of funds. This process ensures accountability and financial stewardship.
7. **Board Vote and Contract Award:** The Cape Fear WDB conducts a board vote to approve the procurement of Youth program services. Contracts for Youth program services are typically awarded for one year, with the possibility of an extension for the next program year.

*USDOL granted North Carolina a waiver for Program Years 2022 and 2023, which reduced the minimum Title I Youth expenditure rate requirement for OSY from 75% to 50% and allowed the maximum expenditure rate for in-school youth (ISY) to be increased from 25% to up to 50%. NC is requesting the same waiver for Program Year 2024.*

11. Provide the Cape Fear WDB's approach to meeting the required 75% minimum (NextGen) youth expenditures on out-of-school youth and include special outreach efforts and highlight planned program design.
  - a) State how the WDB will achieve the 75% OSY expenditure rate and describe the steps that will be taken to comply with the WDB's programmatic goals and outcomes.
  - b) Describe why there is a need to serve additional ISY in the Cape Fear region and state how the WDB will achieve the 25% ISY expenditure rate.
  - c) Describe how the Cape Fear region will be able to meet the demand for youth services by using the waiver.

a) To achieve the 75% out-of-school youth (OSY) expenditure rate, the Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Cape Fear will implement several strategic steps:

1. Targeted Outreach: The WDB will enhance outreach efforts to identify and engage eligible out-of-school youth participants. This may include collaborating with local schools, community organizations, and social service agencies to reach OSY who are not currently enrolled in educational programs.
2. Tailored Services: The WDB will develop and implement programs and services specifically designed to meet the needs of out-of-school youth. These may include alternative education programs, job readiness training, apprenticeships, and supportive services such as transportation assistance and childcare.
3. Partnerships with Community Organizations: Collaborating with community-based organizations that specialize in serving OSY populations will expand access to resources and support services. These partnerships can help bridge gaps in services and provide wraparound support for OSY participants.
4. Data Analysis and Monitoring: The WDB will regularly analyze data related to youth participation and expenditure rates to track progress towards the 75% goal. Monitoring expenditures and outcomes will enable the WDB to make informed decisions and adjustments to program strategies as needed.

b) There is a need to serve additional in-school youth (ISY) in the Cape Fear region to ensure comprehensive support for all youth populations and address the diverse needs of the community. To achieve the 25% ISY expenditure rate, the WDB will implement the following strategies:

1. Strengthening School Partnerships: The WDB will collaborate closely with local schools and educational institutions to identify ISY participants who can benefit from workforce development services. This may involve establishing school-based career centers or resource hubs to provide ISY with access to job readiness training, career exploration, and support services.
2. Career Pathway Development: Developing career pathways aligned with local industry needs will engage ISY in relevant and meaningful workforce development activities. Providing opportunities for internships, work-based learning experiences, and career counseling will help ISY explore career options and gain valuable skills.
3. Youth-Friendly Programs and Services: The WDB will design programs and services that are tailored to the unique needs and preferences of ISY participants. This may include incorporating technology, social media, and interactive activities to enhance engagement and participation among ISY.
4. Mentorship and Peer Support: Establishing mentorship programs and peer support groups will provide ISY with guidance, encouragement, and networking opportunities. Connecting ISY with mentors who can share their experiences and provide advice on career pathways will enhance their confidence and motivation.

c) The Cape Fear region will be able to meet the demand for youth services by utilizing waivers that provide flexibility in program design and implementation. The WDB will leverage waivers to:

1. Expand Eligibility Criteria: Waivers may allow the WDB to serve youth who do not meet traditional eligibility criteria but are in need of workforce development services. This flexibility will enable the WDB to reach a broader range of youth participants and address the diverse needs of the community.
2. Tailor Program Strategies: Waivers can provide flexibility in program design, allowing the WDB to customize services to meet the unique needs of youth participants. This may include innovative

approaches to service delivery, such as mobile career centers, online training platforms, or intensive case management for at-risk youth.

3. Streamline Administrative Processes: Waivers may streamline administrative processes and reduce bureaucratic barriers, allowing the WDB to allocate resources more efficiently and effectively. This will enable the WDB to focus on delivering high-quality services and achieving programmatic goals.

By leveraging waivers strategically, the Cape Fear region can maximize its capacity to meet the demand for youth services and ensure that all youth have access to the support they need to succeed in education, training, and employment.

12. How does the Cape Fear WDB ensure that the minimum of 20% of funds is spent on work experience and is the Cape Fear WDB expending the 20% minimum on work experience, to include an estimate of expenditures that will be paid wages to youth? If the Cape Fear WDB has not been meeting the minimum of 20% of funds, please explain additional measures to be taken this year. [WIOA Section 129(c)(4)] (CPS 09-2021, Change 1)

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) ensures that a minimum of 20% of funds is spent on work experience by implementing several strategies:

1. Program Design: The WDB structures its youth programs to incorporate work experience opportunities as a core component. This may include internships, summer jobs, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning activities.
2. Partnership Development: The WDB collaborates with local employers, businesses, and organizations to create work experience opportunities for youth participants. By establishing partnerships with a diverse range of employers, the WDB increases the availability and variety of work experience options for youth.
3. Program Monitoring: The WDB closely monitors program expenditures to ensure that at least 20% of funds are allocated to work experience activities. Regular financial tracking and reporting allow the WDB to assess spending patterns and make adjustments as needed to meet the minimum requirement.
4. Budget Allocation: The WDB allocates sufficient funds specifically for work experience activities within its youth program budget. By earmarking funds for work experience upfront, the WDB ensures that resources are available to support these critical components of youth development.

Regarding whether the Cape Fear WDB is expending the 20% minimum on work experience, an estimate of expenditures that will be paid wages to youth would provide clarity on the allocation of funds. If the WDB has not been meeting the minimum 20% requirement, additional measures may include:

1. Enhanced Outreach: The WDB may increase efforts to engage employers and encourage them to offer work experience opportunities for youth participants. This could involve targeted outreach campaigns, employer incentives, and promotional events to raise awareness about the benefits of hiring youth.
2. Program Expansion: The WDB may expand its work experience program offerings to include a wider range of opportunities in various industries and sectors. This expansion could involve developing new partnerships, securing additional funding sources, and exploring innovative models for delivering work experience.
3. Training and Support: The WDB may provide training and support to employers to facilitate the successful implementation of work experience programs. This could include guidance on designing

meaningful work experiences, mentoring support for youth participants, and resources to address any challenges that may arise.

4. Performance Improvement Plan: If the WDB consistently fails to meet the minimum 20% requirement for work experience expenditures, it may develop a performance improvement plan to address the issue. This plan could include specific targets, timelines, and strategies for increasing work experience spending and improving program outcomes.

Overall, by implementing these measures, the Cape Fear WDB can ensure compliance with the minimum 20% requirement for work experience expenditures and enhance the quality and effectiveness of its youth programs.

13. Does the Cape Fear WDB have a dedicated full-time Youth Business Services Representative (or similar title) at the Cape Fear WDB level or at the Provider level. If so, state at which level, how many representatives, and how this impacts the Youth Program Design?

The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager promotes younger workers, especially opportunity youth, and provides information to companies that are interested in recruiting younger workers. The CFWDB Business Engagement Manager interfaces with NCWorks staff, sharing these opportunities with Youth Career Advisors. Career Advisors also work within their own communities to build relationships with business and develop work-based learning opportunities for clients. The direct collaboration between the Business Engagement Manager and youth service provider staff ensures a coordinated approach that efficiently engages employers and creates work opportunities tailored to the needs and interests of youth participants.

14. Does the Cape Fear WDB have special programs for young adults that are Justice-Involved or have a substance use disorder? If yes, please briefly describe them.

The CFWDB works closely with reentry and juvenile justice representatives from community-based organizations that serve WIOA Youth-eligible clients. This collaborative approach enables WIOA youth staff to rely on the expertise of these professionals when providing career guidance to participants. This also streamlines services for youth in need and provides opportunities to braid funding to more holistically support justice involved youth who are shared clients.

15. Describe how the Cape Fear WDB partners, aligns, and leverages, as appropriate with:

- a. Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program resources and policies.

- b. Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program resources and policies.
- c. Integrates adult education with occupational education and training and workforce preparation, as Cape Fear WDB's and the creation of career pathways for youth. [USDOL TEGL 8-15]

a. The Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program provides resources and policies aimed at addressing the educational needs of adults and families. This federal program supports adult education and literacy activities, including basic skills instruction, English language acquisition, high school equivalency preparation, and family literacy services. The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) collaborates with local adult education providers, such as community colleges and literacy councils, to integrate Title II AEFLA resources into workforce development initiatives. Policies related to Title II AEFLA ensure equitable access to adult education services, promote lifelong learning opportunities, and support the development of essential skills for success in the workforce.

b. The Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program offers resources and policies aimed at assisting individuals with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment. This federal program provides vocational rehabilitation services, such as career counseling, job training, assistive technology, and job placement assistance, to individuals with disabilities. The Cape Fear WDB coordinates with vocational rehabilitation agencies and service providers to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to the necessary support services to achieve their employment goals. Policies related to Title IV VR focus on promoting disability inclusion, removing barriers to employment, and fostering an inclusive workforce environment.

c. The integration of adult education with occupational education and training, as well as workforce preparation, is a key strategy employed by the Cape Fear WDB to create career pathways for youth and adults. By aligning adult education programs with occupational training initiatives and workforce development efforts, individuals can acquire the academic and technical skills needed to succeed in high-demand occupations. Career pathways initiatives offered by the Cape Fear WDB provide structured education and training programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials and employment opportunities in growing sectors of the economy. These integrated pathways support lifelong learning and career advancement for youth and adults, ultimately strengthening the regional workforce and promoting economic growth.

16. Specify if the Cape Fear WDB plans to offer incentives for (NextGen) youth. If yes, attach the Youth Incentive Policy, which should include:

- a. criteria to be used to award incentives;
- b. type(s) of incentive awards to be made available;
- c. whether WIOA funds will be used; and
- d. the Cape Fear WDB's internal controls to safeguard cash/gift cards.

- Name document: Cape Fear WDB Youth Incentive Policy.

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*Note: Federal funds may not be spent on entertainment costs. Youth Incentive Policies should include: compliance with the Cost Principles in 2 CFR part 200; identify types of items that may be awarded (gift cards, plaques, certificates, checks); identify types of achievements/completion of activities (an inclusive list is required); practices for internal controls for safeguarding incentives, and provide a sample list of required documentation for reimbursement (diploma, evaluations).*

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17. If the Cape Fear WDB does not offer incentives for (NextGen) youth, please explain why.

N/A

18. Describe the local strategy to prepare the youth (NextGen) for unsubsidized employment, including with small employers, specifically those that include in-demand industry sectors and occupations of the local and/or regional labor markets. [WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(C)(v)]

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (WDB) implements a contracting process that prioritizes agencies capable of fostering collaborative relationships with employers. These selected providers undergo thorough training on regional Certified Career Pathways and other high-growth occupations, equipping them with the knowledge and resources to effectively engage with employers. NextGen staff members actively engage with these employers to cultivate meaningful Work Experience and On-the-Job Training (OJT) opportunities for youth participants. Through these experiences, youth learn workplace expectations and acquire valuable skills essential for future unsubsidized employment. Furthermore, service providers leverage NCWorks online resources to access relevant labor market information. This information aids in preparing youth customers for the workforce by providing insights into industry trends, job opportunities, and skill requirements. Overall, this comprehensive approach ensures that youth participants are equipped with the necessary skills, experiences, and knowledge to succeed in the workforce and pursue fulfilling career pathways.

19. Please complete the Youth Program Elements chart provided to demonstrate how the Cape Fear WDB ensures each of the 14 youth program elements is made available to youth participants. Be certain to complete both columns of the chart to demonstrate partnerships and potential use of shared funding. Please specify partners. [WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(A)]

- Name document: *Cape Fear WDB Youth Program Elements Chart.*

20. Does the Cape Fear WDB have a standing committee to provide information to assist with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth? [WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii)]

a. If no, describe how oversight to planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth will be provided.

The Youth Standing Committee of the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) plays a crucial role in promoting opportunities and raising awareness for youth in the Cape Fear region. Responsibilities of the committee include:

1. Promoting Opportunities: The committee actively promotes various opportunities available to youth in the region, including workforce development programs, educational resources, and career pathways. This may involve organizing outreach events, disseminating information through social media channels, and collaborating with community partners to raise awareness.
2. Conducting Oversight: The committee conducts oversight of youth programs funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This oversight ensures that programs are effectively meeting the needs of youth participants, adhering to program guidelines, and achieving desired outcomes. The committee may review program performance data, conduct site visits, and solicit feedback from stakeholders to inform its oversight activities.

3. **Increasing Post-Secondary Credential Rate:** One of the key goals of the Youth Standing Committee is to increase the post-secondary credential rate among youth in the Cape Fear region. This aligns with the myFutureNC goal of increasing educational attainment and workforce readiness. The committee may develop strategies and initiatives aimed at supporting youth in obtaining industry-recognized credentials, certifications, and degrees. This could include expanding access to education and training programs, providing financial assistance, and offering academic and career counseling services.

Overall, the Youth Standing Committee plays a pivotal role in supporting the educational and career advancement of youth in the Cape Fear region, ensuring that they have the opportunities and resources needed to succeed in the workforce and achieve their post-secondary goals.

b. If yes, please provide a response to the following

a) Provide the committee's purpose/vision.

The purpose/vision of the Youth Committee within the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) is to empower youth in the Cape Fear region by providing them with the resources, opportunities, and support they need to thrive academically and professionally. The committee envisions a future where every young person in the Cape Fear region has access to high-quality education, training, and career pathways that lead to meaningful employment and economic self-sufficiency. It aims to cultivate a supportive and inclusive environment where youth are encouraged to explore their interests, develop their talents, and pursue their aspirations.

Key aspects of the Youth Committee's purpose/vision may include:

1. **Promoting Educational Attainment:** The committee strives to increase educational attainment levels among youth by promoting access to quality education and supporting initiatives that improve graduation rates, academic achievement, and post-secondary enrollment.
2. **Fostering Workforce Readiness:** The committee focuses on equipping youth with the skills, knowledge, and experiences necessary to succeed in the workforce. This includes providing career exploration opportunities, job readiness training, and work-based learning experiences.
3. **Championing Equity and Inclusion:** The committee is committed to advancing equity and inclusion in all aspects of its work, ensuring that youth from diverse backgrounds have equitable access to opportunities and resources. This includes addressing barriers to success faced by marginalized and underserved youth populations.
4. **Strengthening Community Partnerships:** The committee collaborates with schools, colleges, employers, community organizations, and other stakeholders to create a comprehensive network of support for youth. By leveraging the strengths and resources of various partners, the committee aims to maximize its impact and reach.
5. **Empowering Youth Leadership:** The committee seeks to empower youth to become active participants in their own education and career development. It provides opportunities for youth voice and leadership, encouraging them to contribute their ideas, perspectives, and talents to shaping the future of the Cape Fear region.

Overall, the purpose/vision of the Youth Committee is to create a pathway to success for youth in the Cape Fear region, ensuring that they are prepared to thrive in an ever-changing economy and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

b) Provide the youth committee's top three goals or objectives for PY 2024.

1. **Increase Youth Engagement and Participation:** The committee aims to increase youth engagement and participation in workforce development programs and services. This includes promoting awareness of available resources, opportunities, and support networks among youth aged 16-24 in the Cape Fear region. By actively engaging with youth through outreach events, community partnerships, and

targeted recruitment efforts, the committee seeks to ensure that a greater number of young people are connected to valuable educational, training, and career pathways.

2. Enhance Access to Education and Training: The committee is committed to enhancing access to high-quality education and training opportunities for youth in the region. This involves collaborating with educational institutions, training providers, and community organizations to expand access to programs that lead to industry-recognized credentials, certifications, and degrees. By providing support and resources to youth pursuing post-secondary education and vocational training, the committee aims to equip them with the skills and qualifications needed to succeed in the workforce.

3. Foster Youth Empowerment and Leadership: The committee prioritizes fostering youth empowerment and leadership development. This includes providing opportunities for youth to voice their perspectives, contribute to decision-making processes, and take on leadership roles within their communities. By empowering youth to become active agents of change and advocates for their own futures, the committee seeks to build a generation of confident, resilient, and self-reliant young leaders who are equipped to navigate the challenges of the 21st-century workforce.

c) Provide a list of youth committee members to include members' agency/organization, one of which must be a community-based organization with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth. Provide the Committee's Chair information in the first block (*who must be a Cape Fear WDB member*).

- Name document: Cape Fear WDB Youth Committee Members [WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii)]

c. Complete the following chart for the PY 2024 Youth Committee's planned meeting schedule to include dates, time, and location. (Expand form as needed or mark Not Applicable.)

Date	Time	Location (include address and room #)
August 13, 2024	10:00am	Zoom
October 15, 2024	10:00am	Zoom
February 11, 2025	10:00am	Zoom
May 13, 2025	10:00am	Zoom



## XI. Cape Fear WDB Innovations

1. List all additional funding received by the Cape Fear WDB (for example, to include but not limited to, special grants, NC Job Ready Workforce Investment Grants, Business Services funds, National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) (disaster), YouthBuild, Foundations, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD), NCWorks Commission Local Innovation Fund Grant, and/or outside funding to include a brief description of the source and the amount received).

Grant Name/Kind	Brief Description	Beginning and End date	Source and Amount	Partner Organization (if applicable)
ARPA	Grant funds to promote small and microbusiness	11/1/23 to 12/31/2025	WIOA/Set Aside Amount: \$280,000	n/a

2. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Cape Fear WDB's best or promising **Adult/Dislocated Worker** program practice that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) has integrated Conover Company soft skills training to enhance the employability of adults and dislocated workers seeking employment. This training is offered in various formats, including in-person instruction and virtual options accessible from any internet-connected device. The training program includes pre and post-testing, allowing participants to track their progress, and upon completion, individuals receive a certificate of competence, which can bolster their job search documents.

These modules serve as valuable tools to foster collaboration between job seekers and Career Advisors. By focusing on developing essential soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving, participants are better equipped to navigate the job market and succeed in their careers. The flexibility of offering both in-person and virtual options ensures accessibility for individuals with diverse needs and preferences, contributing to a more inclusive and effective workforce development strategy.

3. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Cape Fear WDB's best or promising **Youth** program practice that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) has integrated the Workplace Excellence Series soft skills training to enhance the employability of youth seeking employment. This comprehensive training program is utilized for all WEX (Work Experience) participants, providing them with essential skills to succeed in the workplace.

The training is offered in multiple formats, including in-person instruction and virtual options accessible from any internet-connected device. This flexibility ensures that young job seekers can access the training in a manner that best suits their needs and preferences. The module-based structure of the training allows participants to progress systematically, building upon foundational skills to develop a strong foundation of

work readiness.

By focusing on essential soft skills such as communication, teamwork, time management, and problem-solving, the Workplace Excellence Series equips youth with the tools they need to thrive in the workplace. This investment in developing the skills of young job seekers not only enhances their employability but also strengthens the workforce as a whole, contributing to the economic vitality of the Cape Fear region.

4. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Cape Fear WDB's best or promising **regional strategy** that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) engages in regional meetings with subrecipients and partners across the board region to provide technical assistance, guidance, team building, and best practices. These meetings aim to align with CFWDB expectations and foster a sense of connection and collaboration among NCWorks teams throughout the region.

Through these meetings, consistency is achieved across the region, ensuring that all NCWorks teams are operating according to established standards and practices. By sharing best practices and providing guidance, CFWDB staff facilitate knowledge exchange and skill development among partners, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of services provided to job seekers and employers.

Additionally, these regional meetings promote team building among NCWorks staff, strengthening relationships and fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose. As a result, collaboration between partners within each career center is increased, leading to more cohesive and coordinated efforts to support the workforce development needs of the Cape Fear region.

5. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Cape Fear WDB's best or promising **virtual services strategy** that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

The adoption of virtual services has proven to be a promising strategy for engagement within the

Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB). Virtual services, including virtual intake and case management, have emerged as effective tools for reaching individuals in hard-to-reach communities and have led to increased enrollments and engagement with services.

By offering virtual intake and case management, CFWDB has overcome geographical barriers and increased accessibility for individuals who may face challenges in accessing traditional in-person services. This approach has been particularly beneficial for reaching individuals in remote or rural areas, as well as those with limited mobility or transportation options.

The convenience and flexibility of virtual services have also contributed to increased engagement among job seekers and participants. With the ability to access services from the comfort of their own homes or from any internet-connected device, individuals are more likely to engage with the workforce development system and enroll in programs and services offered by CFWDB.

Overall, the utilization of virtual services has enhanced the CFWDB's ability to connect with and serve individuals in the Cape Fear region, leading to improved outcomes and greater accessibility to workforce development resources and opportunities.

6. Provide a clear and detailed example of the Cape Fear WDB's innovative **business services strategies** and engagement practices that demonstrated employers taking charge and driving the agenda that has yielded positive results with evidence, which affirms this practice is effective.

#### **Strategic Use of IWTG:**

Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) has effectively utilized a targeted approach to Incumbent Worker Training Grants (IWTGs) to serve multiple clients within industries of need. By concentrating on small businesses, the CFWDB has significantly influenced the growth and sustainability of many small companies.

This focused strategy acknowledges the importance of small businesses in the local economy and their unique challenges, particularly during times of crisis such as challenges presented by the pandemic. By providing tailored training and support through IWTGs, the CFWDB has helped small businesses enhance the skills and productivity of their workforce, adapt to changing market conditions, and maintain their operations.

The impact of this approach extends beyond individual businesses, contributing to the overall resilience and vitality of the local economy. By supporting the growth and sustainability of small companies, the CFWDB has played a crucial role in mitigating the economic impact of the pandemic and fostering recovery and growth within the Cape Fear region.

#### **Sector Partnerships:**

Sector Partnerships represent the pinnacle of employer engagement in driving the agenda within workforce development efforts. The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) has embraced this concept, utilizing the NextGen Sector Partnership model to facilitate the creation of the Cape Fear Manufacturing Partnership.

This collaborative initiative boasts over fifty members who convene quarterly to collaborate on strategies aimed at addressing industry challenges and fostering growth. Through the Cape Fear Manufacturing Partnership, stakeholders from across the manufacturing sector come together to share insights, best practices, and resources. These regular gatherings provide a platform for dialogue and collaboration, allowing members to collectively identify and address issues affecting the industry. By leveraging the expertise and perspectives of diverse stakeholders, the partnership is able to develop innovative solutions and initiatives that drive positive change within the manufacturing sector.

The success of the Cape Fear Manufacturing Partnership underscores the value of sector partnerships in fostering employer engagement and driving forward the workforce development agenda. By bringing together key stakeholders, such as employers, industry associations, educational institutions, and workforce development agencies, sector partnerships create opportunities for collaboration and collective action, ultimately leading to a more responsive and resilient workforce system. The CFWDB continues to convene leadership from high-growth industries to create additional sector partnerships.

## XII. Program Year 2024 Cape Fear WDB Plan Required Policy Attachments

1. The following policies are *required* to be attached as separate documents in WISE as part of the PY 2024 Cape Fear Plan. The Cape Fear Plan is not complete without these documents.

- Name Each Document: *Cape Fear WDB, Policy Name.*

- In the first column, state if the policy is attached or why it is missing and when it can be expected. If two of the policies have been combined, please make a notation.
- In the second column mark “Yes” **only** if the policy has been changed/revised for the PY 2024 Plan and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.
- Revised policies should be submitted with a highlight or summary of the changes made to the local policy.
- Do not add an empty document in WISE as a “placeholder”.

Required Cape Fear WDB Policies	Attached (Yes/No). If no, why?	Revised for PY 2024 (Yes/No) and needs review
1. Adult/Dislocated Worker Experience Policy	Yes	No
2. Competitive Procurement Policy	Yes	No
3. Conflict of Interest Policy	Yes	No
4. Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Standards and Complaint Procedures	Yes	No
5. Financial Management Policy for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I	Yes	No
6. Individualized Training Account Policy	Yes	No
7. On-the-Job Training Policy	Yes	No
8. Oversight Monitoring Policy, Tool and Schedule	Yes	No
9. Priority of Service Policy	Yes	No
10. Youth Work Experience Policy	Yes	No

Required Cape Fear WDB Policies	Attached (Yes/No). If no, why?	Revised for PY 2024 (Yes/No) and needs review
11. Supportive Services Policy	Yes	No
12. Cape Fear WDB WIOA and TAA Co-enrollment Policy	Yes	No
13. Eligible Training Provider Policy	Yes	No
14. Non-Criminal Complaint Procedures	Yes	No

2. Designate whether the following local *Optional Policy* is included and used at the Cape Fear WDB and is included in the Cape Fear Plan or write “N/A” implying “Not Applicable”, if the Cape Fear WDB does not have this policy and; therefore, does not use these services.

In the second column mark “Yes” **only** if the policy has been changed for PY 2024 and has not been previously submitted to the DWS.

- Do not add a blank document in WISE as a “placeholder”.
- These policies are required to operate/offer these services
- If “Yes”, load the policy as a separate document.
- Name document: Cape Fear WDB Name, Policy Name. (Example: IWT Policy – Yes. Attached as *Board Name IWT Policy*.)

Optional Cape Fear WDB Policies	Yes- the Cape Fear WDB has a policy or N/A (Not Applicable)	Revised for PY 2024 (Add Yes or N/A for this column)
1. Cape Fear WDB Guidance for Local Incumbent Worker Grants	Yes	N/A
2. Cape Fear WDB Needs-Related Policy	N/A	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
3. Cape Fear WDB Transitional Jobs Policy	N/A	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
4. Cape Fear WDB Youth Incentive Policy	Yes	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

3. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are required [Regulations Section 680.300] to pay the cost of training provided with Adult and Dislocated Worker funds and limitations on duration and amount may be included [Regulations Section 680.320]. Please provide the following ITA elements in summary:

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) Summary	
Dollar Amounts	\$5,000 per Program Year; \$10,000 Lifetime Max
Time Limits	36 months with a maximum of 6 Semester supported
Degree or Certificates allowed (Associate, Bachelor's, other)	Industry Recognized Credential, Certificate, Associate, Bachelor's
Procedures for determining case-by-case exceptions for training that may be allowed	Written approval by WDB Director
Period for which ITAs are issued (semester, school year, short-term, etc.)	Semester, short-term
Supportive Services covered by ITA (provide examples such as uniforms, tools, physical exams, etc.)	Tuition, books, fees, supplies, tools, uniforms and exams
Other	N/A

4. Provide a description of how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with section 134(c)(3)(G), including if contracts for the training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided. [WIOA Section 108(b)(19)]

Training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B, as outlined in section 134(c)(3)(G), will be provided in accordance with the following approach:

1. Utilization of Contracts: The CFWDB utilizes contracts with eligible training providers to deliver training services to participants. These contracts ensure that training programs meet the quality and performance standards established under WIOA. Contracts may be awarded through a competitive procurement process to ensure transparency and accountability in the selection of training providers.
2. Coordination with Individual Training Accounts (ITAs): In cases where individual training accounts (ITAs) are used to fund training services, the CFWDB will coordinate the use of contracts with the use of ITAs to maximize flexibility and choice for participants. ITAs allow individuals to select training programs that best align with their career goals and interests, regardless of whether the training provider is under contract with the local board.
3. Informed Customer Choice: The CFWDB is committed to ensuring informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, irrespective of how the training services are provided. This involves providing participants with comprehensive information about available training options, including program duration, cost, credentials awarded, job placement rates, and potential earnings upon completion. Participants receive guidance and counseling from qualified staff to help them make informed decisions based on their individual needs and circumstances.

4. **Quality Assurance:** The CWFDB monitors the performance of contracted training providers to ensure that they deliver high-quality training services that lead to meaningful employment outcomes for participants. Performance metrics, such as completion rates, credential attainment, and employment placement, are tracked and used to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs. Participants are encouraged to provide feedback on their training experiences for continuous improvement efforts.

By adopting these strategies, the CFWDB ensures that training services are delivered effectively, participants have access to diverse training options, and informed choices are made to support successful employment outcomes for individuals served under WIOA.

5. Please specify the supportive services provided by the Cape Fear WDB Supportive Services Policy. List specific items under Supplies, Emergency, and Other, as identified in the Cape Fear WDB policy. (Expand form as needed.)

<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Childcare</b>	<b>Supplies</b> <i>(include examples)</i>	<b>Emergency</b> <i>(include examples)</i>	<b>Other</b> <i>(include examples)</i>
Reimbursement for actual expenses via check, gas card, or contracted agreement	Reimbursement for actual expenses via check	Tools Uniforms Shoes	Food Shelter Medication	N/A

**Note:** *The Cape Fear WDB must adequately safeguard all forms of supportive services payments (i.e., gas cards, cash, gift cards, etc.) and assure that they are used solely for authorized purposes. The Supportive Services Policy must include the Cape Fear WDB’s internal controls to safeguard supportive services. The internal controls must address issuance, storage, and reconciliation of supportive services throughout the area and be clearly stated within the policy.*

## Attachment Checklist from Cape Fear Plan Instructions

- Cape Fear WDB Signed copy of Consortium Agreement (if applicable)
- Cape Fear WDB Administrative Entity Organizational Chart
- Cape Fear WDB Board Members (*form provided*)
- Cape Fear WDB By-Laws
- Cape Fear WDB By-Laws Required Elements Crosswalk (*form provided*)
- Cape Fear WDB Organizational Chart
- Cape Fear WDB Administrative Entity Certification Regarding Debarment\* (*form provided*)
- Cape Fear WDB Workforce Development Area Signatory Form\* (*form provided*)
- Cape Fear WDB NCWorks Career Centers (*form provided*)
- Cape Fear WDB Adult and Dislocated Worker Service Provider (*form provided*)
- Cape Fear WDB Eligible Training Provider Policy
- Cape Fear WDB 14 Youth Program Elements Chart (*form provided*)
- Cape Fear WDB Youth Committee Meeting Schedule (*optional*)
- Cape Fear WDB Youth Committee Members (*optional*)
- Cape Fear WDB Youth Service Provider (*form provided*)
- Cape Fear WDB Youth Incentive Policy (*optional*)
- Cape Fear WDB WIOA and TAA Co-enrollment Policy (*required*)
- Cape Fear Adult/Dislocated Worker Work Experience Policy
- Competitive Procurement Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity Standards and Complaint Procedures
- Financial Management Policy for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I
- Cape Fear WDB Individualized Training Account Policy
- On-the-Job Training Policy
- Cape Fear WDB Oversight Monitoring Policy, Tool, and Schedule
- Priority of Service Policy
- Youth Work Experience Policy
- Cape Fear WDB Supportive Services Policy
- Cape Fear WDB Incumbent Worker Training Policy (*optional*)
- Cape Fear WDB Needs-Related Policy (*optional*)
- Non-Criminal Complaint Procedures
- Cape Fear WDB Transitional Jobs Policy (*optional*)
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Customer Flow Chart

\*Mail signed and unfolded originals to assigned DWS Planner at:



N.C. Division of Workforce Solutions  
313 Chapanoke Road, Suite 120  
4316 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-4316

DocuSign® (or similar) signature pages may be uploaded in WISE.

## Appendices

NC Cape Fear WDB By-Laws Required Elements

[Appendix A](#)

By-Laws Guidance

[Appendix B](#)

Guidance Regarding Meetings and Conferencing via Electronic Means

[Appendix C](#)

Cape Fear WDB Membership Requirements

[Appendix D](#)

## NC Local Area WDB By-Laws Required Elements

At a minimum the Cape Fear WDB by-laws must include the following items for DWS approval. When submitting the Cape Fear WDB by-laws, please specify the section (provide a clear crosswalk) where the following required elements are located within the submitted by-laws.

**Elements 1-7 are the *required* elements designated at WIOA Final Rule 679.310(g).**

1. The nomination process used by the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) to elect the Cape Fear Board Chair and members.
2. The term limitations and how the term appointments will be staggered to ensure only a portion of membership expire in a given year.
3. The process to notify the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) of a Board member vacancy to ensure a prompt nominee within ninety (90) days of the vacancy.
4. The proxy and alternative designee process that will be used when a Board member is unable to attend a meeting and assigns a designee as per the requirements of 20 CFR 679.110(d)(4).
5. The use of technology such as phone and web-based meetings, that will be used to promote Board member participation (20 CFR 679.110(d)(5)).
6. The process to ensure Board members actively participate in convening the workforce development system's stakeholders, brokering relationship with a diverse range of employers, and leveraging support for workforce development activities.
7. A description of any other conditions governing appointment or membership on the Board as deemed appropriate by the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs); (20 CFR 679.310(g)(1-7)).

**North Carolina specific requirements that must be specified within the by-laws:**

1. The adopted generally accepted parliamentary procedure, such as Robert's Rules of Order, chosen by the Board.
2. Whether an appointee filling a vacancy will serve the remainder of the unexpired term or be appointed for a new full term.
3. The Board's policy assuring attendance and participation of its members.
4. Quorum requirements to be not less than 51% constituting 51% of the total filled Board positions.
5. Any standing committees the Board has established shall be included in the by-laws.
6. The Board's conflict of interest policy, which may not be any less stringent than the requirements of the DWS's Policy, shall be referenced in the by-laws.
7. The process the Board will take when expedient action is warranted between Board meetings, such as calling a special meeting or allowing the Executive Committee to act on behalf of the Board.
8. Board meetings will be held in accessible facilities with accessible materials available upon prior request.
9. The Board will meet no less than four times per program year.

## By-Laws Guidance

*This template is provided for guidance purposes only. It contains sample language that may be used in by-laws development. It is not required that Boards utilize this template or language within. This template reflects multiple counties within a Consortium. Single-county Boards and non-Consortia will need to adjust their by-laws accordingly.*

### Article 1

#### Name and Purpose

##### Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the **Click Here to Enter WDB Name. Board** (hereinafter referred to as the “Board”).

##### Section 2. Purpose and Responsibilities

The purpose for which the Board is organized is to perform all functions of a WDB and Local Workforce Development Area as set forth in the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (“WIOA”), or the corresponding provision of any applicable federal or state laws of related purpose and the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, and Section 143B-438.11 of the North Carolina General Statutes and to perform such functions with the **Click Here to Enter WDB Name. WDB.**

The Board services area shall encompass the counties of **Click Here to Enter WDB Name..**

The Board responsibilities shall include:

1. Develop and submit Cape Fear Plan annually to the Governor, a comprehensive 4-year Cape Fear Plan, in partnership with the Chief Local Elected Official.
2. Perform workforce research and regional market analysis.
3. Convene local workforce development system stakeholders to assist in the development of the Cape Fear Plan and identify non-federal expertise and resources to leverage support for workforce development activities.
4. Lead efforts to engage with a diverse range of employers and with entities in the region involved.
5. Lead efforts with representatives of secondary and postsecondary education programs in the Cape Fear to develop and implement career pathways within the Cape Fear by aligning the employment, training, education, and supportive services that are needed by adults and youth, particularly individuals with barriers.

## By-Laws Guidance

6. Lead efforts in the Cape Fear to identify proven and promising strategies and initiatives for meeting the needs of employers, and workers and jobseekers in the local workforce system, and to identify and disseminate information on promising practices carried out in other Cape Fears.
7. Develop strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of the local workforce development system for employers, workers, and jobseekers.
8. Conduct program oversight.
9. Negotiate and reach agreement on local performance accountability measures.
10. Designate or certify one-stop operators, contractors, and service providers and, in appropriate circumstances, terminate for cause the eligibility of such operators.
11. Coordinate activities with education and training providers in the Cape Fear.
12. Develop a budget for the activities of the Cape Fear WDB consistent with the Cape Fear Plan and the duties of the Cape Fear Board and subject to the approval of the Chief Local Elected Official.
13. Annually review the physical and programmatic accessibility provisions of all one-stop centers, as well as locations for contractors and service providers, in the Cape Fear, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

## Article 2

### Board Members

#### Section 1. Appointment

There shall be a Board of no more than **Click Here to Enter Number**. Board members. Members of this organization shall be appointed by the following procedure: The Chief Local Elected Official (of the **Click Here to Enter Name**. County Board of Commissioners, hereinafter referred to as the CLEO) shall appoint members based on nominations from the following: local business organizations; local education agencies; vocational education institutions, community-based organizations, and higher educational institutions; and private and proprietary schools; state or local labor organizations and other interested organizations.

The number of business sector nominees shall be at least 51% of the number of individuals to be appointed and are appointed from amongst individuals nominated by local business organizations and business trade associations. The nominated candidate or company must be a member of the nominating organization. A majority of the Members shall be representatives of businesses in the Cape Fear (including small businesses or organizations representing businesses that, at a minimum, include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the Cape Fear) and are owners, chief executives or

## By-Laws Guidance

operating officers, or other business executives or employers with optimum policy making or hiring authority. The members of the local Board shall represent diverse geographic areas within the Cape Fear.

### Section 2. Composition

Organized Labor and Community Based Organizations: Not less than 20% of the Members shall be representatives of the workforce within the Cape Fear, who:

- i. shall include representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by local labor federations, or other representatives of employees;
- ii. shall include a representative, who shall be a member of a labor organization or a training director, from a joint labor-management apprenticeship program, or if no such program exists in the area, such a representative of an apprenticeship program in the area, if such a program exists.
- iii. may include representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or that provide or support competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and
- iv. may include representatives of organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth;

Education and training activities: The Board shall include representatives of entities administering education and training activities in the Cape Fear, who:

- i. shall include a representative of eligible providers administering adult education and literacy activities under Title II of the WIOA;
- ii. shall include a representative of institutions of higher education providing workforce investment activities (including community colleges);
- iii. may include representatives of local educational agencies, and of community-based organizations with demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the education or training needs of individuals with barriers to training;

The Board shall include representatives of governmental and economic and community development entities serving the Cape Fear, who:

- i. shall include a representative of economic and community development entities;
- ii. shall include an appropriate representative from the State Employment Service Office under the Wagner-Peyser Act serving the Cape Fear;
- iii. shall include an appropriate representative of the programs carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, serving the Cape Fear;

## By-Laws Guidance

- iv. may include representatives of agencies or entities administering programs serving the Cape Fear relating to transportation, housing, and public assistance, and
- v. may include representatives of philanthropic organizations serving the Cape Fear; and

This Board may include such other individuals or representatives of entities as the Chief Local Elected Official determines appropriate.

### Section 3. Tenure

All appointments will be for a two-year term to expire on June 30 of each respective term. No member shall serve more than three consecutive terms (6 years) or a total of five terms (10 years) in any one appointed position. An individual whose initial appointment is to fill an unexpired term or an initial staggered term of less than two years, shall be eligible to serve the number of full-length terms other members are eligible to serve, unless, prior to the time for reappointment that individual has already served six consecutive years. Members may be re-appointed at the discretion of the Chief Local Elected Official subject to the term limitations outlined in this section.

Terms shall be staggered to ensure that at any given time a percentage of the members are experienced in WDB functions.

The Board shall advise the Consortium Counties of potential Board member vacancies prior to the end of the term. In the case of a midterm vacancy, an immediate replacement shall be requested of the Consortium County represented by the departing Board member. The appointed Board member shall fill the remaining term of office.

The Board shall not compensate Board Members for their services, but by resolution of the Board, a fixed sum and expenses, if any, may be allowed for attendance at each regular or special meeting of the Board.

### Section 4. Termination for Cause

By two-thirds majority vote of the membership or by action of the Chief Local Elected Official, a member may be removed for cause from the Board. Cause would be for such actions as malfeasance, misconduct, or any action which would be deemed not in the best interest of the Board; or three unexcused absences from regular scheduled meetings within the preceding twelve calendar months. Notice that a removal vote that may be taken for cause must be included on the agenda of said meeting. The Chair shall send a precautionary letter to the said Board member upon two unexcused absences within the preceding twelve calendar months prior to the next meeting.

### Section 5. Resignation

Letters of resignation must be submitted to the [Click Here to Enter WDB Name](#). Chair. Three consecutive absences without justification and no response to the above referenced letter from the chair will be considered acceptable terms for resignation. Justification must be submitted in writing. The Board Chair has the authority to accept or deny justification.

## By-Laws Guidance

### Section 6. Vacancies

Upon vacancy of any position on this Board, the procedure in Article II, Section 1, will be followed to provide replacement representation to complete the remainder of that term of appointment.

## Article 3 Meetings

### Section 1. Regular Meetings

The Board shall meet at a public location at such time and place as determined by the Chairperson. All meetings must be held in an accessible facility, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. All materials must be in an accessible format (i.e., large print, Braille, interpreter, etc.), as needed or indicated.

The Board will meet no less than four times per program year. Regular Board meetings are face to face; however, Board members may attend meetings via conference call, video communications and other alternative methods.

Five working days' notice shall be delivered to each member stating a reasonable time, date and place of the meeting and the meeting's purpose unless deemed an emergency by the Chair or Executive Committee calling for said special meeting.

### Section 2. Special Meetings

The Chair of the Board and Committee Chair may, when deemed necessary, call a special meeting of the Board via conference call, video communications, or alternative media sources for transacting any business designated in the call.

### Section 3. Quorum

At all meetings (regular or special) of the Board, a majority of the Board members present constitutes a quorum for transacting business. A quorum shall require the participation of Board members constituting 51% of the total filled Board positions. Proxy representatives who are unable to cast votes shall not count toward meeting the quorum requirement. Votes may be cast via electronic medium for remote attendees. The act of the majority of the Board members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board. However, a two-thirds vote of those present shall be required to amend any provision of these by-laws.

### Section 4. Conduct of Meetings

All meetings of this Board shall be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order.



## By-Laws Guidance

### Section 5. Open Meetings

Cape Fear Board Conducts Business Openly: The Cape Fear Board must conduct its business in an open manner as required by WIOA sec. 107(e), by making available to the public, on a regular basis through electronic means and open meetings, information about the activities of the local Board. (20 CFR 679.390) This includes:

- a. Information about the Cape Fear Plan, or modification to the Cape Fear Plan, before submission of the Cape Fear Plan;
- b. List and affiliation of Cape Fear WDB members;
- c. Selection of one-stop operators;
- d. Award of grants or contracts to eligible training providers of workforce investment activities including providers of youth workforce investment activities;
- e. Minutes of formal meetings of the Cape Fear Board; and
- f. Cape Fear Board by-laws, consistent with § 679.310(g).

### Section 6. Proxy Representation and Voting

A member may designate a representative to attend a meeting of the Board in his/her absence. The proxy must meet the membership criteria for the member's affiliation type. The proxy will count toward the appointed member's attendance. The representative may participate in discussions and may vote so long as the member provides written voting instructions to the Chair allowing his/her proxy representative to cast votes in accordance with the written voting instructions.

Each Board member present shall be entitled to one vote on each matter for which a vote is taken. Votes may be cast telephonically or via electronic medium.

### Section 7. Conflict of Interest and Voting

No WDB member (whether compensated or not) shall engage in any activity, including participation in the selection, award or administration of a sub-grant or contract supported by WIOA funds if a conflict of interest, real or apparent would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when:

- i. The individual,
- ii. any member of the individual 's immediate family,
- iii. the individual's partner, or
- iv. an organization which employs, or is about to employ any of the above, has a financial interest in the firm or organization selected for the award.

No WDB member, member of his/her immediate family, officers, employees, or agents of the WDB member's agency or business, shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to sub agreements.

## By-Laws Guidance

A WDB member shall not cast a vote on, or participate in, any decision-making capacity on the provision of services by such member (or any organization which that member directly represents), nor on any matter which would provide any direct financial benefit to that member.

No WDB members shall participate in a governmental decision including voting on a matter (including recommendations, appointments, obligating or committing the WDB to a course of action) when such action influences a decision or exercises judgement in making a decision. Any member with a potential or actual conflict of interest shall comply with requirements for public disclosure and recusal.

### Article 4 Organization

#### Section 1. Officers

The officers of this Board shall be a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary.

#### Section 2. Election of Officers

Officers of this Board shall be elected in June for two-year terms. The Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected from among the members who are representatives of the business sector. The secretary will be elected from among all members.

The Chair shall appoint a nominating committee to recommend officers who shall be elected from the Board's business sector membership and shall begin their term at the beginning of the new program year effective July 1. These officers shall serve until their successors are elected and qualified or until they are no longer Board members. If an officer is unable to complete his/her term the Board shall elect a successor to complete the remaining portion of the original term. The Vice-Chair shall not be required to succeed the Chair at the end of the Chair's term of office.

#### Section 3. Chair

The Chair shall preside at Board meetings, designate standing and ad hoc committees deemed appropriate and appoint their Chair and members. The Chair shall not vote except in the case of a tie, in which event he/she shall cast the deciding vote.

#### Section 4. Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair shall assume all duties and responsibilities of the Chair in his/her absence from meetings. In the event that the office of Chair is vacated before the end of the term, the Vice-Chair shall assume the office in an acting capacity until such time as the Board elects a new Chair.

## By-Laws Guidance

### Section 5. Secretary

The Secretary shall be responsible for proper notification of meetings, review, and submission of the minutes to the Board, and shall carry out any other duties deemed appropriate by the Chair. Cape Fear staff will serve as support personnel in performing these duties.

### Section 6. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary (from a sector other than business), and the previous Chair or Vice-Chair. As determined by the Chair of the Board, chairs of Board committees will attend Executive Committee meetings. Responsibilities of the Executive Committee are as follows: make standing committee assignments and coordination among committees, prepare recommendations to Board on state and national issues, act as needed between regularly scheduled Board meetings, and develop immediate and long-range goals for Board concurrence.

### Section 7. Vacancy

If an office becomes vacant, the Board shall elect a successor at its next meeting.

## Article 5 Committees

### Section 1.

The Chair of the Board shall have the power, except as otherwise provided in this Article, to appoint the members of any Committee for a term of two (2) years. No Committee, except as elsewhere provided in this Article, shall take any action or position on behalf of the Board, bind the Board, or exercise the authority of the Board in the management of the Corporation. The Chair of all the Committees shall be members of the Board. The Executive Committee of the Board shall meet at the call of the Chair of the Board or the written request of any two (2) members of the committee. The Board's other Committees shall meet at the call of their respective Chair or the Chair of the Board.

### Section 2.

Electronic meetings shall be permissible in lieu of face-to-face committee meetings at the discretion of the Committee Chair. An electronic meeting of the Committee occurs when Board members are in different locations, connected by electronic means, through audio, video, or both. All votes taken during an electronic meeting shall be by roll call. All scheduled electronic meetings shall be held in such a way that all members participating can hear each other at the same time. When speaking, each member will be asked to clearly identify himself, so that proper recognition is given and recorded. All Board policies, administrative practices, and by-laws shall apply equally to electronic meetings.

## By-Laws Guidance

### Section 3.

The Cape Fear WDB may establish standing committees to provide information and assist the Board in carrying out its responsibilities (20 CFR 679.360).

## Article 6 Amendments

### Section 1. Amendment Procedure

Board by-laws can be amended at any regular Board meeting provided the proposed amendment(s) has been submitted in writing to the Board members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

### Section 2. Vote Needed

The by-laws shall be amended upon affirmative vote by a two-thirds majority of the Board.

## Article 7 Severability

In the event that any of the rules, regulations, restrictions, covenants, or conditions of these by-laws are held to be partially or wholly invalid or unenforceable for any reason, such holding shall not affect, alter, modify, or impair in any manner any of the other terms, provisions, rules, regulations, restrictions, covenants, or conditions contained herein.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Adopted This NUMBER DATE Day of MONTH, YEAR.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Board Director, Printed Name and Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Chief Local Elected Official Printed Name and Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Board Chair, Printed Name and Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

## Guidance Regarding Meetings and Conferencing via Electronic Means

All public WDB meetings and Committee meetings will be held at specified times and places which are convenient and open to the public.

The Board believes it is in the best interest of its members, systems, and customers that the fullest participation and attendance in all meetings be achieved whenever possible. Furthermore, it recognizes that the use of electronic, audio or video conferencing for meeting attendance and voting requirements is permissible so long as the meeting is conducted in accordance with the Sunshine Provision.

The Board in all of its regular and special, standing committee, and ad hoc committee meetings complies with and intends to comply with the provisions of the Sunshine Provision. Therefore, the Board hereby adopts this policy, to be used when needed, to make use of the capabilities for conferencing by electronic means or any other type of audio or video conferencing for its meetings *or* any of the standing committee and ad hoc committee meetings as set forth and adopted according to the following rules as applicable:

- A. All pertinent provisions of the Sunshine Provision must be complied with, including specifically the proper notice of any regular or special meeting, the proper record keeping or minutes of each meeting, the appropriate agenda preparation for each meeting, which in addition shall be posted along with the notice of the meeting; and, in particular, any use of closed sessions shall be in compliance with the provisions of WIOA.
- B. All Board and Committee members attending meetings by electronic conferencing shall be entitled to vote as if they were personally and physically present at the meeting site so long as a quorum is, in total, present and accounted for, and their votes shall be recorded by the Board Director.
- C. A Board or Committee member who attends a meeting by electronic, video, or audio conference must provide notice to the Board Director at least 24 hours prior to the meeting unless such advance notice is impracticable.
- D. The location of the meeting included on the notice shall be equipped with a suitable transmission system (e.g., a speakerphone) in order that the public audience, the members in attendance and any staff in attendance will be able to hear any input, vote, or discussion of the conference and that the member attending by electronic means shall have a similar capability of hearing and participating in such input, vote, or discussion.
- E. As the Board or its committees begin each new matter of business, the Chair will check with all remote locations(s) where members are to ensure that each such connection is active.

## **Guidance Regarding Meetings and Conferencing via Electronic Means**

- F. When a motion is made, and seconded, and discussion regarding the motion begins, the Chair will check that the connection with remote location(s) where members are present is active. Prior to closing discussion and taking any vote, the Chair will ask all remote location(s) where member(s) is(are) present whether there are any additional comments, questions, or information to be added to the discussion.
  
- G. All decisions will be made using majority rule except when a higher vote is required. There will be no muting of any connections with remote location(s) where members are present at any time. There will be no sidebar discussions.
  
- H. The procedures outlined above shall also apply to each Board and its Committee members.

## Guidance Regarding Meetings and Conferencing via Electronic Means

### Representative of Business (WIOA Section 107(b) (2)(A))

#### Who May Satisfy the Requirements:

The majority of the members of the Cape Fear WDB must be representatives of private sector business in the Cape Fear. At a minimum, two members must represent small business as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Business representatives serving on Cape Fear WDBs may also serve on the State Board. Each business representative must meet the following criteria:

- be an owner, chief executive officer, chief operating officer, or other individual with optimum policy making and hiring authority;
- provide employment opportunities in **in-demand** industry sectors or occupations, as those terms are defined in WIOA section 3(23); and provide high-quality, work-relevant training and development opportunities to its workforce or the workforce of others (in the case of organizations representing business as per WIOA Sec. 107(b)(2)(A)(ii); and
- are appointed from among individuals nominated by local business organizations and business trade associations.

In North Carolina, examples of allowable business organizations may include chambers of commerce, trade organizations, large non-profit organizations, such as Rex Hospital, and for-profit organizations, such as Duke Hospital, depending on the specific circumstances. Examples of unallowable business organizations include the N.C. Department of Public Safety or other state or municipal agencies.

### Representative of Workforce (WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(B))

#### Who May Satisfy the Requirements:

**Not less than 20%** of the members of the Cape Fear WDB **must** be workforce representatives. These representatives:

- **must include two or more representatives of labor organizations**, where such organizations exist in the Cape Fear. Where labor organizations do not exist, representatives must be selected from other employee representatives;

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*Employee representatives must come from organizations that advocate, enhance, or protect the rights of a group of employees. In North Carolina, such examples include the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE), the State Employees Association of North Carolina (SEANC), and the National Guard Association). The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher*

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## Guidance Regarding Meetings and Conferencing via Electronic Means

*Education (NCATE) is an example of an organization that is not allowable as a labor organization.*

- **must include one or more representatives of a joint labor management, or union affiliated, registered apprenticeship** program within the area who must be a training director or a member of a labor organization. If no union affiliated registered apprenticeship programs exist in the area, a representative of a registered apprenticeship program with no union affiliation must be appointed, if one exists.

In addition to the representatives enumerated above, the Cape Fear WDB **may** include the following to contribute to the 20% requirement:

- one or more representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or provide or support competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and

*In North Carolina, examples of allowable community-based organizations include organizations such as Goodwill and community action agencies.*

- one or more representatives of organizations that demonstrated experience or expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth.

*Community College representatives would not be appropriate for this category.*

### Representatives of Education and Training (WIOA Section 107(b) (2)(C))

#### Who May Satisfy the Requirements:

The balance of Cape Fear WDB membership **must include:**

- **At least one** eligible provider administering **adult education and literacy** activities under WIOA Title II;
- **At least one** representative from an **institution of higher education** providing workforce investments activities, including community colleges; and
- **At least one representative** from each of the following governmental and economic and community development entities:
  - **Economic and community development** entities;



## Guidance Regarding Meetings and Conferencing via Electronic Means

- The **State Employment Service Office** under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S. C. 49 et seq.) serving the Cape Fear; and
- The programs carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, other than Sec. 112 or part C of that title.

In addition to the representatives enumerated above, the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) **may** appoint other appropriate entities in the Cape Fear, including:

- Entities administering education and training activities who represent local educational agencies or community-based organizations with demonstrated expertise in addressing the education and training needs for individuals with barriers to employment;
- Governmental and economic and community development entities who represent transportation, housing, and public assistance programs;
- Philanthropic organizations serving the Cape Fear;
- and Other appropriate individuals as determined by the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO).
- The board chair shall be elected among the business representatives.

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*The Division of Workforce Solutions may request additional information from Cape Fear WDBs on representatives and the organizations they represent at any time in order to determine compliance with these requirements. The final determination on whether requirements are met is made by the Division of Workforce Solutions.*

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