

**STATE OF ILLINOIS WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT  
UNIFIED STATE PLAN FOR PROGRAM YEARS 2016-2020  
(JULY 1, 2016-JUNE 30, 2020)**



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### CHAPTER 1 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Illinois Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Unified State Plan is designed to provide a vision of the Governor's integration of workforce, education and economic development policy while also serving as a federal compliance document for the United States Departments of Labor and Education under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The Unified State Plan outlines the vision, principles and goals for the integration of workforce, education and economic development programs for the State of Illinois (state).

**State Workforce System:** The Governor, State Workforce Innovation Board and WIOA core partners including the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce), the Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security), the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Vocational Rehabilitation) and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) determined that the state will submit a Unified State Plan. The state has developed this Unified State Plan with the intent to integrate the programs listed below (including the non-core programs) into the strategies outlined in the Unified State Plan.

- Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
  - Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs
  - Employment and Training under the Community Services Block Grant Program
  - Trade Act Programs
  - Regional Economic Development
- Illinois Community College Board
  - Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
  - Career and Technical Education Programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006
- Illinois Department of Employment Security
  - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services including Labor Market Information
  - Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers Monitor Advocate System
  - Veterans Employment and Training Services
  - Unemployment Insurance Services
  - Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Illinois Department of Human Services
  - Rehabilitation Services for Individuals with Disabilities
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Illinois Department on Aging
  - Senior Community Services Employment Program
- Illinois Department of Corrections
  - Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007
- Nationally Directed - Locally Administered Programs
  - National Farmworker Jobs Program
  - YouthBuild
  - Job Corps

**Vision Statement:** Promote business-driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals, and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the state's economy.

**Guiding Principles:** Illinois will work toward achieving the vision using these principles as guideposts for policy development and program service delivery. Each partner will use its resources to support the following principles:

- Business demand driven orientation through a sector strategy framework
- Strong partnerships with business at all levels
- Career pathways to jobs of today and tomorrow
- Integrated service delivery
- Access and opportunity for all populations
- Cross-agency collaboration and alignment for developing and/or promoting career pathways and industry recognized stackable credentials
- Clear metrics for progress and success
- Focus on continuous improvement and innovation

**State Goals:** The partners will collectively use the following goals to support Illinois' vision to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development strategies at the state, regional and local levels to improve the economic growth and competitiveness of the state's employers and their workforce.

- Foster improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.
- Expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.
- Expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs.
- Expand information for employers and job seekers to access services by improving the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.

**State Strategies and Highlighted Activities:** Illinois will explore a variety of strategies for the implementation of these principles and goals with a focus on improving community prosperity through more competitive businesses and workers. These strategies and highlighted activities include:

- *Coordinate Demand-Driven Strategic Planning at the State and Regional Levels*
  - Providing data and tools to support regional planning to align education, workforce and economic development strategies.
  - Developing a state and regional cross-agency benchmark report for stakeholders and the public.
- *Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives*
  - Conducting outreach to regional and local economic development organizations to improve regional collaboration in economic development planning.

- Aligning and integrating business and job seeker services among the programs along with state and regional economic development partners.
- *Provide Career Pathways for Economic Advancement*
  - Exploring ways to fully mainstream targeted populations into sector-based career pathway initiatives to achieve outcomes similar to other populations (see “Targeted Populations” on page 21).
  - Creating new pathways for success by preparing low-skill adults to take advantage of sector-based bridge programs.
- *Coordinate and Enhance Career Services and Case Management*
  - Establishing case management teams to coordinate and support the delivery of enhanced case management services to participants across programs.
  - Promoting continuous improvement in career services and case management through the identification of best practice models and incentivizing demonstration projects.
- *Expand Access to Labor Market Information*
  - Improving access to labor market information for employers and job seekers that will allow them to promote and access job openings, review changing labor market trends, and identify education and training programs.
  - Supporting awareness and adoption of innovative private sector models, such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Initiative.
- *Improve Public-Private Data Infrastructure*
  - Working with core partners and the State Chief Information Officer to develop a framework of how to integrate state intake, case management and reporting systems.
  - Expanding and improving the state education and workforce longitudinal data system to support the six strategies.

### **Stakeholder Collaboration and Comment**

The State of Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) is responsible for overseeing the development, implementation and modification of the Unified State Plan and for convening all relevant programs, required partners and stakeholders. The state agencies responsible for the administration of the core and required programs have reviewed and commented on appropriate operational planning portion of the Unified State Plan. Illinois’ Unified State Plan was released for public comment on January 25, 2016 to allow interested stakeholders to participate in the development of the plan. The comments to the Unified State Plan can be viewed in Attachment A.

### CHAPTER 2 – ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

Illinois' Unified State Plan is structured around the operational and strategic elements that are required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act State Plan Requirements.<sup>1</sup> To ensure compliance with the federal planning requirements, some content contained in Illinois' Unified State Plan is included in multiple chapters, appendices and attachments. Chapters 2 through 5 summarize the data analysis and strategic elements of the Unified State Plan.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security houses the state's labor market economists and provides data and information to support state, regional, and local workforce and economic development initiatives. The state established an interagency data team with representatives from the core program partners including Employment Security, Commerce, ICCB and Vocational Rehabilitation to establish the framework for the data that is used in the Economic and Workforce Analysis. Illinois is looking to formalize the relationship of the interagency data team so that it serves as an ongoing resource, extending beyond the development of the Unified State Plan and supporting the implementation of the state, regional and local plans.

The economic and workforce analysis presented in this chapter highlight data that is publicly available and analysis that replicable. The state encourages regional and local partners to regularly and systemically analyze and validate complementary data through various forms of business engagement. The long-term goal is to develop the most robust data collection possible so that supply and demand projections benefit from as near to real-time information as possible.

#### **Economic and Workforce Analysis**

Three of the most important economic benchmarks used by Illinois to both understand our economic position and to evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts to improve that position, are overall economic production, employment and earnings. Examining these three indicators across the past ten years provides an uncommonly stark description of Illinois' experience before, across and since the "Great Recession" during the final years of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The main narrative told by the numbers in Table 1 is that Illinois was struck hard by the economic downturn – harder than the nation overall, but not as hard as our fellow states in the Great Lakes region (IL, IN, MI, OH and WI). Our overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by an infinitesimal six-tenths of one percent from 2004-2009. But even that far surpassed our neighbors, whose combined economies shrank by nearly five percent. Similar stories are told by changes in employment and earnings from 2004 to 2009. Illinois gained only a handful of jobs – much less than the nation as a whole, but still ahead of the Great Lakes region overall. The story since 2009 has been one of a lagging recovery for Illinois. While we have seen increases in all three of these measures, Illinois has trailed the region in the pace of those increases (see Table 1).

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<sup>1</sup> See Office of Management and Budget Control Number 1205-0522

## ILLINOIS WIOA UNIFIED PLAN

**Table 1: Illinois vs. Benchmark States vs. Nation:  
Change in GDP, Employment and Earnings over Last 10 years**

	Gross Domestic Product			Employment			Earnings		
	2004	2009	2014	2004	2009	2014	2004	2009	2014
<b>ILLINOIS</b>	<b>637,828</b>	<b>641,880</b>	<b>680,448</b>	<b>5,934,131</b>	<b>5,935,337</b>	<b>6,071,686</b>	<b>256,671,215</b>	<b>286,828,581</b>	<b>333,471,194</b>
Great Lakes Region*	2,090,863	1,995,394	2,187,656	22,027,090	21,140,406	21,852,220	847,365,841	894,538,281	1,055,156,486
US	13,772,746	14,329,566	15,773,516	147,379,583	154,188,500	155,899,000	5,417,439,000	6,244,497,000	7,469,374,000

	Percent Change in Gross Domestic Product			Percent Change in Employment			Percent Change in Earnings		
	2004-2009	2009-2014	2004-2014	2004-2009	2009-2014	2004-2014	2004-2009	2009-2014	2004-2014
<b>ILLINOIS</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>29.9%</b>
Great Lakes Region*	-4.6%	9.6%	4.6%	-4.0%	3.4%	-0.8%	5.6%	18.0%	24.5%
US	4.0%	10.1%	14.5%	4.6%	1.1%	5.8%	15.3%	19.6%	37.9%

\* Defined by the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis to include: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin

Sources:

Gross Domestic Product: Bureau of Economic Analysis Real GDP by State (millions of chained 2009 dollars)

Employment: Haver Analytics, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Earnings: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Compensation of Employees by NAICS Industry (Table SA6N), wage and salary data

The situation described by these numbers provides the setting for planning the implementation of WIOA. The challenge for Illinois is to utilize WIOA and all of its partner programs to assist the state's businesses in increasing productivity, employment and earnings throughout the state.

### Economic Analysis

Table 2 shows the projected employment demand through 2022 for major industry sectors across Illinois. The largest number of job openings is expected to be created within the business services and health care sectors. Large percentage changes in employment are also expected in wholesale trade and a resurgent construction sector.

## ILLINOIS WIOA UNIFIED PLAN

**Table 2: Illinois Employment by Major Industry Sector**

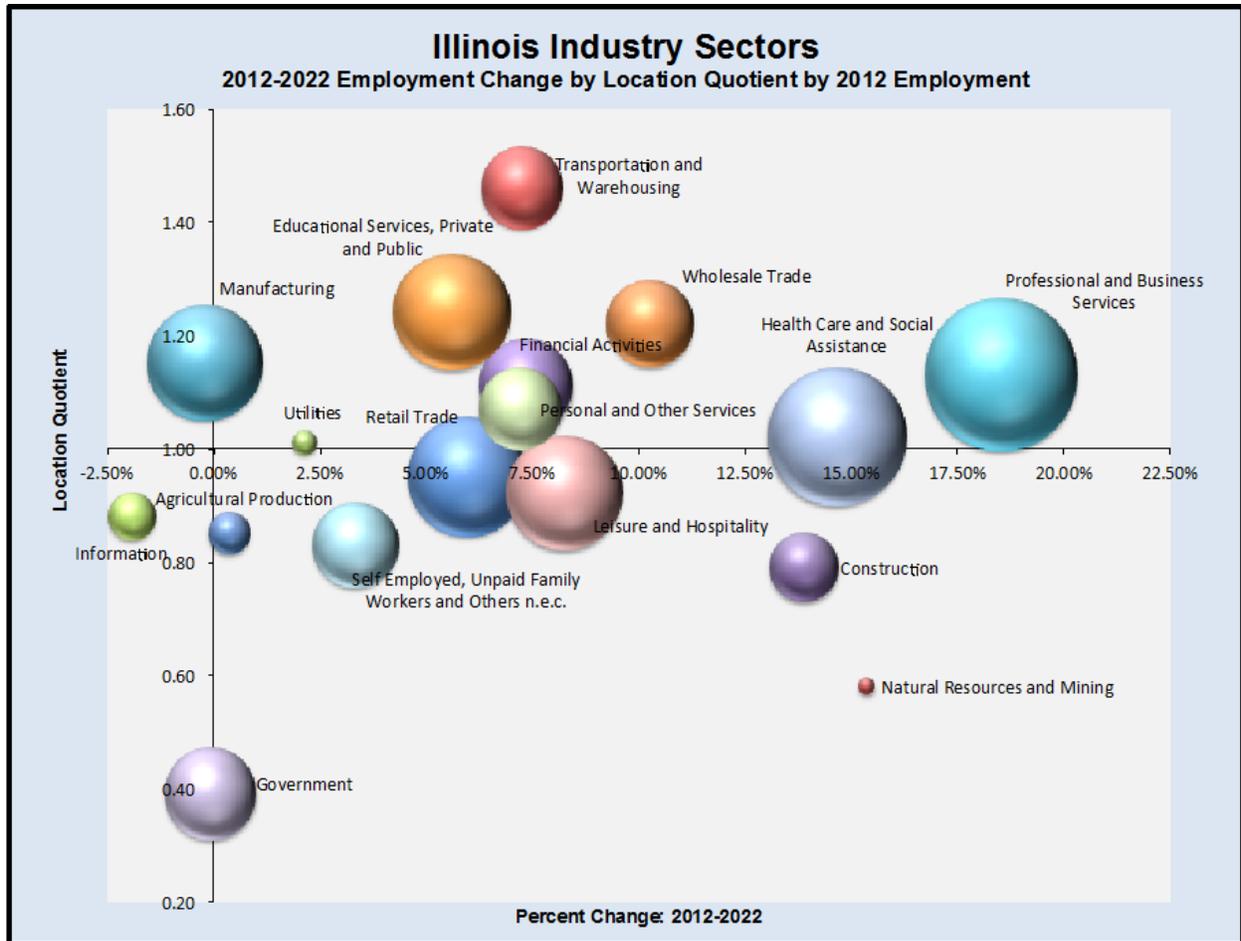
North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Title	Base Year Employment 2012	Share of Statewide Base Year Employment 2012	Projected Year Employment 2022	Net Change 2012-2022	Ten-Year Percent Change 2012-2022	Location Quotient 2012
<b>TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES</b>	<b>6,166,236</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>6,678,572</b>	<b>512,336</b>	<b>8.31%</b>	<b>1.00</b>
Agricultural Production	76,292	1.24%	76,584	292	0.38%	0.85
Natural Resources and Mining	10,137	0.16%	11,695	1,558	15.37%	0.58
Utilities	23,809	0.39%	24,322	513	2.15%	1.01
Construction	188,916	3.06%	215,181	26,265	13.90%	0.79
Manufacturing	582,735	9.45%	581,655	-1,080	-0.19%	1.15
Wholesale Trade	294,361	4.77%	324,652	30,291	10.29%	1.22
Retail Trade	596,393	9.67%	632,132	35,739	5.99%	0.95
Transportation and Warehousing	273,535	4.44%	293,395	19,860	7.26%	1.46
Information	100,018	1.62%	98,113	-1,905	-1.90%	0.88
Financial Activities	365,716	5.93%	392,651	26,935	7.37%	1.11
Professional and Business Services	860,924	13.96%	1,020,527	159,603	18.54%	1.13
Educational Services, Private and Public*	568,857	9.23%	600,804	31,947	5.62%	1.24
Health Care and Social Assistance	733,693	11.90%	841,289	107,596	14.66%	1.02
Leisure and Hospitality	535,716	8.69%	580,005	44,289	8.27%	0.92
Personal and Other Services	280,007	4.54%	300,240	20,233	7.23%	1.07
Government	365,894	5.93%	365,720	-174	-0.05%	0.39
Self Employed, Unpaid Family Workers and Others n.e.c.	309,233	5.01%	319,607	10,374	3.35%	0.83

\* Location Quotient for "Educational Services, Private and Public" is for 2014

Sources: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Figure 1 factors in percentage growth and a measure of industry importance in the state (location quotient), with “bubble” size indicating the relative size of the industry.

Figure 1: Bubble Chart Based on Table 2



Sources: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

## ILLINOIS WIOA UNIFIED PLAN

Table 3 shows the projected employment demand through 2022 for major occupational sectors throughout Illinois. The largest numbers of new jobs are expected to be created within the transportation and material moving, sales, healthcare, food service, business and financial operations and computer and mathematical occupation sectors. Large numbers of job openings (including replacement jobs) are expected in sales and office and administrative occupations.

**Table 3: Illinois Employment by Major Occupational Sector**

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Title	Base Year Employment	Share of Statewide Base Year Employment	Projection Year Employment	Net Employment Change 2012-2022		Average Annual Job Openings due to		
	2012	2012	2022	Number	Percent	Growth	Replacements	Total
<b>TOTAL, ALL OCCUPATIONS</b>	<b>6,166,236</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>6,678,572</b>	<b>512,336</b>	<b>8.31%</b>	<b>55,296</b>	<b>143,981</b>	<b>199,277</b>
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	460,208	7.46%	513,176	52,968	11.51%	5,327	11,114	16,441
Sales and Related Occupations	636,874	10.33%	678,851	41,977	6.59%	4,220	19,108	23,328
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occs	330,411	5.36%	371,129	40,718	12.32%	4,089	6,773	10,862
Food Preparation and Serving Occupations	451,936	7.33%	491,629	39,693	8.78%	3,989	16,629	20,618
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	315,143	5.11%	353,460	38,317	12.16%	3,872	6,106	9,978
Healthcare Support Occupations	172,031	2.79%	207,310	35,279	20.51%	3,564	3,286	6,850
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	917,264	14.88%	951,675	34,411	3.75%	5,283	20,442	25,725
Construction and Extraction Occupations	220,061	3.57%	249,079	29,018	13.19%	2,905	3,828	6,733
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	152,628	2.48%	181,295	28,667	18.78%	2,867	2,556	5,423
Management Occupations	459,745	7.46%	485,377	25,632	5.58%	3,488	9,212	12,700
Education, Training and Library Occupations	410,319	6.65%	434,583	24,264	5.91%	2,437	8,529	10,966
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maint. Occs	229,563	3.72%	253,732	24,169	10.53%	2,417	4,728	7,145
Personal Care and Service Occupations	187,390	3.04%	209,960	22,570	12.04%	2,277	4,118	6,395
Production Occupations	445,529	7.23%	466,575	21,046	4.72%	2,945	9,042	11,987
Installation, Maintenance and Repair Occs	202,930	3.29%	220,543	17,613	8.68%	1,795	4,617	6,412
Protective Service Occupations	153,906	2.50%	162,477	8,571	5.57%	892	4,014	4,906
Community and Social Services Occupations	102,398	1.66%	110,938	8,540	8.34%	862	2,373	3,235
Arts/Design/Entertainment, Sports/Media Occs	98,826	1.60%	105,138	6,312	6.39%	668	2,353	3,021
Legal Occupations	53,470	0.87%	59,545	6,075	11.36%	608	860	1,468
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	83,565	1.36%	88,821	5,256	6.29%	559	1,943	2,502
Life, Physical and Social Science Occupations	35,102	0.57%	36,970	1,868	5.32%	194	976	1,170
Farming, Fishing and Forestry Occupations	46,937	0.76%	46,309	- 628	-1.34%	38	1,376	1,414

Sources: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

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### *Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations*

Based on the information contained in Table 2 (and displayed in Figure 1), major industry sectors were categorized according to the following methodology:

- LEADING industries are identified as those which are expected to grow during the projection period, and which are important within the state (i.e., have a location quotient greater than 1.0). These industries are found in the upper right hand quadrant of Figure 1.
- EMERGING industries are identified as those that are not strongly represented in the current economy (i.e., have a location quotient that is less than 1.0), but are expected to grow during the projection period. These industries are found in the lower right hand quadrant of Figure 1.
- MATURING industries are identified as those that are important within the state, but are not expected to grow during the projection period. These industries are found in the upper left hand quadrant of Figure 1.

Each of these categories are significant for the economy, for job growth and availability, and are hence important for the planning of WIOA and partner programs during the period of this Unified State Plan. In summary, LEADING industries are those that will likely provide the largest numbers of job openings, due to their combination of size and growth; EMERGING industries are those that are currently small but are quickly gaining in economic importance and job creation; and MATURING industries are those which have slower job growth but still have hefty presences in the economy and will continue to create significant job openings, if only through attrition (e.g., accelerating retirements).

Tables 4, 5 and 6 display the results of categorizing (according to this methodology) the major industries from Table 3. Major industry categories that are not included in one of these categories are now dropped from the analysis.

**Table 4: LEADING Major Industry Sectors Statewide**

<b>LEADING INDUSTRIES</b> NAICS Title	<b>Base Year Employment 2012</b>	<b>Share of Statewide Base Year Employment 2012</b>	<b>Projected Year Employment 2022</b>	<b>Net Change 2012-2022</b>	<b>Ten-Year Percent Change 2012-2022</b>	<b>Location Quotient 2012</b>
<b>TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES</b>	<b>6,166,236</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,678,572</b>	<b>512,336</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>1.00</b>
Professional and Business Services	860,924	14.0%	1,020,527	159,603	18.5%	1.13
Health Care and Social Assistance	733,693	11.9%	841,289	107,596	14.7%	1.02
Educational Services, Private and Public	568,857	9.2%	600,804	31,947	5.6%	1.24
Wholesale Trade	294,361	4.8%	324,652	30,291	10.3%	1.22
Financial Activities	365,716	5.9%	392,651	26,935	7.4%	1.48
Personal and Other Services	280,007	4.5%	300,240	20,233	7.2%	1.07
Transportation and Warehousing	273,535	4.4%	293,395	19,860	7.3%	1.46
Utilities	23,809	0.4%	24,322	513	2.2%	1.01

Sources: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

**Table 5: EMERGING Major Industry Sectors Statewide**

<b>EMERGING INDUSTRIES</b> NAICS Title	Base Year Employment 2012	Share of Statewide Base Year Employment 2012	Projected Year Employment 2022	Net Change 2012-2022	Ten-Year Percent Change 2012-2022	Location Quotient 2012
<b>TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES</b>	<b>6,166,236</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,678,572</b>	<b>512,336</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>1.00</b>
Leisure and Hospitality	535,716	8.7%	580,005	44,289	8.3%	0.92
Retail Trade	596,393	9.7%	632,132	35,739	6.0%	0.95
Construction	188,916	3.1%	215,181	26,265	13.9%	0.79

Sources: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

**Table 6: MATURING Major Industry Sectors Statewide**

<b>MATURING INDUSTRIES</b> NAICS Title	Base Year Employment 2012	Share of Statewide Base Year Employment 2012	Projected Year Employment 2022	Net Change 2012-2022	Ten-Year Percent Change 2012-2022	Location Quotient 2012
<b>TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES</b>	<b>6,166,236</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6,678,572</b>	<b>512,336</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>1.00</b>
Manufacturing	582,735	9.5%	581,655	(1,080)	-0.2%	1.15

Sources: IL Department of Employment Security Statewide Long-Term Employment Projections, Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

For those major industries that are included, we can drill down the analysis to each of the industry sectors (3-digit NAICS-level industries<sup>2</sup>) found within these major industry categories. The tables found in Attachment B display the LEADING, EMERGING and MATURING industry sectors within the major industry categories identified in the first step. The regional planning process will utilize the same analytic steps to assist regional teams in identifying LEADING, EMERGING and MATURING industry clusters within each region (see Chapter 7, Activity 1.3 and Attachment O).

*Employer’s Employment Needs*

Attachment B displays statewide employment projections, from 2012 to 2022, for occupational pathways within the nine STEM clusters and Illinois Pathways. These include:

- Agriculture, food & natural resources
- Architecture & construction
- Energy
- Finance
- Health science
- Information technology
- Manufacturing
- Research & development
- Transportation, distribution & logistics

<sup>2</sup> North American Industry Classification System - <http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/>

Prior to the selection of the nine focused STEM clusters, the ICCB adopted the original 16 national career cluster system. The additional clusters include:

- Arts, audiovisual technology & communications
- Business management & administration
- Education & training
- Government & public administration
- Hospitality & tourism
- Human services
- Law, public safety, corrections & security
- Marketing

The regional planning process (described in Chapter 7) will include the development of crosswalks between the detailed (3-digit) industry clusters and the occupational pathways listed above, for each region. The results of this crosswalk will identify occupations related to the detailed industry clusters identified statewide as LEADING, EMERGING and MATURING, which will be integrated into Illinois' Unified State Plan going forward. At a regional level, the results of this crosswalk will be the starting point for conversations with employers regarding critical occupations within their industries during the complete regional planning process.

### **Workforce Analysis**

#### *Labor Force Size and Demographics*

The Illinois labor force in the 25-54 age group has declined almost 200,000 (-4.4%) between 2009 and 2014, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey estimates. This is a result of the shrinking population in that age group. Smaller declines occurred in the 16-19 and 20-24 age groups. During that same period the labor force in the 55-64 age group increased over 135,000 (+12.6%). As the overall population gets older, the available labor force in Illinois will likely continue to decline.

#### *Employment and Unemployment*

Unemployment rates for the 16-19 age group are much higher than the rate for all ages, but especially high for African-Americans, Hispanics, and the "other" race category. Part of this discrepancy for racial/ethnic groups may be related to living in areas where few appropriate job matches are available. Unemployment rates are lowest among Caucasians for the 16-19, 20-24, and 70+ age groups, while Asians have the lowest rates for the 25-54, 55-64, and 65-69 groupings. Overall, unemployment rates have dropped between 2009 and 2014. This is in line with a stronger overall economy in 2014 relative to 2009.

While unemployment rates for youth (age 16-19) are high, the rates for older workers (65+) have remained low. This is likely a result of many older individuals leaving the labor force after separation from work (voluntarily or involuntarily). Other targeted populations include veterans, single parent families (headed by either a male or female), and the disabled. The unemployment rate for all veterans remains below the rates for the entire population. However, the rate for veterans in the 18-34 age group is significantly higher than the overall state average. This group of veterans is the most likely to have been recently discharged and thus the most likely to still be in transition to civilian employment. Rates for single parent families are high for both male and female heads of households, but especially high for females. Rates for the disabled are higher than any other group except for youth. Attachment C provides additional demographic details regarding the Illinois labor force, employment and unemployment during this period.

## ILLINOIS WIOA UNIFIED PLAN

### Labor Market Trends

Between 2004 and 2014, U.S. employment shifts occurred among industry sectors with a reduction in goods-producing industries in favor of service-producing industries. This shift is a continuation of a long term trend as manufacturing employment has declined due to both strong productivity gains in high-value added industries and offshoring of low-value added production to lower cost economies. Construction employment decreased as a share of total employment in 2014 relative to 2004, when the housing bubble was still in its nascent period. Among goods-producing industries in the U.S., mining and logging was the only sector to show marked improvement between 2004 and 2014 as oil production surged during the period with a greater number of oil-producing states with growth in the fracking industry.

As shown in Table 7, in the Midwest states (IL, IN, IA, KY, MI, MN, MO, OH and WI), none showed significant gains in its industry shares towards mining and logging. Only Kentucky experienced a reduction in employment activity as a share of its industry mix. On the construction front, Midwest states weakened as much as the United States or more, except for Iowa, which ticked up just a bit in its industry mix towards construction.

**Table 7: Distribution of Industry Employment in the U.S. and Midwest: Regional Similarities and Differences**

2014 Employment Distribution by Industry as a Share of Total NonFarm Payrolls

	US	IL	IN	IA	KY	MI	MN	MO	OH	WI
<b>Mining and Logging</b>	0.6%	<b>0.2%</b>	0.2%	0.1%	0.9%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%
<b>Construction</b>	4.4%	<b>3.4%</b>	4.1%	4.8%	3.9%	3.4%	3.8%	4.0%	3.0%	3.6%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	8.8%	<b>9.9%</b>	17.0%	14.0%	12.6%	13.8%	11.1%	9.4%	12.6%	16.3%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	4.2%	<b>5.1%</b>	3.9%	4.5%	4.0%	4.0%	4.7%	4.4%	4.4%	4.2%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	11.0%	<b>10.3%</b>	10.7%	11.6%	11.1%	11.0%	10.3%	11.1%	10.6%	10.6%
<b>Trans, Warehousing and Utilities</b>	3.7%	<b>4.6%</b>	4.6%	4.2%	5.2%	3.1%	3.4%	3.6%	3.7%	3.6%
<b>Information</b>	2.0%	<b>1.7%</b>	1.2%	1.7%	1.4%	1.4%	1.9%	2.1%	1.4%	1.7%
<b>Financial Activities</b>	5.7%	<b>6.3%</b>	4.3%	6.7%	4.8%	4.9%	6.3%	6.0%	5.4%	5.3%
<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	13.7%	<b>15.6%</b>	10.8%	8.8%	11.3%	14.8%	12.6%	12.9%	13.3%	10.8%
<b>Educational and Health Services</b>	15.4%	<b>15.1%</b>	14.7%	14.4%	14.0%	15.4%	17.7%	15.9%	16.7%	15.1%
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	10.6%	<b>9.5%</b>	9.8%	8.9%	9.8%	9.7%	9.0%	10.4%	9.9%	9.3%
<b>Other Services</b>	0.4%	<b>4.3%</b>	4.2%	3.8%	3.4%	4.1%	4.0%	4.2%	3.9%	4.9%
<b>Government</b>	15.7%	<b>14.1%</b>	14.3%	16.5%	17.4%	14.3%	14.9%	15.8%	14.2%	14.5%

Decline from 2004	
No Change from 2004	
Growth from 2004	

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program 2004, 2009, 2014

In the Midwest, the real story lies in the manufacturing sector. Midwest manufacturing employment accounts for about one-third of national manufacturing employment. All of the states in the Midwest (as well as the national average) recorded a drop in their share of manufacturing employment as a share of the total industry sector mix. Illinois, Kentucky and Michigan saw roughly the same reduction in their manufacturing employment shares as the nation. Indiana, Ohio and Missouri saw a greater reduction in their manufacturing shares, while Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin saw a smaller reduction in their manufacturing employment share in the 10 years spanning 2004-2014.

It is no surprise that manufacturing employment has declined in the Midwest as well as the United States overall following long-term trends of improved productivity combined with offshoring to low-cost economies. Many people are surprised to learn that the demand for manufacturing employment remains strong due to replacement needs. As baby boomers retire in Illinois, the Midwest and across the nation, employers will need to backfill positions so that manufacturing occupations remain in demand locally and across Illinois. The share of manufacturing employment as a portion of total employment is highest in Indiana and Wisconsin. Iowa, Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky also have a high share of manufacturing employment.

While manufacturing is a key industry in all Midwest states, Illinois' share is smaller than its neighbors; in fact, Illinois' share of manufacturing employment is more closely aligned to the national average. However, Illinois is the largest state in the Midwest and, consequently, its actual level of manufacturing employment is larger than each of the other states in the region with the exception of Ohio (based on 2014 data). Demand for manufacturing occupations remains healthy in Illinois and will continue to compete with its neighbors for skilled workers.

Among trade, transportation and utilities, all states (including the national average) saw a reduction of the share of employment in the retail trade sector, and the majority also saw a reduction in wholesale trade (with the exception of Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin). The majority of states (as well as the national average) saw an increase of their share of employment in the transportation, warehousing and utilities sector. Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky and Iowa have a larger share of their employment in this industry sector than the nation.

Professional and business services grew across the region, although all states except Illinois have a smaller share of their employment in this industry sector. In contrast, Illinois' share of employment in professional and business services is larger than the national average. Professional services include accounting, legal, architecture and engineering, computer design and management consulting as well as business headquarters. Business services include temporary help agencies (with a wide variety of occupational needs), waste management services, business support services and investigation and security services.

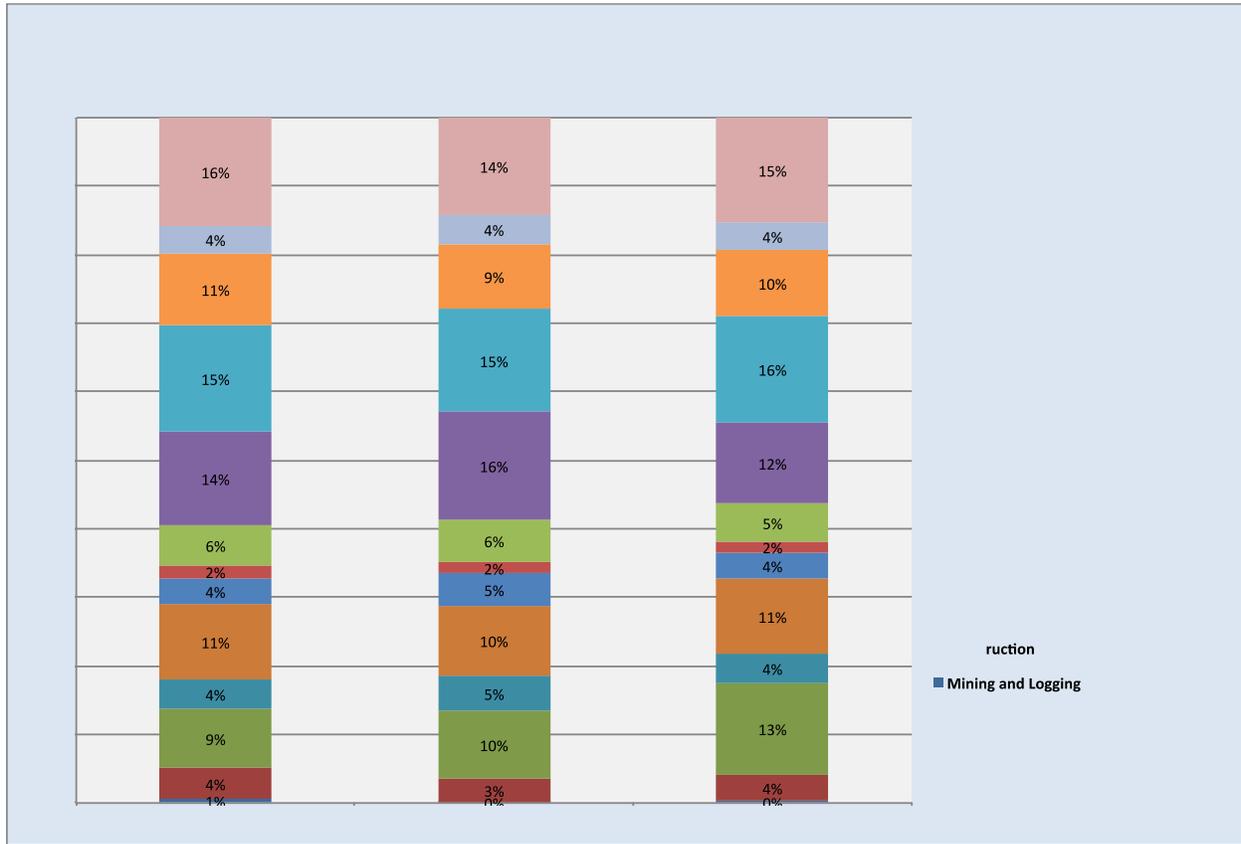
Educational and health services showed an increased share of employment in the United States and among Midwest states, including Illinois. Occupations related to health care industries as well as education will be in demand across the region as Midwest states may end up competing for workers in these occupational fields.

The leisure and hospitality sector drew a greater share of employment in the nation than in any of the Midwest states, although Illinois' share of employment in this industry sector grew more than any other Midwest state. On the whole, Midwest states have a smaller share of employment in this industry sector than the nation.

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The information sector saw a reduced share of employment in all states and the national average. Financial activities employment also was a smaller share of employment in all states (except Iowa and Kentucky, where it had a greater share from 2004 to 2014). Chart 1, based on Table 7, provides a graphic representation of this analysis.

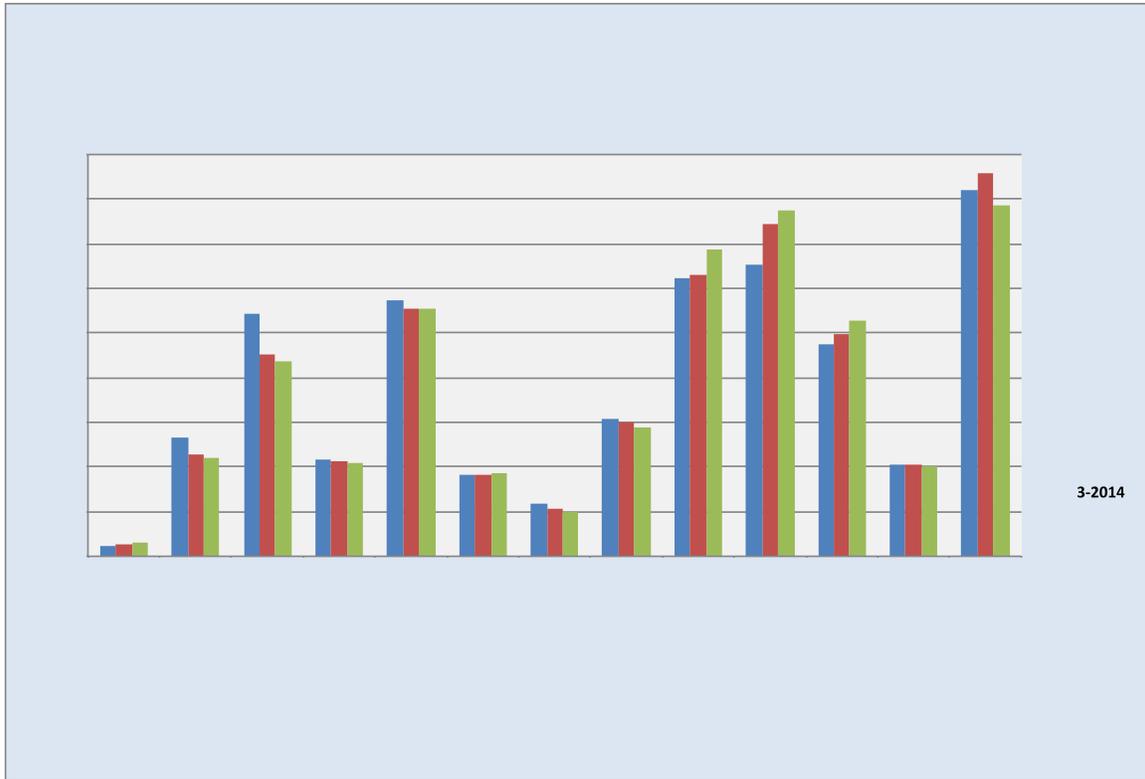
**Chart 1 – Current Distribution of Industry IL vs. U.S. and Average of Other Midwest States**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program 2014

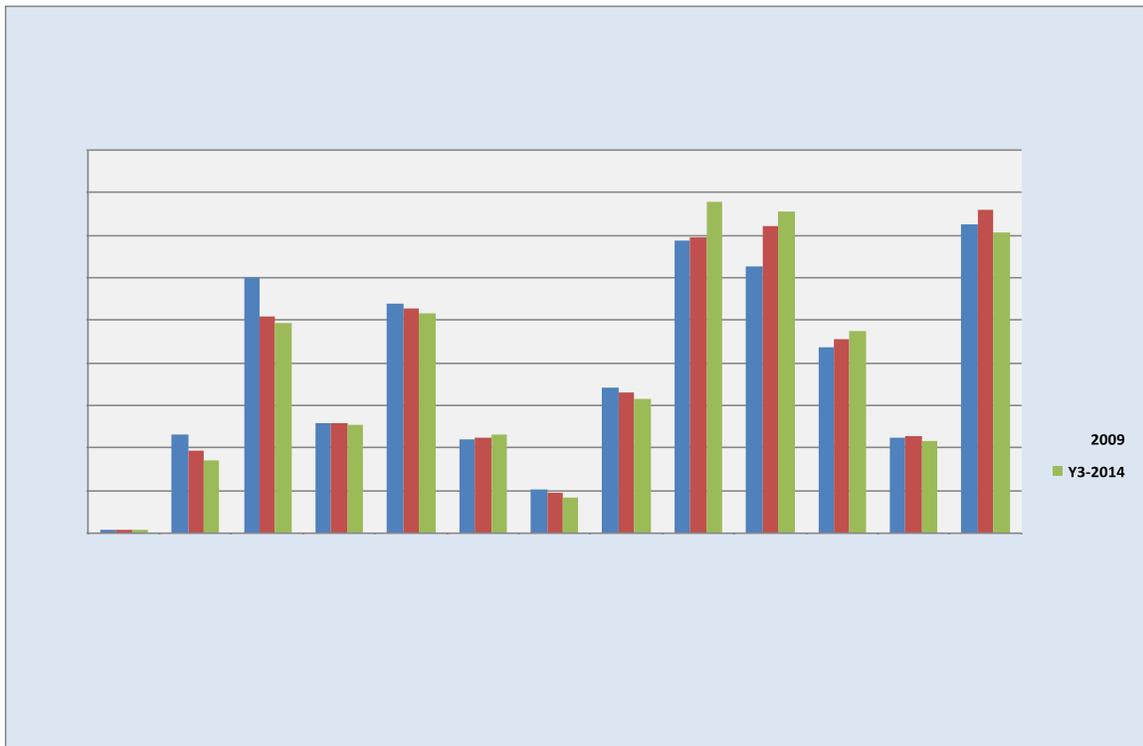
Charts 2-4 show how the industry distribution has changed over the last decade, with data shown for 2004, 2009 and 2014.

**Chart 2 – U.S. Employment Distribution Trend**



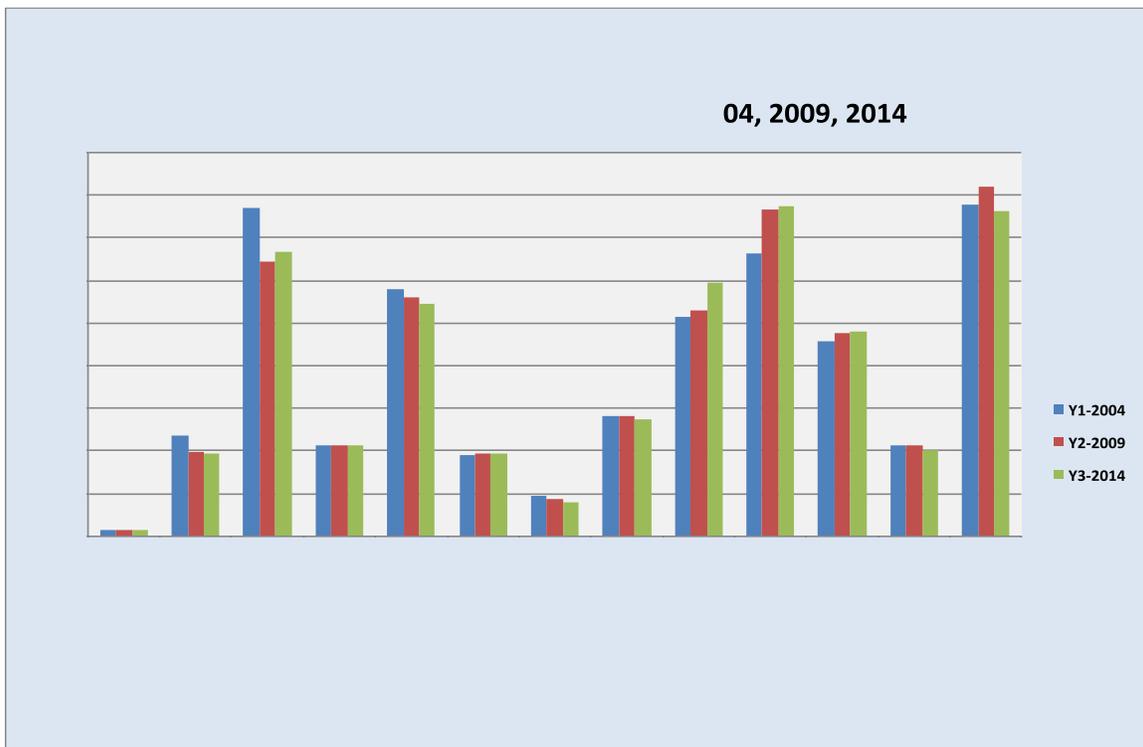
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program 2004, 2009, 2014

Chart 3 – IL Employment Distribution Trend



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program 2004, 2009, 2014

Chart 4 – Midwest State Average (not including IL) Employment Distribution Trend

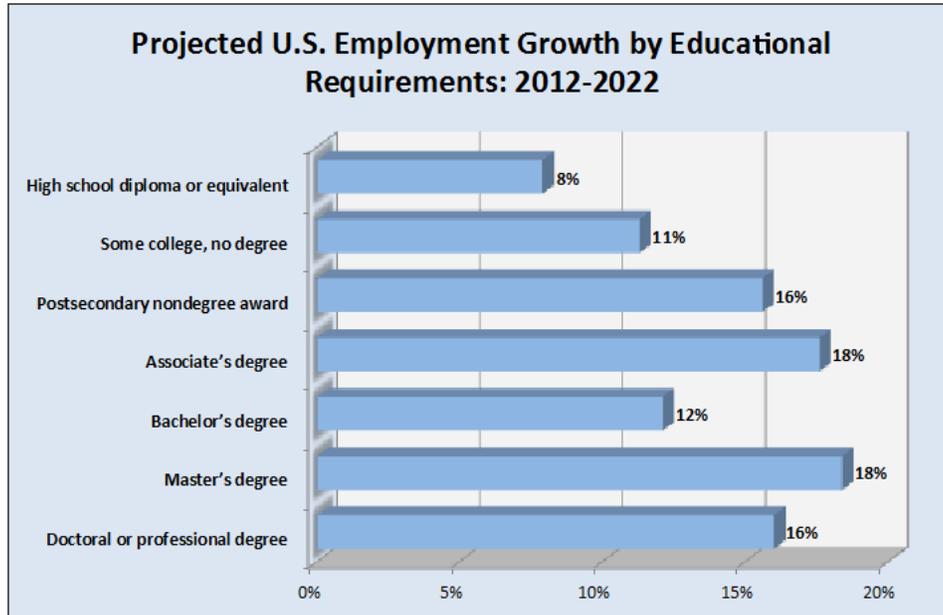


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics Program 2004, 2009, 2014

*Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce*

Occupational skill requirements are increasing across the workforce due to a myriad of factors, including the increasing pace of technological change and the increasingly global nature of the economy. In its most recent set of occupational employment projections, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS) shows the increasing need for advanced education and training to qualify for occupations with the highest growth rates.

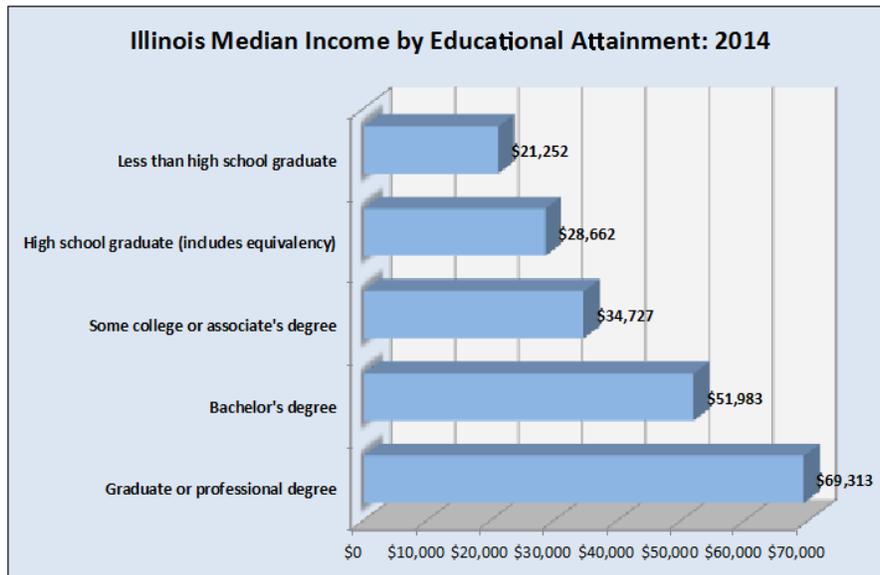
**Chart 5 – Projected U.S. Employment Growth by Educational Requirements: 2012-22**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections Program 2012-2022

Moreover, the education and skill requirements of occupations are directly related to the earning power of those occupations, as evidenced by Illinois data from the 2014 American Community Survey.

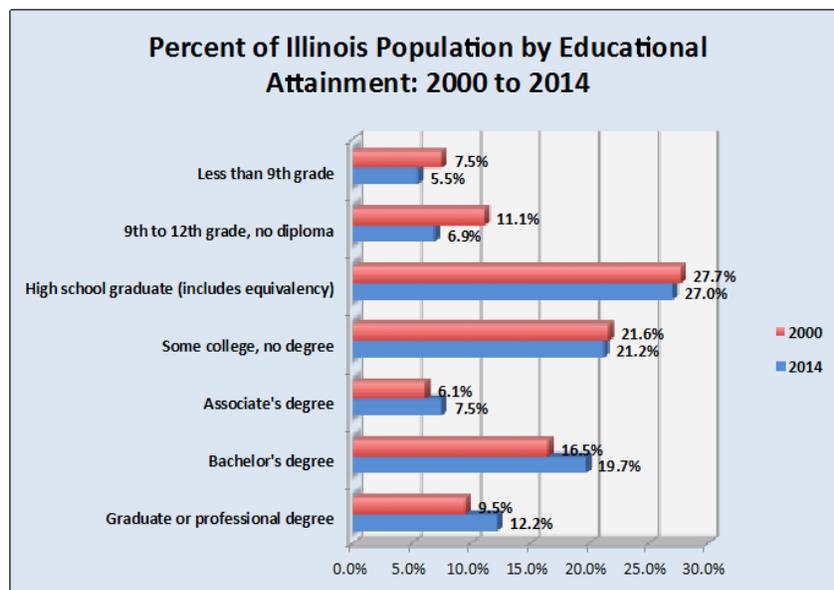
**Chart 6 – Illinois Median Income by Educational Attainment: 2014**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2014

These data sets highlight the importance and the value of increased educational attainment and degrees. For Illinois to compete in this globalized, technology-charged economy, we must train our workforce to meet the challenges of these increasing education and skill requirements. Since the turn of the century, Illinois has made progress in increasing the overall educational attainment of its population. However, the number of individuals with low literacy skills has remained a significant concern in meeting the demand for an educated and skilled workforce.

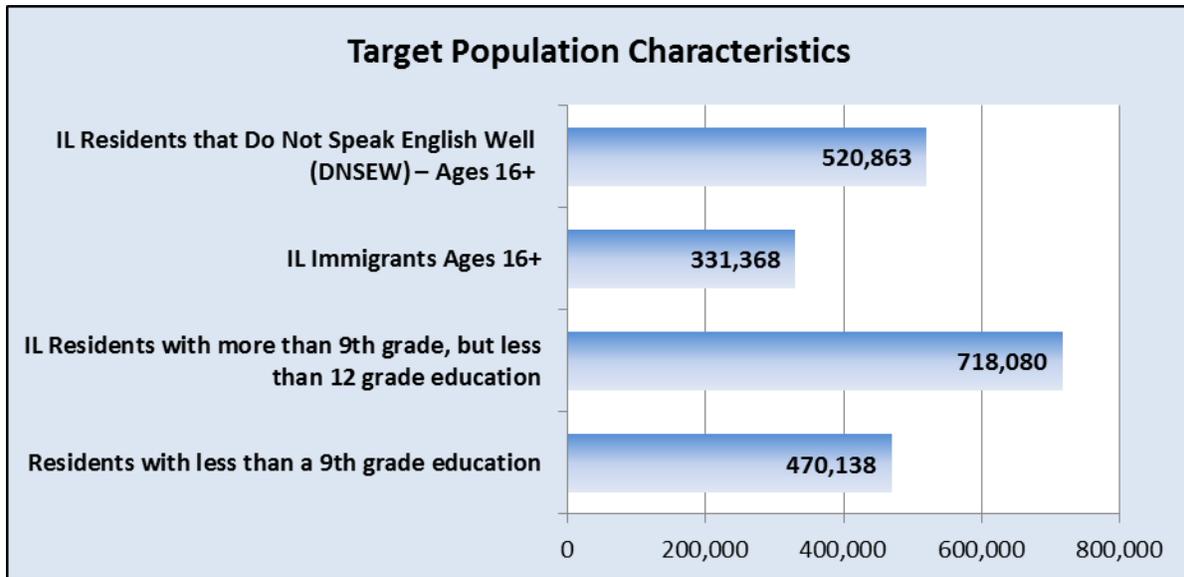
**Chart 7 – Percent of Illinois Population by Educational Attainment: 2000 to 2014**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, American Community Survey 2014

The percentage of Illinois' population (age 25+) with some type of post-secondary degree increased from 32% in 2000 to over 39% in 2014. However, this number is still too low. Illinois has committed to ensuring that 60% of the state's population has a high quality degree or credential by 2025, an initiative referred to as 60 by 2025. As this data shows, the state is clearly moving towards that goal, but there is still a long way to go in the next decade. Illinois' continued economic and income growth is dependent on reaching the 60 by 2025 goal.

**Chart 8 – Target Population Characteristics**



Source: 2015 Illinois Community College Board Index of Need Report

There are approximately 850,000 persons in Illinois that lack of English proficiency. Over 700,000 people have some high school education but do not have a diploma, and nearly 500,000 people have less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education. These individuals could benefit from a variety of workforce and adult education programs, especially bridge programs that incorporate English, reading and math skills contextualized for a targeted industry.

### **Skill Gap Analysis**

During recent years, a number of projects and studies have been undertaken to examine the issue of “skill gaps” within major industry sectors in Illinois (or significant portions of Illinois). What follows is a brief synopsis of the findings of these studies within each of three major industry sectors: manufacturing, health care and transportation distribution and logistics (TDL).

#### *Manufacturing*

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency on Planning (CMAP) released a policy update in March, 2015<sup>3</sup> that examined quantitative labor market data to determine the extent of the manufacturing skills gap in metropolitan Chicago.

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<sup>3</sup> “Searching for Evidence of a Skills Gap in Manufacturing,” CMAP Policy Update, March 4, 2015. [http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/about/updates/policy/-/asset\\_publisher/U9jFxa68cnNA/content/searching-for-evidence-of-a-skills-gap-in-manufacturing](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/about/updates/policy/-/asset_publisher/U9jFxa68cnNA/content/searching-for-evidence-of-a-skills-gap-in-manufacturing)

As of 2014, Economic Modeling Specialists International (EMSI) estimated that 28,000 unemployed individuals in the Chicago region were seeking work in the manufacturing sector. Despite this large pool of job seekers, manufacturing companies claim they are having trouble finding skilled workers to fill open positions, both in the region and nationwide. Data indicate that there may be shortages of industrial machinery mechanics, computer numerical control (CNC) machine operators and programmers and welders in the region.

The skills gap is a complex issue with few direct measures. Data about wages, job openings and work weeks must be woven together to understand the full conditions in the labor market. Even with all three measures, it can still be difficult to determine whether individual occupations face a shortage of skilled workers. Within the Chicago region, skills gaps are evident in several key manufacturing jobs, such as industrial machinery mechanics, computer numerical control (CNC) programmers and operators and welders. The severity of this recent manufacturing skills gap may have intensified when demand for workers spiked as the economy began to recover in 2009.

While much of the manufacturing skills gaps dialogue has focused on technical skills, the challenge of finding employees may extend beyond technical competencies. Manufacturing employees also must have so-called "essential/soft skills" such as literacy, numeracy, reliability, problem solving and the ability to work in teams. The "CMAP Manufacturing Drill-Down Report"<sup>4</sup> indicates that firms throughout the region have reported being unable to find sufficient workers with these skills. Downstate manufacturers and those in more rural areas face similar and often greater challenges in filling their vacancies due to an aging workforce, outmigration of younger residents and smaller labor pools.

### *Health Care*

In September 2014, the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) accepted a report<sup>5</sup> developed by its Health Care Task Force, consisting of IWIB business leaders and health care educators and practitioners. This report examined the workforce implications of issues regarding the implementation of new public health and coordinated, community-based healthcare delivery models in Illinois. These new models are being implemented in response to changing population and patient needs, federal and state healthcare reforms, and innovations in delivery models, professional practices and technology. These new models place stronger emphasis on prevention and primary care and use professional and paraprofessional healthcare workers in new roles with different skill requirements.

The Healthcare Task Force determined that the shift to team-based delivery models and improved health information technologies will allow each primary care physician to efficiently and effectively manage a greater number of patients. Insofar as workforce staffing is concerned, the results of these changes will be the following associated shifts in demand:

- A reduction in growth rate for primary care physicians. While the demand for primary care services will grow chiefly because of policy and incentive (and demographic) changes, the provision of those services will be shared across all team members, not exclusively by primary care physicians.
- An increased demand for advanced practice nurses (APNs) and physician assistants (PAs).

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/69902/FULL\\_Technical\\_Report\\_web.pdf/3243f710-f91d-4632-934a-3682fc19fff](http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/documents/10180/69902/FULL_Technical_Report_web.pdf/3243f710-f91d-4632-934a-3682fc19fff)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www2.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/HCTF%20Final%20Report.pdf>

- A significantly increased demand for front-line occupations such as community health workers (CHWs), home health aides (HHAs) and medical assistants (MAs).

In each of these occupational categories, apparent skills gaps can be identified. The gaps range from the need for increased managerial skills on the part of primary care physicians to the up-skilling of APNs and PAs in order to meet more robust patient care responsibilities and to the need for new and updated certification protocols for CHWs, HHAs and MAs.

### *Transportation, Distribution & Logistics (TDL)*

In June 2015, JP Morgan Chase and Jobs for the Future released a report called “Growing Skills for a Growing Chicago”<sup>6</sup>, which sought to develop “data-driven solutions to address the mismatch between employer needs and the skills of current job seekers”. In terms of TDL, the report found that there is a strong and ongoing demand for what it terms “middle-skill” jobs – jobs that require more than a high school credential but less than a bachelor’s degree, such as a diesel mechanic or supply chain specialist. The Chicago metro area creates more than 5,000 of these middle-skill jobs in TDL each year, but the need for an associate’s degree or credentialing is often the source of the skill gap. To close that gap, the report outlines a series of recommendations, including the widespread institution of TDL-specific talent pipeline solutions that will increase the feedback loop between employers and training providers. The IWIB also reconstituted the TDL Task Force in 2015 and charged it with developing recommendations and strategies for developing the needed TDL workforce in all areas of Illinois. In this sector, retention is as significant a challenge as talent pipeline management.

### **Targeted Populations**

The concentration of growth in higher-skill occupations will require more targeted initiatives with populations requiring assistance to attain the credentials necessary to pursue opportunities in in-demand occupations in key sectors. Estimates of need for many of these targeted populations are included in Attachment D. Targeted populations in Illinois will include the following:

- Long-term unemployed
- Low-income adults
- Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities
- Those receiving public assistance
- Out-of-school youth
- Veterans
- Migrant and seasonal farmworkers
- Re-entry individuals (ex-offenders)
- English Language Learners
- Older individuals
- Homeless individuals
- Single parents
- Youth in the foster system or who have aged out
- Displaced homemakers
- Veterans with disabilities
- Low literacy adults, including those without a high school diploma
- Low skilled adults
- Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.jpmorganchase.com/corporate/Corporate-Responsibility/document/54841-jpmc-gap-chicago-aw3-v2-accessible.pdf>

Illinois has launched statewide initiatives to address the needs of specific populations facing barriers to employment, and the WIOA partners will identify effective practices and resources to address the employment needs of each of the targeted populations listed above. The following examples describe the types of approaches that will be used to meet the needs of these populations.

### *Long-Term Unemployed*

Though the unemployment rate in Illinois has improved along with the rest of the country since the start of the economic recovery, long-term unemployment, defined as unemployment of a duration of 27 weeks or longer, remains a problem throughout the state. According to the USBLS, Illinois leads all six of its neighboring states in percentage, number and duration of long-term unemployed, with an average duration of 38.5 weeks for 2014, well in excess of the 26-week limit on individual unemployment insurance benefits. Such persistent unemployment can have ripple effects throughout local economic areas. To address these challenges, Commerce has leveraged multiple National Emergency Grants targeting long-term unemployed and piloted innovative strategies, such as Group Discovery, to address the unique needs of the population.

### *Individuals with Disabilities*

Unemployment among individuals with disabilities is a national epidemic and Illinois is no exception. In a report from the USBLS, the unemployment rate in November 2015 for those with a disability, ages 16 and over, was 12.1 percent, almost three times that of individuals that do not have disabilities. The labor force participation rate that month for those with disabilities was 19.2 percent. Those without disabilities were recorded at 68.3 percent. Illinois works to address that disparity through better service alignment between the partner programs, in addition to Disability Employment Initiative projects in targeted geographies throughout the state that build the capacity of American Job Centers to address the needs of adults with disabilities. Illinois also prioritizes multilevel partnerships between the workforce, secondary and post-secondary systems to provide career pathway programs to youth with disabilities.

### *Out-of-School Youth*

Approximately 184,000 youth age 18-24 in Illinois are considered “disconnected”, meaning they are not attending school and are not working. This number is approximately 15% of the 18-24 population statewide. Meanwhile, unemployment among this group stands at 22.1%, according to USBLS data, approximately five times that of the state as a whole. To address these issues, the IWIB created the Disadvantaged Youth Career Pathways Task Force to develop recommendations for building pilot projects that will seek to blend different sources of public funds, engage businesses for work-based learning and other initiatives and create sustainable career pathways for youth throughout the state. The “Report of the Illinois Disadvantaged Youth Task Force” was accepted by the IWIB in February 2016. Recommendations include: reinvigoration of cross-agency and cross-sector statewide supports for career pathway system development under the framework of Illinois pathways, creation of regional opportunity youth systems and the continuation of the work of the Youth Task Force as a function of the IWIB. The full report is available in Attachment E.

### *Veterans*

Serving Illinois’ 721,000 veterans is a high priority of the workforce system in Illinois. Veterans receive priority of service as required by WIOA. The Illinois workforce centers are committed to helping veterans find a job, training and other services. Employment Security employs veterans’ employment representatives, who are fellow veterans and specialists in providing employment services. Illinois

veterans have been served over the years through targeted initiatives administered by the workforce and education partners and the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs.

### *English Language Learners*

Approximately 2.73 million Illinois residents speak a language other than English as the primary language in their homes, and more than 331,368 immigrants are currently residing in Illinois. An English language learner is an individual who has limited ability in reading, writing, and speaking or comprehending the English language, and whose native language is a language other than English or who lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.

### *Low Literacy Adults (including those without a high school diploma)*

Employers increasingly require postsecondary credentials when hiring workers for good jobs that provide family-supporting wages and career advancement opportunities. Almost 1.2 million of Illinois' 10.1 million adults have less than 12 grades of formal education. Included in this number are 470,138 people with less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education. Low Literate adults are individuals who are basic skills deficient with academic skill levels below the postsecondary level, and who do not have the ability to read, write, speak in English and perform mathematics or other activities of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalency.

### *Low Skilled Adults*

With good jobs becoming harder to find for people with a high school diploma or less, it is critical to help low-skilled workers obtain the skills that are needed to be successful in postsecondary employment and training. According to a Report by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE formerly OVAE) Promoting College and Career Readiness: Bridge Programs for Low-Skilled Adults, defines Low-skill adults as individuals who lack the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in postsecondary education and training, or meet the demands of the current labor market.

### CHAPTER 3 – ILLINOIS WORKFORCE SYSTEM

Governor Rauner’s administration is focused on delivering value for taxpayers, creating a pro-jobs economic climate, ensuring world-class schools and educational options for every Illinoisan and bringing greater accountability to state government. This chapter includes a brief summary of the workforce system and the capacity of state agencies and boards that are responsible for the administration of the workforce and education programs. Additional operational detail is provided in Chapter 8.

#### **Interagency Coordination and Planning**

The Governor’s Office and the IWIB provide the major mechanisms for promoting joint planning and coordination around the vision, principles, goals and strategies outlined in Illinois’ Unified State Plan (Chapter 4). Deputy Governor Trey Childress, Secretary of Education Beth Purvis and other cabinet members have been directly engaged in developing the vision and principles outlined in the Unified State Plan. The Governor’s Policy Advisor for Economic Development, Sean McCarthy, has a direct line of authority over Commerce and Employment Security and will work to ensure that the implementation of the strategies and activities outlined in this Unified State Plan align with the Governor’s workforce education and economic development policies and vision.

#### *WIOA State Interagency Work Group*

The state established an Interagency Work Group that meets regularly to identify and address the state-level issues associated with the implementation of WIOA. The intended outcomes are state-level policies that provide consistent direction to regional and local-level partners as they establish effective One-Stop Delivery Systems. In concert with these discussions, regional and local-level partners are examining issues that will influence the full implementation of WIOA and are making recommendations to the Interagency Work Group for consideration. Through the Interagency Work Group, the core partners are establishing a new mechanism to address operational and policy issues under WIOA implementation and those that are raised by local Comprehensive One-Stop Center partners. The group has committed to meet regularly on an ongoing basis.

#### *State and Regional Planning Process*

In August of 2015, Governor Rauner asked the National Governors Association to facilitate a “*Policy Academy*” among his key staff, business leaders, state administrators, agency directors and local partners to develop the vision and guiding principles for WIOA state and regional planning. The Education, Workforce and Economic Development Leadership Team (Leadership Team) (see Attachment F) emerged from the Policy Academy that includes high level state policymakers with the authority to make commitments on behalf of their respective agencies and other key public and private stakeholders whose involvement is critical to the development of the Unified State Plan. The Leadership Team is responsible for establishing the vision and principles and directing the implementation of strategies outlined in Chapter 4. The Leadership Team has also worked with the Interagency Work Group to oversee and direct the development of the regional planning process in Illinois. The planning process is underway in each of Illinois’ economic development regions including the review of data, establishment of goals, development of strategies and the integration of services.

#### **State Agency Capacity**

The following is a list of the state agencies and boards that are responsible for the administration of the workforce, education and economic development programs outlined in WIOA.

- Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
  - Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

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- Employment and Training under the Community Services Block Grant Program (authorized under Department of Housing and Urban Development)
- Trade Act Programs
- Regional Economic Development
- Illinois Community College Board
  - Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
  - Career and Technical Education Programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006
- Illinois Department of Employment Security
  - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services including Labor Market Information
  - Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Monitor Advocate System
  - Veterans' Employment and Training Services
  - Unemployment Insurance Services
  - Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Illinois Department of Human Services
  - Rehabilitation Services for Individuals with Disabilities
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Illinois Department on Aging
  - Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Illinois Department of Corrections
  - Section 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007

### *Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity*

Commerce is the state agency that leads economic development efforts for Illinois and is responsible for the WIOA Title IB activities. Key program activities include distributing WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth formula funds, Trade Act funds and National Emergency Grants to 22 Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs), monitoring the local areas' use of WIOA funds, and providing technical assistance to local areas. Commerce is responsible for the administration of the required and allowed Governor's Statewide Workforce Activities as outlined in WIOA. Commerce issues formal guidance to the local areas through policy letters and notices designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. Commerce also provides staff support to the IWIB and its committees and ad hoc task forces. As part of the Bureau of Community Development, Commerce also oversees the employment and training programs under the Community Services Block Grant Program.

### *Illinois Community College Board*

The ICCB has the responsibility of overseeing Title II activities under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. Services provided include, but are not limited to, assessment, basic skills instruction, English language acquisition instruction, high school equivalency instruction, career awareness, workforce preparation, online instruction, bridge programs as well as accelerated education and training programs. Currently, there are 86 providers of adult education and family literacy in Illinois that consist of community colleges, community based organizations, regional offices of education and other approved providers. The mission and vision of adult education is to provide every individual in Illinois access to adult education and literacy services. In Illinois, more than 1.7 million adults have less than 12 grades of formal education, approximately 2.6 million Illinois residents speak a language other than English in their home, and more than 552,000 immigrants reside in Illinois. ICCB seeks to prepare adult learners to compete for jobs of the present and the future. To accomplish this it is necessary to build a system that is education, training and workforce focused.

Illinois has seen continued growth and demand for postsecondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) in both higher completion rates and increased program offerings. Last year roughly two-thirds (66.9%) of all Illinois community college graduates earned a CTE degree or certificate and 615 new CTE programs were approved to meet workforce demands. In Illinois, federal Perkins Title I funds are divided 60/40 between the secondary and post-secondary career and technical education systems where administration is shared between the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and ICCB. The 57 Education for Employment (EFE) regions receive funds from ISBE to support secondary CTE programs, and the 39 community college districts receive funds from ICCB to support post-secondary CTE programs.

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) is the most important piece of legislation affecting career and technical education (CTE) in Illinois. Perkins IV focuses state and local efforts on continuously improving programs to facilitate the academic achievement of CTE students by: strengthening the connections between secondary and post-secondary education; restructuring the way stakeholders, high schools, community colleges, universities, business and parents work together; and increasing state and local accountability standards. The intent of Illinois post-secondary CTE is to provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in the global economy. Career and technical education equips students with the foundational knowledge to explore a cluster of occupations and careers. As a student evolves through their educational experience, their focus is narrowed to a particular program. This process allows students to transition seamlessly while providing them with hands-on exploration, rigorous academics and the support necessary to succeed.

### *Illinois Department of Employment Security*

Employment Security is responsible for administering Title III activities for employment services under the Wagner-Peyser Act. The intent of Wagner-Peyser services is to sustain economic growth by meeting the needs of job seekers, increase awareness of resource providers and expand employment opportunities. Services offered include assessments for job placement, job search assistance and online job application processing. Employment Security is responsible for increasing community awareness about the services provided via job fairs, community collaborations, onsite recruitments, resource linkage and presentations. Additionally, Employment Security is responsible for labor market and career information in Illinois through cooperative agreements with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to provide statewide and sub-state employment, unemployment, occupation, wage information and statewide and sub-state industry and occupational employment projections. These data products serve as the cornerstone for the Career Information System, a web-based tool for students and job seekers to identify Illinois' in-demand jobs and make informed choices about future career pathways.

### *Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation*

Vocational Rehabilitation administers Title IV activities and is the state's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. Vocational Rehabilitation works in partnership with individuals with disabilities and their families to assist them in making informed choices to achieve full community participation through employment, education and independent living opportunities. The primary focus of Vocational Rehabilitation is to assist individuals with significant disabilities in obtaining and retaining competitive integrated employment. Vocational Rehabilitation services are designed to prepare an individual for employment through an individualized planning process.

### *Career Pathways Model*

The career pathways model is one that is fairly new to the Vocational Rehabilitation system. Vocational Rehabilitation is creating training opportunities for Vocational Rehabilitation counselors to improve their

understanding of career cluster concepts and in methods of incorporating those concepts in developing employment plans for people with disabilities. The initial focus of the training will be on transition age youth with disabilities, but also will be extended to individuals with disabilities of all ages. Coordination with the Employment and Economic Development for Persons with Disabilities Task Force created under Illinois' Employment First initiative will be an important resource for increasing competitive integrated employment for citizens with disabilities. Members of the task force, who include people with disabilities, business representatives, and state agency officials, are focused on the same outcomes as those in the WIOA Unified State Plan: integrated service delivery, robust engagement with business, competitiveness and accessibility, cross-agency collaboration and alignment of results-driven practices.

The Illinois Department of Human Services' Division of Family & Community Services is also the state administrator of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. DHS operates Family Community Resource Centers statewide serving TANF customers, linking them to time-limited cash assistance for basic needs, transitional services to help families become independent and screening for issues related to substance abuse, mental health and domestic violence, as well as referrals to address those issues. Employment and Training activities under TANF include assisting qualified individuals in applying for cash assistance, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and medical assistance; evaluating and assessing eligibility for work and training programs; and evaluating eligibility for supportive services, such as transportation and child care. Each TANF and SNAP customer who is engaged in workforce development services receives such services according to a responsibility and services plan.

The Department of Human Services' Division of Family & Community Services will have a strong presence in Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and is committed to increasing workforce engagement with collaborative partnerships to achieve employment opportunities for all adults served by DHS. Casework staff will develop a services plan for TANF and SNAP recipients connecting them to career pathways opportunities offered in each Comprehensive One-Stop Center. Casework staff will connect customers in need of barrier reductions services at the Comprehensive One-Stop Centers and connect them to services offered by DHS such as mental health, substance abuse and child care. Supportive services will be provided to participants as per policy guidelines.

### *Illinois Department on Aging*

The mission of the Illinois Department on Aging (Aging) is to serve and advocate for older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity and quality of life. In accordance with the federal Older American's Act<sup>7</sup> regulations, Aging has divided Illinois into 13 Planning and Service Areas (PSAs). The 13 PSAs in Illinois are each managed and served by an Area Agency on Aging. Aging works in partnership with these agencies: 12 not-for-profit corporations and one unit of local government, the City of Chicago. Area Agencies on Aging (Area Agencies) have the primary task of planning and coordinating services and programs for older people in their respective areas. The Area Agencies receive funding from Aging based on a formula which takes into consideration the number of older citizens and minorities in that area, as well as the number living in poverty, in rural areas and alone. Like Aging, Area Agencies are not, as a rule, direct service providers. Area Agencies contract with local agencies which provide services to the older citizens who live in the same community.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.illinois.gov/aging/AboutUs/Pages/rules-main.aspx>

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The role of Aging under WIOA is to ensure the needs of older workers and job seekers are considered so that these individuals remain employed for as long as they wish. Age is often a barrier to finding employment, and Aging's resources can be leveraged to help older citizens find and retain employment. As a partner program, Aging has the role of administering the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) under Title V of the Older Americans Act. The SCSEP program provides on-the-job training and resources/referrals for all individuals 55+ years of age that will ultimately lead to unsubsidized employment.

### *Illinois Department of Corrections*

The mission of the Illinois Department of Corrections (Corrections) is to serve justice in Illinois and increase public safety by promoting positive change in offender behavior, operating successful reentry programs and reducing victimization. Corrections administers the Second Chance Act Program, which allows governments and communities to coordinate reentry efforts, enhance existing housing and support services, engage in evidence-based practices and create innovative strategies that will serve the growing needs of this population, ultimately increasing public safety and reducing recidivism.

### **Nationally Directed/Locally Administered Programs**

There are a number of nationally directed workforce programs that are administered in some of the regions and LWIAs in Illinois. These programs, where present, will be included in the regional and local workforce plans.

### *National Farmworker Jobs Program*

The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) provides employment and training services that are targeted to migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). The program partners with community organizations and state agencies to counter the chronic unemployment and underemployment experienced by farmworkers who depend primarily on jobs in agricultural labor performed across the country. NFJP partners with the state monitor advocate to provide outreach services to farmworkers and their families. NFJP provides career services and training to eligible farmworkers, and coordinates with the One-Stop Delivery System. The National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grant awards are determined by a formula that estimates, by state, the relative demand for NFJP services.

### *YouthBuild*

The US Department of Labor grants funds directly to the local YouthBuild program through an annual competitive process. YouthBuild is a community-based alternative education program that provides job training and educational opportunities for at-risk youth ages 16-24. Youth learn construction skills while constructing or rehabilitating affordable housing for low-income or homeless families in their own neighborhoods. Youth split their time between the construction site and the classroom, where they earn their GED or high school diploma, learn to be community leaders, and prepare for college and other post-secondary training opportunities. YouthBuild includes significant support systems, such as a mentoring, follow-up education, employment and personal counseling services; and participation in community service and civic engagement.

### *Job Corps*

Job Corps is an education and vocational training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young people ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. Job Corps' mission is to attract eligible young people, teach them the skills they need to become employable and independent and place them in meaningful jobs or further education. Job Corps centers are operated for the U.S. Department of Labor by private companies through

competitive contracting processes, and by other federal agencies through interagency agreements. For more information regarding the Job Corps Program in Illinois please visit: <http://www.jobcorps.gov/centers/il.aspx>

### **State Workforce Activities**

Workforce development, education and training activities in Illinois have been transforming for some time. This transformation will accelerate as WIOA is fully implemented across partner programs at the local, state and regional levels. Illinois has strongly advocated and supported aligning efforts to demand industries, occupations and skills. The intent is to deliberately link education and training to the skills identified by businesses, ensuring that program completers have those skills when entering the workforce. Additionally, comprehensive career services that enable individuals to make informed decisions on education and training opportunities that maximize their potential for successful and rewarding careers are being promoted.

The state will work to develop policies and incentives to support the strategies and activities as outlined in Chapter 7. Based on experience with interagency initiatives such as the Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing Program, bridge programs and other initiatives, Illinois is making a deliberate shift to increase the use of contextualized learning and work-based training while moving away from a one-size-fits-all mentality of service delivery.

### **Strengths and Challenges**

While Chapter 2 provides data and analysis of Illinois' workforce development, education and training activities, this section provides a snapshot of Illinois' strengths and weaknesses of the workforce system. Core partners collaboratively identified the strengths and weaknesses as part of the unified planning process and as part of the ongoing efforts to better align and integrate service delivery consistent with the state's vision, principles, goals and strategies, as discussed in Chapter 4.

The following summarizes key strengths of Illinois' workforce system as identified by core partners.

- The state encourages innovation.
- Pockets of regional innovation are developing.
- State and local partners have recent experience in work-based learning due to National Emergency Grants and Workforce Innovation Fund grants.
- State partners continue to work collaboratively and explore opportunities for service alignment.
- The state has provided technical assistance on employer engagement, sector strategies, work-based learning, labor market information and best practice models on serving special target populations.
- The state is pursuing innovation in providing services to individuals with disabilities.
- The state is encouraging the use of lean principles in workforce development programs.
- There are examples of effective business-led regional sector partnerships that exist and that can be leveraged as models for the rest of the state (i.e., Vermilion Advantage<sup>8</sup>).
- Illinois has been successful in administering innovative education and training initiatives, such as Accelerating Opportunity Integrated Education and Training and Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.vermilionadvantage.com/>

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The following summarizes challenges for the workforce system in Illinois as identified by core partners.

- Employers have difficulty finding skilled workers with essential workplace skills and technical skills.
- The quality of local career services varies.
- The level of regional and local cross-program collaboration varies.
- The willingness to pursue innovation at regional and local levels varies.
- The level and quality of regional and local public-private sector partnerships varies.
- The level and quality of employer engagement varies, but the areas with weak engagement outnumber those with well-connected employers.
- The level and quality of co-located, in-person services has coverage gaps in the Comprehensive One-Stop Center.
- There is an emphasis on a one-size-fits-all approach, with little effort to leverage job seekers' existing knowledge and skills to accelerate training.
- The service delivery model in Illinois is characterized by a silo approach.

The strengths identified above have been incorporated into the strategies as assets to be leveraged, and the challenges also addressed in the strategies as improvement opportunities.

### CHAPTER 4 – STATE VISION, PRINCIPLES, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Illinois is planning now for what the state will come to be during the 21st century. These are exciting times, marked by dramatic change, challenges and opportunities. Illinois is emboldened by a strong sense of mission and is encouraged by WIOA, which codifies into law many of the strategies that the state has worked on for years.

#### Vision Statement

Promote employer-driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the state's economy.

#### Principles

- Demand Driven Orientation – Through a sector strategy framework, the state should support the systemic assessment of business needs for talent across local, regional and state levels and ensure that strong partnerships with business drive decision-making across the talent pipeline.
- Strong Partnerships with Business at All Levels – Strong partnerships with business should focus on equipping employers with the support and tools they need to define in-demand skills and articulate those needs to education and training providers. Strong partnerships at the regional and local level should be recognized and inform the development of high-quality partnerships across the state.
- Career Pathways to Jobs of Today and Tomorrow – Partnerships with business should drive the development of career pathways that meet employers' skills needs today, while offering individuals clear opportunities to build and upgrade their skills and advance their career over time. Those pathways should be integrated within the P-20 system, including adult education, to help students and young adults identify career pathway options and offer flexibility to build upon their skills to meet the evolving needs of the global economy.
- Cross-agency Collaboration and Alignment – Developing career pathways and stackable credentials will demand collaboration and alignment across agencies that contribute to Illinois' overall talent pipeline. There should be a focus on improving the strategic connections across all components and levels of the education and workforce systems to ensure no "dead ends" exist.
- Integrated Service Delivery – Enhanced collaboration and alignment across state agencies at a strategic level should lead to better service delivery integration. Multiple state agencies and partners are positioned to support the success of individuals and businesses. Technology and integrated data systems can help illustrate those interrelationships and position the system to collaborate across agencies to deliver the right services at the right time.
- Access and Opportunity For All Populations – Coordinated and comprehensive services can help targeted populations (see Chapter 2) prepare for and advance along a career pathway. Connecting individuals with relevant supports, such as transportation, child care and transition services enables the systems to be responsive to the needs of individuals' workforce readiness.
- Clear Metrics for Progress and Success – The Unified State Plan should include metrics for assessing progress and success. As the talent pipeline serves two customers – businesses and individuals – those metrics should reflect the strategic priorities of the state that relate to building a globally competitive workforce. Illinois will develop metrics or examine existing framework metrics that define successful career pathway programs (i.e., Alliance for Quality Career Pathways (AQCP)).
- Focus on Continuous Improvement and Innovation – The system should establish mechanisms for continual assessment of system performance and opportunities for improvement, as well as for encouraging innovation and disseminating best practices. This includes the continued enhancement of non-traditional methods for delivering education and training. Additionally, the growing role of

entrepreneurship and its contributions to employment and economic growth will be an outcome of continuous improvement and innovation.

### **State Goals**

Illinois' Vision and Principles establish a foundation for a new era of integration of Illinois' workforce, education and economic development policy and programs. The partners will collectively use the following goals to support our vision to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development strategies at the state, regional and local levels to improve the economic growth and competitiveness of Illinois employers and their workforce.

- Foster improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.
- Expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.
- Expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs.
- Expand information for employers and job seekers to access services by improving the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.

### **State Strategies**

The vision and principles will be implemented through six policy strategies that together are necessary to reach the state plan goals. This section provides an overview and rationale of each strategy and how they fit together. Chapters 6-9 address how these strategies will be implemented and coordinated by the core programs and other partners. These strategies, and how they will be implemented as outlined in Chapter 7, reflect input from the Interagency Work Group which includes both core and required partners. Additionally, this group identified and addressed state-level issues with technical and programmatic details associated with new requirements under the law.

#### *Strategy 1: Coordinate Demand-Driven Strategic Planning at the State and Regional Levels*

This coordinated strategic planning process is designed to identify the best opportunities and challenges for increased economic growth and economic advancement through the coordination and alignment of state and regional resources and assets. This strategy starts with a set of key indicators and benchmarks across education, workforce and economic development as shown below. These indicators will be used to monitor and compare performance at the local, regional and state levels over time and to similar states and regions nationally. These strategic indicators include the following:

- Measures of overall economic growth and advancement.
- Measures of key strategic drivers addressed in education, workforce and economic development initiatives and programs such as business growth in key competitive sectors and quality of the workforce.
- Definition of the WIOA planning regions.
- Creation of an integrated planning process that aligns leading planning practices and tools in economic and workforce development and education planning. This planning process includes the integration of economic cluster, industry sector and career cluster analyses in ways that can support employer-driven regional sector partnerships (Strategy 2). The process will also address

in-demand industries and occupations and align and integrate existing education and workforce resources. By supporting these partnerships through career pathway solutions, the state will provide the best opportunities for career advancement, including to targeted populations facing barriers to employment. This planning process will be supported through integrated planning tools and an enhanced data infrastructure including the state education and workforce longitudinal data system (Strategy 6).

### *Strategy 2: Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives*

This strategy focuses on state policies fostering the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector initiatives addressing in-demand industries and occupations in key sectors that are the engines of economic growth for the state and its regions. These regional initiatives are informed by state and regional strategic planning (Strategy 1). The first step is the development of a statewide policy framework that defines the goals and guiding principles of employer-driven partnerships and how state and regional resources can be used to launch, expand and support them. The state has developed a statewide guide (see Attachment G) for business and industry associations to work with education, workforce and economic development in establishing and managing these partnerships to achieve and promote economic growth and economic advancement. This is accomplished through aligned planning around in-demand occupations (Strategy 1) and career pathway strategies (Strategy 3). This guide will be expanded to include methods and tools to benchmark existing partnerships and evaluate the success of both existing and new partnerships in achieving their goals. These goals include their performance goals on the common WIOA measures and other measures related to economic growth and advancement. This strategy will include how to align and integrate business services among the core programs along with state and regional economic development partners. Finally, this strategy will explore how to integrate funding and resources from core programs and economic development to support employer-driven sector initiatives, including how to leverage rapid response and layoff aversion for business retention.

### *Strategy 3: Provide Career Pathways for Economic Advancement*

Through alignment and integration of new and existing career pathway policies and procedures, state, regional and local partners will promote opportunities that can lead to career and economic advancement in critical and in-demand industries and occupations (Strategy 1) for students and workers, including those facing multiple barriers to employment. Credentials for student pathways should be both industry recognized and stackable so that participants are able to advance into better jobs in their chosen industry and occupation. This will allow students who exit education and training programs to re-enter the education and training system without starting over, and they can continue to build on the foundation they've already established. The state will align and integrate existing career pathway policies and promote their implementation across all education and workforce programs and funding streams. The strategy includes aligning and integrating career pathways developed through regional sector partnerships (Strategy 2). This strategy promotes leading and proven practices in promoting career pathways including improved career services (Strategy 4). It builds on innovative pilot programs like the Accelerated Training in Manufacturing that integrates work-based and classroom training, programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improves employment and earnings. This strategy also aligns support services for targeted populations facing barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities as well as those who are low-skilled and have low literacy levels. The state will expand career pathway guides and promote leading practices with the understanding that career pathways must be customized at the regional level based on employer-driven talent solutions within different sectors. State, regional and local partners must develop and utilize the pathway strategies that best leverage existing education and workforce assets and work best with

different targeted populations. Finally, these guides also will provide methods and tools for managing and improving the performance of career pathway initiatives including those managed through regional sector partnerships.

### *Strategy 4: Coordinate and Enhance Career Services and Case Management*

This strategy integrates and enhances the career services now received through education and workforce funding streams and programs especially for populations facing multiple barriers to employment. This strategy will integrate and enhance case management and related support services. It will address career services and case management delivered to participants through Comprehensive One-Stop Centers, as well as those receiving services outside these centers. Policies will be developed across programs and related partners on how to integrate the delivery of enhanced career services resulting in individualized plans addressing how to reach career goals based on career and skill assessments and identified barriers requiring support services. It also will involve developing state policies on the coordination of case management services based on these plans. These policies will be implemented and supported through career services and case management guides and training, as well as through integrated case management systems across applicable core programs that allow data sharing between multiple service providers and programs. The effectiveness of the delivery of enhanced case management will be evaluated based on internal and external client satisfaction and the performance management systems that monitor and report the delivery of enhanced career services.

### *Strategy 5: Expand Access to Labor Market Information*

This strategy improves access to labor market information for both employers and job seekers that will allow them to promote and access job openings, review changing labor market trends and opportunities, identify funding opportunities and find education, training and support services. This strategy will support employers in establishing and managing regional sector partnerships using employer talent pipeline management tools and resources (Strategy 2). It will provide easier access to career guidance and planning information for the delivery of enhanced career services (Strategy 4), including information on career pathways within critical sectors of in-demand industries and occupations (Strategies 1-3). It also will provide better information to employers on how to promote career opportunities and job openings and access business services, education, training resources and services. This strategy will include the development of a WIOA compliant eligible provider information system for employers and job seekers to find and compare education and training services from approved providers. This improved labor market information system will be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis on utilization and effectiveness in serving the needs of employers and job seekers.

### *Strategy 6: Improve Public-Private Data Infrastructure*

This strategy focuses on improving the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the following: the alignment and integration of education and economic and workforce development planning strategies (Strategy 1); sector partnerships and career pathways (Strategies 2 and 3); career services (Strategy 4); and enhanced labor market information (Strategy 5). This strategy requires the integration of labor market information with state education and workforce longitudinal data systems. The focus on alignment and integration of economic development and labor market information resources will support state and regional integrated planning. The strategy will also lead to the development of an integrated data infrastructure process that will support regional sector partnerships, career services and labor market information for employers and job seekers. Training will be developed for partners to understand labor market projections and state longitudinal data systems to monitor and evaluate the performance of regional sector partnerships and their career pathway solutions.

## **ILLINOIS WIOA UNIFIED PLAN**

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The vision, principles, goals and strategies presented here provide a description of Illinois' collective resolve to improve the competitive position of the state's economy. Elevating our workforce with the education and skills matched to the evolving needs of our businesses will ensure Illinois is prepared to take advantage of every market opportunity and remain a world-class leader.

### CHAPTER 5 – STATE WORKFORCE BOARD FUNCTIONS

Overseeing the entire workforce system on behalf of the Governor and General Assembly is the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB). The IWIB provides oversight and strategic leadership to the workforce development system to further the state's goals of meeting the workforce needs of businesses and workers. Appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Illinois Senate, the IWIB is charged with the task of reviewing the progress of the state's workforce development efforts. To meet this directive the IWIB, in accordance with federal legislation, includes leaders from business, state agencies, industry, labor, education and community-based organizations. The Governor also appoints the two co-chairs for the IWIB. Currently, John Rico, President and CEO of Rico Enterprises, serves as the private sector co-chair, and James M. Schultz, Director of Commerce, serves as the co-chair representing the Governor. Attachment H includes a membership roster for the State Board, including members' organizational affiliations.

Members of the IWIB represent organizations, agencies or other entities and require optimum policymaking authority within their organization, agency or entity. They must also represent diverse regions of the state, including urban, rural and suburban areas. Over 50% of the IWIB must be made up of business representatives. Other membership categories include: Governor and General Assembly appointments; state agencies; chief elected officials from cities and counties; labor organizations; youth activities representatives; workforce training representatives and education, including adult education; vocational rehabilitation; employment security; and other institutional representatives. The state has made it a priority to recruit business leaders from high-demand sectors whose companies are also end users of the workforce system.

The IWIB meets four times per calendar year, typically in the Chicago area twice a year, Springfield once per year and the central/southern region once per year. Special meetings may be convened as deemed appropriate by the co-chairs to address special issues. Another mechanism established by the IWIB was the creation of the Executive Committee to deliberate and make recommendations regarding key policy initiatives between regularly scheduled board meetings.

Through a task force structure, representatives from the mandated and optional public-private partners develop recommendations to present to the full IWIB for consideration. Task forces convene around topic-specific issues and the established priorities of the IWIB. Examples of past task forces include those focused on disadvantaged youth, healthcare, information technology, manufacturing, people with disabilities and transportation, distribution and logistics.

In cooperation with the Governor and Leadership Team, the IWIB charged the Executive Committee to oversee the efforts of WIOA implementation. The IWIB will expand its role with workforce, education and economic development related groups within the state, such as the Illinois P-20 Council, the Illinois Pathways Advisory Council, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce Advisory Fund Board and the Illinois Higher Education Commission on the Future of the Workforce. Through these various roles, the IWIB ensures the strategies used by core partners and other required partners remain effective and relevant, and if not, recommends appropriate changes.

### CHAPTER 6 – PERFORMANCE GOALS, ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Chapters 6-10 include the required operational and technical elements of the Unified State Plan required by the United States Departments of Labor and Education.

The state's vision, principles, goals and strategies are designed to preserve and improve the competitive advantage of Illinois' businesses and workers in the global economy. Illinois' competitiveness depends on both groups performing to their full potential. In working to achieve the state's vision, the workforce and education programs must be employer and demand-driven, with program services linked to providing appropriately skilled, high quality workers.

#### Performance Goals

The Interagency Work Group established a performance accountability subgroup consisting of representatives from the core partners. The subgroup identified the extent to which each core partner either now captures the data elements required or has access to the data required from other sources. The subgroup then identified gaps between the data required to support performance accountability and the data each core partner now collects, stores and reports. Based on an analysis of historical and current participant outcomes, each core partner will negotiate baseline WIOA performance measures for each indicator, as applicable. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and U.S. Department of Education (ED) will adjust baseline performance indicators for each core partner at the state level using a statistical model yet to be determined. The six primary indicators of performance under WIOA for each core partner (note that primary indicator four and five do not apply to Wagner-Peyser Employment Services) are:

1. *Entered Employment* – The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
2. *Employment Retention* – The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.
3. *Median Earnings* – The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
4. *Credential Attainment Rate* – The percentage of participants who obtained a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has obtained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is only included in this measure if the participant is also employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized post-secondary credential within one year from program exit.
5. *Measurable Skills Gains* – The percentage of participants who during a program year are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress towards such a credential or employment.
6. *Effectiveness in Serving Employers* (not yet defined by DOL or ED) – This will be based on indicators developed as required by Section 116(b)(2)(A)(iv) of WIOA.

Illinois remains committed to continuous improvement of its performance within an overall framework that recognizes the importance of setting realistic and attainable goals that enable service to a broader range of individuals and to customers with barriers to employment. When a statistical model is developed, the state will also take into consideration the economic setting in which the programs operate.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) has identified benchmarking as a leading strategy to assess and evaluate results. The annual benchmarking report<sup>9</sup> is submitted to the IWIB, Governor and General Assembly as a method for measuring progress of the state's workforce development system. The ten established benchmarks are designed to provide a comprehensive and balanced picture of the status and progress of workforce development services in Illinois. They are divided into three general categories:

#### *Workforce Quality Benchmarks*

The first six benchmarks measure workforce quality and are arranged in an order that tracks the life of a worker through various educational milestones. These benchmarks include three youth benchmarks.

- Educational level of working-age adults
- Percentage of the adult workforce in education or workforce training
- Adult literacy
- Percentage of high school graduates transitioning to education or workforce training
- High school dropout rate
- The number of youth transitioning from 8th grade to 9th grade

#### *Earnings Benchmarks*

The next two benchmarks focus on earnings, a primary indicator of workforce quality.

- Percentage of individuals and families at economic self-sufficiency
- Average growth in pay

#### *Competitive Business Advantage Benchmarks*

The final two benchmarks are key indicators of Illinois' competitive business advantage.

- Net job growth
- Productivity per employee

Illinois will consider refining the State Benchmark Report and identify additional metrics (such as the Alliance for Quality Career Pathway (AQCP) that will assess both our progress towards meeting WIOA goals and the effectiveness of the strategies to move towards those goals. The expanded benchmark report will clearly link overall organizational principles to program goals, strategies and outcomes. This provides the framework for an ongoing feedback mechanism, through which program goals and strategies can be consistently evaluated with regard to their contributions towards program outcomes and may be adjusted if those outcomes indicate a need. By maintaining this "clear line of sight" between goals, strategies and outcomes, the assessment process becomes much more comprehensible and transparent for all of the WIOA partners, as well as for the IWIB in its oversight role.

The overarching intent is to accomplish a fundamental shift toward measuring the system's ability to make our workers and businesses as globally competitive as possible. While each program will maintain its mandated measures, we will work with the private sector to identify what success means in serving employers. Potential measures could include the areas of program flexibility and responsiveness;

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<sup>9</sup><https://www2.illinoisworknet.com/DownloadPrint/2015%20Benchmark%20Report.pdf>

reducing the amount of time required for new hires to reach full productivity; reducing the amount of time required for new program participants to begin earning money; reducing the amount of time needed to fill vacant positions; and working toward wholesale improvement of essential workplace skills.

The Interagency Work Group will work with partners to integrate evaluation and research projects that impact the workforce system in Illinois. The state will also consider the information developed by the interagency data team and other program-specific evaluations, research reports and pilot programs such as the Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing Program, Workforce Data Quality Initiative and Disability Employment Initiative in the development of an integrated evaluation and research approach.

### CHAPTER 7 – IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE STRATEGY

An Interagency Work Group has been established to promote an integrated WIOA strategic planning process across education, workforce and economic development. This team's work will continue to build on and integrate current state and regional planning initiatives and utilize resources of the state-level core partners, state-level required partners and others to integrate these services. This team will carry out the following activities to provide the basis for implementing the strategies outlined in this chapter:

- How core program partners will align, integrate and fund activities to carry out the strategies and will align these activities with other required partners to assure coordination and non-duplication of effort, including coordination with economic development.
- How core program partners will align and integrate services for both employers and individuals in cooperation with non-core program partners.
- How core program partners will fully engage educational institutions to leverage resources and assets to increase post-secondary education and training access and success through career pathway strategies.

#### **Strategy 1: Coordinate Demand-Driven Strategic Planning at the State and Regional Levels**

The state is coordinating a demand-driven strategic planning process across education, workforce and economic development at the state, regional and local levels. This team has built on and integrated current state and regional planning initiatives and resources of the core state agency partners and other non-core partners, including the economic development arm of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce). This team will carry out the following activities to provide the support for regional planning, which provides the basis for implementing the remaining strategies, especially regional sector partnerships.

##### *Activity 1.1: Develop Strategic Indicators, Benchmarks and Related Planning Data Resources.*

The Interagency Work Group will build on existing agency initiatives to develop and use strategic indicators and benchmarks as part of comprehensive data resources for state and regional planning. Together, state agency partners are developing strategic indicators and benchmarks for state and regional economic development. These include indicators and benchmarks for economic, job, and income growth and distribution. Additionally, indicators and benchmarks for key economic development strategies including workforce development can be compared with other states and regions. The Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) has recently updated state, regional and LWIA industry and occupational projections. These projections are used by all core program partners to identify in-demand industries and occupations. Additionally, Employment Security provides key indicators of business growth and location, labor force participation and unemployment rates that will be used to support regional planning. Employment Security, through its partnership with Workforce Data Quality Initiative agencies, has developed a data infrastructure to produce workforce outcomes for education and training graduates. Work has already begun on mapping labor entrants and worker flows across jobs and over time. The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) also works to estimate the percent of the state's population with post-secondary degrees in cooperation with the Illinois P-20 Council and its 60by25 goal (see Chapter 2) for the state.

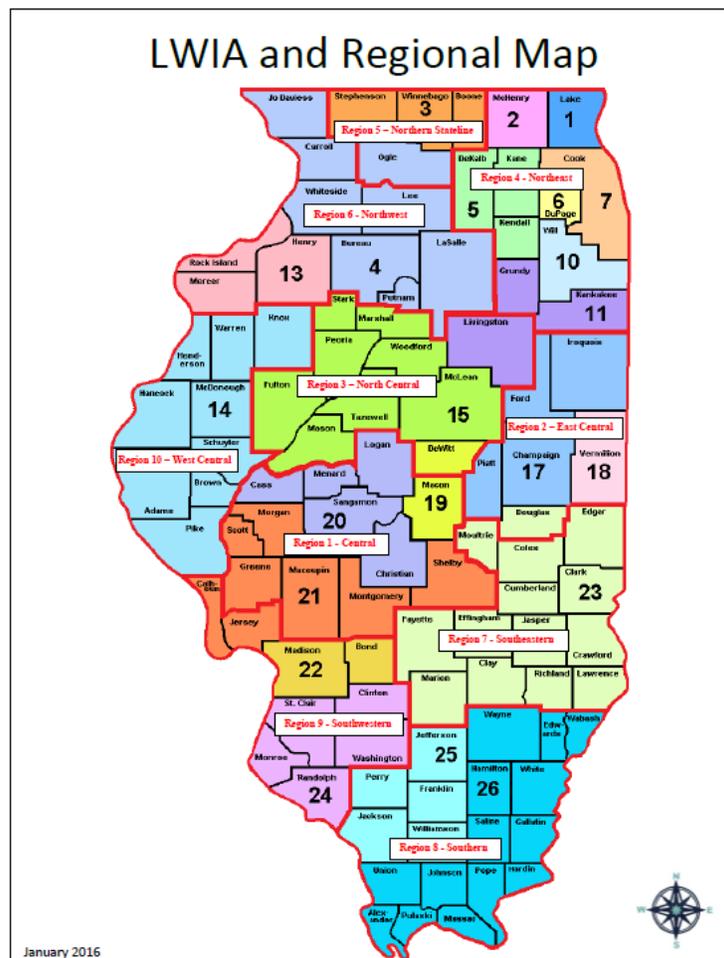
All four core partners have worked together using the national career cluster framework to integrate sector and career cluster initiatives throughout the state. All four core agencies have utilized U.S. Census data to estimate the size and characteristics of the population and labor force, including targeted populations facing multiple barriers to employment. The Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) has annually produced a State Benchmark Report that includes education, workforce and economic

development indicators and benchmarks including an economic self-sufficiency benchmark for each region. The IWIB will work with the Illinois Education and Self Sufficiency Council to review and finalize metrics defining economic self-sufficiency. The IWIB, in cooperation with core program partners, developed indicators and benchmarks for in-school and out-of-school youth at the state and regional levels that will be used to support regional planning. The Interagency Work Group will build on these initiatives to: (1) develop a state and regional cross-agency benchmark report for stakeholders and the general public, and (2) provide regional planning data and tools to support regional planning to align education, workforce and economic development.

*Activity 1.2: Establish Regional Planning Areas.*

The Interagency Work Group will use these planning resources to support regional planning within ten regions that have been defined by the Governor to support the integration of education, workforce and economic planning. These ten regions address the WIOA Section 106 requirement that the Governor identify and organize local workforce boards and core program partners into regional planning areas to engage in joint planning, integrate service delivery, share administrative costs and enter into regional coordination efforts with economic development agencies operating in the same region. The ten regions were established by the Governor based on the analysis of statewide commuting patterns surrounding major and minor metropolitan centers. As shown below and in Attachment S, these ten regions involve the following LWIAs and counties.

**Illinois Economic Development Regions**



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It is important to note that Illinois currently has 22 local workforce innovation areas. The state continues to recommend that Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) and Local Workforce Innovation Boards review the patterns in WIOA funding, participant service levels, and administrative costs and consider how these will impact service delivery and the ability to meet administrative requirements. The state has acknowledged the many efforts already undertaken to streamline operations and provide more efficient service delivery. The state continues to encourage CEO's to consider a voluntary consolidation of LWIAs as an option to provide as much funding as possible for direct client services.

### *Activity 1.3: Conduct Integrated Regional Planning*

The state (Attachment F) and IWIB have developed and supported an integrated regional planning process in each of the ten regions that is coordinated with local area planning. As required by WIOA, this planning process will include how local workforce innovation boards will engage in the joint development and implementation of regional sector initiatives. ICCB, Commerce and other state agency partners established the foundations for regional planning with community colleges throughout Illinois through an ICCB strategic planning process in the spring of 2015. The process addressed workforce and education needs across the state to improve the changing economic and student needs within the ten planning regions and community college districts.

### Illinois Regional Planning Process Framework

The state has worked with the Leadership Team, IWIB and local partners to develop regional planning workshops and a statewide summit to support the regional planning process. The graphic to the right illustrates Illinois' regional planning framework that is customized for each regional team and its particular goals. Regional planning will address how to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development resources to identify opportunities for sector initiatives and partnerships that will promote business and expand career opportunities for more people in the region. The regional plans will also identify opportunities for the coordination and delivery of services. Please see Attachment N for more details regarding Illinois' regional planning process.



### **Strategy 2: Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives**

State and regional strategic planning activities will align education, workforce and economic development and lay the foundation for employer-driven regional sector initiatives. The graphic on page 43 outlines a set of critical success factors for Illinois' sector strategy initiatives.

### *Activity 2.1: Promote Employer-Driven Regional Sector Partnerships*

The Interagency Work Group will work to expand the statewide policy framework that defines the goals and guiding principles of employer-driven sector partnerships and how state and regional resources can

be used to launch, expand and support them (see Attachment G). These partners will implement strategies based on the leading national and state employer-driven models such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s Talent Pipeline Initiative.

### *Activity 2.2: Promote Sector-Based Business Services and Employer Initiatives*

The Interagency Work Group will also work together to better align and integrate business services among the core programs, along with state and regional economic development partners. This will focus on providing integrated business services to employers in targeted industries and occupations that are identified as in-demand through the state and regional planning process. The Interagency Work Group will support these business service teams through guides and tools, as well as professional development and training. This integrated business services initiative will be complemented by related initiatives to integrate funding to support employer-driven sector initiatives, including how to leverage rapid response and layoff aversion funds for business retention (see Appendix I).

### **Illinois Sector Strategy Success Factors**



### **Strategy 3: Provide Career Pathways for Economic Advancement**

The state and regional sector initiatives will provide the foundation for sector-based career pathway initiatives that expand career and educational opportunities for students and workers, including those facing multiple barriers to employment to achieve economic advancement.

### *Activity 3.1: Promote Leading Career Pathway Models and Best Practices*

The state agency partners will develop career development guides and technical assistance materials to promote leading career pathway models and best practices that can be implemented through regional sector partnerships and other regional sector initiatives. These technical assistance materials and professional development will address how to improve career services and expand access to accelerated and integrated work-based and classroom training, aligned and integrated programs of study leading to

industry-recognized credentials, as well as support services for targeted populations facing barriers to employment. They also will address how to fully mainstream targeted populations into sector-based career pathway initiatives to achieve similar outcomes relative to other populations. These targeted populations will include the long-term unemployed, low-skilled adults, low-income adults, low literacy adults, those receiving public assistance, out-of-school youth, veterans, individuals with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, ex-offenders, English language learners, older individuals, homeless individuals, single parents, youth in the foster system who have aged out, displaced homemakers and Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians. The promotion of the models and best practice will be built on lessons learned from the following:

- Sector-based Job Training and Economic Development/SNAP pilot project involving community-based organizations serving SNAP and TANF recipients as well as ICCB initiatives, including Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs.
- Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) pilot projects for individuals with disabilities. These career pathway initiatives will be supported by core and required partners.

### *Activity 3.2: Expand and Improve Bridge and Integrated Education and Training Models*

The state agency partners will focus on expanding access and success in sector-based bridge programs that provide opportunities for low-skilled and low literate youth and adults. The state will support new initiatives that promote sector-based pre-bridge, bridge programs and integrated education and training models that expand access and success of low-skilled youth and adults in career pathways. These programs are designed to introduce individuals to career pathway programs of interest. A common definition of bridge programs has been developed to ensure all core and required partners have a basic understanding of the provisions of services under these programs. The partners will revisit this definition and other policies to ensure that it aligns with current employer and workforce readiness needs. The state recognizes the use of bridge programs as a foundation for career pathway systems and also as a foundation for employment opportunities and other training. ICCB will work closely with core and required partners under WIOA to re-examine the use of bridge programs to those individuals who lack basic skills as a way of connecting with Title I and Title III for training opportunities and with Title IV to ensure those who are basic skill deficient and have learning differences have access tools needed to be successful.

### *Activity 3.3: Promote Innovation in Career Pathway Solutions.*

State agency partners will promote innovation in career pathway solutions for targeted populations through state demonstrations and pilot projects. This will include initiatives that expand career pathway opportunities for out-of-school youth through the blending of federal and state funding based on the recommendations of the IWIB Youth Task Force. This will also include joint projects between adult education programs, local workforce boards and others on project such as:

- Aligning WIOA Title I services with efforts that currently address justice-involved youth. Illinois is exploring a range of career pathway models seen nationally and statewide as best practices, and examining ways to braid and blend funding for maximum impact. Where possible these models will be folded into existing juvenile justice efforts for seamless service alignment to add the expertise of WIOA service providers to strengthen employment and training models.
- Another high priority population targeted for service alignment is foster youth, including youth who are aging out of the foster care system. The Departments of Commerce and Child and Family Services are developing an initiative to expand career pathway services to older foster youth who are nearing age-out. Successful models for braiding and blending WIOA and Chafee Foster Care funds are under consideration as a basis for Illinois' effort.

### *Activity 3.4: Promote the Use of Apprenticeships*

The use of apprenticeships will be encouraged through demonstration projects, policy guidance and technical assistance. With increased attention on various forms of work-based learning, we expect apprenticeships to become more common as WIOA is implemented. In addition, the ICCB through its highway construction careers training project, prepares minority and low-income individuals to enter apprenticeship programs. Illinois will learn from the best practices and expand on programs like the Illinois Manufacturers' Association Education Foundation Advanced Apprenticeship Consortium project that will serve more than 7,000 collectively through apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship and career pathway programs in the State of Illinois. To leverage funding, apprenticeships will be embedded within Illinois Pathways, the state's public-private career pathway system initiative.

### **Strategy 4: Coordinate and Enhance Career Services and Case Management**

The Interagency Work Group will develop and implement policies for integrated and enhanced career services and case management.

### *Activity 4.1: Provide Coordinated and Enhanced Career Services*

The Interagency Work Group is working to support the delivery of enhanced career services to participants across partner programs. Employment Security is responsible for the Illinois Career Information System, a web-based tool that incorporates Illinois-specific actionable data on in-demand occupations and wages that allow students and job seekers to make informed decisions about their career pathways. These services will result in individualized plans addressing how to reach career goals based on career and skill assessments and identified barriers requiring support services. Agency partners also will include the assessment of digital literacy as a basic skill and provide services to participants in gaining these skills through career services and through additional services in career pathway bridge programs. Agency partners will also provide career services guides, tools and professional development to core program staff in providing these career services. This will be supported by the interagency labor market information team to provide improved access to career guidance information in in-demand industries and occupations and education, training and credentialing options for achieving career and education goals in participant plans (See Activity 5.2).

### *Activity 4.2: Provide Coordinated and Enhanced Case Management Services*

The Interagency Work Group will establish a case management team, as applicable, to coordinate and support the delivery of enhanced case management services to participants across the core programs and with other partners. This case management team will provide training in the use of case management data from aligned and integrated case management systems used by core programs and with other partners, including related human resources and Supportive Service programs (See Activity 6.3).

### *Activity 4.3: Promote Continuous Improvement and Ongoing Professional Development*

State agency partners will promote continuous improvement in career services and case management services through state and regional initiatives to promote leading business practices. They will promote the ongoing professional development of front-line staff providing client services through case management academies and national professional development and credentialing programs, such as the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP). Cross-agency training and professional development will be developed to ensure needs are clearly understood by all partners, both core and required. For example, the ICCB Adult Education will provide professional development to agency partners in the appropriate administration of educational assessment of basic skill deficiencies. Training and other professional development resources will be developed in collaboration

with front-line and supervisory workforce personnel to ensure they are relevant and timely, and technological solutions will be pursued to maximize access and cost-effectiveness.

### *Activity 4.4: Promote the Incorporation of Required Partner Services*

The core partners will explore opportunities to incorporate the services of the Comprehensive One-Stop Center partners into case management and career services. Illinois has made progress through the Interagency Work Group to identify the business services, career services, training services and supportive services of the state's workforce, education and economic development partners. Through the implementation of best practices from programs such as the Disability Employment Initiative, the state will develop policies to ensure that there is a customer-centered approach of coordinating services that consider the additional needs of the targeted populations as identified in Chapter 2.

### **Strategy 5: Expand Employer and Job Seeker Access to Labor Market Information**

The interagency data team will design, develop and use the statewide public-private data infrastructure (Strategy 6) to provide both employers and job seekers with tools to promote and access job openings, review changing labor market trends and opportunities, identify funding opportunities and find education, training and support services. This will require partners to ensure that privacy and security issues are addressed.

### *Activity 5.1: Improve Employer Tools for Communicating and Accessing Information*

The interagency data team will develop new tools for employers to communicate their forecasted demand for workers and review and provide input into industry and occupational projections developed through Employment Security. This will include new tools for employers working together in leading regional partnerships to continuously communicate short-term forecasts of job openings and competency and credentialing requirements for these jobs. This will build on tools and best practices from employer-led national and state initiatives, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Initiative and the Vermilion Advantage pilot project. The team also will improve employer capacity to easily communicate career opportunities and current job openings to regional partnerships and their broader labor market in Illinois. This will be accomplished through employer tools that can be easily integrated with their current human resource information systems and their own websites that provide information on careers and job openings.

### *Activity 5.2: Improve Access to Career and Education Guidance Tools and Information*

The interagency data team, in cooperation with the Interagency Work Group, will also utilize existing tools and develop new and improved tools and information to support the enhanced career services provided through the core programs and other partners. The team will expand the Illinois Career Information System tools to avoid duplication and to provide the ability to use a flexible and robust system (Strategy 4). The team also will provide ongoing training and support to front-line career services and case management staff to improve access and use of these tools and resources.

### *Activity 5.3: Improve Access and Integration of Eligible Training Provider Lists*

To improve the access and use of the WIOA eligible training provider lists by employers and job seekers, the labor market information team will also make Illinois workNet even more user-friendly and work with other state agencies to share similar information.

### *Activity 5.4: Improve Access and Utilization of Labor Market and Workforce System Information*

Labor market and career information is currently provided on the Employment Security website through a variety of web-based tools included in the Illinois Virtual Labor Market Information (VLMi) System

supported by Geographic Solutions and the Illinois Career Information System, which incorporates Illinois-specific labor market information. Through the partnership with the core partners, additional enhancements will improve the current platform and changes will be made through any new technology platform utilized by the state.

### **Strategy 6: Improve Public-Private Data Infrastructure**

The interagency data team, in cooperation with the Interagency Work Group, will expand and improve the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the five strategies described above. This requires the integration of labor market information with state education and workforce longitudinal data systems, as well as program and case management systems.

#### *Activity 6.1: Enhance the State Labor Market Information System*

The core partners, including Employment Security, will work to enhance the labor market information system to support the six WIOA strategies listed in this Chapter.

#### *Activity 6.2: Expand and Improve the State Longitudinal Data System*

The Illinois data team will continue to expand and improve the state education and workforce longitudinal data system to support the six strategies. This will include initiatives to use state longitudinal data to support regional sector partnerships based on lessons learned from initiatives such as the Vermilion Advantage pilot project. It will also continue to build the capacity to link to state licensing, industry and professional certification data. This will build on the pilot projects conducted by ICCB by:

- Expanding labor market information by including improved measures of workforce outcomes (job attachment and full quarter earnings) that can be used to benchmark the outcomes for education and training graduates to other Illinois workers.
- Developing longitudinal worker profiles from improved measures for workforce outcomes.
- Developing and implementing a mapping of labor entrants and worker flows across jobs and over time to understand local labor supply and employer demand dynamics.

#### *Activity 6.3: Improve the Integration of Program and Case Management Information Systems*

The Illinois data team will work with core partners and the Illinois Chief Information Officer to improve the integration of program and case management systems as applicable to improve service delivery. This team also will work to improve the integration with state longitudinal data systems to support evaluation and continuous improvement.

### CHAPTER 8 – CORE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

This chapter includes compliance information for the State agencies that are responsible for the administration of workforce and education programs in Illinois under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in Illinois.

#### **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity**

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce) is the state agency that leads economic development efforts for Illinois. The main focus of Commerce is to retain and create jobs in Illinois by marketing to:

- Existing businesses, encouraging them to reinvest and create more jobs for Illinois citizens;
- New businesses, inviting them to relocate, invest and create new jobs;
- International companies, positioning Illinois as a global business destination for Foreign Direct Investment;
- Entrepreneurs and investors, connecting resources to support their startups and ventures; and
- Locally and globally, promoting Illinois as a world-class tourism and film destination.

Commerce works with businesses, local governments and community organizations to advance economic development and improve the state's competitiveness in the global economy. Commerce is organized into the following offices that are focused on economic growth for the State of Illinois:

- **Business Development:** Administer job creation/retention grants, loans and tax credit programs;
- **Employment and Training:** Oversee statewide workforce training system, and promote and coordinate initiatives to bridge skills gaps;
- **Community Development:** Utilize federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funding to administer community infrastructure, housing and disaster recovery funding programs;
- **Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology:** Catalyze local, national and global partnerships including the Small Business Development Center network and the Advantage Illinois program that strengthen Illinois' competitive advantage;
- **Regional Economic Development:** Integrate economic development activities and outreach across the state;
- **Energy and Recycling:** Promote investment in Illinois' green economy, as well as create energy and recycling policies for state facilities;
- **Energy Assistance:** Enable low income households to maintain utility services through programs to reduce energy costs through improved energy efficiency;
- **Film:** Promote the state's film and theatre industry through tax incentives, including the Illinois Film Tax Credit;
- **Tourism:** Market state travel opportunities domestically and internationally, contributing to over \$2 billion in state and local tax revenues annually;
- **Trade and Investment:** Promote Illinois' economy through outreach events and trade missions, and provide financial and technical exporting assistance to Illinois companies; and
- **Urban Assistance:** Manage the Urban Weatherization Initiative, targeting homes in disadvantaged communities and training home energy technicians, and the Employment Opportunities Grant program, which trains participants in the construction trade industry.

#### *Office of Employment and Training*

Supporting innovative workforce programs that connect employers to a highly skilled workforce is central to Illinois' commitment to ensure that businesses thrive in Illinois. The Office of Employment and Training (OET) oversees the administration of the WIOA Title IB Programs, WIOA statewide activities including rapid response and the training component of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act Program.

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Key units of the OET include Planning, Policy, Performance, Monitoring, Reporting, Rapid Response, Trade and Technical Assistance.

### *Coordination with Economic Development*

Commerce is responsible for ensuring that economic development activities are integrated with the workforce strategies outlined in Chapter 7. Over the last decade there has been a steady, deliberate move to integrate economic and workforce development services at the state, regional and local levels. At the state level, Commerce's Business Development, Regional Economic Development Offices and the Office of Employment and Training collaborate to respond to the needs of business and industry in Illinois. This collaboration has accelerated over the last year under the leadership of the Governor and Commerce Director. There have been multiple informational briefings between offices and a marked increase in the use of cross-cutting teams to bring additional perspective and resources to bear on efforts of business retention, layoff aversion and business expansion. Establishing, maintaining and expanding these relationships are critical to the successful implementation of the workforce strategies and activities.

### *Coordination with Community Development*

As part of the Bureau of Community Development, Commerce oversees the employment and training programs under the Community Services Block Grant Program funding. The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program provides federal funding to Illinois' 36 community action agencies (CAAs) to carry out locally designed programs providing a range of services and activities that have measurable impacts on the causes and effects of poverty. The CSBG program assists low income populations with transportation, clothing, health services, food, shelter and programs designed to increase self-sufficiency, such as job preparedness, education and housing assistance. Small business loans are also available with CSBG funding. Commerce will use the WIOA state, regional and local planning process to better align and integrate this program into the workforce and education system to strengthen Illinois' communities.

### **Illinois Community College Board**

Title II of WIOA is funded through the U.S. Department of Education Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) and is administered by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). Title II of WIOA reauthorizes and enhances the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AELA). The purpose of Title II is to:

- Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency;
- Assist adults who are parents to obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children; and lead to sustainable improvements in the economic opportunities for their families;
- Assist adults in attaining a secondary school diploma and in the transition to postsecondary education and training, through career pathways; and
- Assist immigrants and other individuals who are English language learners in improving their:
  - Reading, writing, speaking and comprehension skills in English, and
  - Mathematics skills; and
  - Acquiring an understanding of the American system of government, individual freedom and the responsibilities of citizenship.

The eligible population to be served under Title include individuals “who has attained 16 years of age; who is not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law; and

- is basic skills deficient;
- does not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and has not achieved an equivalent level of education; or
- is an English language learner.

The ICCB recognizes the core purpose of Adult Education is to prepare individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce. Two ways that this can be accomplished is through the Alignment Activities and Establishment of High Quality Adult Education System.

### **Illinois Department of Employment Security**

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security) is responsible for administering the Wagner-Peyser program, Title III. The intent of the Wagner-Peyser program is to sustain economic growth by meeting the needs of job seekers, increase awareness of resource providers, and expand employment opportunities. Services offered through the Wagner-Peyser program include assessments for job placement, job search assistance and online job application processing. Employment Security is responsible for increasing community awareness about the services provided via job fairs, community collaborations, onsite recruitments, resource linkage and presentations.

The Employment Security Business Services Division delivers professional employer engagement, with a focus on servicing our veteran community. This team is comprised of Business Service Managers, Business Service Coordinators, Veteran Program Representatives and special program advocates. Each serve collectively to deliver services and programs to the business and job seeker community. Employer engagement throughout Illinois is accomplished through personal business relationships with chambers of commerce, industry associations, economic groups and community-based organizations. Employer workshops are held, highlighting topics such as the Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC)/State Tax Credits, Federal Fidelity Bonding Program and Apprenticeship programs. In addition to daily employer interactions, Employment Security provides training on Illinois Job Link (IJL), which is the data platform that assists employers in meeting their job candidate needs.

Wagner-Peyser staff, in conjunction with the Unemployment Insurance (UI), Reemployment Services Program (RES), conducts workshops which target the needs of customers that may have a difficult time finding employment. Topics for the workshops include how to perform an effective job search, resume writing and cover letters, interviewing skills, labor market and career choice tools and tips on how to use IllinoisJobLink.com (IJL). Specialized workshops are held for military veterans, youth and ex-offenders.

Employment Security promotes employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and encourages employers to hire these individuals for job openings. Employment Security hosts and participates in hiring events and workshops across the state for individuals with disabilities in coordination with Central Management Services (state agency) and the Department of Human Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, presenting information about employment opportunities in state government and the Successful Disability Opportunities Program.

To better serve the employment needs of returning citizens and in response to the sharply increasing number of returning citizen job seekers in Illinois, Employment Security facilitates a statewide Reentry Employment Service Program (RESP). This program is for adults or juveniles who are or have been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process and who require assistance in overcoming barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction. The RESP provides one-on-one job

readiness assessments through its state labor exchange program, conducts workshops, makes appropriate referrals for supportive services, matches qualified job seekers with employer needs and encourages job retention.

The Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers Program is a statewide program that assists migrant farmworkers, food processors and seasonal workers with workforce development services, career guidance, referral to training, advocating for appropriate working conditions and referrals to supportive services. The Higher the Future (HTF) program encourages youth age 16-24 years old to aspire to careers in professional and growth-oriented occupations. It provides employment services to youth and introduces them to career opportunities.

Employment Security is the preeminent source for labor market and career information in Illinois. Employment Security has cooperative agreements with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS) to provide statewide and sub-state employment, unemployment, occupation and wage information. In addition, Employment Security has a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor's (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration to provide 10-year and 20-year statewide and sub-state industry and occupational employment projections. These data products serve as the cornerstone for the Career Information System, a web-based tool for students and job seekers to identify Illinois in-demand jobs and make informed choices about future career pathways.

Employment Security's Economic Information and Analysis Division (EI&A) also offers consultation services and products on workforce outcomes to state agencies, training providers and universities. EI&A economists are singularly trained on workforce outcome metrics based on longstanding cooperative working relationships with the U.S. Census Longitudinal Employment Dynamics Division, USBLS, and U.S. DOL's Employment and Training Administration.

### **Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services**

The Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) is the designated state agency for administration of the vocational rehabilitation (Vocational Rehabilitation) program in Illinois. The main focus of the Department is to assist individuals with significant disabilities to obtain and retain competitive integrated employment. Vocational Rehabilitation services are designed to prepare an individual for employment through an individualized planning process. Key Vocational Rehabilitation services include:

- Job Placement – Vocational Rehabilitation counselors work with customers to identify job opportunities in the community, develop a resume and prepare for interviews. Other customers receive more intensive job placement and preparation services through community rehabilitation program agencies under contract to DRS.
- On-the-Job Training and Evaluations – Many Vocational Rehabilitation customers receive on-the-job training and evaluation services arranged by Vocational Rehabilitation counselors in conjunction with local employers. These services provide an opportunity to demonstrate job skills and learn the requirements of a specific job.
- College and University Training – Vocational Rehabilitation assists many customers in pursuing a degree at a community college or at a university, based on the needs and abilities of the individual. Each year DRS assists about 3,000 individuals in attending college training.
- Treatment and Restoration Services – Vocational Rehabilitation funds may be used to purchase medical, surgical, or psychological services, as well as other therapeutic services, to help customers achieve greater functioning and reduce barriers to employment.
- Supported Employment – Individuals with most significant disabilities often require a high level of

support, both in preparation and on-the-job assistance, in order to achieve and maintain employment. Supported employment provides a variety of supports, such as job coaching, to assist customers in meeting employment goals.

- Assistive Technology – Many people with disabilities utilize a variety of technological devices to function in the world of work and increase their employment potential. The Vocational Rehabilitation program can assist customers with evaluation services and purchase of technology equipment that will meet their individual needs.
- Transition services – Students with disabilities benefit from work-based learning experiences and other pre-employment services designed to prepare them for post-school employment or additional training.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services counselors establish program eligibility based on an evaluation of functional limitations, then work with the customer to develop an individualized plan for employment. Many services are provided through a network of community partners with the capacity to assist the customer in obtaining employment consistent with their needs. These include:

- Around 145 school districts which provide pre-employment transition services, including work-based learning experiences, to over 10,000 students with disabilities;
- About 150 community rehabilitation providers who provide job development, job placement and supported employment services to around 4,000 individuals; and
- Community colleges and universities that provide training services to about 3,000 individuals pursuing degrees or credentials to enhance employment skills.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services works in partnership with other elements of the workforce system to provide people with disabilities access to a wide range of services and employment opportunities. DRS staff are members of local workforce boards and serve as a key linkage to information on disability awareness, work accommodations and accessibility requirements.

An important resource for meeting the employment needs of Illinoisans with disabilities is the Employment First initiative. Illinois became an Employment First state in July 2013 with the passage of the Employment First Act (Public Act 98-91). Employment First is a national movement to promote competitive integrated employment for people with disabilities, particularly individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. WIOA defines “competitive integrated employment” as the key objective for people with disabilities, creating inherent synergy between the two laws.

Before the passage of WIOA, Illinois’ Employment First Act created the Employment and Economic Development for Persons with Disabilities Task Force to work towards the goal of increasing competitive integrated employment for citizens with disabilities. Members of the task force are appointed by the Governor and include people with disabilities, business representatives and officials from state agencies.

The guiding principles of the WIOA Unified State Plan align directly with Employment First. The focus on integrated service delivery, robust engagement with business, competitiveness and accessibility, cross-agency collaboration, and alignment of results-driven practices are shared by both the Unified State Plan and the Employment First movement and are in line with the preliminary findings and goals of the Employment First Task Force.

### **Illinois' Current Strengths in Alignment of Core Partner Programs**

Throughout the State of Illinois, many strong partnerships already exist, with ideas and room for further alignment and expansion during WIOA implementation. The following programs and initiatives illustrate Illinois' strength in aligning and integrating workforce and education programs.

#### *Illinois Pathways*

Illinois Pathways is an innovative public-private education partnership that is organized to support local implementation of P-20 Council STEM Programs of Study by coordinating and reducing the transaction cost among statewide networks of education partners, businesses, industry associations, labor organizations and other organizations. Education and career pathways are an integrated collection of programs and services intended to develop students' core academic, technical and employability skills; provide them with continuous education and training; and place them in high-demand, high-opportunity jobs. Illinois Pathways builds off of the National Career Clusters® Framework and supports career pathway systems in STEM application areas. The pathways are a basis for clusters of specific occupations or careers grouped together because they share similar interests, strengths and skills. More information regarding Illinois Pathways is posted at [www.illinoispathways.com](http://www.illinoispathways.com).

#### *Access to Activities Leading to Recognized Postsecondary Credentials*

The State of Illinois is dedicated to ensuring that all students have access to rigorous and relevant educational opportunities that prepares them for success in college and careers. Illinois Career and Technical Education (CTE) provides students with the academic and technical skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century knowledge and skills-based economy. Students participating in these programs are held to specific and reliable industry-based learning standards to ensure that they are fully prepared for both postsecondary education and the high-wage, high-skill and high-demand career of their choice.

A key to a robust career pathways system is that portable, stackable credentials are incorporated fully into the system, particularly at the postsecondary level. Fortunately, in Illinois, the incorporation of portable, stackable credentials have been an ongoing commitment of the postsecondary career and technical education system since the implementation of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act (Perkins IV).

The ICCB recognized that CTE students at a community college do not always fit the model of transition implied in the Perkins IV definition. Thus, the agency moved early to adopt a more holistic career pathways approach to implementation. For example, the ICCB CTE division partnered with Adult Education to develop an Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS). The purpose is to provide integrated CTE and Adult Education instruction, so adult students can earn at least one "stackable," credit-bearing, post-secondary education credential as well as industry recognized credentials that lead to high-wage employment in Illinois. In integrated programs career and technical educators teach integrated classes alongside adult education instructors, ensuring that students receive not only integrated curriculum inclusive of basic skills enhancements, but also curriculum tied to the latest in industry standards developed in partnership with employers.

Community colleges, four-year colleges and universities in Illinois play a key role in helping residents pursue credentials that will help them access high-skill, high-wage jobs. Partnerships with high schools ensure graduates are college-ready, and dual credit opportunities, transfer assistance, recognition for prior learning, and other innovative approaches help learners, particularly low-income individuals, move through the P-20 pipeline.

### *Pathways to Results Initiative (PTR)*

In Perkins IV, effective partnerships are viewed as essential to help all students meet college and career readiness expectations<sup>10</sup>. One of the most effective ways in which the post-secondary CTE system has modeled good partnerships in Illinois is through the implementation of the Pathways to Results (PTR) initiative. An effort led by the Office of Community College Research and Leadership (OCCRL) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, PTR has been utilized in over 100 post-secondary CTE programs across the state. PTR is an outcome-focused process, guided by equity considerations and targeting the improvement of pathways and policies that support the transition of students into post-secondary education.

Within the context of PTR, community colleges must fully and completely engage both internal and external stakeholders in their career pathways work. To do this, colleges are encouraged to develop partnerships based upon sound principles—setting goals and outcomes, defining the structure of governance, identifying a strategy for operation, evaluating success and considering sustainability. Stakeholders representing all sectors of industry and education should be at the table under the PTR model. By way of example, PTR is a five-step continuous quality improvement process. During phase one, partners are at the center of the phase and thus provide a perfect model for fully engaging partners to pursue other resources. Among the elements required as a part of this first phase are the identification and engagement of leaders that support the improvement of pathways or programs of study, including secondary, post-secondary, business and industry, adult education, workforce development, community-based organizations and others and who guide P-20 education systems change. PTR is an excellent model to utilize for the purpose of leveraging resources in order to provide enhanced access to workforce development programs at the states' community colleges and across post-secondary CTE programs.

### *Bridge Programs*

The goal of bridge programs is to sequentially bridge the gap between the initial skills of individuals and what they need to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and career-path employment. The state's bridge programs prepare adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in post-secondary education and training leading to career-path employment in demand occupations as identified by the local labor market information. Illinois has had a unified bridge definition between the community college system and the workforce since 2010. Bridge programs must be built on the criteria below to be an approved program in the state.

- The delivery of bridge programs does not have to be through an eligible training provider with a certified training program; they may be provided by:
  - An approved and funded Adult Education program;
  - The credit or non-credit department(s) of a community college; or
  - Community-based organization (CBO) or other type of provider that offers non-credit workforce training.
- Training programs may be offered by a single entity (e.g., a community college or a CBO) or by a partnership (e.g., a CBO and a community college). Regardless of the provider, they:
  - May provide opportunities to earn college credit (such as through escrow credit accounts);
  - May offer dual enrollment in credit and non-credit programs; or
  - May offer a multi-level program that moves people from an adult education course offered by one provider to a non-credit occupational course offered by the same or another provider.

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<sup>10</sup> See: Nicholson-Tosh & Kirby, 2013 <http://occril.illinois.edu/files/Projects/ptr/Modules/PTR%20Module%201.pdf>

- All bridge program providers must use pre-skill assessments consistent with program requirements to place students into the appropriate courses as well as post-skill assessments to measure progress. All providers will use data tracking systems to collect and analyze key information about bridge program participants and graduates.

Under WIOA, the partners will update and enhance the current bridge definition policy by engaging Title I, Title II, and college credit leaders and providers to learn what is working with the current policy and what could be adjusted to ensure that bridge programs are more widely implemented across Illinois. Any new policy developed around the bridge definition and model will cut across all four core partner programs to ensure services are maximized for the students in the adult education programs. Furthermore, information garnered from the review of the definition, will inform new initiatives that promote sector-based pre-bridge and bridge activities, enhance and expand bridge programs offerings, and align with core partner WIOA requirements. The focus will be to expand access and success in these sector-based bridge programs across all WIOA partners, as a way to braid funding to ensure an integrated approach to service. As the leader in the development of bridge programs for Illinois, ICCB will use their lessons learned to help expand the program model across partners.

### *Labor Market Data*

All core partners use a common set of labor market information data produced by Employment Security, including but not limited to, industry and occupational employment projections. The data team from the core partners worked together to compile a list of occupations that are in-demand, based on regional needs, a list which will be continuously updated as occupational demand evolves in each region. Maintenance of the demand occupation list leads to the identification of the key occupational competencies required by businesses, which in turn will lead to adjustments by training providers to ensure students leaving programs are ready to be productive as they enter the workforce.

### *Work-Based Learning Initiatives and Training Roundtables*

Work-based learning (WBL) provides more opportunities for workers to earn income while gaining critical job skills. To prepare for the WIOA requirements, the state has coordinated a number of roundtable events over the last two years highlighting the importance of work-based learning, with a specific emphasis on using these training strategies to support industry sector initiatives. Additional technical assistance will provide the opportunity to institutionalize best practices and expand the impact of WBL employers, job seekers and the workforce system. There are a number of programs and initiatives that support work-based learning in Illinois including:

- WIOA requires a minimum of 20 percent of youth funding, or \$7.6 million, to be dedicated to work-based learning in Program Year 2015.
- Illinois' \$6.1 million 2014 Job Driven and \$4 million Sector-Based National Emergency Grants focus on work-based learning strategies.
- Illinois was awarded three projects totaling \$9.3 million as part of the \$175 American Apprenticeship initiative.
- The Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing Program has resulted in a number of best practices, including the blending of traditional occupational training and work-based learning strategies, as well as providing valuable experience in cross-program collaboration for client recruitment and intake, case management, training, supportive services and job placement.
- Illinois agencies have a strong track record of partnering with other agencies on implementing summer employment opportunities to provide youth with work experience that is linked to work-readiness training and career pathways.

### *Technology Accessibility*

The disability community is on the forefront of technology, which makes it vital to stay up-to-date with technology statewide, especially when implementing new information systems (e.g., ensuring systems are compatible with screen readers, speech recognition, etc.). The DHS/DRS Rehabilitation Technology Section houses experts in the field of technology accessibility. Technical assistance is provided by this unit to other state agencies. For example, website design accessibility is incredibly important, especially in portions of the state where public transportation is limited. If a request is made by another agency in the delivery system for assistance with accessibility to technology or a program, a DRS employee will assist. DHS notes that the most requested accommodations are for computer accessibility for individuals who are visually impaired and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

### *Business Service Coordination*

Vocational Rehabilitation is working with Commerce on the development of a business engagement strategy as part of a national technical assistance effort funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Community Inclusion. This effort is focused on engaging businesses throughout the state through job-driven vocational counseling concentrated on potential opportunities for individuals in high-growth sectors. Among other items, Commerce has provided Vocational Rehabilitation with assistance on utilization of regional sector-based data to target employers for participation in the project.

The core partners are also working with the DOL technical assistance consultants on a complementary effort to align business services. This project will provide the State of Illinois with an environmental scan of current business engagement and service delivery across identified workforce system partners. The product will include a "map" of current efforts to support the first step of alignment – understanding gaps, overlaps and opportunities for integration. This product will also include best practices in aligned business engagement and service delivery based on information available through Workforce3One and the contractor's experience working in other states and regions.

### *Workforce Education Strategic Plan (WESP)*

The ICCB worked in concert with Commerce in the development of a statewide Workforce Strategic Education Plan. Eleven regional forums were held in the 10 economic development regions in the spring of 2015. Initial employment and education data was used to identify the trends as well as the supply/demand opportunities in each region of the state (See Attachment M). The ICCB will continue the development of the WESP in the spring of 2016. The information gathered through these education planning meetings was used to inform WIOA state and regional planning efforts that began in the fall of 2015.

### *Integrated Education and Training (IET)*

The ICCB Adult Education program has developed an IET initiative to provide the opportunity for adult education students to earn industry recognized credentials, college certificates and college credit while studying to obtain the high school equivalency certificate or learn the English language. Through the IET program in Illinois, Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS), many students will be connected to Title I to ensure they have the services necessary to gain access to resources for training and employment opportunities upon completion.

### *Disability Employment Initiative (DEI)*

Vocational Rehabilitation has worked effectively with Commerce around its DEI projects throughout the state. In one instance, Vocational Rehabilitation provided cooperative funding to support individuals with disabilities seeking to establish their own businesses. In another, Vocational Rehabilitation

provided funding to community providers as part of an overall package including DEI funds. Vocational Rehabilitation and Commerce have a strong level of communication around the needs of the individuals being served and the goals of the projects.

### *Career Workshops & Rapid Response*

Employment Security staff in partnership with core partners hold joint workshops on a regular basis regarding various topics (i.e., resume writing, employer panels, and re-employment) as a way to educate the public on employment, as well as services provided by each core and required partner. Additionally, Commerce and Employment Security Unemployment Insurance collaborate to hold rapid response workshops for dislocated workers.

### *Economic Information and Analysis*

Employment Security provides statewide and sub-state occupational employment projections, so Commerce and LWIAs, along with other core partners, can determine in-demand occupations and community colleges can plan education and training curricula. The Interagency Work Group has established an interagency data team to develop comprehensive data reports that will be used in the state and regional plans. The data team will continue to work with the regional planning teams to provide additional data as needed. For the regions to be able to access labor market information that is specifically tied to the WIOA regional plans, the team will work on developing a vehicle to access this specific information on whichever platform is utilized for the state. Currently, Employment Security provides labor market information on the Employment Security website in a variety of formats including the Illinois Virtual Labor Market Information System (VLMIS) that is supported by the DOL Workforce Information Grant and that is a required deliverable for all states.

### *Interagency Agreements*

The Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Vocational Rehabilitation) will continue to pursue development and expansion of agreements that further service integration and promote employment of people with disabilities. This includes agreements relating to services to students and youth with disabilities and transition services generally.

### **Illinois' Current Strengths in the Alignment between Core Partners and Other Required Partners**

Illinois has initiated and continues numerous activities that engage core and required partner representatives at the state and local levels.

In an effort to provide a voice for each core and required partner, facilitate relationships between the two, and for improving alignment for WIOA implementation, an initial step was for each state agency executive to appoint a top program administrator to serve on the Interagency Work Group to address the policy, technical and programmatic details associated with integration and alignment of workforce programs under WIOA. Attachment I provides a list of the Interagency Work Group members and their respective State Agency.

### *Interagency Work Group*

This group of top program administrators began meeting in May 2015 and had met eight times as a full group by December 2015 and many more times as working subgroups. This group will continue to meet regularly. All meetings are supported by highly structured agendas designed to bring about clarity at the state-level regarding integration and alignment under WIOA. The major accomplishments of this group include:

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- Participating in a coordinated process for review of the WIOA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, a key purpose of which was to identify issues, requirements and opportunities of common interest and concern;
- Reaching an agreement on the specific career services and workforce programs and activities each required partner will make available at One-Stop Comprehensive Centers throughout Illinois, and this includes the full configuration of workforce service delivery through Comprehensive One-Stop Centers in Illinois.(see Attachment K);
- Working collaboratively to coordinate the different methods that will be used to deliver these services, including delivery through technology that meets the “direct linkage” requirements of WIOA;
- Providing state-level input regarding policies guiding the local implementation of governance provisions such as the initial designation of “Local Workforce Innovation Areas” (see Attachment L);
- Jointly developing a strategy for defining the number and location of Comprehensive One-Stop Centers in Illinois; concurring on a general framework for cost sharing under WIOA, including a framework for sharing one-stop center infrastructure costs;
- Establishing a working subgroup of the four core program partners to develop and implement work plans for the Unified State Plan and Performance Accountability requirements, the two areas in which core program partners have unique obligations and implementation challenges. These subgroups continue to meet to work through operational details in these and other areas;
- Establishing an interagency task force to focus on operational details and mechanics associated with local and state infrastructure cost funding mechanisms under WIOA;
- Identifying initial elements to be included in the Governor’s Guidelines (Attachment J) providing direction and support regarding negotiations of program partners at the state and local levels. This process has included vetting these elements multiple times to obtain the perspectives of all key stakeholders;
- Developing suggested content for the required guidelines from the Governor and reviewing draft and final versions of these guidelines, including obtaining and incorporating suggested content from local program partners and stakeholders before final guidelines were issued by the Governor; and
- Providing input to the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) regarding the criteria and process to be used for certification of Comprehensive One-Stop Centers.

### *Regional Meetings*

Illinois hosted a series of regional planning kick-off meetings in December 2015. These meetings included partner program staff from each economic development region to learn about each other’s programs, review regional demographic and program data and learn to use a data-driven planning approach. Using a format developed by the state, they also began to work on a planning framework specific to their region. Approximately 500 individuals attended these events and had the opportunity to ask questions and determine how their programs could contribute to the overall success of the region.

In late February 2016 the IWIB and the Inter-Agency Team held a two-day statewide regional planning technical assistance summit. Planning teams from the ten economic development regions gathered in Springfield to: 1) give an update on how they were progressing with their planning efforts; 2) meet in person with their planning facilitator from Maher & Maher; 3) see the leaders of the WIOA core partners sharing the stage and presenting a unified message; 4) attend breakout sessions covering practical planning topics such as employer-led sector-based partnerships, business engagement and using labor market information to be data and demand driven; and 5) engage in structured peer networking.

Nearly 300 regional planning team members attended the event. They had the opportunity to interact with business leaders from across the state to hear first-hand how to go about developing sustainable public-private partnerships. Attendees also could ask questions of the all the WIOA public program leaders and each other to share best practices and lessons learned from each region. The event also had a dedicated “Data Room” open throughout the event where labor market information experts were available to help teams interpret the meaning of the economic and labor market data in their region. The IWIB and the Interagency Work Group is committed to continuing technical assistance efforts such as this to foster relationships between the state, regional and local levels and also cross-cutting relationships between business and programs throughout all levels across the state.

### *WIOA Wednesday Webinars*

Interactive webinars are held weekly to provide a platform for interagency partners to discuss integral WIOA implementation topics. The widely attended webinars provide a forum for questions and increase awareness of the required partner programs, activities and resources.

### *Illinois Works Together Updates*

To facilitate common and ongoing communications, the Interagency Work Group initiated a joint monthly newsletter entitled “Illinois Works Together” to provide a source of common information about WIOA implementation progress for all local program partners and stakeholders. This newsletter will continue as long as needed. Additionally, the ICCB collaborated with the partners to release a newsletter to highlight WIOA activities providing a better understanding of partner agencies requirements to the adult education and career and technical education community.

### **Challenges Core Partners Face in Pursuing Additional Alignment**

WIOA implementation has brought to the surface several challenges, including a lack of awareness among partners regarding other programs and requirements, as well as supportive services. Although major strides have been made since the implementation of the Interagency Work Group, the need for new and stronger relationships was identified.

Core partners in Illinois realize that there are significant data system limitations. The main barrier to joint case management is the inability to share data through a streamlined process due to the lack of common participant identification method. Federal laws governing some programs limit data sharing, and the information collected is not aligned across core partners due to statutory regulations (e.g., Adult Education does not require a Social Security Number to receive services). Currently, core partners collect their data using their respective state agency systems. There is currently no ability to track participants across programs and no mechanism to identify when a participant has exited from all applicable WIOA core programs. To begin to overcome these challenges, Illinois is exploring a “Common Framework Approach” and is seeking additional federal guidance from DOL and the U.S. Department of Education. In the meantime, core program partners are collaboratively developing a working definition of “exit” to ensure continuity across programs. A common identifier or “common participant ID” across the core programs is also under consideration.

Other challenges include core program statutory requirements serving as roadblocks to alignment. For example, Vocational Rehabilitation intake by other entities is prohibited because only Vocational Rehabilitation staff are permitted or allowed to handle “non-delegable functions” by statute. This is also an issue with the administration of the training component of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act as it specifically relates to the state merit staff administrative requirement.

While core partners recognize measurable skills gains as critical to the effectiveness of state and local workforce innovation systems, the definition and parameters of measurable skills gains are lacking, as are the standards for assessment tools, methods and measures for employer satisfaction.

Illinois is also challenged by geographical and local boundaries alignment. Some boundaries do not perfectly align with LWIA boundaries. For example, under Adult Education, “Area Planning Councils districts” do not align with LWIAs, but they are aligned with Community College Districts.

Finally, the state is also interested in examining best practices to support the planning and coordination of workforce, education and economic development services in interstate regions.

Despite these challenges, Illinois is positioned to address these challenges through the Interagency Work Group that is creatively and collaboratively working to find solutions and to create new opportunities.

### **Opportunities for Future Alignment between Core Partners**

Desired systemic improvements of various levels of specificity, most of which involve some level of service integration, were identified by the core partners. One of the first items of interest is to integrate service delivery, especially at the front end of the process. As part of this plan, the goal of service integration is to ensure that every individual seeking help has the opportunity to take advantage of the full range of services for which they are eligible regardless of which partner program sees them first. The initial step toward this goal is ensuring informed, effective program liaisons are the first point of contact at a one-stop center. These liaisons will be cross-trained to be knowledgeable about all programs available at the one-stop center and will be responsible for guiding walk-in customers to the appropriate program staff.

State agency partners also have the opportunity to improve the coordination and delivery of career services and case management services through state and regional initiatives to promote leading business practices. They also will promote the ongoing professional development of front-line staff providing client services through case management academies and national professional development and credentialing programs.

Core and required partners in Illinois are working towards the development of a common intake system. The first step is the development of a “smart referrals” system. A portal will need to be developed for auto-referrals. The group hopes to learn from an existing “Career Connect System” between Vocational Rehabilitation and the Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership. Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation see a great need to connect adults with learning disabilities to vocational rehabilitation services. Vocational Rehabilitation involvement through community colleges has traditionally been through the disability services offices; however, this is mostly focused on students pursuing degrees. One idea is to reach out to this existing connection to see if there are other applicable types of trainings using the resources at the community college. Disability offices tend to work with people coming from high school and self-identifying as having a disability, whereas adults might develop a condition later in life or have an undiagnosed disability that meets vocational rehabilitation eligibility requirements.

Overall, this system will improve coordinated client tracking, giving partners the ability to view when a client “exits” a program or completes a training. For example, it is important for Employment Security to see confirmation when a customer is “job ready” because then it may assist the customer in finding employment through the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program staff. This brings the customer back full circle and carries out the mission of WIOA.

Other efforts and opportunities for data integration also include applying a GIS mapping analysis to illustrate the location of training providers, employers and workers or job seekers throughout Illinois. This will help show the distance between training providers and employers, the lack of access to training providers in some areas and sources of employees for employers. Eventually, the mapping could be used across required programs to map the distance customers must travel to access services throughout local workforce delivery systems.

In the past, there was a high-level of variability in terms of core partner participation in workforce board activities, as well as in communication around service issues. Core partners are making a coordinated effort to ensure their staff participates with local workforce boards. For example, Vocational Rehabilitation moved to strengthen involvement in all LWIAs so that individuals with disabilities can benefit from the workforce system regardless of where they live.

Core and required partners in Illinois recognize that the key to successful alignment is constant, clear communication. Significant effort will be required to establish and maintain effective channels of communication. However, the return on investment is potentially enormous when compared to the improved efficiency and effectiveness of our programs and outcomes for our customers.

### **CHAPTER 9 – OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES**

This chapter includes compliance information for the state operating systems that will support the implementation of the strategies and activities outlined in Chapter 7.

#### **Assessment of Core Programs**

The Governor, General Assembly, Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) and state agency partners continuously assesses the performance outcomes of the workforce system in the annual benchmark report and other performance reports. The state agency responsible for each of the core programs outlined in Appendices 1-4 constantly assesses performance accountability measures as required by law.

The state will develop strategies for aligning technology and data systems across core programs and to evaluate common performance outcomes, including the quality, effectiveness, and improvement of programs by local areas. One potential tool to support that assessment is a dashboard for aggregate data for all core programs. A subgroup of the Interagency Work Group is exploring such a dashboard that, if successful, will provide a high-level view of each core program's performance by quarter and help identify the need for technical assistance or adjustments. In the meantime, and pending federal guidance about measurable skills gains and other performance-related requirements, the interagency subgroup is also working to identify common definitions, standards and procedures to prepare core program partners to meet performance accountability requirements of WIOA. The intent is to ensure the data collected by each core program partner fully conforms to WIOA and accurately reflects the outcomes for each core program on a local level and in aggregate.

#### **Assessment of Other One-Stop Partner Programs**

The IWIB, in cooperation with the Interagency Work Group, has begun to establish objective criteria and procedures for use by local boards in assessing and certifying Comprehensive One-Stop Centers, per Section 121(g)(1) of WIOA. The state standard certification criteria will help ensure a minimum level of quality and consistency of services in Comprehensive One-Stop Centers throughout Illinois, regardless of location. As local boards review and update the criteria and processes for certifying Comprehensive One-Stop Centers biannually, insights will be gained on assessing and establishing standards on effectiveness, physical accessibility, programmatic accessibility and continuous improvement. These

review processes will help identify best practices in assessing and improving local one-stop partner programs, both core and required programs, to promote efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce development system. Outcomes of the assessments of core program partners and of other required partners will be reported annually and made public.

### **Alignment and Integration of Workforce and Education Data on Core Programs, Unemployment Insurance Programs and Education through Postsecondary Education**

Illinois does not yet have an integrated data system but is committed to pursuing alignment and integration of participant and performance data across core programs with the ultimate goal of providing effective and efficient services that leads to the participants' employment as quickly as possible.

To help prepare for and explore options for data integration, an interagency performance subgroup of the Interagency Work Group is focused on performance accountability and data integration. Core program partner representatives have identified existing gaps between the data currently collected and the data required to be collected under WIOA. Core partners established priorities and strategies for addressing those gaps, including identifying the following:

- Actions core partners can take now to adjust their own data systems in preparation for new performance accountability requirements under WIOA;
- Data collection methods and standards that are best practices in some core program partners and could be explored for use by other core program partners (e.g., how to account for participants who lack a Social Security number when reporting performance outcomes);
- Potential platforms for developing a common framework for use by all required partners under WIOA;
- Development of a dashboard for core program partners to track individual and aggregate performance data across core programs;
- Mechanisms for facilitating smart referrals and allowing core program partners to share information directly with each other's systems; and
- Items which require additional Federal guidance, such as these examples:
  - Consistency of measurable skills gains in terms of the necessity of standardized tools and procedures between core programs for assessing participant skills and the time period over which skills gains are to be measured; and
  - Additional definition of "effectiveness serving employers" so core program partners can prepare to demonstrate such effectiveness.

The Illinois core partners already have long-standing data sharing agreements in place whereby the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (Commerce), Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Vocational Rehabilitation) and Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) request data matching of the Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Data from the Illinois Department of Employment Security (Employment Security). WIOA has motivated the agencies to look closely at the long-term agreements and determine if changes need to be made to accommodate the new and innovative sharing of data between the agencies. The agreements facilitate cross-program access to data about common participants while minimizing duplicative systems costs. In addition to one-on-one data access the Illinois Longitudinal Data System and the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) fully executed a multiple agency data sharing agreement with all the state of Illinois educational and workforce agencies. This data sharing agreement allows for the sharing of agency data via the new established Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator (CDDA). The interagency agreements and the CDDA arrangement establishes a master client index number for all clients and facilitates integrated

and streamlined service delivery, common reporting and measurement of interagency longitudinal performance outcomes as required under WIOA Section 116(d)(2).

Illinois will continue to use existing web-based interfaces that integrate data via Application Program Interface (API) tools. Real-time access to workforce development resources for individuals, businesses and workforce professionals is available, shareable and viewable in user-friendly dashboards for better customer service. Ongoing discussions include how to further integrate the Internet-based data systems to enhance program alignment and service delivery.

- Currently the Illinois workNet portal connects individuals and businesses to workforce services and data. The new Beta version of the portal serves as a hub for WIOA implementation resources and guidance for all required programs. The open source and widget technology available in the new version allows for maximum agility in on-demand program development and implementation needs.
- Employment Security administers the IllinoisJobLink (IJL) system to collect data on job seeker and employer customers. IllinoisJobLink.com is an internet-based system with a centralized job search engine and resume service that integrates workforce customer information to facilitate coordination of services across partner programs.
- The Illinois Community College Board—Adult Education administers the Illinois Data and Information System (DAIS-i), which is a web-based system that collects relevant student level record data on education, attendance, courses and employment data needed for reporting to WIOA.
- Career Connect System - A key element moving forward is the capacity to use information systems to improve communication and increase the movement of information critical for providing assistance to job seekers. Vocational Rehabilitation has partnered with the Chicago-Cook Workforce Partnership (CCWP) on a data sharing software project designed to improve mutual referrals and communication (internet based referrals). Although limited to one geographic area, this project will enable Vocational Rehabilitation to test new data infrastructure options. Commerce has also worked with CCWP to connect this interface with the Title IB case management system (Illinois Workforce Development System).

The Illinois Governor's Office is actively assisting the core partners in technology interoperability solutions. Assessments of current systems have begun and additional research and analysis will be necessary prior to committing one solution for the state. Further discovery is needed and attention made to mold the technology plan with the state WIOA plan so that policy drives the state technology. This action will ensure long-term success and sustainability of a WIOA Unified State Plan and workforce system.

### **Use of the Workforce Development System to Assess Progress of Participants that are Exiting from Core Programs and Entering, Persisting in and Completing Postsecondary Education or Employment**

One significant challenge is that no mechanism currently exists to allow all core program partners to track participant exits across all programs. An interagency subgroup working with Illinois' Chief Information Officer is exploring the development of a common information system using the existing Illinois Framework for Healthcare and Human Services. Ongoing discussions include the possibility of adapting that framework for WIOA purposes, including tracking participant exits from all programs. Two initiatives that will support this effort are the Longitudinal Data System and Workforce Data Quality Initiative.

- Partners established a common vision and built the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) with data sharing agreements with universities and others to ensure consistently high levels of quality, reliability and security in matching and managing participant-level data across agency and university

partners. The LDS Agencies and the Governing Board have made substantial progress on activities that relate to the LDS Functions in 2014-15. As detailed in this Section, this progress includes:

- Development and adoption of the Initial Annual Report and Plan;
  - A number of intraagency enhancements that support the broader LDS effort;
  - The selection and establishment of the Centralized Demographic Dataset Administrator;
  - Significant work and accomplishments in the end-user service priorities established by the Governing Board.
- Illinois currently participates in the Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI), to improve the linkages between education, workforce development and human services data systems that build from current education state longitudinal data system initiatives through a common identifier system and data quality and security framework and shared applications.

### **Privacy Safeguards Incorporated into the Workforce Development System, Including Complying with Section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act and other Federal Laws**

Continuing to comply with federal and state laws governing protection of personally identifiable information is a priority during WIOA implementation. Existing privacy safeguards in administering the core programs in Illinois pose opportunities for additional collaboration and interoperability, while efforts also exist to ensure security systems and procedures do not inhibit service integration.

For instance, ICCB maintains student data related to high school equivalency exams. Any entities outside of the community college board system submit forms to ICCB staff focused on data accountability to ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), which protects the privacy of student education records. Future considerations include how data integration between required programs can facilitate a smooth transition from high school to the workforce or to post-secondary education while preserving the privacy of their records throughout the workforce system.

Employment Security's existing system could also serve as a model for cross-agency collaboration. The Labor Exchange Program is a password-protected program backed by a user agreement, including an explanation of how individual data will be used throughout service delivery. Internal communications through the program use a unique participant identification number rather than a Social Security number. The unique identification number could be used across required programs to help preserve privacy and facilitate tracking of that participant by core program partners.

### **Distribution of Funds for Core Partners**

The following describes the methods and factors the state will use in distributing funds under core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions.

#### *Distribution of Funds for Title I*

WIOA funds are distributed on a formula basis to twenty-two Local Workforce Innovation Areas (LWIAs) based on several underlying economic data factors, including the area's unemployment rate, long-term unemployment rate, if the area has been designated as one with substantial unemployment, the economic growth rate of the area and the percent of entire state funding allocation the area received the prior year. Local areas may apply for additional WIOA funds in response to mass layoff events and large economic impact events such as natural disasters. If funding is available, they may also apply for competitive innovation grants from Commerce's WIOA statewide activities allocation. The detailed methodology for the distribution of funds is included as Attachment Q.

### *Distribution of Funds for Title II*

Adult education funding under Title II are distributed using a formula methodology. The use of the Census data is used in the allocation of resources to an Area Planning Council District. The ICCB will review the funding formula in FY 2017 to align with WIOA requirements. Base funding is established to provide greater equity and stability for the various providers. The base funding also emphasizes the importance of quality and preserving multiple provider types. Smaller providers are funded with a foundation amount that is stable and predictable with the remaining base funds allocated based on units of instruction and enrollment. Base funding consists of 1) Index of Need, 2) Units of Instruction Component, 3) Foundation Component and 4) Enrollment Component. The detailed methodology for distribution of funds is included as Attachment Q.

### *Performance Funding for Title II*

The focus of performance funding is continuous improvement for all programs. Funds are based on two performance categories: Secondary Completions and Level Gains. Each category is weighted.

### *Distribution of Funds for Title IV*

The Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) distributes Vocational Rehabilitation grant funds through two primary mechanisms. The first is through the development of service plans (individualized plan for employment or IPE) for individuals with disabilities. The specific services provided to VR customers varies considerably from year to year based on the needs of the individuals being served at that time. Although the Division of Rehabilitation Services makes nominal allocations to each of its five administrative regions, those can be and are changed frequently based on the needs of individual customers. Total spending on individual service plans varies from year to year and by geographic region for any given year.

The second mechanism is through development of service contracts with community-based providers. The largest proportion of these contracts are for job placement and related services, including supported employment, from community rehabilitation providers. Another large category involves contracts with local school districts for provision of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities. The Division of Rehabilitation Services utilizes a needs assessment process that involves input from local office staff and regional managers, who can initiate a new contract based on local information about service needs. Similarly contracts can be reduced or eliminated if providers are not effective in meeting customer needs or are unable to serve sufficient numbers of individuals. The detailed methodology for the distribution of funds is included as Attachment Q.

### **Veterans Priority in the One-Stop Delivery System**

Illinois places a priority in serving the 721,000 veterans located throughout the state. Veterans and covered persons will receive priority of service in accordance with the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act codified at Section 4215 of 38 USC. The Comprehensive One-Stop Centers are committed to helping veterans find a job. Illinois veterans have been served over the years through targeted programs administered through Employment Security and the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs in cooperation with other education and workforce agencies.

In Illinois, Employment Security serves as the lead agency for veteran's employment and employer services. All veterans, regardless of their characterization of discharge, are provided employment services by Wagner-Peyser staff, using the Veterans triage process. Those eligible veterans identified with significant barriers to employment during the initial assessment (part of the veterans triage process) are referred by the Wagner-Peyser staff to the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP)

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specialist for potential career services. The DVOP can also refer veterans to job training programs, provide coordination and referrals to core and required partner agencies, and facilitate the job development process with the Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER). The core programs and required partners are working together to expand upon alignment of services and referral methods specifically for veterans.

### Employment Status of Illinois' Civilian Non-institutional Population 18 Years and Over by Veteran Status, January 2015-December 2015 (based on CPS) (Numbers in thousands)

	Civilian Non-Institutional	Civilian Labor Force					Not in the Labor Force
		Total	Percent of Population in Labor Force	Employed Total	Unemployed Total	Rate	
Veterans	675.6	338.0	50.0%	321.0	16.9	5.0%	337.7
Gulf War Era (I & II) Veterans	189.6	164.1	86.6%	158.1	6.0	3.6%	25.5
Gulf War I Veterans	98.6	85.6	86.8%	84.2	1.4	1.6%	13.1
Gulf War II Veterans	91.0	78.5	86.3%	74.0	4.6	5.8%	12.5
Non-Veterans	9,022.4	6,061.1	67.2%	5,713.8	347.4	5.7%	2,961.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

For example, the current practice for serving veterans who are ineligible for Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment services may include a DVOP specialist providing a referral to Vocational Rehabilitation to assess and assist the veteran with mitigating his or her disability in order to meet their employment goal. DVOP's also work closely with other core and required partners as well as community supportive service organizations to help veterans receive various supportive assistance, training and certification credentials. Some of the highlighted programs serving veterans in Illinois include:

- *IllinoisJobLink.com* – Illinois Labor Exchange is an online tool used by veterans searching for jobs in Illinois.
- *Illinois Joining Forces Foundation* – Statewide public and private organizational network that works to identify, collaborate and marshal available resources and services to create efficient access and delivery of these programs to the state's military and veteran communities. One of the main objectives is to provide a network of organizations with improved capacity, awareness and intra-network referrals.
- *Reemployment Services (RES)* – RES is a joint effort with the Unemployment Insurance (UI) profiling program that provides certain profiled claimants with reemployment workshops. These workshops train claimants on interviewing techniques, provide job search instructions and explain the many employment services and resources available.
- *Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program (IVTP)* – IVTP offers Illinois' incarcerated veterans employment services during and after confinement. Veteran representatives provide services in 13 Illinois correctional facilities. Employment Security coordinates with the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) to provide employment workshops for inmates within 18 months of their maximum release date. Emphasis is placed on job search techniques and resources to help these veterans address the unique employment barriers and other obstacles they face when attempting to re-enter the job market after their release.

### **Physical and Programmatic Accessibility to the One-Stop Delivery System**

Illinois is committed to ensuring both programmatic and physical accessibility to the One-Stop delivery system by maintaining compliance with WIOA Section 188, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and all other applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. Compliance monitoring is conducted at the state and local level to make certain that all comprehensive one-stop facilities, programs, services, technology and materials are accessible and available (see Attachment P). These services must be provided “on-demand” and in “real time” in the physical Comprehensive One-Stop Center location or via technology consistent with the “direct linkage” requirement defined in WIOA.

#### *Staff Training*

It is imperative that if someone with a disability visits a Comprehensive One-Stop Center and requires a service, that the staff has an understanding of how to accommodate the needs of the customer. The state will use the best practices from the Disability Employment Initiative as a part of WIOA implementation and case manager training. When appropriate, the state will also consult with staff from core partner agencies that have expertise in using or training in the areas of reasonable accommodation or assistive technology.

#### *One-Stop Center Certification*

All Comprehensive One-Stop Centers must meet specific physical and programmatic accessibility criteria prescribed by the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board to be certified. This includes ensuring that the Comprehensive One-Stop Center’s location and layout are inclusive of individuals regardless of their range of abilities and mobility. This also requires the physical characteristics of the facility to comply with 29 CFR Part 37, the 2010 or most recent ADA standards for Accessible Design and the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards. Physical layout and the Comprehensive One-Stop Center location are the primary criteria for physical accessibility. Outdoor space is evaluated in areas such as the layout, location in a recognizable and high-traffic area, reasonable distance from public transportation and adequate parking.

The certification criteria specified by the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board to evaluate the Comprehensive One-Stop Center’s programmatic accessibility ensures equal access to all required programs, services and activities to eligible participants and to employers regardless of their range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, intelligence or education level. Essentially, services must be made available without unlawful discrimination. Primary criteria include: equal access to career services, equal access to program services, direct linkage and reasonable accommodations. The indoor space is evaluated to make sure there is “equal and meaningful” access to programs for individuals with disabilities. Examples include computer accessibility, ergonomic set-up, screen-reading software programs (JAWS and DRAGON) and access to interpreters.

#### *Accessibility for Individuals who are English Language Learners*

In Illinois, there is a great need for interpreters due to limited English proficiency in many portions of the state. Staff is trained to ensure an interpreter is provided in these situations “in real time” to meet the needs of English language learners. The State of Illinois has a master contract with an interpreting service provider to offer these services.

### CHAPTER 10 - ASSURANCES

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires that that the Unified State Plan include the common assurances (for all core programs) that are outlined in this chapter.

- 1. Conflict of Interest Disclosures and Resolution.** The State of Illinois has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a state board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents and procedures to resolve such conflicts. The state will take every reasonable course of action to avoid any favoritism or questionable or improper conduct and operate in an impartial manner, free from personal, financial or political gain and will avoid situations that give rise to a suggestion that any decision was influenced by prejudice, bias, special interest or personal gain.
- 2. Compliance with Open Meetings Act.** The State of Illinois has established a policy to provide members of the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to the meetings of the state board and local boards, including information regarding activities of state boards and local boards, including but not limited to, posting of meeting times and locations, meeting agendas, meeting minutes and data on board membership. This policy is in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120).
- 3. Core Program Representatives Review and Comment.** The State of Illinois lead agency staff (Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Community College Board and Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services) with optimal policy making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified Plan, taking into consideration the needs of the populations served by each core program. This includes an opportunity for review and comment on the Unified State Plan by the state agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the board. Each core partner engaged in an in-depth analysis focusing on program alignment, one-stop service delivery integration, program funding, performance measures, and accessibility. Core partners in Illinois met several times through an Interagency Work Group to discuss means of developing and fostering future alignment between programs. A full draft of the Unified State Plan was presented to all core programs prior to distribution for public comment.
- 4. Local and Stakeholder Review and Comment.** The State of Illinois received input into the development of the Unified State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment to local board members, chief elected officials, business representatives, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment and the general public.
- 5. Accessibility.** The State of Illinois assures that a final version of the Unified State Plan is available and accessible to the general public (including to individuals with disabilities).
- 6. Nondiscrimination Clause.** The State of Illinois has taken the appropriate action to comply with WIOA, Section 188, as applicable, including but not limited to compliance with applicable provisions of the United States Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Illinois Department of Human Rights Act, Illinois Accessibility Code and all other applicable federal and state acts and rules. Furthermore, the State of Illinois has a certification

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policy that ensures physical and programmatic access to all Comprehensive One-Stop Centers in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

- 7. Veterans.** The State of Illinois has a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) services, when appropriate. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the US Department of Labor.
- 8. Fiscal Control and Accounting Procedures.** The State of Illinois is in compliance with WIOA, Section 116(i), certifying fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the state through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities.
- 9. Uniform Administrative Requirement.** The State of Illinois has taken appropriate action to ensure it is compliant with the uniform administrative requirements of WIOA, including that the state will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA, Section 184(a)(3).
- 10. Fiscal Controls.** The State of Illinois assures that federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program.
- 11. Appropriate Share.** Each core partner in the State of Illinois will pay its appropriate share (as defined by the state board) of any and all costs determined to be necessary to comply with WIOA Section 116.
- 12. State Performance Accountability.** The State of Illinois will provide evaluations on activities under WIOA core programs, in consultation with the state and local boards, state agencies responsible for administration of all respective core programs and in conjunction with evaluations provided by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education.

### **ILLINOIS UNIFIED PLAN LIST OF APPENDICES & ATTACHMENTS**

#### **APPENDICES**

- 1 - Title IB Program Specific Requirements
- 2 - Title II Program Specific Requirements
- 3 - Title III Program Specific Requirements
- 4 - Title IV Program Specific Requirements

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A - Public Comments
- B - Employment Projections
- C - Illinois Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment
- D - Targeted Populations
- E - IWIB Report on Disadvantaged Youth
- F - Education, Workforce and Economic Development Leadership Team
- G - Illinois Sector Partnership Framework
- H - State Workforce Board Members
- I - State Interagency Work Group Members
- J - Governor's Guidelines
- K - Service Program Matrix
- L - Local Workforce Designation
- M- Illinois Economic Development Regions Analysis
- N - Illinois Regional Planning Guides
- O - Illinois Regional Planning Data
- P - One-Stop Center Accessibility Compliance Checklist
- Q - Methods of Fund Distribution
- R - Local Workforce Area Map
- S - Local Workforce Area and Regional Planning Area Map
- T - Organizational Charts