



WIOA TITLE I: ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM AND ONE STOP OPERATOR SERVICES

Request for Proposals

PY2025

*Equal Opportunity Employer/Program
Auxiliary Aids and Services are Available Upon Request to Individuals with Disabilities*

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. PURPOSE OF THE RFP

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit competitive proposals from qualified organizations for the delivery of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title I, Public Law 113-128 Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, and One Stop Operator services under the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board (CFWDB) in the following counties: Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender.

The CFWDB is seeking services for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Program to enhance the talent pipeline for local businesses and industries by improving the employability of enrolled jobseekers through both traditional and work-based learning activities in the CFWDB region. Proposals should demonstrate a clear understanding of the current and emerging industries in the service area, effective talent pipeline management, and the diverse needs of jobseekers across various socio-economic, educational, and career backgrounds.

The CFWDB is seeking a dynamic program design for One Stop Operator services that emphasizes vision, innovation, accountability, and efficient use of resources in workforce development for NCWorks customers, including jobseekers and employers. The One Stop Operator will serve as the lead manager within NCWorks leadership, ensuring adequate staffing coverage at career centers and access points. This role includes overseeing the scheduling of NCWorks staff meetings and training, as well as coordinating events such as hiring fairs, resource expos, and informational sessions for NCWorks customers.

Direction and guidance for public Workforce Development activities are provided under the WIOA law by the US Department of Labor (USDOL/ETA), with additional directives provided by the North Carolina Governor's office and the NCWorks Commission, and the Cape Fear Workforce Development Consortium, which is comprised of county commissioners from our four counties. The CFWDB is responsible for ensuring adherence to the law and compliance with additional policies. As subrecipients under the CFWDB, responders to this RFP will comply with these requirements and support initiatives of these stakeholders.

B. WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) supersedes the Workforce Investment Act and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to strengthen the workforce development system through better alignment of employment, training, and education programs. WIOA helps job-seekers access services needed to succeed in the labor market and match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in a global economy. WIOA strengthens the role of the American Job Center network. Specifically, WIOA:

Aligns Federal Investments to Support Job Seekers and Employers: At the State level, WIOA establishes a unified strategic planning across "core" programs which include Wagner-Peyser Employment Service; and Title I of the Rehabilitation Act programs.

Strengthens the Governing Bodies that Establish State, Regional and Local Workforce Investment Priorities: WIOA streamlines membership of business-led, state and local workforce development boards.

The Act emphasizes the role of boards in coordinating and aligning workforce programs and adds funds to develop strategies to meet worker and employer needs.

Helps Employers Find Workers with the Necessary Skills: WIOA emphasizes engaging employers across the workforce system to align training with needed skills and match employers with qualified workers. The Act adds flexibility at the local level to provide incumbent worker training and transitional jobs as allowable activities and promotes work-based training, for example by increasing on-the-job training reimbursement rates to 75 percent. The law also emphasizes training that leads to industry recognized post-secondary credentials.

Aligns Goals and Increases Accountability and Information for Job Seekers and the Public: WIOA aligns the performance indicators for core programs and adds new ones related to services to employers and postsecondary credential attainment. Performance goals must reflect economic conditions and customers characteristics. It makes available data on training providers' performance outcomes and requires third party evaluations of programs.

It is important to note that WIOA priorities and funding may be impacted by congressional budgets and interpretation of the law under leadership at DOL. Proposers are strongly encouraged to follow the Department of Labor's WIOA resource page for WIOA information and latest updates: www.doleta.gov/wioa.

C. CAPE FEAR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Under the WIOA law, Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are established to identify regional labor market needs and collaborate with community stakeholders to address them. WDBs are composed of at least 51% private-sector members, ensuring business insight into industry sectors relevant to the CFWDB region. The remaining members represent public agencies, including partners under other WIOA Titles such as Adult Basic Education/Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and NC Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities , as well as Higher Education, Economic Development, Apprenticeship, Labor Organizations, and specialized Community-Based Organizations. As outlined by their composition, WDBs serve as the primary entity for convening and enhancing the public workforce system. Cape Fear WDB members are appointed by the Cape Fear Workforce Development Consortium.

The public workforce development system in the Cape Fear region must effectively address the employment needs of businesses by preparing the workforce to meet their hiring demands. The system should provide reliable, accurate information to help customers make informed decisions, connect them to relevant services, facilitate access to diverse funding, and offer high-quality job matching services for both jobseekers and employers. The Cape Fear WDB drafts a regional strategic plan every four years and updates the plan annually. This plan is shared with stakeholders, including NCWorks partners.

Under federal legislation, the Board is also responsible for overseeing and evaluating the regional NCWorks Career Center system, including the integration of business services to support a qualified workforce. The Board is committed to delivering exceptional customer service through a team of experts.

To support this goal, CFWDB staff will provide the successful proposer with the technical assistance and capacity-building resources necessary to achieve high performance and outstanding customer satisfaction; however, viable bidders must demonstrate expertise and capacity to build upon these resources to deliver outstanding customer satisfaction.

Responsibilities of the CFWDB include:

Federal Connection: Ensure that Federal procedures and guidelines are correctly implemented; allocate federal workforce development funds; provide data and reports as needed to satisfy Federal systems and participate in Federal funding opportunities that further the Board’s vision for the NCWorks system. Federally, WDBs are considered “local” as compared to the state boards. The Cape Fear “Local Area” is a four-county regional footprint, committed to each municipality, county, and collaborative within our four-county Workforce Development Region.

State Connection: *Ensure* that State policies, procedures and guidelines are correctly implemented; allocate State workforce development funds; provide data and reports as needed to satisfy Federal and State systems and participate in State funding opportunities that further the Board’s vision for the NCWorks system.

Local Connection: Comply with local government policies and regulations; serve as the primary convener for workforce development in the Cape Fear Region, and partner with local organizations to address needs.

Evaluation and Measurement Metrics: Approve customer satisfaction survey tools throughout the system and other evaluation tools; measure metrics set for NCWorks Career Centers to ensure quality services are being provided and continuous improvement; designate the successful operator of the NCWorks Career Centers; maintain a grievance procedure for customers to access if the Operator grievance procedures do not produce a resolution; meet with the NCWorks Career Center Operator regularly to listen to suggestions, discuss issues and resolve concerns; and monitor and report on quality, performance and cost effectiveness, through on-site visits, records review, evaluations, expenditure review and other methods as needed.

Outreach: Approve site location, facilities and equipment that contribute to a center of excellence and customer satisfaction; approve outreach materials funded by the Board or containing information about the Board’s programs; provide NCWorks Career Centers with a common name, logo and signage to promote the identity of the NCWorks Career Centers and ensure connectivity between the NCWorks Operator and local and regional entities such as Chambers of Commerce, public education institutions, economic development entities, etc.

Performance and Compliance: Provide technical assistance on all policies, procedures and rules that impact the operation of centers and provide assistance as needed for compliance; develop and provide technical assistance to build capacity to help operator meet quality and consistency standards as well as to meet or exceed performance goals within the NCWorks system; ensure compliance with all rules, regulations and procedures issued by all funding sources.

Perform fiscal and programmatic monitoring for compliance in accordance with Federal, State and local standards; track and maintain documentation of each performance measure and approve regional education/training providers for inclusion on the State Training Provider List.

Fiscal: Ensure administrative and programmatic cost categories are properly implemented; confirm that costs are correctly allocated to the associated funding stream; verify that NCWorks system costs are allocated according to the MOUs and provide technical assistance to fiscal staff.

The roles and responsibilities may be refined and changed as the WIOA regulations and procedures are changed by the US Department of Labor; State policy and requirements are created and implemented

throughout the State's workforce development system and local direction and procedures are adopted or revised by the Board.

The **Cape Fear Council of Governments** is the administrative entity and grant recipient for the Cape Fear Workforce Development Consortium. The Cape Fear Council of Governments, through an agreement with the Cape Fear Workforce Development Consortium (which governs the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board), is authorized to receive Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds and to administer programs. With consultation and direction from the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board, workforce development programs are designed through a "partnership" approach. Successful bidders will therefore enter into contracts with the Cape Fear Council of Governments. All contracts resulting from this RFP are contingent upon the availability of funds and are subject to amendment or termination due to the lack of or reduced funding. All parties contracting with the Cape Fear Council of Governments must comply with the USDOL regulations and any other interpretations published by the USDOL. Administration and operation of this program are subject to compliance with the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, USDOL- ETA guidance, North Carolina State policies issued from the NCWorks Commission, procedures issued from Division of Workforce Solutions, and local policies and procedures as issued by the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board.

II. SELECTION PROCESS AND TERMS

A. CONTRACT INFORMATION

Type of Contract

Bidders must propose a cost-reimbursement contract. A cost-reimbursement contract is one that establishes an estimate of total costs for the purpose of obligating funds and a ceiling that the contractor may not exceed (except at contractor's risk) unless the awarding party agrees to amend the contract to provide additional funds. A line-item budget shall be based on all legitimate costs to be incurred by the contractor in carrying out the training activity. The contractor is reimbursed for the actual expenses according to the approved line-item budget.

If any part of the work covered by this request is to be subcontracted, the grantee shall identify the subcontracting organization, and a subcontract agreement must be entered into between the two parties upon adequate procurement. Written approval from the Cape Fear Council of Governments – Workforce Development prior to initiating any subcontract agreements is required. Copies of the agreements must be submitted to both the CFWDB and the CFCOG.

Eligible Service Providers

Any governmental, education, community-based organization or non-profit agency engaged in public service. Private-for-profit agencies engaged in providing employment, training and educational opportunities for adults and/or youth may apply. All budgets submitted will be reviewed by the CFWDB Finance Committee for reasonableness of profit and indirect costs. Workforce development-minded organizations with or without previous experience as a provider are encouraged to submit proposals; however, only proposals from organizations that can thoroughly demonstrate that they have the ability to deliver services within the Cape Fear Area will be accepted. Services offered shall be delivered through the established and designated One-Stop Delivery system, NCWorks, and made available through the NCWorks Career Centers. Efficiency in operation and cost effectiveness are considerations for the award.

An entity may not compete for funds if:

- the entity has been debarred or suspended or otherwise determined to be ineligible to receive federal funds by an action of any governmental agency;
- the entity's previous contract with the CFWDB/CFCOG was terminated for cause;
- the entity has not complied with an official order to repay disallowed costs incurred during its conduct of programs or services; or
- the entity's name appears on the convicted vendors list.

Outstanding Monitoring, Audit or Legal Concerns – respondents must disclose and rectify any and all outstanding monitoring and/or audit concerns from any of the respondent's other contracts prior to receiving a contract resulting from this RFP. Additionally, respondents must disclose any legal judgments, claims, arbitration proceedings, lawsuits or other legal proceedings pending or outstanding (unresolved) against the organization, its owners, officers, or principals.

Competency – respondents are expected to have the technical competence, knowledge and expertise in management and administration, the professional staff, and the administrative and fiscal management

systems to accomplish the scope of work and the goals and objectives stated in this RFP and must meet high standards of public service and fiduciary responsibility. Respondents are responsible for being knowledgeable of all laws, regulations, rules, and policies of the specific funding sources involved and applying them in developing the RFP response.

Contract Period

The bidders selected will be awarded an annual contract (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026). A fully executed contract must be in place within the first thirty days of the contract period. No funds will be exchanged until after the contract is executed by both parties agreeing to the terms outlined in the contract. The CFWDB/CFCOG reserves the right to modify all contracts year-to-year. A subrecipient under contract must meet the performance requirements as outlined in the contract; however, continuation is subject to future funding and legislative authority.

Contracts are reviewed annually and may be extended for an additional year based on the following:

- Funding is sufficient to allow an extension for a longer time period
- Performance expectations under the existing criteria were met
- There have been no serious issues related to performance or invoicing
- Services being provided remain valuable to participants or the need remains
- Subrecipient has met all external audit requirements

Anticipated Funding

All funding is contingent on the availability of federal funds and continued federal authorization for program activities. Any contract hereto is subject to the amendment or termination due to lack of funds or authorization due to statutory or regulatory changes. The below amounts are based on allocation and take into consideration proposed infrastructure expenses.

- The amounts are for planning purposes only. The proposed allocation is subject to change based on actual PY2025 allocations and infrastructure costs. Additional funding may be made available to high-performing programs.
- Respondents’ proposed budgets must be within the amounts indicated (including profit) and must be reasonably based on proposed service level and service delivery plans.
- Subsequent revisions and negotiations of final contract budgets may be required due to actual allocations received, actual infrastructure costs, and funding award decisions.

Bidders’ budgets should not exceed:

COUNTY	Adult	Dislocated Worker	One Stop Operator
Brunswick	\$285,000	\$90,000	\$50,000
Columbus	\$245,000	\$110,000	\$50,000
New Hanover	\$285,000	\$90,000	\$50,000
Pender	\$150,000	\$50,000	\$25,000
TOTALS:	\$965,000	\$340,000	\$175,000

B. SCHEDULE FOR SELECTION

Below is the schedule of important dates for the PY 2025 RFP cycle. The Bidders’ Conference is optional; however, it is highly recommended that interested parties attend the Conference. A conference line will be available. If your agency would like to utilize that option, please request via email to Brian Jackson cfwdb@capefearcog.org, who will provide you with that information. Regardless of attendance at the Bidders Conference, a required Intent to Bid form must be submitted by 4:00 p.m. on **Thursday, March 6, 2025**. If your agency is a finalist for operating a program under this grant, you may be invited to present to the Committee for further evaluation as listed below.

IMPORTANT DATES	
RFP Release	Monday, February 17, 2025
Bidders’ Conference	Thursday, March 6, 2025
Written Response to Bidders’ Conference Questions	Friday, March 12, 2025
Intention to Bid Form Due	Thursday, March 6, 2025
Proposals Due	Monday, March 31, 2025
Reference Forms Due	Monday, March 31, 2025
Committee Review of Proposals	Monday, March 31, 2025, through Friday, April 11, 2025
Bidder Presentations to Committees	Monday, March 31, 2025, through Friday, April 11, 2025
Cape Fear Workforce Development Board Meeting/Action on Awards for PY2024	Wednesday, April 16, 2025
Notification of Awards	Thursday, April 17, 2025
Contract Negotiations	April – May, 2025
Contract Start Date	July 1, 2025

Mandatory Intent to Bid

Respondents must submit an Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid are due no later than 4:00 p.m. on **Thursday, March 6, 2025**. They will be accepted in person at the Bidders Conference and electronically via email or fax. The Cape Fear COG fax line is: 910-395-2684. If submitted electronically, please call us at 910-202-4646 to confirm that we received your form.

Mandatory Reference Forms

Upon receipt of the Intent to Bid, respondents will receive three copies of the CFWDB Reference Form. The respondent must solicit references via this form. The Reference Form must be submitted in a sealed envelope to the Cape Fear Council of Governments by **Monday, March 31, 2025**.

Bidders' Conference

There will be a Bidders' Conference for those organizations with an intention to bid. The Bidders' Conference will be held on **Thursday, March 6, 2025**, at 10:00 a.m. at the Cape Fear Council of Governments at 1480 Harbour Drive, Wilmington, NC 28401. Bidders may participate via telephone. If you would like to participate telephonically, arrangements must be made in advance by contacting Brian Jackson at cfwdb@capefearcog.org no later than **Wednesday, March 5, 2025**. The mandatory Intent to Bid form will be accepted at the Bidders' Conference.

Contact Information for RFP Questions

The CFWDB or staff cannot assist proposers with actual preparation of their proposal. During the period of time between the publication date of the RFP and the deadline to submit technical RFP questions, the CFWDB will only respond to technical questions about the RFP submitted by email. No telephone inquiries will be accepted.

All RFP technical assistance questions will be answered at the Bidders' Conference and/or included with official responses to questions received at the Bidders' Conference, which will be posted on the CFCOG website. All proposers will be notified by email when questions concerning RFP technical assistance are answered and posted on the website.

During the proposal process, the individual identified below is the contact for any inquiries or Information relating to this RFP. Questions concerning this RFP, the application process, or programmatic issues should be submitted in writing by email or addressed as listed below.

Ginger Brick, Director
Cape Fear Workforce Development Board
Cape Fear Council of Governments
1480 Harbour Drive, Wilmington, NC 28401
gbrick@capefearcog.org

C. INSTRUCTIONS

General Instructions for Submission

All proposals must be sealed and addressed as directed per these instructions. Failure to do so may result in a premature opening of, or failure to open, such a proposal. Sealed modifications of proposals already submitted will be considered if received at the office by the final date.

Please submit one original in a three-ring binder, with sections and required attachments clearly marked, with tabs, and four copies of budget documents and Statement of work packet, no later than 4:00 p.m. on **Monday, March 31, 2025**, to:

Ginger Brick, Workforce Development Director
Cape Fear Workforce Development Board/Cape Fear Council of Governments
1480 Harbour Drive, Wilmington, NC 28401

Please also submit a portable drive or an email PDF to cfwdb@capefearcog.org with the subject "CONFIDENTIAL PROPOSAL" no later than 4:00 p.m. on **Monday, March 31, 2025**. If a PDF is submitted via email, please utilize a read receipt to confirm delivery.

Required Proposal Format

Proposals must include all items in the order shown, as listed in the Section IV of this RFP. Submissions must be numbered, tabbed, and labeled as indicated. All forms should be completed with all information requested and executed properly. Omissions, inaccurate submissions, or out-of-order responses may result in a section being deemed incomplete or non-responsive, and therefore, being excluded from review or receiving a low rating during the review process. Proposals that fail to include all applicable forms and information will not be considered. Forms are attached unless otherwise indicated.

D. SELECTION AND APPEALS

Terms of Selection

The CFWDB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received. The CFWDB reserves the right to waive informalities and minor irregularities in offers received. All solicitations are contingent upon availability of funds.

The CFWDB may accept any item or group of items of any offer, or award more or fewer slots at the same price bid, unless the proposer qualifies its offer by specific limitations.

The CFWDB may select a service provider based on initial offers received without discussion of such offers. Accordingly, each initial offer should be submitted on the most favorable terms from a price and technical standpoint that the proposer can submit to the CFWDB. However, the CFWDB reserves the right to request additional data or oral discussion or documentation in support of written offers.

Any proposer may be requested to make an oral presentation of their proposal(s) to the CFWDB. If requested, staff will schedule the time and location for these presentations.

The primary consideration in selecting organizations to deliver services will be the effectiveness of the organization in delivering comparable or related needs based on demonstrated performance, in terms of the likelihood of meeting performance goals, cost, quality of training, and characteristics of participants. Selection in considering agencies or organizations shall also include time management of participant files and NCWorks.

Determinations will take into consideration such matters as whether the organization has:

- Adequate financial resources or the ability to attain them;
- The ability to meet the program design specifications at a reasonable cost, as well as the ability to meet performance goals;
- A satisfactory record of past performance in employment and training related activities, including demonstrated quality of training, the ability to provide or arrange for appropriate supportive services, retention in employment at follow-up, and earning rates of participants;

- The ability to provide services that can lead to long-term, unsubsidized employment for participants with identified deficiencies.
- A satisfactory record of integrity, business ethics, and fiscal accountability;
- The necessary organization, experience, accounting, and operational controls;
- The technical skills and time to perform the work; and
- An adequate plan to provide services and all related aspects of providing services as described in the offeror's proposal.
- Adequate staffing. If direct project staffing should become an issues, the agency shall deploy the same level of expertise and delivery of those proposed to in the statement of work nuntil adequate professionals are positioned to achieve statement of work goals.

Terms of Contract

After the CFWDB has determined the most qualified proposals, an attempt to negotiate the final terms of the contract will begin. If negotiations with the selected bidder are unsuccessful, the CFWDB will stop all negotiations with the selected bidder and proceed to negotiate contract terms with the second ranked bidder. The same procedure will occur with the third ranked bidder if negotiations fail with the second bidder. If an agreement is not negotiated with any of the first three ranked bidders, additional bidder proposals may be selected. Additionally, this process may occur if it is determined the selected bidder is insufficient in delivering services. A contingency list of ranked proposals is retained should the initial provider prove ineffective to deliver services. If no additional qualified bidders are available, the CFWDB reserves the right to request a waiver to provide direct services until a new proposal cycle can be established.

Appeals

Appeals by proposing organizations denied funding are limited to procedural appeals only. Such appeals shall be based solely on allegations of irregularities in the solicitation and awards procedure and not on the relative merit of the offers submitted. If a proposer believes to have been harmed by the violation or misapplication of procedure or regulation of this program, the proposer has the right to file grievance. This grievance should be filed according to the written procedures established by the CFWDB and may be obtained by contacting the CFWDB Director, Ginger Brick, by emailing gbrick@capefearcog.org.

E. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- This RFP does not commit the CFWDB to award a grant.
- No costs will be paid to cover the expense of preparing a proposal or to procure a contract for services or supplies under WIOA.
- Ownership of all data, material, and documentation originated and prepared by the service provider pursuant to the contract shall belong exclusively to the CFWDB.
- Proposals should be submitted in the format set forth in this RFP and should adhere to the minimum requirements specified herein.
- Formal notification to award a contract and the actual execution of a contract are subject to the following:
 - Receipt of WIOA funds granted under the WIOA plan;
 - Results of negotiations between selected providers and CFWDB staff; and
 - Continued availability of WIOA funds.

- Any changes to the WIOA program, the State of North Carolina WIOA Plan, or the CFWDB WIOA Plan, may result in a change in contracting. In such instances, the CFWDB will not be held liable for what is in the Offeror's proposal or this Request for Proposal package.
- Each offeror submitting a proposal will be notified in writing of the CFWDB's decision regarding its proposal.
- Proposals submitted for funding consideration must be consistent with the federal WIOA legislation, all applicable Federal Regulations, the North Carolina Division of Workforce Solutions policies, and the CFWDB policies and procedures.
- Offerors selected for funding must also ensure compliance with the following: USDOL Regulations 20 CFR Part 652, Office of Management and Budget Circulars A-21, A-87, A-110, A-122, A-133 or 48CFR Part 31, whichever is applicable.
- The CFWDB may require selected service providers to participate in negotiations and to rewrite their proposals as agreed upon during negotiations.
- Additional funds received by the WDB may be contracted by expanding existing programs, or by consideration of proposals not initially funded under this RFP, if such proposals were rated in the competitive range. These decisions shall be at the discretion of the CFWDB.
- The CFWDB may decide not to fund part or all of a proposal even though it is found to be in the competitive range if, in the opinion of the CFWDB, the services proposed are not needed, or the costs are higher than the CFWDB finds reasonable in relation to the overall funds available, or if past management concerns lead the CFWDB to believe that the service provider has undertaken more services than it can successfully handle.
- Any proposal approved for funding is contingent on the results of a pre-award survey that may be conducted by the CFWDB administrative staff. This survey will establish, to the CFWDB's satisfaction, whether the proposed service provider is capable of conducting and carrying out the provisions of the proposed contract. If the results of the survey indicate, in the opinion of the CFWDB, that the proposed service provider may not be able to fulfill contract expectations, the WDB reserves the right not to enter into contract with the organization, regardless of CFWDB approval of the Offeror's proposal.
- The CFWDB is required to abide by all WIOA legislation and regulations. Therefore, the CFWDB reserves the right to modify or alter the requirements and standards as set forth in this RFP based on program requirements mandated by State or Federal agencies.
- Programs must be operated according to the federal WIOA provisions and all applicable Cape Fear policies, and all Federal regulations of the NCWorks Commission and, subsequently, the North Carolina Division of Workforce of Workforce Solutions (DWS) procedures.
- Service Providers will be expected to adhere to CFWDB procedures to collect, verify, and submit required monthly reports as well as invoices to the CFWDB.
- All grievances arising out of the WIOA or this RFP must be filed according to the Cape Fear Workforce Consortium's grievance procedures.
- All service providers must fully comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, amended; Non-Traditional Employment for Women Act of 1991, as amended; with all other applicable requirements imposed or pursuant to the regulations implementing those laws, including but not limited to 29CFR Part 34.
- Service providers must accept liability for all aspects of any WIOA program conducted under contract with the CFWDB. Service providers will be liable for any disallowed costs or illegal expenditures of funds or program operations conducted.

- Reductions in the funding level of any contract resulting from this solicitation process may be considered during the contract period when a service provider fails to meet expenditure, participant, and/or outcome goals specified in the contract or when anticipated funding is not forthcoming from the federal or state governments.
- Service providers will allow access to all WIOA records, program materials, staff, and participants to local, state, and federal representatives. In addition, service providers are required to maintain all WIOA records for a period of 6 years (3 years from the program year which the client completed follow-up services and 3 years beyond that date).
- Selected proposer(s) shall give credit to the CFWDB, as the program activity funding source, in all oral presentations, written documents, publicity and advertisements regarding any activities funded as a result of this RFP.

F. GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The operation and performance of all components will be in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the accompanying Federal Regulations; and any interpretations published by the U. S. Department of Labor (USDOL) and the State of North Carolina; the Nontraditional Employment for Women Act of 1991; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended; and instructions issued by the WDB. [If new policies are implemented, all contractors will be required to operate in accordance with these mandates.] All contractors are directed to familiarize themselves with the WIOA Act to ensure compliance. Bidders are responsible for obtaining copies of the above listed documents. These and related documents can be obtained online at <http://usdol.gov>.

Fiscal and Administrative Management: A number of changes to the federal OMB circulars took place on December 19, 2017. New Uniform guidance was issued in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 2900. The Employment and Training Administration issued TEGL 15-14 that gives guidance on this reform. In summary, 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900 replaces the following: A-103 & A-89, A-87, A-133 & A-50, A-110, A-21, A-110 and A-122.

Internal Financial Management: All proposers are required to conduct internal financial management reviews. The purpose is to provide adequate internal controls and ensure compliance with the following areas related to WIOA funds and services:

- Provisions of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act and its regulations;
- Provisions of the WIOA Contract;
- Applicable state and workforce development board policies;
- Accepted financial management and accounting practices; and
- Compliance with 2 CFR 200

Internal financial management procedures shall be sufficient to prevent fraud and abuse. All reports of information creating suspicion of or instances of criminal misconduct must be reported immediately to Cape Fear WDB staff, NC Department of Commerce Division of Workforce Solutions and USDOL. Internal financial management procedures must also ensure that auditable and otherwise adequate records are maintained which support all expenditures of WIOA funds and confirm adherence to policies regarding allowable costs and allocations of cost to proper cost categories. It is necessary to assure that accounting records are supported by source documentation for each transaction. In addition, records should be traceable to documentation and maintained in such a manner as to provide a complete and accurate audit trail during any internal or external examination.

The selected proposer shall document all internal financial compliance reviews.

If applicable, the proposer will provide a copy of the organization's Cost Allocation Plan. For-profit organizations will need to provide any proposed profit within the budget document.

Internal Program Management: Contractors are required to establish internal program management procedures to assure compliance with contract requirements, delivery of high-quality services to eligible adults and dislocated workers, and achievement of planned outcomes. Internal program management procedures must also ensure that auditable and otherwise adequate records are maintained to support the eligibility of all WIOA customers and confirm adherence to specific requirements and time limitations.

Internal financial management procedures shall be sufficient to prevent fraud and abuse. Internal financial management procedures must also ensure that auditable and otherwise adequate records are maintained which support all expenditures of WIOA funds and confirm adherence to policies regarding allowable costs and allocations of cost to proper cost categories. The WIOA contractor shall document all internal financial compliance reviews.

Audit Submission: As a recipient of WIOA funds, proposers must have an annual financial and compliance audit performed. The audits must be conducted in accordance with auditing standards set forth under the Single Audit Act Amendment of 1996 and revised OMB Circular A-133 at 29 CFR 95.26 for institutions of higher education, hospitals and other non-profit organizations and at 29 CFR 97.26 for units of state and local government. This requirement will be met by providing the Cape Fear Council of Governments-Workforce Development Department with a copy of the annual audit according to OMB Circular A-133. For all for profit businesses, proposers must have an annual financial and compliance audit performed under Generally Accepted Accounting Principles by an independent auditor. A copy of the audit will be forwarded to the Cape Fear Council of Governments-Workforce Development Department. The audit should be submitted within 30 days after the completion of the audit, but no later than six months after the end of the audit period.

Monitoring Procedures: Subrecipient staff must cooperate with any monitoring, inspection, audit, or investigation of activities related to WIOA contracts. These activities may be conducted by the NCDOC-DWS, USDOL, and the CFWDB staff or their designated representatives. This cooperation includes access to, examination of, and/or photocopying of books, records, files, documents, property or equipment related to all aspects of WIOA-funded activities under this contractual agreement.

The CFWDB has developed a systematic monitoring system for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of WIOA funded programs. Monitoring is the quality control system whereby the CFWDB gathers and analyzes information to detect problems, identify strengths and weaknesses, and propose improvements to the program. Monitoring activities are conducted periodically to determine whether programs are in compliance with contractual agreements, WIOA law and regulations, and CFWDB policies and requirements. The CFWDB monitors performance, programmatic and fiscal activities. In many instances, the different types of monitoring are interrelated, and conducted simultaneously. Contractors must cooperate with any monitoring, inspection, audit or investigation of activities related to WIOA contracts. Monitoring visits may be announced or unannounced in accordance with Cape Fear Workforce Development Area policies. These activities may be conducted by the North Carolina Department of Commerce/Division of Workforce Solutions, the U.S. Department of Labor and the CFWDB, or their designated representatives. This cooperation includes access to the premises for the purpose of interviewing employees or participants

and permitting the examination of, and/or photocopying of books, records, files, or other documents related to the contractual agreement.

Records Retention: Records and documents must be maintained for WIOA participants and employees. The subrecipient agrees to make these records available for monitoring and review by the CFWDB and agrees to retain these records, subject to audit, for five (5) years from completion of services. Release of responsibility to retain records after the five (5) year period will not be authorized until final resolution of all audit findings. In the event the contractor goes out of business or ceases to be an organization prior to the expiration of records retention responsibility, the contractor will deliver all records required to be retained by the Cape Fear Council of Governments-Workforce Development Department. The records shall be transmitted to the Cape Fear Council of Governments for acceptance in an orderly fashion with documents properly labeled and filed and in an acceptable condition for storage.

The following records and documents must be maintained:

- General ledger or equivalent;
- Cash receipts and cash disbursements journals/reports or equivalent;
- Bank statements, reconciliation, deposit slips and canceled checks for each bank account through which WIOA funds were received or disbursed;
- All contracts with the Cape Fear WDB including all amendments;
- All financial reports and documentation supporting requests for reimbursement;
- Payroll records including Individual Earnings Record, Employee Withholding Authorization (W-4), FICA reporting forms, federal and state withholding, Unemployment taxes, Employee Personnel Files, Time Records and Employee Time/Salary Allocation plans;
- Invoices and/or supporting data for non-payroll disbursements; and
- Customers' records including participant data forms, verification/documentation items, assessments tests and results, the Individualized Employment Strategy and documentation of outcomes.
- Monthly Participant and Financial Reports and Monthly Performance Reports; and
- Other financial records or documents that are related to the contract as requested by the CFWDB.

Insurance Requirements

Insurance: The service provider shall provide adequate on-site medical and accident insurance for all enrollees not covered by North Carolina's Workers' Compensation law. This coverage shall not include income maintenance. Contributions to a self-insurance plan, to the extent that they are comparable in costs and extent of coverage had insurance been purchased, are allowable upon prior approval by the State of North Carolina, Department of Commerce/Division of Workforce Solutions through the Cape Fear Council of Governments/Workforce Development Department. Requests for such approval must be submitted in writing. It is strongly encouraged that WIOA customers are covered by accident insurance while participating in WIOA-funded activities. OJT employers must provide proof of workers' compensation or comparable coverage prior to execution of the OJT contract. No WIOA client will be required or permitted to work or receive services or training in a building or within surroundings or under working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to the client's health or safety. All participants placed in a paid work experiences or internships, must be covered by workers compensation. OJT employers must provide proof of workers' compensation or comparable coverage prior to execution of the OJT contract.

Workers' Compensation Insurance: Workers' Compensation must be provided to participants in programs and activities under Title I of WIOA on the same basis as the compensation is provided to other

individuals in the state in similar employment. Workers' compensation benefits must be available to participants in work experience for injuries suffered while participating in work experience. If the work experience activity is not covered by workers' compensation insurance coverage must be secured for injuries suffered by the participant in work experience.

General Liability Insurance: General public liability insurance coverage in the amount of \$500,000 single limit coverage is required of all WIOA contractors except where a lesser amount maybe agreed to by the Consortium. (NOTE: Contractors that are state agencies or political subdivisions of the State of North Carolina are exempt from the public liability insurance requirement referenced above.)

Automobile Insurance: WIOA contractors using motor vehicles in conducting services shall provide automobile insurance that clearly specifies that the Cape Fear WDB, Cape Fear Council of Governments and/or staff are held harmless against claims arising from ownership, maintenance, or use of said vehicle.

Bonding Insurance Requirements: WIOA contractors must meet bonding requirements as required through the OMB Circulars or other applicable regulations. Public agencies are required by the North Carolina General Statute to be bonded. Non-governmental agencies shall procure a blanket fidelity bond, position bond, or name schedule fidelity bond for all persons or positions authorized to receive or disburse WIOA funds. The Contractor must maintain all bonding in force for the period of the contractual agreement. The proposed contractor must submit a written notice to the Cape Fear WDB within fifteen (15) calendar days prior to any reduction in the limits stated on the bonding document. Similarly, the Cape Fear WDB selected proposer must provide written notice of any cancellation of the bonding policy to the immediately upon receipt of the cancellation notices.

Program Income Requirement

USDOL requires that all income generated under any WIOA contract shall be reported and used to further program objectives. Any organizations proposing program income must provide a set of measurable deliverables. Program income is required to be spent prior to use of WIOA funds.

For Profit

WIOA for-profit entities are required to adhere to the requirements of 2 CFR 200.324 concerning earning and negotiating a fair and reasonable profit. Profit margins shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the Contract, and the earning of profit shall be calculated and awarded according to CFWDB POLICY NO. P-WDB-021-2022 which shall be made available at the Bidder's Conference.

Authority to Re-Capture and Re-Distribute Funds

The WDB has the authority to re-capture and re-distribute funds based on the following criteria not being met:

- Staffing
- Enrollments
- Caseload Management
- Spending levels

Property Management Requirements

The proposer agrees to maintain careful accountability of all WIOA purchased non-expendable property (property with a life expectancy of one year or more and a unit cost of \$500.00 or more) and to maintain an inventory of all properties issued by the Cape Fear WDB or subsequently acquired with WIOA funds. Acquisition of non-expendable property with a unit cost of \$500.00 (including taxes, shipping and handling costs) or more must be approved by Cape Fear WDB staff **prior** to the purchase. Any

disposal of WIOA property must be according to applicable federal, state and local disposal procedures. Any revenues derived from the sale of property purchased with WIOA funds must be used in WIOA service delivery for the program(s) which funded the original purchase.

Any single piece of equipment that costs greater than \$5,000 and to be purchased with WIOA funds must be pre-approved by the Cape Fear WDB and the NC Division of Workforce Solutions. Failure to do so may result in disallowed costs.

The WIOA contractor will be responsible for maintaining an accurate inventory of all WIOA property in their possession. A copy of the updated annual inventory shall be submitted to the Cape Fear WDB staff upon completion. The Cape Fear WDB will maintain a fixed-asset listing to be verified for physical location and serviceability at the WIOA contractor facility at least annually. Funds may be used to pay for or replace the missing property.

In the event property purchased with WIOA funds is stolen or destroyed by criminal act, the proposer will notify appropriate law enforcement officials immediately. The Cape Fear WDB must be notified within three (3) working days of discovering the loss or damage. A copy of the police report will be maintained as documentation of loss, and a copy forwarded to the Cape Fear WDB.

The proposer agrees to pay for or replace any property purchased with WIOA funds that is lost, damaged or destroyed through negligence.

Wage and Labor and Health and Safety Standards

Customers employed in work-related activities under WIOA must be compensated in accordance with applicable law, but not less than the higher of the rate specified in the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 or the applicable State minimum wage law.

Health and safety standards under Federal and State law otherwise applicable to working conditions of employees are equally applicable to working conditions of WIOA customers engaged in work experience activities under WIOA. Workers' compensation insurance coverage must be secured for WIOA customers in work experience.

Budgets and Invoices

Respondents to this RFP should submit a separate Adult and Dislocated Worker and a combined budget that is included with the RFP up to, but not greater than, the projected available funding for each program. Once a proposer is selected the Cape Fear WDB staff will work with the proposer to budget those funds. The amounts on the funding chart are intended to be used as guidelines for proposers and are subject to revision based upon final notification of WIOA funding availability from the NC Department of Commerce. The budget spreadsheet document will provide a summary of the proposed cost by line item with additional worksheets to provide additional back up detail of projected budgets. If additional narrative detail is needed, please provide that as well. It is understood that customer expenses will be difficult to accurately predict at this time; however, a projection of these expenses based on plans for services to customers is requested. More detailed budgets will be developed after the proposer is selected and allocation amounts are more defined.

Proposed budgets must be within the amounts indicated and must be reasonable based on proposed staffing, service levels, and service delivery plans. The amount awarded will be determined on a

competitive basis, but not necessarily based on the lowest proposed cost. Subsequent revisions and negotiations of final contract budgets may be required due to funding award decisions.

Under this reimbursement contract, the proposer will be expected to incur the costs for all program services and make payments on behalf of the enrolled customers, then report each month's expenses by the 10th day of the following month for each of the funding sources in the contract. The monthly reimbursement submission will include a line-item invoice, with budgets, current month expenses, unexpended balances, and accrued expenses. As backup to the invoice, a summary line-item expenditure reports and detailed line item expenditure reports by fund source that support the invoice amounts should be submitted each month.

The program year and fiscal year is from July 1st through the following June 30th. Final payment for each program year's WIOA expenses will occur with the June invoice that will be submitted by the proposer to the Cape Fear WDB during the month of July along with end of year Financial Closeout documents. Proposers are expected to expend at least 80% of their contracted funds by the end of each program year.

Although not expected, if any part of the work covered by this request is to be sub-granted, the proposer shall identify the sub-granting organization and a sub-grant agreement must be entered into between the two parties. Copies of the sub-grant agreements must be submitted to the Cape Fear WDB for approval, prior to execution of any sub-grant agreements.

Reports

Monthly and Quarterly Reports: It is expected that routine monthly and quarterly written programmatic reports will be compiled to include WIOA Performance Measures, NCWorks Commission Performance Measures, career services, career center traffic, business services, caseload management and other key performance indicators as required by the CFWDB.

Financial Reports: Detailed Financial reports and invoices for reimbursement will be prepared and submitted to the CFWDB staff each month following the report month. Contractors are required to adhere to CFWDB reporting requirements and procedures.

III. PROGRAM ELEMENTS

A. ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM AND INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY

One-stop Delivery System

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the nation's principal workforce development legislation. WIOA establishes the one-stop delivery system, identified as the American Job Center Network, titled in North Carolina as the NCWorks Career Center system.

Bidders will leverage community resources to create a seamless network of services that are easily accessible and relevant to customers. To have a meaningful impact on the quality and breadth of the NC Works system, bidders must be able to draw upon a resource base that extends beyond WIOA funding. Bidders should include connections to other funding sources and services that will benefit participants and increase the cost effectiveness of federal funds.

Required Partners under WIOA

WIOA defines One-stop Career Center partners. Each partner must provide access to its programs or activities through the NCWorks Career Center system, in addition to its other appropriate location(s). Required partners include:

- WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, JobCorps, YouthBuild, Indian and Native American program, National Farmworker Jobs programs/Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker programs
- WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy programs
- WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser Employment Services program
- WIOA Title IV – Rehabilitation Act Title I programs (Vocational Rehabilitation)
- Carl D Perkins Career and Technical Education programs
- Community Services Block Grants
- HUD Employment and Training Programs
- Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance programs (TAA)
- Access to Unemployment Compensation programs (UI)
- Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) – Second Chance programs

Additional partners may include Community-based organizations, K-12 education agencies, local Chambers of Commerce, small business centers, universities, and local community colleges.

Integrated Service Delivery (ISD)

WIOA requires that partners within the NCWorks system collaborate to achieve shared goals. The CFWDB authorizes Title I and Title III staff to cross-train, and staff are encouraged to learn the basic offerings of partner agencies/programs to enhance customer experience and improve access to all services. Subrecipient staff may also be required to provide coverage in the Career Resource Center, reception desk, access points, or off-site events. The functional supervisor, which is the One Stop Operator, is responsible for scheduling coverage for events, staff meetings, functional team meetings, and NCWorks staff training. The minimum hours of operation for each Cape Fear WDB NCWorks Career Center is 40 hours per week. Responders must plan staffing to ensure coverage during those 40 hours. Days and hours vary by center to meet the

needs of jobseekers and businesses. Staff are expected to conform to the hours assigned and attend career center staff meetings, leadership team meetings, or other meetings scheduled by the OSO.

Team-Based Staff Deployment: In the Cape Fear NC Works Career Center integrated model, staff will be deployed in functional teams that work together to meet the needs of job seeker and employer customers. The specific functional teams that will operate in each NC Works Center at a minimum will include the Welcome Team, the Skills Team, and the Employment Team. The Cape Fear Workforce Development Board requires the contractor through this Request for Proposals to staff these functional teams with high energy professional staff who can deliver high quality services to customers and who also have the ability to determine the need for further employment and training services, managing referrals based on availability and suitability, and identifying both internal and external resources to meet customer needs.

Subrecipient should provide staffing for the following teams (cross-training should occur):

The Welcome Team: The Welcome team greets visitors, conducts initial assessments, completes NC Works enrollment activities, and makes referral decisions based on information obtained in the process. Enters all required and pertinent data elements into the NC Works system.

The Skills Team: The Skills Team works with job seeker customers on a variety of skill development issues including basic skills, technology skills, soft skills, occupational-specific skills, OJT, pre-apprenticeship, and others. Enters all required and pertinent data elements into the NCWorks system.

The Employment Team: The Employment Team works with job seeker customers on a variety of job searching activities, including resume development, interview preparation, job referrals, and others. Enters all required and pertinent data elements into the NC Works system.

Note: Depending on staffing levels, staff may serve on more than one functional teams.

Locations of Current CFWDB One-stop Career Centers

Across the four-county region, there are three stand-alone, comprehensive NCWorks Career Centers, and there are several NCWorks Access Points across all four counties. CFWDB requires that Adult and Dislocated worker service providers operate from an NCWorks Career Center, except in cases where a subrecipient specializes in a population that is better served through that agency's own facility. In such a case, the subrecipient is expected to schedule staff at the NCWorks site and participate in all career center meetings and events. Bidding organizations should be aware that the successful bidder(s) will provide staff to at NCWorks sites. Scheduling is coordinated between the OSO and CFWDB staff.

Cape Fear Workforce Development Board Career Centers

Brunswick County

5300 Main Street
Shallotte, NC 28740

Columbus County

Southeastern Community College
4564 Chadbourne Highway
Whiteville, NC 28472

New Hanover County

1994 S 17th Street
Wilmington, NC 28401

Pender County (Access Point)

Cape Fear Community College
100 Industrial Drive
BC Building
Burgaw 28425

Access, Direct Linkage, and Affiliated One-stop Sites

The OSO will ensure all partner programs, services, and activities are available through the one-stop delivery system. Partner program services can be made available in three ways:

1. A one-stop partner program staff member can be physically present at the one-stop center;
2. A one-stop partner program can have a staff member from a different partner program, physically present at the one-stop center that is appropriately trained to provide information to customers about the programs, services, and activities available through their program;
3. Or the one-stop operator and the one-stop partner can make a direct linkage available through technology, so that program staff can provide meaningful information or services to one-stop career center patrons without being physically present.

The one-stop delivery system may also provide partner programs, services, and activities through affiliated sites or through a network of eligible one-stop partners that provide at least one or more of the programs, services, and activities at a physical location or through an electronically or technologically linked access point, such as a library. Specialized centers that address a specific population may also exist (i.e. a youth career center).

Programs, services, and activities must be accessible to individuals through electronic means in a manner that improves efficiency, coordination, and quality in the delivery of one-stop partner services.

Priority Populations

WIOA requires states, Workforce Development Boards, and One-Stop Career Centers to connect supports and services for priority populations that lead to long-term employment and outcomes for individuals seeking services, especially those with significant challenges to employment, including:

- Unemployed insurance claimants
- Youth and adults with disabilities
- Veterans
- Low-income residents
- Returning citizens to the area
- Older workers
- Opportunity Youth

NCWorks staff, including ADW program staff and the One Stop Operator, will also work closely with the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager to better understand our regional labor market and the employment needs of high-growth industry sectors recognized by the CFWDB.

B. ONE STOP OPERATOR

The One-Stop Operator will manage services within the NCWorks system, specifically at local NCWorks Career Centers, ensuring consistent use of the NCWorks brand (name, logo, marketing materials). These

Career Centers serve as key community hubs, offering workforce services to jobseekers and employers within the NCWorks Integrated Services Framework.

The One-Stop Operator is expected to support the development of the local workforce system by working with NCWorks partners, educational institutions, and other community organizations. This includes overseeing Career Center operations, developing staff, partnering with schools to provide workforce resources, organizing career fairs and workshops, and supporting Career Pathways initiatives. Proposals should demonstrate the provider's ability to effectively manage and contribute to the workforce system.

WIOA-funded staff and partners will work together in an integrated NCWorks team to deliver all career services, such as greeting customers, providing career advice, issuing training scholarships, organizing workshops, and participating in hiring events. Staff will be cross-trained to fill any career services role as needed based on demand.

Under this RFP. The subrecipient to provide One-Stop Operator services is also the provider of program services; therefore, firewalls must be in place to prevent conflicts of interest. This ensures that jobseekers and employers receive impartial guidance, and all partner agencies/services are objectively supported. The bidding organization must submit a written agreement outlining how it will manage its dual roles without conflicts, in compliance with WIOA regulations and conflict-of-interest policies.

Expectations of role:

The One Stop Operator is lead manager and primary point of contact for the NCWorks Career Center(s) and Access Point(s). An effective One Stop Operator will have extensive leadership experience and possess working knowledge of all NCWorks programs and services, including those provided through community partners. The One Stop Operator will:

- Coordinate the service delivery of NCWorks partners in accordance with the NCWorks MoU for the CFWDB region.
- Implement human-centered practices to improve customer access to NCWorks services and improve outcomes for NCWorks providers.
- Manage hours of operation in accordance with CFWDB standards and expectations, open and close the facilities, block time for team-building, and communicate when services must switch from onsite to virtual due to unforeseen circumstances.
- Maintain schedule of all NCWorks staff; coordinate with other NCWorks managers to ensure coverage onsite and at Access Points or NCWorks events.
- Plan, schedule, and promote meetings and events for business and job-seeking customers.
- Work with other NCWorks managers to create interesting and meaningful opportunities for staff professional development and team-building.
- Host routine (weekly or daily) staff meetings that promote shared understanding among partner agencies, highlight new and long-term job orders in the system, emphasize LMI data for the county and WDB region, and provide progress updates on career center functionality.
- Utilize Integrated Services Delivery, emphasizing cross-training of staff and meaningful customer service practices, to better meet the needs of business and jobseeking customers.
- Ensure current resources regarding labor market information, career pathways in high-growth industries, program information, and other relevant resources are provided and adequately maintained in the NCWorks lobby and within staff offices for ease of use.

- Manage general facilities issues, solicit bids for repairs, and be available to oversee and confirm completion of any scheduled repairs.
- Serve as convener and lead facilitator for quarterly WIOA cross-agency leadership meetings with mandatory and additional partners who operate under the legislation.
- Manage the process of completing the NCWorks Certification application for the NCWorks Career Center(s) and update as required by CFWDB and NCWorks Commission staff.
- Follow federal, state, and local area regulations/policies concerning handling of EEO responsibilities, customer complaints, and physical and programmatic accessibility
- Possess and understanding of relevant DOLETA regulations, Cape Fear Workforce Development Board policies, NCWorks Commission Policy Statements, DWS Operational Guidance, and regulations from WIOA partner agencies.
- Submit reports to the Cape Fear Workforce Development Board, as requested.
- Participate in meetings and complete projects as required by CFWDB staff.
- Use employer, customer, and staff feedback to drive continuous improvement. Track and share data with NCWorks staff; make decisions/develop strategies based on data and successful practices.

Bidders should demonstrate the principles listed below:

- Competent and cooperative leadership style
- Superior customer service to employers, jobseekers, staff, and partners
- Ability to give and receive functional instruction
- Capacity to provide adequate staff and support to One-Stop Center(s) and Access Point(s)
- Commitment to teamwork and continuous improvement
- Understanding of the local labor market and the needs of local business
- Ability to facilitate cross-training of career center staff and manage collaborative teams
- Accountability for required reporting and expectations of the CFWDB
- Willingness to integrate resources and activities with other organizations
- Flexibility in deploying human resources as operational needs evolve
- Ownership for role of One-stop Operator in facilities decisions

Rapid Response Services

Rapid Response Services, as mandated by USDOL, are services delivered to businesses and employees of companies that are experiencing downsizing through layoffs or closure and may have also been impacted by a Worker Adjustment & Retraining Notification (WARN) issued by the state of North Carolina. Coordination of the Rapid Response teams is managed by the Workforce Development Board (WDB) in coordination with the NC Department of Commerce-Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS). The One-Stop Operator (OSO) is responsible for assisting the WDB and coordinating Rapid Response activities among NCWorks partners at the direction of the WDB. The selected WIOA proposer will be expected to assist in coordinating these outreach teams.

NCWorks Career Centers shall provide the following Rapid Response Services to employees of businesses issuing WARN notices or experiencing layoffs or closures, in conjunction with other appropriate partners:

- Reviewing affected workers' assistance needs;
- Coordinating and conducting Rapid Response workshop presentations to assist with career transition, job search tools and skills, résumé preparation, and interviewing techniques;
- Assessing re-employment prospects for workers in the local community;
- Providing information on available resources to meet the short and long-term needs of affected workers;
- Establishing a process of referring affected employees to the NCWorks System;

- Developing recruitment/job development activities including job fairs, positive recruitments, job lead development, and general recruitment notifications; and
- Providing Rapid Response information with appropriate information relating to potential dislocations, available adjustment assistance, services, and when appropriate, information on the TAA program.

C. ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM:

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services: Subrecipients must provide WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker program services. Subrecipients must provide the appropriate number of staff to the NC Works Centers within the region. Staff will deliver WIOA Title III services as part of Title I service delivery. Adult and Dislocated Worker program services include the following: outreach; initial and comprehensive assessments; eligibility determination; enrollment; development of the Individual Employment Plan (IEP); career advising; skill development through an appropriate mix of classroom training, on-the-job training, subsidized work experience, job placement, internships, apprenticeships, other services as appropriate; referral for additional services; support services; and post program/employment follow-up services. All services must adhere to data and document management policies and procedures as established by the CFWDB. WIOA does not mandate a customer flow; however, a successful subrecipient will be able to creatively and effectively manage the customer flow and provide a successful customer experience.

- Career Services are universally accessible to all interested parties and provides services which customers can access on their own to assist them in obtaining employment. Individuals are not registered for WIOA when received “self-service” core services but will require registration if they receive core services that are not primarily informational and must be staff assisted. Career Services may provide more intensive, case management-centered services, which offer a broad array of more in-depth staff-assisted services.
- Training services provide occupational skills training through a variety of mechanisms including, but not limited to classroom/coursework training and work-based learning.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Requirements:

- Proficiency in reading and communicating Labor Market Information (LMI) and Job Orders to assist clients in making informed career planning decisions.
- Proficiency in using CFWDB Certified Career Pathways in career advising.
- Referrals to services that will help address individual barriers to being job ready.
- Deliver a variety of skill development and job readiness services for customers, addressing client needs in the areas of education and employment.
- Facilitate and deliver relevant workshops and information sessions to improve employability.
- Provide work-based learning, subsidized Work Experience, and On-the-Job Training.
- Assess customer suitability for training (classroom and work-based learning) and provide available financial resources to support customers with allowable training-related expenses.
- Meet with customers monthly to measure progress toward their IEP and assist them with their job search efforts (resumes, interviews, internet job search, networking, and other topics). Assist job seekers in locating appropriate job openings and assist them in applying for jobs.
- Maintain enrollment and monthly documentation of customer activities in NCWorks Online.
- Other tasks as deemed necessary by the One-stop Operator/Functional Leader
- Cooperative management and competent staff with a vision for delivering meaningful adult and dislocated worker programs,
- Commitment to quality and integrity in assisting customers and attaining goals,

- Willingness and ability to integrate resources and activities with other organizations,
- Adaptability to change programming as economic conditions and operational needs evolve,
- Flexibility to move between teams and complete tasks that support the NCWorks system

General Services

Proposals should address how the following requirements will be met as part of an overall WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services design:

Outreach, Recruitment, and Orientation

Bidders should have collaborative relationships with community-based organizations, secondary and post-secondary institutions, social service agencies, professional associations, and others to improve job-seeker access to NCWorks program services. Adequate outreach and recruitment will identify potentially eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers and communicate documentation requirements for enrollment and expectations for program participation. Appropriate orientation is centered on the customer experience.

The contractor will make efforts to broaden the composition participation to include members of both sexes, the various race/ethnicity and age groups, and individuals with disabilities to reflect the demographics of the area covered by the contract. All recruitment brochures and information must contain the “equal opportunity employer/program” statement provided by the CFWDB and must also include the statement that “auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.” The subrecipient must comply with all related sections of 29 CFR Part 37.

Eligibility Determination and Verification/WIOA Registration

Contractors are responsible for determining eligibility, determining suitability for training services, and for collecting and verifying all necessary eligibility documents. These verification documents must be maintained electronically in NCWorks Online. Electronic files are subject to ongoing review by CFWDB staff and it is recommended that contract supervisors confirm eligibility and review data entered. CFWDB staff will provide technical assistance on the eligibility determination process and how to use the WIOA database system known as NCWorks Online.

Adult Program services are available to individuals who are:

- 18 years of age or older,
- a United States Citizen or legally authorized to work in this country, and
- meet Military Service registration requirements (males only).

Dislocated Workers services are available to individuals who:

- have been terminated or laid off due to no fault of their own or have received notice of termination or layoff or; eligible for or has exhausted unemployment insurance; or is not eligible for unemployment benefits due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that were not covered under State unemployment compensation;
- and is unlikely to return to the previous industry or occupation.
- It also includes those who were self-employed but are unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community or because of natural disasters, displaced homemakers, spouse of member of Armed Forces on active duty, and the long-term unemployed (12 or more consecutive weeks).

Comprehensive Assessment

WIOA requires that Adult and Dislocated Worker service providers administer or obtain assessments of the academic level, skill levels, and service needs of each participant at the time of enrollment into WIOA activities. Service providers will use only assessment tools and strategies that are valid for the population being served. For basic academic skills, the CFWDB requires that contractors use the CASAS Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System. Other assessment tools should be utilized for assessing career interests and aptitudes.

Assessment instruments, especially on-line tools, used to measure aptitudes, learning styles, life skills, or other skills must be adequately researched by contractor staff and approved by CFWDB staff prior to use with participants. Assessments must be objective, conform to widely accepted standards for validity and reliability, and be age-appropriate for the participant. All staff performing assessments must have adequate training on the administration, scoring, and interpretation of test results. Information collected from the assessment process serves as the basis for individualized services. In order to achieve the educational and employment outcomes desired for each participant, assessments should be a periodic part of case management. Subrecipients must track the progress of each participant to measure the attainment of skills, fulfillment of personal goals, and the achievement of planned objectives for each participant.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP)

All participants receiving WIOA Title I Adult or Dislocated Worker program services will have a written, individualized plan of services and activities, based upon the entry assessment information. The Individual Employment Plan (IEP) should be developed by the case manager and the participant. The IEP should include relevant history, present circumstances, and short and long-term goals, and all supportive services planned to be provided to support participation. More importantly, the service plan should be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the participant throughout participation in WIOA activities. Each service plan will outline the appropriate mix of services, the sequence and timeline of delivery, and the appropriate benchmarks toward objectives. Each IEP will identify an employment goal at minimum, and a performance goal, selected learning objectives, and preparation for unsubsidized employment as appropriate. The IEP will set clear and realistic goals for educational advancement, entry into employment in a targeted industry, and continued learning and development. The goal is to develop an appropriate service strategy to meet the individual needs of each participant.

The IEP should be reviewed with the participant every three months at minimum to gauge progress toward objectives but may be updated more frequently if appropriate when objectives and goals are achieved. The periodic evaluation should include, when applicable, the participant's progress toward measurable academic skills gains, improvements in work readiness and occupational skills, and the adequacy of supportive services provided. The IEP will be used as the basic instrument for the CFWDB to monitor the appropriateness of the services provided to the participant, including referrals to other programs for specified activities. Training provided by the service provider should be in accordance with the IEP. The IEP is an informal "contract" between the WIOA service provider and the client and serves to support clients in establishing and attaining meaningful career goals.

Because WIOA resources are generally insufficient to provide the full range of training or support services identified as needed in the IEP, every reasonable effort to utilize other community resources to arrange academic, work-readiness, occupational skills training, and supportive services for the participant. WIOA service providers shall utilize the IEP document in NCWorks Online. Technical Assistance and training will be provided by CFWDB staff.

Training Services

Upon completion of orientation and assessments, customers may be deemed appropriate for training services. If the customer is unlikely to obtain or retain self-sufficient employment, the Case Manager may recommend traditional classroom training, work-based training, or a combination of both. Any sponsored training should focus on high-growth industry sectors or in-demand occupations within the CFWDB area or in an area to which the customer is willing to relocate. Subrecipients are responsible for all CFWDB required documentation and forms. Technical Assistance and training around Individual Training Accounts (ITA), On-the-Job Training contracts (OJT), Work Experience (WEX), et cetera will be provided by CFWDB staff.

Comprehensive Case Management

The WIOA Service Provider will provide comprehensive case management services to Adults and Dislocated Workers to support their attainment of training and employment outcomes. Staff is expected to work closely with their participants to provide support and guidance, help solve problems, and work toward objectives established in the IEP. The IEP will be reviewed and updated by staff every three months at minimum to arrange for updated services, identify and address any new concerns, and document progress made during participation. Routine personal contact between a Career Advisor and the participant is essential. Based on the case management relationship, participants should be aware that they have support as they work to achieve employment goals. Primary case management functions are services coordination, advising and counseling, advocacy, follow-up, and accurate and timely record keeping.

All WIOA staff are expected to adhere to professional standards of client confidentiality. Staff with access to WIOA records and other confidential information are expected to safeguard such information. No staff member, volunteer, or other person associated with the WIOA Service Provider shall release or disclose information without securing a signed release of information authorization prior to the release of the records. This includes verbal, written or electronic sharing of records or personal information. Exchange of information is generally to be used for eligibility verification, coordination of services and activities, tracking progress and participation, securing additional services, and for follow-up purposes.

WIOA Data Validation and Record Keeping

The US Department of Labor has issued a data validation policy that establishes record keeping requirements to ensure the accuracy and integrity of information collected and reported on WIOA activities and program outcomes. The federal policy mandates that states "demonstrate the validity of reported data," and conduct data validation annually. North Carolina has set statewide policy for data validation. Cape Fear staff will provide staff training and ongoing technical assistance for data validation.

Information and Referrals for WIOA-Eligible Adults and Dislocated Workers

NCWorks Career Center staff should be able to provide basic information regarding Adult and Dislocated Worker program services and eligibility, but contract staff is responsible for determining eligibility and suitability. Adults or Dislocated Workers who are not eligible for Title I, or those who can be better served by another agency or program, should be referred to appropriate agencies and/or organizations in the community. Contractors should use their relationships with other human-service agencies to cross-refer participants and track referrals.

Employer Engagement

Employer engagement is paramount for the development of effective career pathways and work-based learning opportunities for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants. Rapport must be established with local and regional employers to understand in-demand occupations and to build connections between work and learning. Contractors must engage business and coordinate work-related activities for program participants.

Business engagement should build relationships with employers to secure work-based learning opportunities such as internships, job shadowing, work experience, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and unsubsidized job placements for program participants. In order to assist with these placements, program contractors and One Stop Operators will be expected to meet monthly with the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager to review strategies for business services. Career Advisors will also be responsible for reporting outcomes and retention of individuals placed in subsidized employment to CFWDB staff on a monthly basis.

Performance Expectations

Each contractor for Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services is expected to meet or exceed all negotiated performance goals. The WIOA system-wide performance outcomes were developed to simplify and consolidate performance measures across many federal grants. Coordination of services with partner agencies and accurate data management are important to performance outcomes. Subrecipients should emphasize retention in program services until participants have reached the goals identified in their service strategy plan. USDOL establishes Performance Indicators, and WDBs negotiate PY goals with the state.

USDOL Performance Indicators: CFWDB DOL Performance Measures for PY2025 are listed below:

ADULT

WIOA Performance Measure	PY2025 Goals
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	76.5%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	77.5%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	\$8,025
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit	61.5%
Measureable Skill Gains	65%

DISLOCATED WORKER

WIOA Performance Measure	PY2025 Goal
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	70%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	71.5%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	\$8,505
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after Exit	64.5%
Measureable Skill Gains	65.5%

IV. PROPOSAL FORMAT AND REQUIRED FORMS

A. RESPONSE PACKAGE

Please clearly label and tab each required document with corresponding indicator as listed below:

Attachment	Title	Instructions
A	Proposal Cover Sheet	complete all fields on form with detail
B	Financial Management Form	identify compliance staff
C	Planned Outcomes Data Form	complete all fields on form with detail
D	Assurances and Certifications	requires authorized signature
E	Statement of Compliance	requires authorized signature
F	Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion Lowered Tier Transactions	requires authorized signature
G	Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace	
H	Job Descriptions	direct and indirect staff, list counties
I	RFP Budget Form	*Budget Summary *Support Worksheets *Budget Narrative of all program costs
J	Proposal Grading Matrix	for informational purposes only
K	Intent to Bid Form	Complete all fields on form with detail

B. OTHER REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Please clearly label and tab each required document with corresponding indicator as listed below:

Attachment	Title	Instructions
AA	Federal Identification	
BB	Year-end Financial Statement and Audit	most recent
CC	Agency Grievance Procedures	
DD	Bond Coverage	or explanation of planned coverage
EE	Agency Personnel and Travel Policies	
FF	Current Organization Chart	include Equal Opportunity Officer
GG	Charter and Bylaws of Organization	
HH	Cost Allocation Plan	include agency indirect cost plan
II	Certificate of General Liability Insurance	
JJ	Certificate of Workers' Compensation insurance	
KK	Current Board List	

C. STATEMENT OF WORK NARRATIVE/REQUIRED QUESTIONS

Statement of Work:

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Provide a one-page executive summary of your proposal describing the highlights of your proposed services. This executive summary must accompany your responses to the questions below and should be no more than one page, 12-point font, normal margins, and single spaced. You may include charts or graphs.

If some services are specific to either Adult clients or Dislocated Worker clients, explain those services within your one-page executive summary. Use a separate page to summarize One Stop Operator services.

II. QUESTIONS:

For each question below, please provide a thorough but concise response. Use no more than one page per question and keep responses succinct. Use 12-point font, single spacing, and normal margins. You may include graphs or tables. The responses will be considered part of your Statement of Work and will be used for evaluation of your proposal and, if awarded, for negotiating contractual obligations.

EXPERIENCE, CAPACITY, and FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY:

1. Describe how this grant fits into your agency's mission and your ability to achieve program goals and report to funding entities. What standards can we expect from your agency? What additional expertise will your agency offer to enhance NCWorks? Cite relevant successful results.
2. Describe how your agency will ensure it has the capacity/staffing to administer the program and provide staff for the OSO role. Include onboarding, training, and retention strategies standard to your agency. If your agency proposes a regional approach, how will you ensure adequate services in those counties?
3. Describe your agency's experience in managing federal grants or grants with similar fiscal control requirements. What internal controls will your agency utilize to ensure compliance with expenditures incurred for administering the grant, providing program activities, and supporting all NCWorks activities?

ADW PROGRAM DESIGN:

4. Describe the customer experience from initial inquiry through exit and follow-up. Detail processes and tools used for outreach, recruitment, orientation, objective assessment, referrals, provision of supportive services, employment planning, etc. Describe how participant goals will be developed, evaluated, and coordinated. How does your proposal maximize efficiency to maintain a reasonable Cost-per-Participant (CPP) while achieving customer and program goals?
5. Describe your agency's understanding of the labor market, Certified Career Pathways, and education/training options for high growth jobs in the CFWDB region.
6. How will you engage and serve special populations, such as individuals with limited English proficiency, people with low literacy skills, justice-involved individuals, highly skilled jobseekers, older workers, etc.? What innovative practices does your agency plan to provide to assist clients in improving employability and connecting them to high-growth jobs?
7. Describe your understanding of Work-based Learning (WBL), including work experience (WEX), On-the-Job Training (OJT), Registered Apprenticeship (RA), etc. How will your agency maximize WBL opportunities? What staff will your agency dedicate to the development and management of OJT and WEX contracts and follow-up with employers for quality assurance?
8. Explain how you will utilize the DOL indicators as tools to engage participants and support their attainment of credentials and/or employment. Describe previous success in meeting this, or similar, performance. Explain the relationship between your proposed program design and performance outcomes.
9. Describe your agency's internal processes for training staff to accurately enter data and documentation. Include your agency's procedure for routine internal monitoring, reviewing reports, and continuous

improvement. Explain your agency's experience with tracking performance data at all levels of your organization. Explain your experience with NCWorks Online.

10. In addition to the OSO, what staff will serve as the Point-of-Contact for the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager and how will that person be the conduit for information regarding jobs in the CFWDB region?

ONE STOP OPERATOR SERVICES:

11. For Bidders not currently providing services for NCWorks Operator, describe your start-up plan and proposed transition period, including a timeline of events and staff training planned. Describe services that will be made available for the customers, including priority populations and businesses.
12. Describe how your agency will operate in collaboration with the NCWorks Career Center and mandatory/optional partners? How will your agency ensure the delivery of Integrated Services with a customer-centered approach? How will you conduct onboarding for new NCWorks staff and partners?
13. The OSO is responsible for coordinating and scheduling workshops. Describe your previous experience with this and explain planned workshops for businesses, jobseekers, partners, and staff. How will you coordinate and manage events on behalf of the system, ensuring that events have adequate staff coverage, partner representation, and are well-promoted? How will your agency enhance NCWorks and build the brand?
14. Describe your plan to schedule staff to ensure coverage for daily operations while working toward innovation and continuous improvement? Describe the process for managing disputes that may arise among partners. How will the bidder ensure that a firewall exists between the Operator and the other services provided through NCWorks? How will the bidder maintain objectivity and avoid favoritism?
15. Describe your plans to accomplish the following (include timelines if applicable):
 - i. Submit an Operations Plan for services at each NCWorks Career Center and Access Point
 - ii. Achieve and/or maintain One-Stop Certification (with NCWorks partners and board staff);
 - iii. Draft and execute Standard Operating Procedures, including coverage of Resource Room;
 - iv. Establish One stop Center communication protocols;
 - v. Incorporate the State's and WDB's Strategic Plans into Service Delivery;
 - vi. Investigate and implement best practices for employers and job seekers;
 - vii. Establish connections with community partners and share with Career Center staff;
16. Describe the characteristics of a high-performing NCWorks Career Center and any planned benchmarks for achieving those standards. Include how you will track progress, use data to drive continuous improvement and staff morale, and report data to internal staff, partner agencies, and the Cape Fear WDB.
17. Describe how the OSO will collaborate with the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager and WDB staff to ensure that NCWorks staff understand the needs of regional employers. How will the OSO ensure that critical and current information, such as increases in job orders, changes in customer participation, requests for hiring events, etc., are shared with the CFWDB Business Engagement Manager? Additionally, how will the OSO assure that Rapid Response activities are effectively carried out in collaboration with WDB staff?

STRATEGIC PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS:

18. Describe your agency's current relationship with the NCWorks Career Center. Explain your plan to staff the NCWorks Career center and use collaboration to add value and enhance the services within the center.
19. Describe your agency's relationships throughout the community. Include collaborative partnerships with local agencies and explain any results from previous collaboration. Describe how you will leverage partner relationships to maximize resources, reduce duplication of services, and achieve program objectives.
20. Describe relationships with private-sector employers, employment agencies, companies who offer internships, etc. and successful results from previous collaboration. Describe your agency's connection with professional/business-facing organizations and your plan to leverage those relationships.

This concludes the RFP document. Download "Required Forms" to complete your proposal packet for submission.