



Creating a
better future for
our workforce

Benton-Franklin
**STRATEGIC
PLAN**
2024 - 2028



www.bentonfranklinwdc.com

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IN COMMUNITY

The board expresses deep gratitude to the dedicated staff, community members, stakeholders, and partners whose invaluable time and input have played a pivotal role in shaping and crafting this plan. Their unwavering commitment to collaborative efforts has significantly enriched the development process, ensuring that the resulting plan reflects a collective vision and addresses the region's diverse needs.



INTRODUCTION

The nation's workforce development is pivotal in shaping its economic landscape by ensuring citizens have the skills and knowledge to contribute to a dynamic and competitive global economy. As a local workforce development board, the Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC) engages leadership across our community to identify current gaps in our labor market, collaborate with employers, educational institutions, and community organizations, and implement programs to enhance the skills and employability of the local workforce.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) requires Local Workforce Development Boards to engage partners and stakeholders to submit a Unified or Combined State Plan that includes a four-year

strategy and operational plan for the continuing implementation of the state's workforce development system, with an update after two years. States must have federally approved State Plans to receive funding under the WIOA core programs under Section 102(a) of WIOA:



- WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth) administered by the Department of Labor (DOL),
- WIOA Title II (Adult Education and Literacy) administered by the Department of Education,
- WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) administered by the Department of Labor and;
- Title IV (Rehabilitation) administered by the Department of Education.

Washington State's workforce development system is an integrated network of services, programs, and investments with a shared goal of improving the skills of the state workforce. The system strives to create the workforce needed by industry and business. It also helps job seekers overcome obstacles to successful employment. The services for job seekers and businesses are delivered locally at WorkSource Columbia Basin (WSCB) and TC Futures. These centers are focal points for developing community prosperity, one business and job seeker at a time.

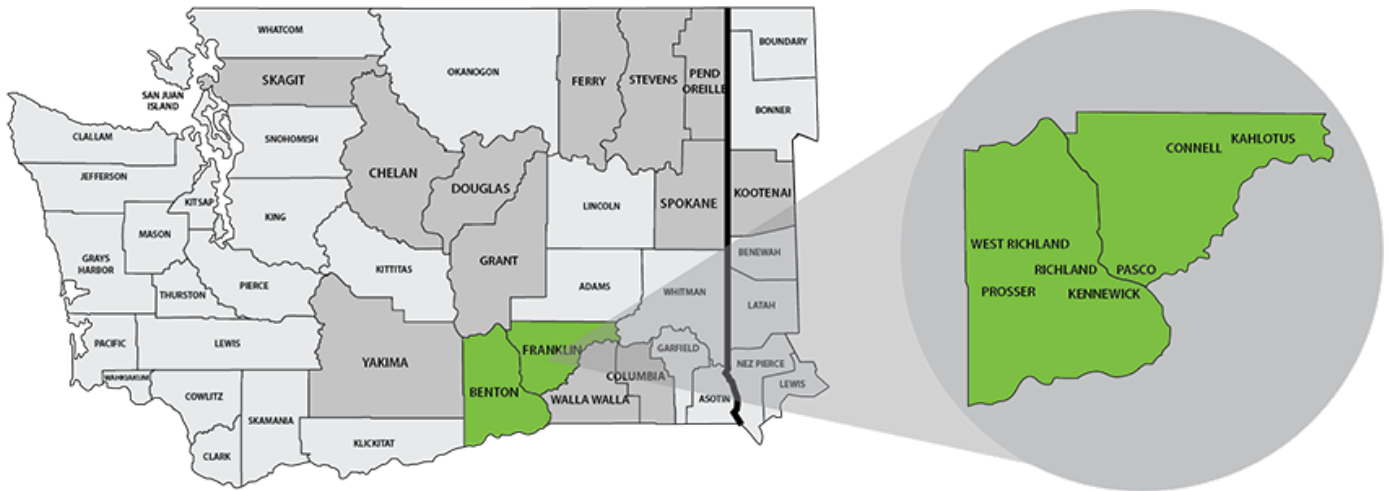
Our plan assesses local business talent needs and sets strategies for the region and local areas' workforce delivery system. A system that remains consistent with the state's workforce system goals articulated in the "Talent and Prosperity for All (TAP)" plan.

ACRONYMS

AARP	American Association of Retired Persons	FY	Fiscal year
ABE	Adult Basic Education	GRS	Guest Resource Services
AEL	Adult & Employer Linkage Committee	GW	Goodwill
ASC	Access Solutions Committee	HCD	Human-Centered Design
BFET	Basic Food Employment & Training	HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act
BFWC	Benton-Franklin Workforce Consortium	IEP	Individual Employment Plan
BFWDC	Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council	I-BEST	Integrated Basic Education & Skills Training
BSD	Basic Skills Deficient	IFA	Infrastructure Funding Agreement
CAT	Commissioner Approved Training	ITA	Individual Training Accounts
CBC	Columbia Basin College	ISD	Integrated Service Delivery
CBO	Community-Based Organization	ISS	Individual Service Strategy
CCWA	Career Connect Washington	ISY	In-School Youth
CLEO	Chief Local Elected Official	IWT	Incumbent Worker Training
CNA	Certified Nurse Assistant	JJC	Juvenile Justice Center
COM	Department of Commerce	JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act
CPS	Career Path Services	JVSG	Jobs for Veterans State Grant
DCS	Department of Children Support	LEO	Local Elected Official
DCYF	Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families	L&I	Labor & Industries
DET	Department of Employment & Training	LLSIL	Lower Living Standard Income Level
DOE	US Department of Education	LMEA	Labor Market & Economic Analyst
DOE	US Department of Energy	LMI	Labor Market Information
DOL	US Department of Labor	LTU	Long-Term Unemployed
DSHS	Department of Social & Health Services	LVER	Local Veterans Employment Representative
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering System	MIS	Management Information System
DVOP	Disabled Veterans Outreach Program	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
DVR	Department of Vocational Rehabilitation	MSFW	Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker
DW	Dislocated Worker	NAC	Nursing Assistant Certified
ECC	Employment Connection Center (Goodwill)	OIC	Opportunities Industrialization Center of WA
EcSA	Economic Security for All	OID	Occupations in Demand
EDC	Economic Development Commission	OJT	On-the-Job Training
EFAP	Emergency Food Assistance Program	OSO	One-Stop Operator
EO	Equal Opportunity	OST	Occupational Skills Training
ESD	Employment Security Department	OSY	Out-of-School Youth
ESD 123	Educational School District 123	PY	Program Year
ETA	Employment & Training Administration	RRIE	Rapid Response Increase Employment
ETO	Efforts to Outcome	SAT	Statewide Apprenticeship Training
ETPL	Eligible Training Provider List	SBCTC	State Board for Community & Technical Colleges
FPL	Federal Poverty Level	SIC	Standard Industry Classification
		SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
		SOC	Standard Occupational Classification
		SS	Support Services

SSI	Social Security Insurance	WEX	Work Experience
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance	WIA	Workforce Investment Act
SSP	Subcontract and Service Provider	WIB	Workforce Investment Board
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	WIOA	Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act
TC Futures	Tri-Cities Futures (Re-engagement Center)	WTECB	Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board
TEGL	Training & Employment Guide Letter	WIASRD	Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data
TAA	Trade Adjustment & Assistance	WIB	Workforce Investment Board
TB	Training Benefits	WIN	WorkSource Information Notice
UI	Unemployment Insurance	WIT	Workforce Information & Technology
WACTC	Washington Association for Community & Technical Colleges	WRT	Worker Retraining
WBL	Work-Based Learning	WSCB	WorkSource Columbia Basin
WDA	Workforce Development Area	WSC	WorkSource System Coordinator
WDC	Workforce Development Council	WSU	Washington State University
		WWA	Washington Workforce Association

SECTION I Regional Designation



“The Benton Franklin Workforce Development Council manages two invaluable, free to the public, resources for our area’s job seekers and businesses. WorkSource Columbia Basin (focused on the needs of our Adult and Dislocated Workers together with Businesses) and TC Futures (focused on meeting the needs of our youth) are helping to equip our citizens with the tools, training, and resources they need to become employed, be able to take care of themselves and their families and to ultimately thrive. These resources are a focal point for developing regional prosperity, one business and one job seeker at a time!”

Todd Samuel, Board Chair

Workforce Region Name:

Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council

Workforce Development Area Name and Number:

Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council (WDA11)

County or Counties Comprising Service Delivery Area:

Benton and Franklin Counties

Fiscal Agent/Entity Responsible for the Disbursal of Grant Funds:

Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council



MISSION

Promoting a prosperous community by providing a progressive workforce system.

VISION

Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council (BFWDC) contributes to our prosperous community by elevating the human potential.

CORE VALUES

Integrity & Honesty, Excellence, Service & Helping Others.

ASPIRATIONAL VALUES

Inclusion, Collaboration & Partnership, Leadership, Creativity & Innovation & Imagination.

SECTION II Regional Component Of Plan

Regional Analysis of Economic Conditions

The Counties of Benton and Franklin make up the Benton-Franklin Region. The region has seen rapid population and economic growth over the past ten years. In recent years, the Region has been one of the fastest-growing regions in Washington state, with a population of over 311,469 and an average annual population growth of over 1.9% for the past five years (2018-2022). The population has grown, as has the area's total employment, which has expanded by 1.0% a year since 2018 and will reach over 130,480 jobs in 2022. Regional Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the best measure of the Regional economic state. Over the past five years (2018-2022), real GDP increased by 1.3% a year.



The community experienced an economic upswing due to job expansion in multiple industries, which helped retain the population and attract newcomers. The local labor force is diverse and has a wide range of skill, knowledge, and ability requirements, thanks to the availability of jobs in various sectors, such as professional and technical services, healthcare, education, construction, manufacturing, retail trade, transportation, warehousing, and agriculture. This diversity in job availability has helped retain and grow diversity in the local labor force. (Ajsa Suljic, Regional Labor Economist, ESD, 2024)

In-Demand Sectors and Occupations

Currently, the Benton-Franklin Region entertains well over 130,480 jobs in the area through over 8,640 employers with \$7,966 million in annual wages. On average, workers earn \$61,058 per year in the Region. For more details, see **Table 1**.

Table 1. Total Covered, all industries, Kennewick-Richland, WA MSA					
Annual averages 2019 - 2022 , All establishment sizes					
Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages - Bureau of Labor Statistics					
Topic	Annual Firms	Annual Average Employment	Total Annual Wages	Annual Average Weekly Wage	Annual Wages per Employee
2018 Levels	8,598	124,300	\$6,418,644,000	\$993	\$51,639
2019 Levels	8,980	126,677	\$6,786,006,811	\$1,030	\$53,569
2020 Levels	9,656	121,172	\$6,786,007,000	\$1,102	\$57,330
2021 Levels	9,612	125,513	\$7,450,331,869	\$1,142	\$59,359
2022 Levels	8,644	130,479	\$7,966,822,308	\$1,174	\$61,058
Level Change 2019-2022	-336	3,802	\$1,180,815,497	\$144	\$7,489
Level Change 2018-2022	46	6,179	\$1,548,178,308	\$181	\$9,419
Percent Change 2019-2022	-3.7%	3.0%	17.4%	14.0%	14.0%
Percent Change 2018-2022	0.5%	5.0%	24.1%	18.2%	18.2%

In 2022, Benton-Franklin Region entertained employment in all major industries, with the top sectors being government at 14.2%, healthcare and social assistance at 13.6%, retail trade at 10.9%, administrative and waste services at 9.3%, and agriculture at 8.9%. For more details, see **Table 2**.

Table 2. Top NAICS Sectors, Kennewick-Richland, WA MSA	
2022 Percent Share of Total Employment	
Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages - Bureau of Labor Statistics	
NAICS Sector	Percent Share of Total Employment
NAICS 92 Total Government (Federal, State, Local)	14.2%
NAICS 62 Health care and social assistance	13.6%
NAICS 44-45 Retail trade	10.9%
NAICS 56 Admin.&support&waste manag.&remed. Serv.	9.4%
NAICS 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	8.9%
NAICS 72 Accommodation and food services	8.1%
NAICS 23 Construction	7.9%
NAICS 54 Professionla and Technical Services	7.0%
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	6.7%
NAICS 42 Wholesale trade	2.7%
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	2.4%
NAICS 81 Other services (except public administration)	2.1%
NAICS 52 Finance and insurance	2.0%
NAICS 71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1.3%
NAICS 53 Real estate and rental and leasing	1.1%
NAICS 61 Educational services (private)	0.7%
NAICS 51 Information	0.5%
NAICS 55 Management of companies and enterprises	0.4%
NAICS 21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0.0%

Based on the trends observed over the years, the industries with the fastest growth from 2021 to 2022 include arts, entertainment, and recreation with 20.6% growth, real estate and rental and leasing services with 13.2%, transportation and warehousing with 10.5%, accommodation and food services with 10.5%, and manufacturing with 9.8%. For more details, please see **Table 3**.

Moreover, to understand longer trends and changes/recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, we look at the changes from 2019 to 2022. Growing industries in 2022 compared to 2019 include transportation and warehousing at 28.1%, finance and insurance at 10.2%, retail trade at 9.3%, and accommodation and food services with 5.8% growth. For more details, please see **Table 3**.

Table 3. NAICS Sectors, Kennewick-Richland, WA MSA				
Annual Change, All establishment sizes				
Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages - Bureau of Labor Statistics				
NAICS Sector	Percentage Change 2021-2022	Percentage Change 2020-2021	Percentage Change 2019-2020	Percentage Change 2019-2022
NAICS 11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	-2.2%	-1.6%	-4.6%	-8.3%
NAICS 21 Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
NAICS 23 Construction	1.5%	3.7%	0.1%	5.3%
NAICS 31-33 Manufacturing	9.8%	-1.8%	-2.8%	4.8%
NAICS 42 Wholesale trade	6.5%	3.4%	-4.2%	5.5%
NAICS 44-45 Retail trade	3.6%	7.9%	-2.3%	9.3%
NAICS 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	10.5%	16.3%	-0.3%	28.1%
NAICS 51 Information	1.6%	-5.1%	-7.2%	-10.5%
NAICS 52 Finance and insurance	2.5%	3.5%	3.8%	10.2%
NAICS 53 Real estate and rental and leasing	13.2%	-2.7%	-15.2%	-6.6%
NAICS 54 Professional, scientific, and technical services	1.1%	-1.4%	-2.6%	-3.0%
NAICS 55 Management of companies and enterprises	5.5%	-1.9%	1.2%	4.7%
NAICS 56 Admin.&support&waste manag.&remed. Serv.	4.5%	5.1%	-3.7%	5.8%
NAICS 61 Educational services (private)	8.3%	14.3%	-20.3%	-1.3%
NAICS 62 Health care and social assistance	2.8%	3.5%	1.1%	7.5%
NAICS 71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation	20.6%	38.8%	-47.1%	-11.4%
NAICS 72 Accommodation and food services	10.5%	13.0%	-15.3%	5.8%
NAICS 81 Other services (except public administration)	7.3%	7.7%	-12.6%	1.0%
NAICS 92 Total Government (Federal, State, Local)	1.9%	0.5%	-3.7%	-1.4%

Industries with expected growth a year through 2026 include leisure and hospitality at 4.06%; private educational services expected growth at 3.78%; professional, scientific, and technical services at 2.64%; other services at 2.54%; transportation and warehousing expected growth at 2.41%; and healthcare and social assistance at 2.39%.

According to the Department of Energy's (DOE) 2023 U.S. Energy and Employment Report, nearly 300,000 new clean energy jobs were created nationwide in 2022—outpacing national job growth (3.8% vs. 3.1%). Research conducted by the Brookings Institution found that having a clean energy job can increase an individual's income by 8%-19%. Clean energy jobs are also widely available to workers without four-year degrees, providing opportunities for Americans of all socioeconomic and educational backgrounds. The DOE focus begins with next generation nuclear/next generation that is projected to produce a 4.11 multiplier of economic impact by 2025. For more details, please see **Table 4**.

Title	Estimated employment 2021	Estimated employment 2026	Estimated employment 2031	Average annual growth rate 2022q2-2024q2	Average annual growth rate 2021-2026	Average annual growth rate 2026-2031
TOTAL NONFARM	117,435	129,033	137,337	1.35%	1.90%	1.26%
NATURAL RESOURCES and Mining	31	31	28	-2.99%	0.00%	-2.02%
CONSTRUCTION	10,565	11,340	12,091	0.97%	1.43%	1.29%
MANUFACTURING	8,034	8,700	8,855	-0.17%	1.61%	0.35%
WHOLESALE TRADE	3,392	3,704	3,767	1.09%	1.78%	0.34%
RETAIL TRADE	13,927	14,811	15,231	0.35%	1.24%	0.56%
TRANSPORTATION, WAREHOUS. and UTILITIES	3,383	3,790	3,897	0.73%	2.30%	0.56%
Utilities	192	195	200	0.51%	0.31%	0.51%
Transportation and Warehousing	3,192	3,596	3,697	0.76%	2.41%	0.56%
INFORMATION	673	715	760	0.73%	1.22%	1.23%
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	4,081	4,339	4,373	0.03%	1.23%	0.16%
Finance and Insurance	2,707	2,785	2,832	0.25%	0.57%	0.34%
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	1,373	1,554	1,541	-0.32%	2.51%	-0.17%
PROFESSIONAL and BUSINESS SERVICES	21,519	23,312	25,062	2.02%	1.61%	1.46%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	9,190	10,471	11,599	3.27%	2.64%	2.07%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	511	542	553	-0.09%	1.18%	0.40%
Other Professional Services	10,192	10,570	11,165	1.03%	0.73%	1.10%
Employment Services	1,627	1,729	1,745	1.95%	1.22%	0.18%
EDUCATION and HEALTH SERVICES	18,756	21,216	23,785	2.13%	2.50%	2.31%
Education Services	1,394	1,678	1,849	2.15%	3.78%	1.96%
Health Services and Social Assistance	17,362	19,538	21,935	2.13%	2.39%	2.34%
LEISURE and HOSPITALITY	11,109	13,558	14,927	2.04%	4.06%	1.94%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1,380	1,754	1,846	0.99%	4.91%	1.03%
Accommodation and Food Services	9,729	11,803	13,081	2.21%	3.94%	2.08%
OTHER SERVICES	3,489	3,955	4,257	1.79%	2.54%	1.48%
GOVERNMENT	18,476	19,561	20,304	1.38%	1.15%	0.75%

Expected occupational demand is associated with the industries that will be growing and expanding. The top occupational groups that will grow the fastest are personal care and service occupations at 3.99%; computer and mathematical occupations at 3.87%; food preparation and related occupations at 3.59%; building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations at 3.02%; and healthcare support occupations at 2.84%. For more details, please see **Table 5**.

Table 5. SOC Fastest Growing Occupational Groups, Kennewick-Richland, WA MSA				
All-term aggregated industry employment projections, July 2023				
Source: Employment Security Department/DATA ¹				
SOC code	Occupational title	Estimated employment 2024Q2	Average annual growth rate 2021-2026	Average annual total openings 2021-2026
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	151,275	1.65%	54,072
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	2,963	3.99%	1,251
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	2,318	3.87%	790
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	12,066	3.59%	5,625
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	4,772	3.02%	1,890
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	7,594	2.84%	3,053
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	1,372	2.21%	458
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	9,626	2.03%	2,282
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	2,422	1.98%	724
23-0000	Legal Occupations	581	1.84%	159
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	11,147	1.79%	4,172
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	4,430	1.76%	1,406
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	5,944	1.74%	2,013
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	7,397	1.59%	2,245

Occupational groups with the top job openings include the following: food preparation and serving related occupations with 5,625 total average annual openings; farming occupations with 5,398 openings; construction and extraction occupations with 5,227 total annual openings; and office and administrative support occupations with 4,823 average annual openings. For more details, please see **Table 6**.

Table 6. SOC Top Job Openings per Occupational Group, Kennewick-Richland, WA MSA				
All-term aggregated occupational employment projections, July 2023				
Source: Employment Security Department/DATA ¹				
SOC code	Occupational title	Estimated employment 2024Q2	Average annual growth rate 2021-2026	Average annual total openings 2021-2026
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	151,275	1.65%	54,072
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	2,963	3.59%	5,625
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	2,318	-0.87%	5,398
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	12,066	1.25%	5,227
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	4,772	1.29%	4,823
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	7,594	1.47%	4,788
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	1,372	1.79%	4,172
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	9,626	2.84%	3,053
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	2,422	2.03%	2,282
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	581	1.59%	2,245
11-0000	Management Occupations	11,147	1.51%	2,242
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	4,430	1.74%	2,013
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	5,944	1.36%	1,939
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	7,397	3.02%	1,890

Workforce Demographics

The information below provides information on the current workforce and the impact of demographic changes on future workforce planning (Data sources – US Census American Community Survey 2018-2022).

Population

In 2018-2022, the Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area had a total population of 311,460, (49.2 percent) females and (50.8 percent) males. The median age was 34.3 years. An estimated 28.0 percent of the population was under 18 years, 36.5 percent was 18 to 44 years old, 22.0 percent was 45 to 64, and 13.6 percent was 65 and older.

Hispanic Origin and Race

For people reporting one race alone, 69.7 percent were White; 1.9 percent were Black or African American; 1.1 percent were American Indian and Alaska Native; 2.7 percent were Asian; 0.2 percent were Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 12.8 percent were Some Other Race. An estimated 11.7 percent reported Two or More Races. An estimated 33.2 percent of the people in the Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area were Hispanic or Latino. An estimated 58.3 percent of the people in the Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area were White alone, non-Hispanic. People of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Employment Status and Type of Employer

In the Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area, 60.2 percent of the population aged 16 and over were employed; 36.4 percent were not currently in the labor force. An estimated 77.7 percent of the people employed were private wage and salary workers; 17.0 percent were federal, state, or local government workers, and 5.2 percent were self-employed in their own (not incorporated) business.

Class of worker	Number	Percent
Private wage and salary workers	107,206	77.7
Federal, state, or local government workers	23,398	17.0
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business	7,143	5.2

Occupations

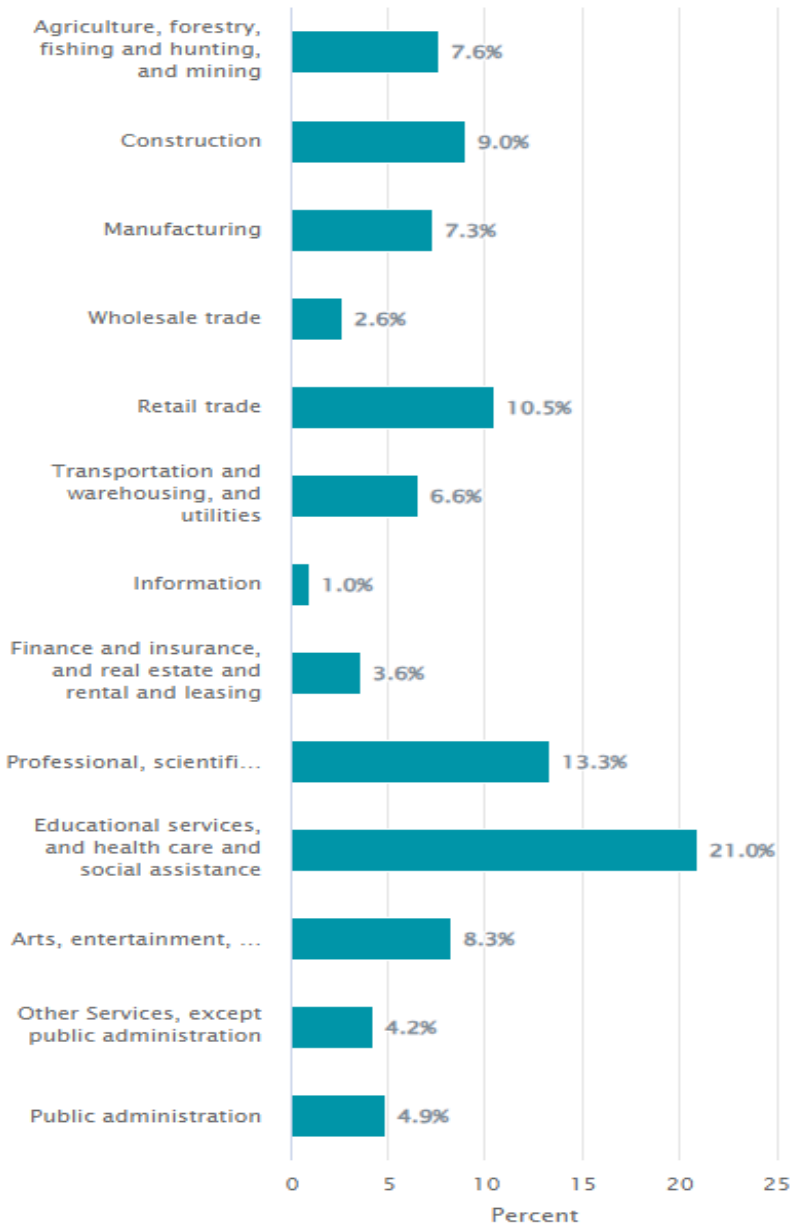
Occupations for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and over in Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area in 2018-2022.

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	Number	Percent
Management, business, sciences, and arts occupations	52,817	38.3
Service occupations	22,646	16.4
Sales and office occupations	24,465	17.7
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	20,083	14.6
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	17,908	13.0

Industries

In 2018-2022, the civilian employed population 16 years and older in the Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area worked in the following industries:

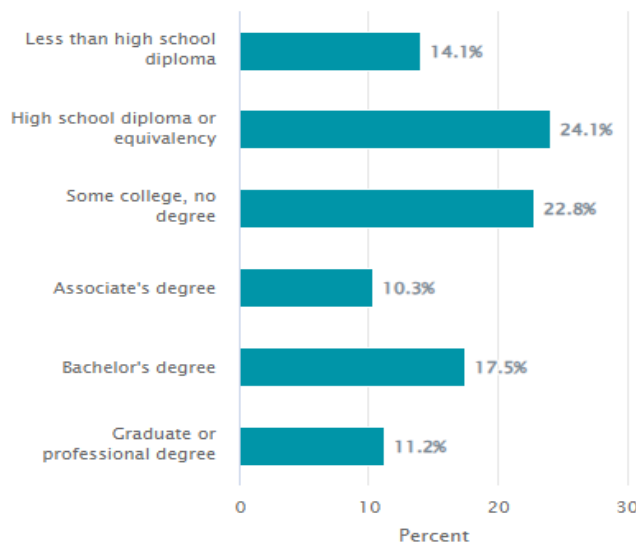
Percent by Industry in Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area in 2018-2022



Education

In 2018-2022, 85.9 percent of people 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school, and 28.7 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. An estimated 14.1 percent did not complete high school. The total school enrollment in the Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area was 81,285 in 2018-2022. nursery school enrollment was 4,439, and kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment was 62,267. College or graduate school enrollment was 14,579.

Educational Attainment of People in Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area in 2018-2022



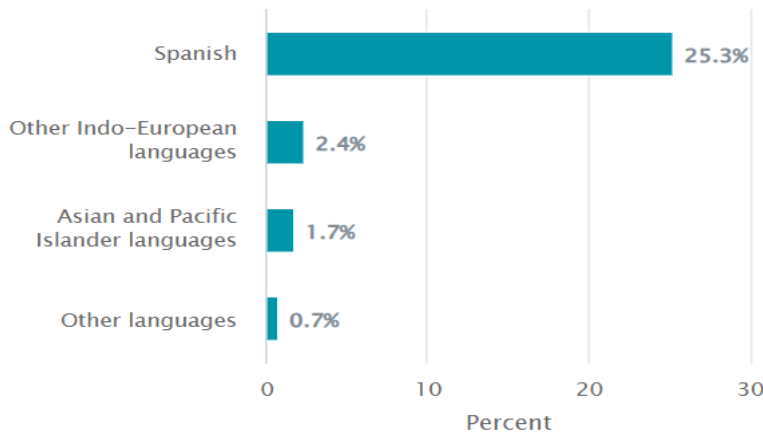
Disability

In the Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area, among the civilian noninstitutionalized population in 2018-2022, 13.4 percent reported a disability. The likelihood of having a disability varied by age - from 4.5 percent of people under 18 years old to 12.1 percent of people 18 to 64 years old and 37.8 percent of those 65 and over.

Language

Among people at least five years old living in the Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area in 2018-2022, 30.1 percent spoke a language other than English at home. Spanish was spoken by 25.3 percent of people at least five years old; 12.9 percent reported that they did not speak English "very well."

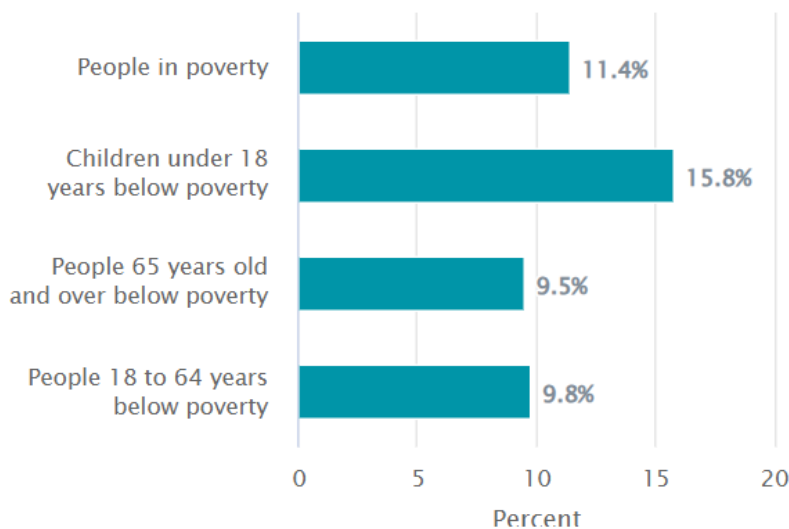
Percent of the Population 5 years and over who Speak a Language other than English in Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area in 2018-2022



Poverty and Participation in Government Programs

In 2018-2022, 11.4 percent of people were in poverty. An estimated 15.8 percent of children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 9.5 percent of people 65 years old and over. An estimated 9.8 percent of people 18 to 64 years were below the poverty level.

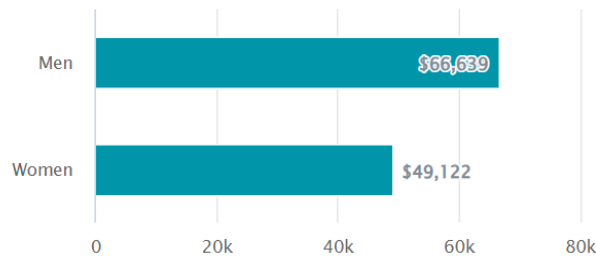
Poverty Rates in Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area in 2018-2022



Income

The median income of households in the Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area was \$82,146. An estimated 3.2 percent of households had income below \$10,000 a year, and 10.8 percent had income of \$200,000 or more. Median earnings for full-time, year-round workers were \$59,019. Male full-time, year-round workers had median earnings of \$66,639. Female full-time, year-round workers had median earnings of \$49,122.

Median Earnings for Full-Time Year-Round Workers by Sex in Kennewick-Richland, WA Metro Area in 2018-2022



An estimated 79.0 percent of households received earnings. An estimated 28.1 percent of households received Social Security, and an estimated 23.1 percent of households received retirement income other than Social Security. The average income from Social Security was \$25,672. These income sources are not mutually exclusive; some households receive income from multiple sources.

Skills and Knowledge

As mentioned, the region is diverse in its employment offerings. It has a wide range of jobs in various sectors, such as professional and technical services, healthcare, education, construction, manufacturing, retail trade, transportation, warehousing, and agriculture. This diversity in job availability has helped retain and grow diversity in the local labor force. In addition, industries with the fastest growth from 2021 to 2022 include arts, entertainment, and recreation; real estate and rental and leasing services; transportation and warehousing; accommodation and food services; and manufacturing.

The local labor force is diverse and has a wide range of skill, knowledge, and ability requirements primarily due to this diversity in job availability. [According to sources](#), some of the most in-demand skills for today's work environment in our area are:

Cloud computing: This skill involves developing and managing cloud-based systems and applications, which many organizations across different sectors increasingly use. Cloud computing requires technical knowledge of software design, coding, engineering, and security and the ability to negotiate with cloud service providers and implement best practices.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning: These skills involve creating, testing, and implementing AI models and algorithms, which can automate tasks, analyze data, and provide insights. AI and machine learning require technical expertise in statistics, programming, engineering, and data science, as well as understanding AI's ethical and social implications.

Sales leadership: This skill involves closing business deals and coaching others to do the same. Sales leaders must have excellent communication, motivation, and persuasion skills and the ability to analyze market trends, identify opportunities, and set goals and strategies.

Analysis: This skill involves collecting, processing, and interpreting data to solve problems, make decisions, and generate insights. Analysis requires technical proficiency in data science, statistics, and software tools and the ability to think critically, creatively, and logically.

Soft skills: These interpersonal and human skills enable effective communication, collaboration, and relationship-building. The most important soft skills are emotional intelligence, empathy, adaptability, resilience, and problem-solving. Depending on the specific sector and occupation, you may also need other skills, knowledge, and qualifications relevant to the field.

Here are some of the skills, knowledge, and qualifications that are commonly required or desired in each of the targeted in-demand sectors for the Region:

Trade transportation and warehousing: This sector involves moving, storing, and distributing goods and materials across various modes of transportation, such as road, rail, air, and water. Some of the skills you may need for this sector are:

- Operating and maintaining vehicles, equipment, and machinery, such as trucks, forklifts, cranes, and conveyor belts.
- Following safety rules and regulations and handling hazardous materials properly.
- Planning, organizing, and coordinating shipments, deliveries, and inventory using software and systems like GPS, barcode scanners, and databases.
- Communicating effectively with customers, suppliers, and co-workers and resolving issues and complaints.
- Analyzing and interpreting data, such as traffic patterns, fuel consumption, and customer feedback, to improve efficiency and quality of service.
- Depending on the specific occupation, you may also need a license, certification, or training in driving, logistics, or warehousing.

Retail trade: This sector sells goods and services to consumers in physical stores or online platforms. Some of the skills you may need for this sector are:

- Providing excellent customer service, such as greeting customers, answering questions, and making recommendations.
- Processing transactions, such as cash, credit, or online payments, using point-of-sale systems and software.
- Displaying, stocking, and replenishing merchandise and ensuring cleanliness and orderliness of the store or website.
- Marketing and promoting products and services using social media, advertisements, and loyalty programs.
- Working as part of a team and managing and motivating staff, if in a supervisory role.
- Depending on the specific occupation, you may also need a degree, certification, or training in sales, merchandising, or e-commerce.

Manufacturing: This sector involves producing goods and materials using machines, tools, and processes, such as assembly, welding, or machining. Some of the skills you may need for this sector are:

- Operating and controlling machines and equipment, such as lathes, drills, or robots, following instructions and specifications.
- Inspecting and testing products and materials, using instruments and tools, such as calipers, gauges, or microscopes, to ensure quality and conformity.
- Troubleshooting and repairing machines and equipment and performing preventive maintenance.
- Applying mathematics, science, and engineering knowledge to solve problems and improve processes.
- Adhering to safety standards and procedures and wearing protective gear and clothing.
- Depending on the specific occupation, you may also need a degree, certification, or training in engineering, mechanics, or electronics.

Government services: This sector provides public services and programs, such as health, education, security, and infrastructure, to citizens and communities. Some of the skills you may need for this sector are:

- Understanding and applying laws, policies, and regulations and following ethical principles and codes of conduct.
- Researching and analyzing information and data, using sources and methods, such as surveys, statistics, or databases, to support decision-making and policy-making.
- Writing and presenting reports, proposals, and documents using clear and concise language, format, and software and tools, such as word processors, spreadsheets, or slideshows.
- Collaborating and communicating with stakeholders, such as other government agencies, private organizations, or the public, to build relationships and achieve goals.
- Manage and oversee projects, budgets, and resources, as well as evaluate and monitor performance and outcomes.
- Depending on the specific occupation, you may also need a degree, certification, or training in areas such as public administration, political science, or law.

Professional and technical services: This sector involves providing specialized and expert services and advice, such as accounting, consulting, engineering, or design, to clients and customers. Some of the skills you may need for this sector are:

- Having in-depth knowledge and expertise in a specific field or domain and staying updated on the latest trends and developments.
- Developing and implementing solutions, strategies, and plans based on the clients' and customers' needs and objectives.
- Using technology and tools, such as software, hardware, or devices, to perform tasks and deliver services.
- Communicate and negotiate with clients and customers and build trust and rapport.
- Working independently and autonomously, as well as managing time and deadlines.
- Depending on the specific occupation, you may also need a degree, certification, or training in accounting, consulting, engineering, or design.

Healthcare services: This sector involves providing medical and health-related services and care, such as diagnosis, treatment, prevention, and education, to patients and populations. Some of the skills you may need for this sector are:

- Applying knowledge of anatomy, physiology, pathology, and pharmacology, as well as using medical terminology and abbreviations.
- Performing clinical procedures and interventions, such as taking vital signs, administering medications, or performing surgery, using equipment and instruments, such as stethoscopes, syringes, or scalpels.
- Assessing and documenting patients' health status and progress using charts and records and software and systems, such as electronic health records or telehealth platforms.
- Provide compassionate and empathetic care and support to patients and their families and respect their privacy and confidentiality.
- Working as part of a multidisciplinary team and collaborating and consulting with other healthcare professionals, such as doctors, nurses, or pharmacists.
- Depending on the specific occupation, you may also need a degree, certification, or training in areas such as medicine, nursing, or allied health.

Educational services: This sector provides academic, career, and technical instruction, as well as other education and training, to students of various ages and levels. Some of the skills you may need for this sector are:

- Designing and delivering engaging and effective lessons, activities, and assessments based on curriculum standards and learning objectives.
- Using educational technology and tools, such as computers, projectors, smartboards, and online platforms, to enhance teaching and learning.
- Managing classroom behavior and environment, as well as ensuring the safety and well-being of students.
- Communicating clearly and constructively with students, parents, and co-workers, as well as providing feedback and guidance.
- Evaluating and monitoring student progress and performance, as well as reporting and documenting results and outcomes.
- Depending on the specific occupation, you may also need a degree, credential, certification, or training in areas such as teaching, education, pedagogy, or subject matter.

Accommodation and food services: This sector involves providing lodging, food, and beverages to customers and guests, such as in hotels, restaurants, or cafes. Some of the skills you may need for this sector are:

- Prepare and serve food and drinks, follow recipes, standards, and hygiene rules, and use equipment and tools, such as ovens, blenders, or knives.
- Providing excellent customer service, such as greeting customers, taking orders, making recommendations, and handling complaints and feedback.
- Processing transactions, such as cash, credit, or online payments, using point-of-sale systems and software.
- Cleaning and maintaining the premises, equipment, and utensils and ensuring safety and sanitation.
- Working as part of a team and following and giving instructions if in a supervisory role.
- Depending on the specific occupation, you may also need a license, certification, or training in food handling, hospitality, or tourism.

Agriculture: This sector involves growing, harvesting, and processing crops, livestock, and other agricultural products, such as fruits, vegetables, meat, eggs, and dairy. Some of the skills you may need for this sector are:

- Operating and maintaining farm equipment and machinery, such as tractors, plows, or harvesters, following instructions and specifications.
- Performing manual labor, such as planting, weeding, pruning, or feeding, using tools and techniques like shovels, hoes, or irrigation systems.
- Working long hours in all weather conditions and adapting to seasonal and environmental changes, such as drought, frost, or pests.
- Follow safety rules and regulations and handle animals and chemicals properly.
- Planning, organizing, and managing farm operations, such as crop rotation, fertilization, pest control, or animal health, using software and systems, such as spreadsheets, databases, or sensors.
- Communicate and negotiate with customers, suppliers, and co-workers, as well as market and sell farm products using social media, advertisements, or farmers' markets.
- Researching and analyzing information and data, such as market trends, soil quality, or weather forecasts, to improve productivity and profitability.
- Depending on the specific occupation, you may also need a degree, certification, or training in areas such as agriculture, agronomy, or animal science.



Workforce Metrics

As of 2022, over 229,056 people aged 16 years and over resided in the Region. With 151,000 people actively engaged in the labor force activities. The current resident employment rate is over 94.6%, while

Veteran:	8,579	4.7%
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unemployment is 5.4 %.

Table 8. Historical resident labor force and employment, not seasonally adjusted	
Source: Employment Security Department/DATA;	
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics; Date: December 26, 2023	
Benchmark: March 2022	
Civilian Labor Force	151,040
Total Employment	142,956
Total Unemployment	8,084
Unemployment Rate	5.4%

Please see **Table 8**.

Dislocated Workers: According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, dislocated workers are those who lost or left their jobs because of plant closures, insufficient work, or position or shift eliminations. From 2019 to 2021, there were an estimated average of 1,300 dislocated workers per year in Benton County and 800 in Franklin County. This means that 1.2% of Benton County's workforce and 2.0% of Franklin County's workforce aged 15 to 64 were dislocated workers.

TANF Recipients: TANF stands for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, a federal program that provides cash assistance and other benefits to low-income families. In February 2020, the latest month for which data is available, there were 2,237 TANF recipients in Benton and Franklin counties. This represents 0.8% of the total population of the two counties.

Disadvantaged Adults: This group consists of adults living in poverty or with low incomes. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that in 2018-2022, the latest period for which data is available, 9,494 adults aged 22 to 72 were below the poverty level in Benton County and 6,808 in Franklin County. This accounts for 4.5% of Benton County's total population and 6.9% of Franklin County's total population. The state average for this group was 7.0%.

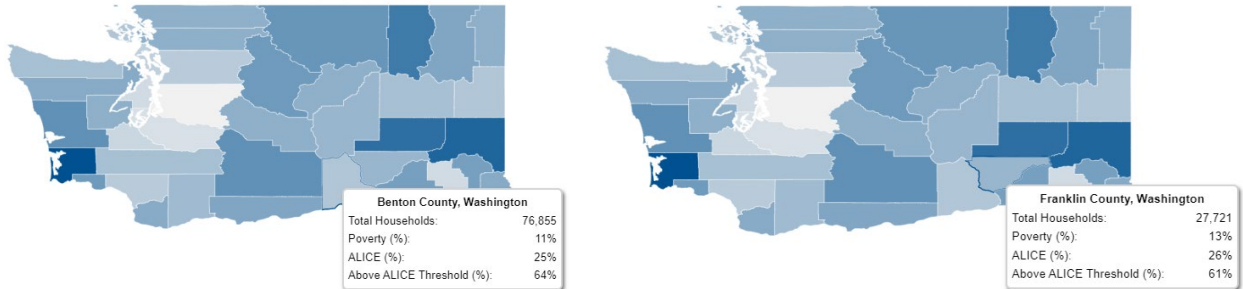
Older Workers: This group refers to workers who are 55 years and older. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in 2022, the latest year for which data is available, there were 38,771 more senior workers in Benton and Franklin counties. This makes up 15.6% of the total population of the two counties. The projected number of older workers for 2025 is 43,636, 17.0% of the total population. The BFWDC has established a collaborative relationship with Goodwill industries to enhance the delivery of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) within the operational areas of Benton and Franklin Counties. This partnership will leverage the strengths and resources to facilitate training, support services, and employment opportunities for SCSEP participants.

People with Disabilities: This group includes people with a physical or mental impairment limiting their major life activities. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that in 2018-2022, the latest period for which data is available, there were 10,704 people with disabilities in the labor force in Benton County and 2,813 in Franklin County. This represents 10.2% of Benton County's labor force and 9.3% of Franklin County's labor force. Additionally, 11,861 people with disabilities were not in the labor force in Benton County and 4,348 in Franklin County. This means that 11.4% of Benton County's population and 14.4% of Franklin County's population had a disability that prevented them from working or did not affect their work status.

ALICE Households: Many communities are moving the focus of service delivery to ALICE households. ALICE, or Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households have incomes above the federal poverty threshold yet do not earn enough to cover basic needs. As shown in the table below, in Franklin County, 39% of households live below the ALICE threshold, with 13% at the poverty level. It is similar for Benton County, with 11% below the poverty level, which leaves 36% at or below the ALICE threshold. [Alice Data Washington State](#)

Year	County	Poverty		ALICE		Above		Total Households
2021	Franklin	3,724	13%	7,207	26%	16,790	61%	27,721
	Benton	8,431	11%	19,394	25%	49,030	64%	76,855

ALICE workers keep our communities running while struggling to keep their households from financial hardship. Service delivery for ALICE households means upskilling those who are underemployed to help them earn higher wages so they will not have to choose between keeping the lights on or buying food. These workers keep our communities running while struggling to keep their households from financial ruin.



Strengths and Weaknesses of Services: Analyze existing workforce development activities in the region, including education and training capacity, to meet the skills and employment needs of regional employers, including for individuals with barriers to employment.

Our local community college, Columbia Basin College (CBC), strives to meet the local economy's needs through certificate and degree offerings. To support the demand in the Healthcare Sector, CBC has added an Expanded Functions Dental Auxiliary Certificate (January 2024), an associate degree in health sciences (June 2023), and a Bachelor of Applied Science in Community Health (June 2023). They have additional offerings under development, including a Dental Assisting Program beginning in September 2024. In response to the demand for marketing training from several sectors, CBC has developed a new associate degree in marketing that is offered entirely online. With a growing community of entrepreneurs, CBC has also revised its one-year certificate in Entrepreneurship for those who want to start their businesses.

Our Transportation/Warehousing sector greatly needs Supply Chain Management training. CBC is working on meeting their need with an associate degree, which is under development. Also, through special funding from the State of Washington, CBC expanded CDL training in our region, although there is still a significant need to help fund job seekers to gain this valuable in-demand skill.

Note: The regional labor market analysis should inform the creation of your goals, objectives, and strategies. Additionally, consult the state's strategic plan for supplementary data.

Regional Sector Strategies

Identification and Prioritization: Prioritizing efforts is necessary to best use limited resources and maximize impact. Through a process with our Local Labor Market Economist, we identified six key factors to help us determine our focus. We are not taking a separate approach for each sector. Please reference Attachment A – Sector Partnership for additional details on our short-term goals.

- *High Growth* – Our resources and efforts must focus on growing industries in our economy.
- *Widening Skills Gap* – Our resources and efforts must focus on increasing the disparity

between the skills employers need and the workforce's skills.

- *Entry-Level Occupations with Little to No Training Required* – Increase connections to positions as points for individuals entering the workforce or transitioning to a new industry.
- *Pathways to “Good Jobs”* – Get job seekers into quality jobs by building and strengthening systems and partnerships to bring together employers with hiring needs and other key entities to train workers with in-demand skills that lead to good jobs, focusing on equity.

INDUSTRY	PERCENT of TOTAL EMPLOYMENT
Government	15.7%
Healthcare	12.2%
Professional and Technical Services	7.3%
Agriculture/Food Processing	10.7%
Construction	7.1%
Manufacturing	6.5%
Transportation and Warehousing	1.9%

Collaborative Approaches

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires that each region and local area is responsible for assuring the workforce system meets the needs of businesses, workers, and job seekers. Through planning and commitment, our location is positioned to power economic growth by implementing strategies that support the most impacted sectors. The criteria used to select key industry sectors were those with high growth projections, those with a widening skill gap, those that offer entry-level positions with little training requirements, and pathways to Good Jobs. The six sectors selected and vetted by leadership and the BFWDC Board of Directors are Healthcare, Hospitality, Government, Manufacturing & Transportation, Small Business, Agriculture, and Warehousing. See [Attachment A](#) for information about our Sector Partnership Framework.

Multi-Regional Focus

Regional Service Strategies

This plan is shaped by regional economic analysis, the voices of customers, and community input. Considering our comprehensive analysis of the region and voice of the customer input, this strategic plan provides details on the services and interventions set for implementation on a regional level. By leveraging insights gleaned from the comprehensive regional analysis, our focus is on addressing specific challenges, capitalizing on opportunities, and addressing the needs of priority populations. This undertaking involves articulating concrete strategies that will be deployed to address the identified needs. Furthermore, we are committed to evaluating the effectiveness of these interventions. This proactive and thoughtful approach underscores our

dedication to fostering positive change within the region through thoughtful and impactful strategies.

Cooperative Agreements

WIOA requires the LWDB, with the agreement of the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs), to develop and enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the WorkSource system Partners to establish a cooperative working relationship between the Parties and to define their respective roles and responsibilities in achieving objectives under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. This MOU also creates the framework for providing services to employers, employees, job seekers, and others needing workforce services. The parties to the MOU and their commitment to the WorkSource system can be found in [Attachment B](#).

Multi-Regional Focus

Currently, there is no multi-regional focus. However, our workforce development areas (WDAs) have a rich history of working collaboratively across jurisdictional boundaries through joint efforts. We will continue strategically deploying the appropriate subject matter experts (SMEs) to lead cross-regional teams on policy development, compliance monitoring, WorkSource certification, and programmatic technical assistance. We will continue strategically deploying the appropriate subject matter experts (SMEs) to lead cross-regional teams on local equal opportunity, specialty youth center evolution, and integrated service delivery with co-enrollment.

Our workforce development areas worked collectively to ensure adequate representation to support statewide grant proposals through ESD, the Department of Commerce, etc. Not all LWDBs have the collective resources to participate in all grant opportunities. By sharing that work across the 12 LWDBs to represent all LWDBs, we brought much-needed additional funding to the state of Washington to assist in pandemic recovery efforts.

Coordination with Regional Economic Development Organizations

The BFWDC is responsible for assisting and supporting its economic development partners by providing a unified training system that will increase our workforce's employment, retention, and earnings while achieving our region's economic development goals.

The Benton-Franklin Economic Development District is the recognized Economic Development (EDD) Planning Organization for Benton and Franklin Counties. As the organizational component of the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCG), the EDD annually adopts a Benton-Franklin Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report. The BFCG is federally designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)/Transportation Management Area (TMA) for the Tri-Cities Metropolitan Area. The BFCG provides a regional forum and planning entity for developing jurisdictional programs and decision-making.

The Tri-Cities Economic Development Council (TRIDEC) is an economic development partner with the BFWDC. TRIDEC is a non-profit organization that attracts job-creating investments into Benton and Franklin Counties. It provides integrated consulting services to businesses considering southeast Washington locations or business sites and coordinates the site selection process. Services include land/facilities identification, incentives analysis, financing information, regulatory agency assistance, and employee recruitment and training.

In consideration of these priorities, the BFWDC has set the following goals by which to measure and achieve success:

Support a workforce system that is employer-driven and responsive to the needs of the labor market, coordinate workforce training and education resources towards developing skills that meet target industries, assist transitioning adults for successful participation in the workforce that leads to employment retention and wage progression, coordinate service strategies for at-risk youth and connect programs to integrated learning opportunities, and provide access to quality workforce services for all customers in the region.

Coordination of Transportation and Other Support Services: Coordination with community-based organizations is crucial for driving community impact. This collaboration creates a synergistic relationship that enhances the ability to address community needs, foster sustainable development, and ultimately lead to positive and lasting outcomes for the community.

Housing: We continue to see an increase in homeless and transient youth that need immediate shelter; this includes youth that are “couch surfing” homeless or facing imminent homelessness. There is also an increase in homeless pregnant or parenting youth who need housing resources. TC Future/WSCB no longer offers financial services to the housing program but continues to partner with My Friends Place, HRC, and CAC to assist the most at-risk homeless youth. We continue working with Benton and Franklin counties to receive housing grant monies to help youth with immediate housing and rental needs.

Transportation: Transportation is vital to finding and maintaining a job, getting to medical appointments, and running essential errands. Transportation is one of the leading barriers preventing people from accessing vital services. Free assistance can help people connect to available transportation resources, often identifying no or low-cost options. People for People assists individuals in matching transportation resources to their need(s), problem-solves potential barriers, and advocates on behalf of the individual when appropriate. This service is available to all individuals, including older adults, people with disabilities, lower-income individuals, and families with small children. We explore fund development strategies to invest in transportation infrastructure that aligns with workforce needs and promotes seamless commuting for workers.

Broadband Access: We advocate for policies ensuring equitable broadband access, recognizing Benton-Franklin’s role in bridging the digital divide. We work closely with our partners, Goodwill Industries of Columbia, and other community partners to achieve digital inclusion, as we recognize strategies are needed to reduce barriers to accessing and using technology. Some of the solutions in place are:

Device gifting program: Included with the free Chrome books, two months of free internet, a Laptop bag, a Headset, a Wireless mouse, Digital assistance, and Advocacy.

Digital literacy classes: Basic Computer Skills, Internet Basics, Using Email, Windows 10, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), Social Media, and Career Search Skills.

Food Assistance: Individuals can call 2-1-1 to process their food stamp applications without having to go in person to DSHS.

Childcare: We advocate for policies supporting affordable and accessible childcare options for the workforce. Our efforts extend to exploring fund development strategies to invest in quality

childcare programs, ensuring that workforce participants have reliable childcare resources.

Regional Cost Arrangements

There are no cross-regional cost arrangements in place. However, the BFWDC continuously explores opportunities to develop these partners. There are in-kind contributions from our region and the Eastern Partnership for things such as management of information systems (MIS), training, programmatic, and technical assistance. We have also collaborated to bring together our leadership (Executive Directors and Board Presidents) to analyze cross-regional workforce development trends and explore areas where it makes sense for us to benefit businesses and workers in our regions mutually.

Regional Performance Negotiation and Evaluation

Regional performance is negotiated and conducted annually. The BFWDC, Chief Local Elected Officials, and the State Workforce Board (on behalf of the Governor) review data on the area's past performance and the federal measures to negotiate an agreement on the performance levels for each indicator. The State Workforce Board will, in conjunction with the BFWDC and local elected officials, develop ways to analyze the local economic conditions and demographic characteristics of the participants served. To promote common understanding, the twelve workforce development areas work with the State Workforce Board before annual performance negotiations.

The State Workforce Board has identified and defined measures for evaluating training provider performance consistent with the requirements of WIOA Title I. The State Workforce Board collects the necessary data from training providers to ensure their courses of study can be certified eligible for WIOA Title I funds. The State Workforce Board will also identify the performance levels that must be achieved to be listed as an eligible training provider on the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The State Workforce Board ensures the electronic dissemination of information on training provider outcomes.

The BFWDC uses performance information to develop and oversee program operations. The State Workforce Board will ensure that participant data collected by the Management of Information System (MIS) matches administrative records to measure employment, earnings, and education indicators. These include federal indicators specified by the Department of Labor (DOL) and indicators needed for the annual Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL).

The committees of the BFWDC review performance monthly and discuss the changes needed to the program design to achieve the expected results under WIOA. Workforce partners (including all four WIOA Titles) continuously share performance targets and results. The practice of transparency is common in our region.

SECTION III

Local Component of Plan

Strategic Vision and Goals: Describe the LWDB's strategic vision for cultivating an educated and skilled workforce, including considerations for youth and individuals with barriers to employment, to foster regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. Explain alignment with the state's strategic priorities.

Goals/Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1

Business and Economic Development | Support business development and competitiveness by aligning with economic development and growth efforts.

Objective 1: Increase awareness of workforce services and programs available to local business owners.

Objective 2: Connect businesses with skills-based testing resources; develop skillsets to promote/elevate businesses to the next level by implementing a localized job quality framework* to guide decisions and critical investments in delivering business services.

**Job quality framework is a blueprint of actionable, detailed strategies for companies to improve their jobs and work conditions.*

Objective 3: Identify the skills gaps and challenges of current and future business owners and economic growth efforts.

Goal 2

Youth | Improve access to opportunities for youth and young adults* with barriers to employment to transition to an economically successful adulthood.

**(In-School Youth- 14-21 years) (Out of School Youth- 16-24 years)*

Objective 1: Empower the next generation by expanding near-peer* youth opportunities and awareness of workforce programs offered.

** A Near Peer is an individual who has recently gone through an experience that someone will now or soon be facing.*

Objective 2: Connect with the digital world of youth and meet them where they are. Use social media and devices to explore education and employment prospects by utilizing social media platforms to communicate opportunities.

Objective 3: Increase awareness and understanding of alternative career pathways- such as technical education, certificates, trade programs, apprenticeships, and educational opportunities, including 2 & 4-year degrees.

Goal 3

Adult | Improve access to opportunities for adults to become economically successful.

Objective 1: Increase education, training, and upskilling of ALICE* workers.

**ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed – earning more than the Federal Poverty Level, but not enough to afford the basics where they live.*

Objective 2: Meet job seekers where they are to introduce them to employment training and skill-building opportunities.

Objective 3: Identify employment and education barriers of job seekers and work with community partners to mitigate them.

Goal 4

Community Outreach | Strengthen collaboration with partners to meet the workforce needs of our employers and community.

Objective 1: Enhance the onboarding of new board members and community partners in the public workforce system, programs, and support services available.

Objective 2: Explore credential reform to improve equitable access, mobility, and long-term economic success.

Objective 3: Increase resources to the public workforce system.

High-Performing Board Objectives

The BFWDC has and continues to keep high program performance as the system's founding priority. Negotiated and approved performance targets are included in every WIOA Title 1 Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth subrecipient contract and all service delivery contracts issued by the BFWDC. Performance targets are set to ensure they are reasonable and manageable based on state-level performance data, historical performance, and local economic conditions.

The goals are charted and monitored monthly by designated BFWDC staff and presented to their perspective committee monthly/bimonthly and to the full council quarterly. Should significant deficiencies occur in contract performance, staff immediately intervene with subrecipients to identify issues and develop solutions for correction. Intervention by BFWDC staff can include various activities, including technical assistance and corrective action. Ongoing involvement in the performance accountability process by members of the BFWDC has been a key element in the high performance of a local board.

Regional Alignment and Strategy

Below is a summary of our partner programs and how each fits into the local workforce development system. In addition, workforce initiatives are embedded within the company. For a description of the local workforce development system in Benton and Franklin Counties, please see **Attachment D**.

WIOA Core Programs

WIOA Title I

WIOA Adult

Adults who are unemployed or under-employed are considered adults in transition, and the Adult program provides various services for adults throughout the region. These services are designed to remove barriers to employment, creating opportunities for needed skill upgrades and connecting quickly to a pathway towards self-sufficient employment. Adult services include occupational skills training, comprehensive assessment, case management, career exploration, financial literacy, support services, and job search assistance. Training services can include paid work experience, on-the-job training, entrepreneurship, and customized training. The goal is to address educational and training needs, eligible for, receiving, or have exhausted their

unemployment benefits.

WIOA Youth

The Youth Program provides various services to local area youth who are out of school and between the ages of 16 and 24. The BFWDC subrecipient makes available the full range of the 14 required youth elements at TC Futures threaded throughout their program and service delivery design. Each youth receives a comprehensive assessment, assisting the youth in identifying career interests and academic and occupational skill levels to prepare them to enter employment or post-secondary education. Youth develop an individualized plan to assess their short and long-term career and educational goals, support service needs, and training required to access a pathway towards self-sufficiency. Guided career planning and labor market review prepare the youth for a career goal that is in demand.

WIOA Dislocated Worker

The Dislocated Worker Program (DWP) connects with affected job seekers to speed their transition to new employment or training when appropriate. DWP services may include occupational skills training, comprehensive assessment, case management, career exploration, financial literacy, support services, and job search assistance. Training services can include paid work experience, on-the-job training, entrepreneurship, and customized training. DWP subrecipient staff coordinate with employers to deliver rapid response services that provide information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs, One-Stop system services, employment, and training activities, including information on the WIOA Title I-B Dislocated Worker program, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Pell Grants, the GI Bill, and other community resources.

WIOA Title II

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program

These programs are critical in empowering adults to achieve their educational, career, and personal goals. By providing accessible, high-quality instruction and support services, these programs contribute to individual success, community development, and economic prosperity. CBC provides a variety of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at times and locations convenient for both employed and unemployed workers needing ESL and vocational skills training.

WIOA Title III

Wagner-Peyser Act Program

At WSCB, the Employment Security Department provides Wagner-Peyser services. These labor exchange services connect job seekers and businesses. Services for job seekers include basic career services (Front End Services/Resource Room), career assessments, and one-on-one individualized job search assistance. Services for businesses include customized labor market information, hiring events, and specifically targeted recruiting. In addition, both job seekers and businesses have access to WorkSourceWa, an online connection platform for job seekers and hiring businesses.

WIOA Title IV

Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), DVR and Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), Customer Service Office (CSO), Department of Services for the Blind

(DSB), Edith Bishel Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP), work collaboratively with WorkSource programs to coordinate services for local customers. Staff from these programs work together to serve customers across workforce development programs and promote quality customer services in person and online. DVR Counselors make cross-referrals to WorkSource programs and integrate services for individuals with disabilities with staff from the DVOP program, the Worker Retraining program, and the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. WorkSource staff provide services to match job seekers to the programs that best meet their needs and conduct outreach to partners and community service providers.

DVR and WorkSource demonstrate a common goal of providing services so that all job seekers with disabilities who want to work can be employed when they receive services tailored to their needs and reasonable accommodations. WSCB provides a welcoming, inclusive environment to serve job seekers with all types of disabilities successfully. Job seekers with disabilities experience an environment where they are supported in addressing employment challenges, no matter how significant, within the workforce system. WSCB has a proficient staff member in American Sign Language to provide services to hearing-impaired customers who prefer this type of communication. Other program staff are bilingual in Spanish and Russian to serve job seekers with monolingual communication needs. Assistive technology offers a wide range of accommodations on computer workstations to promote access to the Internet and software programs. DVR has a full-time Employment Specialist on-site to assist DVR customers with job search activities and integration into the WorkSource programs. DVR has an additional full-time vocational rehabilitation lead counselor at WorkSource to serve individuals with disabilities and accelerate the integration of DVR services in WSCB. Job seekers with disabilities receive WorkSource Services to help achieve successful outcomes to the same extent as those without disabilities.

BFWDC partners with local vocational rehabilitation agencies, the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB), and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to ensure the accessibility of services for job seekers with disabilities in our WorkSource centers and in workforce programming. DSB and DVR serve as committee and board members, embedding accessibility as a criterion for the most comprehensive planning and delivery of workforce services. Both agencies provide training for WorkSource staff and employers regarding accessibility and accommodations, which fosters opportunities for vocational rehabilitation customers while assisting employers with recruitment, retention, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives.

DSB and DVR staff are located within WorkSource centers in the Benton Franklin Workforce region, which contributes to enhanced business relations partnerships for targeted skill building, greater enrollment of customers, and direct employment outcomes.

Partner Programs

Programs for Adults in Transition

Adults who are unemployed or under-employed are considered adults in transition. Transitioning adults can receive job referral assistance and help develop job attainment skills through basic skills training or vocational programs provided through community colleges and other eligible training providers. Various programs address educational and training needs, moving customers

toward self-sufficiency and helping those currently employed to identify opportunities to advance. Courses are developed in response to the customer and labor market demands. Programs also support vocational training to develop workers with the skills needed in the current economy.

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

This program provides workers dislocated because of foreign competition career decision-making and occupational training. Workers, their union or company, the One-Stop Operator, or the State Dislocated Worker Unit may apply to the Department of Labor for TAA certification.

TAA funds education, training, income support, job placement, and relocation assistance when necessary. Strict time limits apply for using TAA benefits, so certified workers are advised to seek TAA counselor assistance as soon as possible after getting laid off. Once certified, displaced workers are eligible for services and benefits to help them prepare for and re-enter the job market.

Programs for Youth in Transition

All youth need support as they move through adolescence to adulthood. Vulnerable youth face transitions made particularly challenging by poverty, disability, illness, homelessness, discrimination, emancipation, foster care, delinquency, and other difficult circumstances. Youth need community-wide webs of support to transition successfully to adulthood.



Worker Retraining

The Worker Retraining Program provides funding for dislocated, unemployed workers, underemployed workers, and workers at risk of unemployment to enter approved career and technical training programs and receive related support services, including financial aid, career advising, educational planning, referral to training resources, and referral to placement services.

Veterans Placement and Referral

Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) ESD employees advise and refer veterans and family members to services such as the Army-Navy Relief Fund and Veteran Health Services. They facilitate access to Department of Veterans Affairs programs. Newly discharged veterans receive help transitioning from the military to the civilian workforce. They also match veteran job seekers and refer them to available openings. Veterans receive priority of service under applicable laws and policies.



Secondary Education

At the secondary level, school districts and other entities offer various options for young adults to obtain a high school diploma or equivalent and, in many cases, get a jump start on college.

These choices range from traditional, comprehensive high schools to small alternative schools, programs offered by the Educational Service District 123 (ESD 123), and private ventures. Schools offer a variety of career and technical education within their districts, as well as having access to our standalone skill center, Tri-Tech. Special education services allow students to meaningfully participate in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible. Though the BFWDC does not currently serve In-School Youth via WIOA Title I, the partnership with ESD 123 directly supports disengaged students who wish to pursue alternatives to the traditional classroom.



Tri-Tech Skills Center

Tri-Tech Skills Center (TTSC) is one of 17 skills centers in Washington State. Skills Centers are dedicated to offering high-quality, tuition-free technical and professional training for students aged 16-20.

TTSC partners with eight local school districts: Kennewick, Pasco, Richland, Finley, Columbia Burbank, Kiona-Benton, NorthFranklin, and Prosser, online schools and home-school students. Tri-Tech offers programs with advanced training otherwise not offered within a comprehensive high school learning environment due to equipment and operation costs or insufficient enrollment within a single school setting.

TTSC is designed as an extension of high school, with students enrolled half day at their high school and half day at Tri-Tech, allowing students to stay connected with their peers, teachers, and counselors. Tri-Tech provides three-period blocks, allowing extra time for students to learn and receive hands-on instruction. Many students are placed in internships, clinical, or job shadows, allowing them a head start in learning how businesses operate and different ways to test their new skills with real-life experience. All programs offered have a college credit option due to TTSC's connection with colleges and technical schools.



Each instructor is an industry professional with years of experience and programs developed around local, state, and national skills standards. The instructor-to-student ratio is low to provide the best learning experience and allow the most growth for every student.

The principal of TTSC is an ex-officio board member of the BFWDC.

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a service program that combines federal and local funds to employ individuals for a year of community service. Participants receive a monthly stipend as well as an education grant upon completion. Workforce agencies have hosted several participants to serve as digital literacy navigators, activity coordinators, and other assignments over the years. WSCB consistently hosts AmeriCorps positions, most recently to assist customers with digital literacy needs.

Programs for Individuals with Disabilities

Public schools through Benton and Franklin counties accommodate students with various disability conditions. Special education classes are offered, with students being provided with Individual Education Programs. Students are integrated into mainstream classes with 504 Plans, which are used to accommodate specific disability needs and barriers.

Significant changes in the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 2014 have allowed vocational rehabilitation agencies to expand services to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and 504 Plans in five areas. The five pre-employment transition services include job exploration, work-based learning experiences, exploring opportunities for post-secondary education programs, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living, and instruction in self-advocacy. These services will help prepare students for competitive, integrated employment in the community after they leave high school.

Pre-employment Transition Services are provided to groups of students or individuals who are eligible or potentially eligible for Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) services. Individualized services are coordinated and planned with a student starting at age 16 if they have a school-based IEP or 504 Plan. Education School District 123 (ESD123) locally can receive DVR funding for group-paced pre-employment transition services. These services will be based on ESD123 proposals that illustrate employment-focused transition needs locally and on school district assessments administered through the Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS).

Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) will work with school and community partners, WSCB, TC Futures, and employers to develop work experience opportunities for customers with disabilities. CCTS is working with DVR to develop statewide interagency transition networks to provide resources and technical assistance to DVR and local schools. CCTS is helping Educational Service Districts assess their current transition practices for DVR to partner with school transition programs and enhance school activities. CCTS has developed transition programs that enhance transition by providing evidence-based interventions for successful transition for students with disabilities. DVR Vocational Rehabilitation Regional Program Counselor positions have been established in various areas to help coordinate and facilitate the development of Pre-employment Transition Services across the state. Kennewick DVR is fortunate to have one of these positions at the DVR Kennewick Office. This individual will work with DVR Counselors, school staff, and various community partners to help coordinate and facilitate the development of Pre-employment transition services in our local Educational School Districts and communities.

National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP)

The National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) is administered by Washington's Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC). This federal grant assists migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFW) and their families in attaining greater economic stability. The program helps farm workers acquire skills to obtain, retain, and advance in agricultural jobs or start new careers.



Type of Services:

- Career Services include skills assessment, labor market information, job search assistance, career planning, career counseling, internships and work experiences, and financial literacy.



- Training Services include occupational skills and job training that prepare participants to work in in-demand occupations, meet the hiring needs of local employers, and provide participants with an industry-recognized credential.

- Youth Services include tutoring, solutions to increase graduation rates, occupational skills training, supportive services to help

further education, leadership development opportunities, mentoring, comprehensive guidance and counseling, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial skills training.

- Related Assistance Services include short-term direct assistance to MSFWs to retain and stabilize their agricultural employment.

Housing Services include permanent and temporary housing services to support better economic outcomes for the farmworkers and meet a critical need for the availability of safe and sanitary farmworker housing.

WorkFirst

WorkFirst provides parents receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) with job search training, work experience, basic education, English language instruction, and short-term occupational training. WorkFirst Services are provided by DSHS, ESD, CBC, and Goodwill in our region.

Labor and Industries

A Labor and Industries Vocational Services Specialist is on-site at WSCB to assist workers injured or diagnosed with an occupational disease while working in the State of Washington in returning to gainful employment. The Vocational Services Specialist also works to support and foster relationships with Washington State employers to find qualified workers, regardless of disability

status, through partnerships with community agencies and educating them on the services available at WorkSource. As a WorkSource partner, they actively participate in One-Stop Center activities requested or suggested by the WorkSource Administrator and LNI Supervisor. The goal is to be visible and effective in the mission of the WorkSource and LNI.

Job Corps

Job Corps is a residential education and training program that helps young people learn a trade, earn a high school diploma or GED, and secure employment. The Job Corps Center is located in Moses Lake, but representatives visit TC Futures to provide orientations to TC Futures customers.

Department of Services for the Blind

The Washington State Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) provides services for people of all ages who are blind or have low vision in Washington. The agency provides services to more than 2,800 Washington State Residents to help them gain or retain employment.

Economic Security for All Programs

Economic Security for All (EcSA) is a poverty reduction model that coordinates existing programs to increase their collective ability to support low-income Washingtonians in their pursuit of equity, dignity, and sustained self-sufficiency. It modernizes and improves our approach to poverty reduction, equity, and economic inclusion. A combination of intensive program navigation, local innovation, and flexible support fills gaps and meets needs within existing programs and regulations. EcSA takes an innovative approach to equitably reduce poverty, focusing on historically marginalized populations and people with multiple obstacles to self-sufficiency. The BFWDC is one of the four workforce development areas that piloted the implementation of this model. Thanks to our local workforce system for your extraordinary unity and teamwork, EcSA will continue to move thousands of people out of poverty each year, every year, well into the future. This WIOA-funded innovation is now state law in Washington, with a \$10 million yearly state appropriation and permanent authorizing legislation. Here is the link to the Senate Bill Report: [2230-S SBR APS 24 \(wa.gov\)](#)

Post-Secondary Education

There are several post-secondary education options and institutions in our area. *Columbia Basin College (CBC)*- structures programs to culminate in attaining industry-recognized certificates, associate in applied science degrees, four-year degrees, and, for some students, a transfer degree. Programs complement technical instruction with workplace skills education such as applied communication and human relations. Professional and vocational-technical education programs (Workforce Education) are offered at CBC. Programs also include short-term, in-demand classes and certificate of accomplishment programs.





WSU Tri-Cities- offers baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degree programs to prepare an increasingly diverse workforce for changing technologies. Continuing education and lifelong learning programs particularly benefit those seeking to upgrade their skills. *WSU Tri-Cities'* strong community support and partnerships, particularly with the nearby Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, provide unique learning opportunities to keep pace with rapid change in critical demand industries in the region.

Charter College offers Associate and Bachelor programs on an “accelerated” basis in business, health care, legal, technical, and the trades (HVAC/R and welding) as well as programs online. *Eastern Washington University (EWU)*: While not located directly in the Tri-Cities, Eastern Washington University is in the region, offering programs and courses that students can access without traveling far.

Heritage University: Heritage University offers a range of undergraduate and graduate programs across various disciplines. These include business, education, nursing, social work, arts and sciences programs. There are three locations: the main campus in Toppenish, the Columbia Basin College campus, and the Tri-Cities Campus.



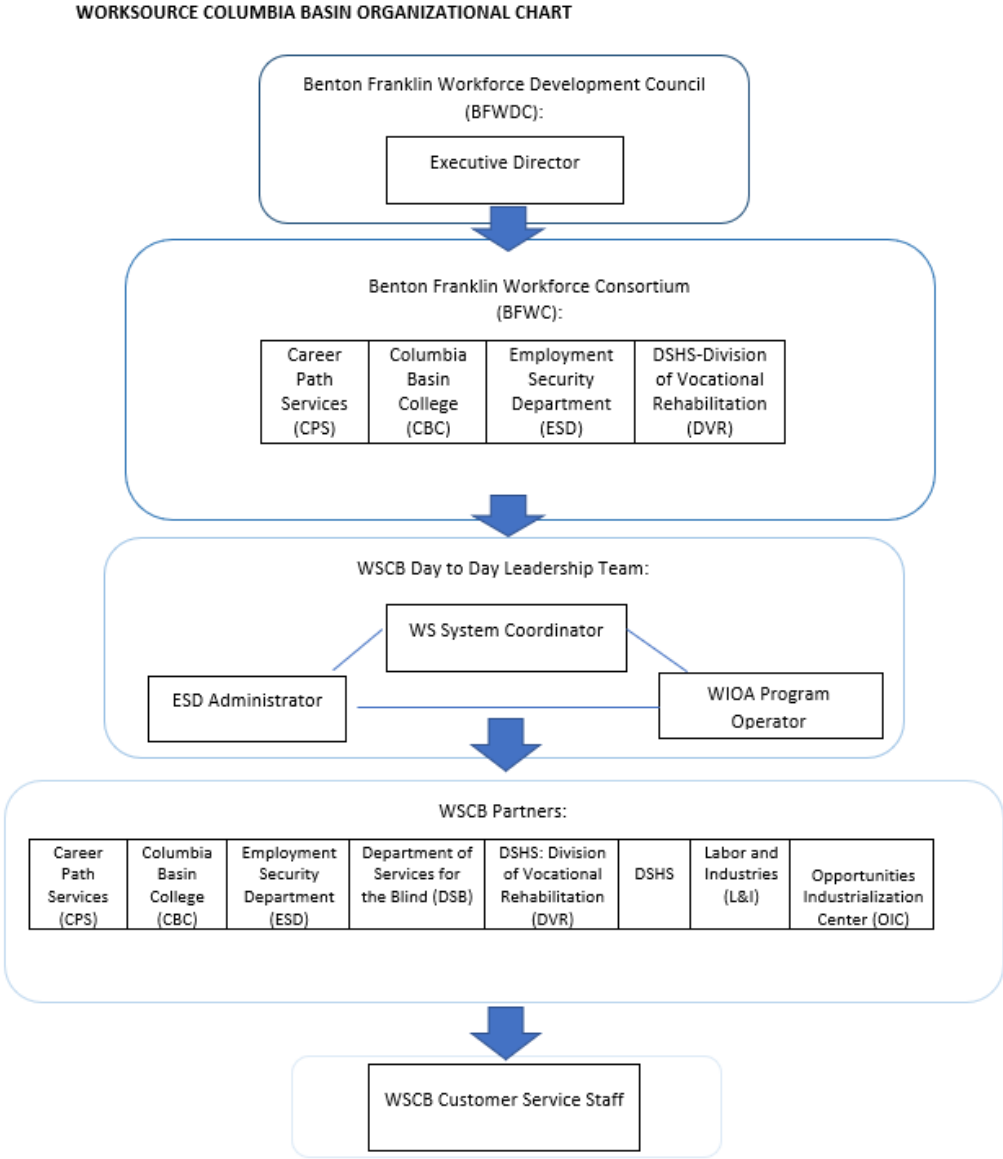
Private Institutions and Online Programs: Private institutions or online programs are available for alternative post-secondary education options. Some students opt for online courses or programs from universities outside the Tri-Cities area but accessible remotely.

Apprenticeship programs: Apprenticeship offerings in our regions currently include, but are not limited to: Labors International Union of North America, Labors Local Union 0348, International Union of Operation Engineers, Engineers Local Union 370, Ironworkers Local Union 14, Sheet Metal (SE Washington/NE Oregon Sheet Metal Workers), Machinists (Aircraft Oriented), Millwrights (Washington State UBC JATC), Construction Lineman (NW Line Construction Ind JATC), Construction Electricians (LU 112/NECA Elect AC), Carpentry (Washington State UBC JATC), and Firefighters (Washington State Firefighters JATC).



The Benton Franklin WDC has subcontracted the leadership of our local WorkSource Center to

a Consortium of representatives of the four titles of WIOA (Title 1 – Career Path Services; Title 2 – Columbia Basin College; Title 3 – Wagner Peyser and Title 4 – Vocational Rehabilitation). The Consortium employs a Workforce System Coordinator who coordinates with all WSCB partners to implement continuous improvement efforts, ongoing cross-training, strategy, facility operation, and overall partnership. See the chart below for a full illustration of our integrated local system.



The BFWDC also partners with TC Futures, the local youth re-engagement center. The BFWDC provides resources and guidance (through the Youth Committee), and Youth Title 1 funds subrecipient Career Path Services. [Meet Our Team - TC Futures](#)

Expanding Access



Veterans and Eligible initiatives to serve Priority of Service spouses is explained WSCB. Customers

the spouse of a veteran through an interactive conversation with trained staff members. Those who are eligible are connected with JVSG services and other POS-eligible programs. Veterans qualifying for JVSG services meet with a JVSG staff member for enrollment, employment assistance, and/or referral to additional services for barrier removal.



Targeted Outreach: Our local area provides robust, targeted outreach to eligible individuals with employment barriers (detailed in the following narrative). As we look forward to 2024-2028 activities, one of the lessons we learned from the pandemic is the restrictive nature of tying services solely to a brick-and-mortar location. Our partnership is committed to actively exploring how to conduct outreach and provide services to our diverse community at the locations they already frequent.

Spouses (including any special the veteran population) (POS) for veterans and eligible to every customer upon entry to are identified as having served or

The ESD JVSG staff conducts outreach to community organizations that serve veterans. Every month, the staff are on-site at the Union Gospel Mission, Columbia Basin Veteran's Center, Veterans Court, WSU Tri-Cities, Columbia Basin College, and OIC of Washington. Staff also outreach to employers about the advantages of hiring veterans and target veterans for employers wishing to fill positions with veterans.

The Adult and Dislocated Worker programs comply with the Jobs for Veterans Act as amended. They will provide POS to covered veterans eligible for Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services as appropriate. Veterans will be given priority over non-veterans if spending limits are in effect. The Veterans Policy is not intended to displace the core function of the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants - The primary goal in engaging UI claimants is to assist them in returning to work as expeditiously as possible. Claimants are initially engaged using the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. Claimants that fall within the required profile score range are invited to attend a mandatory meeting with an ESD Employment Specialist to review their employment goals and jointly develop an action plan to

assist the customer in meeting their goals. Action plans often include attending workshops such as a resume or interviewing class, uploading a resume into WorkSourceWa, and pursuing potential training opportunities. Claimants have a follow-up appointment about three weeks following their initial meeting to ensure that their action plan has been completed and to assess if there are additional needs that WorkSource can assist with.

At-Risk Youth - At-Risk Youth is a high priority in the Benton and Franklin Workforce Development Area. Outreach is conducted in the community to find at-risk youth needing employment, educational services, or assistance navigating TC Futures. Recruitment efforts, executed by WIOA Title I Youth Program staff, involve partnerships with community colleges, adult basic education, youth-serving organizations, juvenile justice, DSHS, local area school districts, and DVR.

Low-Income Adults - The WorkSource partnership focuses on an integrated approach to service delivery to ensure comprehensive outreach and collaborative assistance to low-income adults. Outreach is conducted in the community to low-income adults who need employment services. Community outreach includes developing referral partnerships with community-based organizations that serve the targeted populations. Recruiting involves partnerships with ESD, DSHS, community colleges, Adult Basic Ed, DVR, employers, and other training providers. An orientation introduces job seekers to the programs/services available, including eligibility criteria and participation expectations. This helps a job seeker determine if they want to participate in services. Group or one-on-one orientations occur in the center and the community, including college classrooms, DSHS-Community Services Offices, community centers, and libraries.



Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers- The ESD operates the MSFW Outreach program at WSCB and employs one full-time MSFW Outreach Specialist (OS). This position specifically serves agricultural workers outside of the WSCB office at the locations where farmworkers live, work, and gather. The OS spends the majority of its time conducting outreach. During outreach, information about the resources available through the local WorkSource, additional community-based resources to assist families, and current employment opportunities are shared. This staff member coordinates extensively with our local National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) through OIC. The OS builds meaningful relationships with employers, community resource providers, as well as farmworkers to ensure connection with Farmworker Housing locations, keeps the MSFW outreach worker abreast of migrant workers moving into the area, and provides an opportunity to share information regarding local resources and employment opportunities.



Joint outreach is also regularly conducted with the OSs from two neighboring workforce development areas, South Central and Eastern. This joint outreach ensures that employers and agricultural workers in county-line communities are adequately served. While the Outreach Specialist promotes one-stop services, when a farmworker arrives at the one-stop center, they

are assisted by all program staff (just like any other customer). We are fortunate to have numerous Spanish-speaking bilingual staff, and most farmworkers can be served directly in their language of preference.

Education Coordination

The BFWDC will coordinate education and workforce investment activities in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs to ensure that all delivery service models are inclusive of all programs. This will ensure that strategies are coordinated and services are enhanced to avoid duplication of services.

Coordinating education and workforce investment activities requires understanding each other's needs, requiring that the programs work in an integrated manner to ensure that all customers have equal access to secondary and postsecondary education and workforce investment activities, including employment assistance.

Career Pathways and Credentials

For an inclusive economic recovery, career pathways deliberately address the needs of workers most affected by COVID-19, as well as those facing structural barriers of discrimination or limited opportunity, particularly low-wage workers and workers of color. Various policy decisions, from unequal K-12 education to contributors to the racial wealth gap, have fueled racial disparities in college attainment and earnings.

The BFWDC took part in the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) Regional Challenge grant. This opportunity focused on creating a strong network of partnerships to address the region's percentage of adults with a credential beyond high school, specifically in the Ki-Be School District. Led by The STEM Foundation and Career Connected Learning Council, this grant brought leaders together to lay the foundation for a multi-generational approach to increasing entry-to-post-secondary opportunities for credentials as well as access to certificate and apprenticeship programs. Participation in this grant allowed the BFWDC to strengthen its relationship with all involved partners as well as begin new conversations around serving Out-of-School Youth who do not have the same opportunities as those who attend traditional K-12 institutions. It is important to mention that this grant is designed so that we can deploy it to other small towns in our region (first); the intent is to scale it to larger communities—with a strong focus on serving students farthest from opportunity first. Our intent is to close those economic disparity gaps that are central to our plan. We will continue to be a strong partner in this efforts to increase attainment and close equity gaps through the support of future WSAC grants.

The BFWDC participated in the Career Connected Learning Council, which is a coalition of leaders whose goal is expanding access to work-based learning opportunities through academic and workforce training. Locally, this fledgling council is making strides in implementing programs that benefit our community by meeting workforce needs.

The BFWDC partnership with The STEM Foundation clearly reinforces our programmatic populations as well as its DEI commitment. Their STEM Like ME!® initiative continues to broadens students' awareness and perceptions of STEM careers and the coursework and skills necessary to pursue them. First piloted in 2014, STEM Like ME!® has served more than 31,000 students state-wide. In 2016, STEM Like ME!® was recognized by Governor Jay Inslee as one of

the state’s 21 best practices for career connected learning. Currently the STEM Like ME!® suite is comprised of four in-classroom programs and a Grants for Teacher programs.

Another initiative by The STEM Foundation that creates pathways to students in our community is the Mid-Columbia STEM Nexus Initiative. In July 2020, Battelle announced a \$1 million donation to The STEM Foundation to expand its STEM education outreach. Battelle manages and operates the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) for the U.S Department of Energy. The money launched the Mid-Columbia STEM Nexus Initiative to develop experiential learning programs for underrepresented and underserved students in rural communities. The initiative relies on a multi-pronged, community-engaged approach to unlock curiosity and fuel interest in STEM subjects and career paths. By leveraging evidence-based, hands-on approaches and creating personal interactions with STEM professionals, more and more students will aspire to be and become STEM professionals.

Since much of this work is done within the K 12 system, the BFWDC is focusing on the creation of similar opportunities for “Opportunity Youth” through its partnership at TC Futures with ESD 123 and the Open Doors/UGrad program. Emphasis is on local industries that have identified gaps in labor market needs. Strengthening relationships with employers, labor, and industry professionals will lay the groundwork for creating activities that lead to industry-aligned, portable, and stackable postsecondary credentials and certificates while filling gaps in the workforce.



Supporting credentialing reforms that not only offer equitable access but also enhance worker mobility and foster long-term economic success, thereby aligning with the state's strategic focus



Through strategic alignment with community leaders, we provide a united front in aligning the state’s strategic focus on increasing the rate of credential completion and development of programming to deliver academic and work-based experiences with will result in better outcomes for job seekers and employers. Work with ESD 123 provides strong ties with Washington State of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). OSPI oversees the public K-12 education system with a goal of preparing every student for postsecondary pathways, careers, and civic engagement. OSPI spearheads transformational changes in Washington State through working on legislative priorities which meet the evolving needs of students and future job seekers.

Employer Engagement

WSCB has a Business Solutions team represented by three partners within the Benton-Franklin

Workforce system. This team comprises individuals whose primary customers are businesses and who serve job seekers. Communication among agency and systemwide teams ensures that information is available amongst each of the programs and that every program and customer demographic is included in discussions affecting strategies for outreach.

In alignment with the state-level plan, the BFWDC will use the same business engagement measures developed for reporting on the state-level plan. The measures will identify the market penetration of employers currently engaged with the local workforce system and the engagement efforts around increasing market penetration. The measures will allow the area to analyze the levels of work with small, medium, and large employers while allowing sorting by industry sector. Having this data available will allow the local Business Solutions Team to have informed discussions regarding how outreach efforts are being conducted and to strategize and align those efforts with the needs of the community, employers, and the local board's priorities.

Support for a workforce development system that meets the needs of local businesses depends upon having the data available that reflects the work being done and then determining the needs of local businesses. Using Industry Sector Panels, the BFWDC will facilitate ongoing dialog between the industry representatives on the panels and the Business Solutions Team. The best way to know the needs of local businesses is to engage them in ongoing panel discussions to understand better and identify each other's needs. Once the Business Solutions Team is informed of the needs of the local businesses, the team can align outreach, services, and training development to meet those needs.

Aligning Workforce Development with Local Business Needs and Economic Development Goals to create a supportive business climate and livable wage jobs.

Coordination of workforce development programs and economic development is facilitated locally by ensuring both participate in discussions affecting local economic development. WSCB Business Solutions Team staff participate in monthly meetings held by TRIDEC and hosted by the Tri-Cities Regional Chamber of Commerce. Participation is intended to identify opportunities when the workforce system can directly interact with and support local economic development. In addition, the director of the local economic development organization serves on the BFWDC board of Directors. This ensures that economic development continually engages in the conversations affecting the local workforce system.

Coordinate and integrate local workforce investment activities and economic development programs to optimize resource use, improve accountability, and foster a cohesive system.

One of the functions at the core of the local one-stop delivery system is to assist UI claimants with returning to work as quickly as possible. Every UI claimant who comes to WSCB can access the employment services and potentially training/retraining resources if applicable and eligible. The primary UI program at WSCB is the Reemployment Services Eligibility Assessment (RESEA). Claimants within the first five weeks of their claim are eligible to be called in and attend an orientation at WorkSource to receive a one-on-one appointment with a staff person to assess their employability, develop an employment plan, and receive a referral to additional resources that will assist the customer with returning to full-time employment.

The Universal Tax and Benefits (UTAB) system was introduced in 2016. This system is the primary system for processing UI claims. The design of the system is that it interfaces with the

[WorkSourceWA.com](https://www.worksourcewa.com) job match and management of information systems. A level of claimant information will be available in the [WorkSourceWA.com](https://www.worksourcewa.com) system as a result of a submitted claim. This allows the opportunity locally to design a service delivery that outreaches claimants with specific skill sets that match current employment opportunities. This focused outreach allows staff to connect claimants seeking employment with employers seeking workers with specific skills.

Promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services through partnership with economic development agencies and businesses; training for entrepreneurs and individuals wanting to provide microenterprise services will be identified. In collaboration with WSCB & TC Futures, additional research will be conducted using the human-centered design (HCD) methodology.

Implement Comprehensive Employer-Focused initiatives (such as incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, customized training, industry and sector strategies, career pathways, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies)

Through the Business Solutions Team, we will initiate high-value services that meet local employer needs, including the introduction/implementation of sector oversight, quality jobs initiative, and coordinating outreach and partnerships.

Customer satisfaction indicators, business engagement reports, and labor market information will be used to demonstrate that we are providing satisfactory solutions to unique employer challenges. This will also enable us to pivot to meet today's business needs. We will measure success in the following areas:

- Increase Business Awareness
- Employer Engagement
- Specialized Services
- Sector Strategies
- Results – working toward common measures as identified under WIOA

Please see [Attachment A](#) for additional information on sector strategies.

One-Stop System

The Benton-Franklin Workforce delivery system (WSCB and TC Futures) brings together workforce development, educational, and additional system partner programs and services in a seamless customer-focused service delivery network that enhances access to the programs' services and improves long-term employment outcomes for individuals receiving assistance. Our workforce partners provide programs, services, and activities linked, physically or technologically, to our comprehensive site and specialized site, which assures customers are provided information on the availability of career services, as well as other program services and activities, regardless of where they initially enter the public workforce system in the local area.

System Accountability and Continuous Quality Improvement

The BFWDC conducts quarterly monitoring of all contractors that hold service delivery contracts. The quarterly monitoring is intended to give ongoing feedback on performance within the contract and to analyze feedback from job seekers, employers, and workers to identify any areas of concern.

Suppose a local service provider fails to achieve 80 percent average performance across the federal indicators for WIOA Title I. In that case, the BFWDC will require the local service contractor to submit either a performance improvement plan or a modified local plan to the BFWDC. If such failure continues for a second consecutive year, the BFWDC may require developing a plan following a state-level required reorganization plan. Suppose DOL sanctions the state for poor performance. In that case, ESD will withhold a proportional amount of funds from local areas based on their average performance across the state and federal core indicators. These funds will, in turn, be withheld from the local service provider or partner organization.

The following are some strategies that the one-stop system and the youth re-engagement center use to facilitate access to customers:

Internet Strategies

Access to readily available information is critical to the customer experience. Our only comprehensive One-Stop Center, WSCB, has had wireless internet available for customer usage for over ten years. To date, the strategy for wireless internet capabilities has been focused on allowing customers to use their own technology devices to conduct their job search and employment preparedness activities. The State Wireless Area Network (WAN) was installed at WSCB. This wireless network is connected to the state network and allows additional service delivery strategies.

TC Futures offers high-speed wireless internet and can handle multiple devices simultaneously. Customers primarily access wireless internet through their electronic devices or Chrome books offered by TC Futures or through a school district. Therefore, services such as GED preparation, job search, and other services can be accessed using the wireless connection at the facility. ESD123 provides secure wireless connectivity managed by ESD 123. Teaching curriculum and study supports are offered online and via all electronic methods. In addition, those customers who live in rural areas without immediate access to the internet are also eligible for “hotspots” either through the school districts or support services.

To ensure entities within the one-stop delivery system, including operators and partners, comply with Section 188, the BFWDC Equal Opportunity officer conducts regular program reviews for accessibility and compliance with Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. BFWDC EO Officer conducts annual monitoring regarding physical and programmatic accessibility of the facility, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. All disparities found during the program reviews and/or monitoring are addressed immediately to assure customer accessibility. Annual all-staff training is held to provide staff with the information necessary to assist individuals with disabilities in using installed ADA equipment to access all the available services at the same level as all other customers. Staff are trained to use the installed ADA equipment to assist customers who need it. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation staff assigned to the office serves as a technical support resource to staff and customers in using all installed ADA equipment and the availability of resources to support customers with disabilities.

Title I-B Activities- Refer to Attachment D for a description and assessment of the WIOA Title I Activities.

Rapid Response

The BFWDC coordinates activities with the Employment Security Department (ESD) Rapid Response Team, ESD staff, and other local service providers to avert potential layoffs and provide rapid response services to employers and impacted workers in the event of a layoff, closure, or disaster. When a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notice, announcement, or notification of a dislocation event is received, the local Rapid Response team meets and prepares to support the employer and impacted employees.

In collaboration with the BFWDC, the designated local Rapid Response Coordinator is responsible for planning and coordinating rapid response services to quickly meet the needs of employers and impacted workers. Rapid response services are coordinated with appropriate labor representatives and labor management when appropriate. The local Rapid Response Coordinator initiates contact with the employer to discuss layoff schedules, how the employer plans to assist impacted workers, and how to determine the needs of affected workers as determined by survey responses.

The Rapid Response Coordinator mobilizes the Rapid Response Team, which may include representatives from the Employment Security Department, Dislocated Worker Program, Columbia Basin College, Veterans Program, and other WorkSource partners. On-site orientations are conducted to provide the following information, at a minimum, to impacted workers:

- Unemployment Insurance
- Training Benefit program
- Commissioner Approved Training
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Services
- WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program
- Veteran's Priority of Service
- Community and technical college programs and resources
- Trade Adjustment Assistance and Trade Readjustment Allowance, if applicable
- Other WorkSource (One-Stop) partner programs

For employers not interested in on-site orientation, informational packets are provided to the employer to disseminate to affected workers to ensure they receive information on the services available at WorkSource. The local Rapid Response Coordinator notifies the One-Stop Operator when rapid response activities are initiated. This enables the One-Stop system to prepare for service delivery to laid-off workers interested in accessing career, training, supportive, and other relevant services. To quickly connect impacted employees to employment, the Rapid Response Team incorporated a model of combining Rapid Response on-site services with industry-targeted job fairs whenever possible.

The BFWDC partners with bordering Workforce Development Areas (WDA) when it is determined that jointly providing rapid response services will better assist employers and impacted workers. The BFWDC contacts the bordering WDA's Rapid Response representative to coordinate the delivery of rapid response activities. This ensures that affected workers can access the services they need at the location of their choice.

Supportive Services

Our local WIOA Title I programs align with the provision by providing supportive services, as authorized within the guidelines of each WIOA Title I program and based on specific customer

needs to support training and/or re-employment. Supportive services are specifically provided to enable customers to participate in WIOA program activities such as school, work experience, job search, and getting to and from work.

WIOA requires coordination with other resources in the community to ensure that support services are provided only when they are not otherwise available. WSCB/TC Future partners and other community service providers identify and develop linkages with various supportive services programs available in the local area. Accurate and up-to-date community resource information shall be available on the Washington Information Network 2-1-1, www.211.org, or by dialing 211 on the telephone.

The network of community resource programs is easily and readily accessible to adults, dislocated workers, and youth through the One-Stop delivery system and Youth Comprehensive Center. All participants shall be provided referral assistance to these activities as part of career services. In our local area, supportive services may only be provided when necessary to enable individuals to participate in Title I activities. Supportive services are only provided to individuals who are participating in career and training services as defined in WIOA sec.134(c) (2)(3) and 20 CFR 680.910 and unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services (WIOA sec.134 (d)(2)(B)). Supportive services are not allowed as a component of follow-up services provided after exit for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker participants. Youth follow-up services may include supportive services per 20 CFR 681.580(b). For a complete list of supportive services offered to WIOA Title I participants, please see our [2015-02 Supportive Services and Needs-Related Payments Policy](#).

Limits are not imposed on supportive services, maximum funding, or length of time. The funding level and time for supportive services to be available to a customer shall be on a case-by-case basis. Service providers must establish internal controls that result in equitable (fair and equal) treatment in access to and providing support services to participants.

Wagner-Peyser Coordination

The BFWDC has developed a local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that includes employment service under the Wagner-Peyser (WP) Act to align workforce activities with the provisions of WIOA Title III. The MOU contains specifics regarding the local integration of service delivery systems to ensure that local Wagner-Peyser services delivered through the local service delivery system are included in all workforce activities, discussions, outreach, and service delivery model designs. The MOU also clearly outlines and articulates the expectations and process for review of local alignment with all other local workforce system programs.

The BFWDC convenes multiple partnership forums to ensure our local workforce system is well-aligned and integrated. The BFWDC communicates our expectations for the system to function in this manner through policy, guidance, and continuous quality improvement initiatives. The Employment Security Department (ESD) is located at WSCB and provides basic career services as outlined under WIOA. Our local ESD leadership is innovative and partner-driven. In 2017, they collaborated with other WIOA Titles I, II, and IV leaders to bid on our One-Stop Operator contract and successfully obtained that scope of work. Now, one WSCB Operations Manager works for the local/regional leaders of all four WIOA Titles appropriately named the Benton-Franklin Workforce Consortium (BFWC). Staff paid for by WP provide basic career services alongside their teammates from the other WIOA titles at the front end. This seamless approach benefits the customers entering the facility. In addition, the training approach for shared

knowledge and understanding system-wide is supported by demonstrated integrated practices such as offering ESD professional development opportunities to all, not just WP staff, like previous Human Centered Design (HCD) training and certification.

Title II Coordination

The BFWDC developed a local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local Adult Education and Literacy provider to align workforce activities with the provisions of WIOA Title II. The MOU includes specifics regarding the local integration of service delivery systems to ensure that WIOA Title II program providers are included in all workforce activities, discussions, outreach, and service delivery model designs. The MOU clearly outlines and articulates the expectations and process for review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II to ensure alignment with the local workforce system.

Our local workforce system continues to work to coordinate workforce investment activities with post-secondary education programs. This includes, but is not limited to, local college representation on our board and staff seated on various local college committees. We focus on laying the framework to integrate and support adult education and literacy into the workforce framework. Low skills and future earnings are directly linked to those without a post-secondary education, as they are more likely to end up in lower-paying jobs.

In Benton and Franklin counties, we provide services and activities to increase education and employment opportunities, including basic literacy for both education and workplace success, helping customers with educational and career development, assisting English learners with proficiency, leveraging technology to further education and training, and partnering with employers to integrate workplace training into educational programs.

To accelerate the transition to advance clean energy technologies the BFWDC has joined the Washington VERTical Innovation Cluster, which is an industry-led organization that uses a proven international model to power innovation, go after market opportunities and identify and fix challenges that limit growth within a specified sector of the economy. To learn more about this innovation cluster visit: <https://verticalcluster.com/>.

Cooperative Agreements

WIOA requires the local workforce boards, with the agreement of the chief elected officials, to develop and enter a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the WorkSource partners. Please refer to [Attachment B](#) for additional information on this item.

Procurement

The BFWDC competitively awards contracts to eligible providers of WIOA Title 1 activities, except for sole-source contracts. Sole-source contracts happen only if there is satisfactory and verifiable evidence that there are insufficient providers with the expertise required for serving the youth, adult, or dislocated worker population. Bid solicitations will include the selection criteria for the process and will be maintained as documentation. The BFWDC maintains records to document, in writing, that board members and the public are made aware of the competitive process to be used to identify providers. This includes providing at least 30-day public notice through media where prospective local, state, and national bidders typically identify such opportunities (local print newspapers, online newspapers, the BFWDC website, other community websites, and social media platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook). The BFWDC establishes and

uses criteria, including the ability of service providers to meet performance accountability measures, full and open competition consistent with 2 CFR parts 200 and 2900, and applicable state and local procurement laws to procure eligible providers of workforce investment activities.

The BFWDC follows general procurement standards established through state law, rules, and policy and 2 CFR 200.318-326. Here is a link to our [Procurement and Selection of One-Stop Operators and Service Providers Policy](#).

Training Services

Please refer to **Attachment D** for additional information on this item.

Management Information System

The BFWDC and our workforce development system partners continue to utilize Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) while collaborating with our state partners on a new system that would effectively meet our dynamic local, regional, and state data and reporting needs.

Equity

Equity in the workforce system is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic approach that benefits individuals, organizations, and society as a whole. It leads to more robust, inclusive, and sustainable economies and communities. The local plan is designed to cultivate an inclusive, equitable, diverse, and resilient workforce and economy, aligning seamlessly with the overarching mission, vision, and strategic priorities of the state. This plan seeks to create an environment where every individual, regardless of background, has equal access to opportunities, resources, and benefits in the workplace. This is essential for breaking down barriers and creating a level playing field for everyone, regardless of factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or disability. The plan places particular emphasis on meeting the needs of both the workforce and businesses that are most in need, fostering a symbiotic relationship that propels sustainable economic growth. Through targeted interventions and strategic initiatives, the local plan endeavors to dismantle barriers to access, promote diversity, and fortify the community's resilience in the face of economic challenges. This comprehensive approach reflects a commitment to not only meet the state's vision but also to go beyond, actively shaping a workforce ecosystem that serves as a model for equity, inclusion, and economic growth.

The BFWDC board and staff possess the core value of helping others. In doing so, diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the forefront of what we do daily. This focus is shared and lived with our local workforce development area partners and stakeholders. While completing the components of this plan, a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens was consistently used. Inclusion has been cited as one of our aspirational values. It is being practiced currently, and we will continue to analyze demographics to ensure that all are included and served equally. The BFWDC Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer conducted a thorough quality review of our plan before the 30-day public comment period to check for accuracy and reflection of appropriate terminology.

Board Composition

Please refer to [Attachment E](#) for a list of current workforce board members and how the board membership complies with WIOA requirements.

SECTION IV

Performance Accountability

Performance Accountability Plan

System performance data will provide the BFWDC and our stakeholders with the information necessary to gain perspective on the system's operations and resulting outcomes for business and job-seeking customers. The data will help develop system-wide objectives and strategies that respond more effectively to service gaps. The BFWDC shapes local strategies to address broad workforce development issues. Performance data will provide important information for those strategies.

Through providing high service standards, our WorkSource center and youth provider locations exceed positive placements and outcomes for the job seekers we serve. Our overarching systemic goal is for individuals to return to work and employers to find the right workers to grow their businesses. The BFWDC works with our regional providers to ensure that all service components meet federal, state, and local performance requirements. The targets for measures are defined annually by the federal and state governments and the BFWDC Board. All BFWDC service providers are held accountable for achieving all measures and targets. To drive long-term results, the BFWDC is committed to providing technical assistance and support to system partners where necessary. The BFWDC utilizes customer-experience data, demographic data, partner data, employer data, and key economic growth and trend data that speak to the challenges, gaps, and opportunities throughout Benton and Franklin Counties.

How is performance information used to oversee and measure the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I, and the local one-stop delivery system:

The BFWDC conducts comprehensive quarterly monitoring of WIOA Title IB files and receives monthly performance data from service providers, assessing the efficacy of WIOA Title IB and other contractual obligations to uphold performance standards. We provide continuous technical support across various departments, aiding our providers in surpassing predefined outcomes and objectives. We acknowledge and celebrate our contractors meeting and exceeding their targets and goals. In instances where targets are not met, we provide additional technical assistance, and if improvement is not observed, corrective action is promptly implemented.

The performance analysis extends to key performance metrics, including the number of enrollments, training placements and completions, work experience placements and completions, participants receiving support services, measurable skills gains, credential attainments, and program completions leading to employment or post-secondary education for youth. This holistic strategy ensures that our interventions align with and enhance the performance metrics critical to success in our programs.

The BFWDC assesses the effectiveness of our one-stop operations through an annual comprehensive evaluation encompassing partner engagement, day-to-day operations, service integration, center culture, and continuous improvement. This approach is geared towards maximizing the relative benefit for our partners within the WorkSource One-Stop System.

How is the WorkSource system and WIOA Title I-B performance information are used by program operators to inform continuous quality improvement in their day-to-day management:

The BFWDC has identified several strategies to ensure excellence in service delivery and quality improvement. Continuous quality improvement quarterly monitoring of WIOA Title IB service providers, technical assistance, and operational reports are crucial tools, supported by creating key performance indicators that systematically track and evaluate service provider performance. This involves analysis of trends and areas for quality improvement, including customer outreach, data entry processes, service outcomes, and employment outcomes. These tools and evaluation strategies emphasize the importance of regularly monitoring service providers to maintain high standards while establishing best practices.

Additionally, customer feedback plays a pivotal role in refining and enhancing services, while commitment to compliance and quality standards remains a cornerstone of our strategic approach. Customer feedback influences service delivery by recognizing gaps and areas of opportunity or highlighting the great work being done in our centers.

How is performance information used to conduct a performance-based intervention? LWDBs will be held accountable for the results of WIOA Title I-B through a system of performance-based interventions and will share in accountability for career and technical education (CTE) and adult education (ABE/ESL) results.

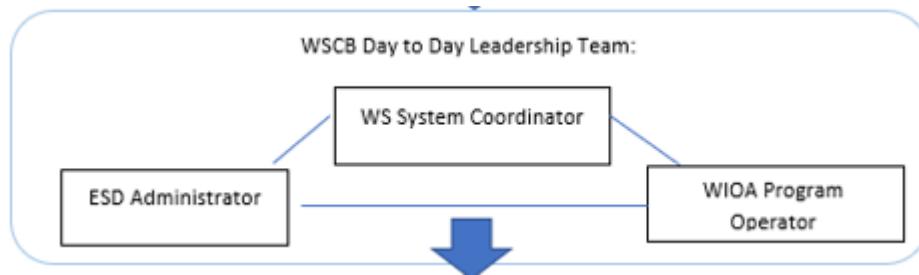
WIOA Title I service providers meet monthly to review performance outcome data and budgets and to problem-solve with the BFWDC management team. BFWC, The Trio*, and BFWDC Board and Committee meetings are all venues for performance evaluation.

The BFWDC is accountable for the results of WIOA Title I programs through a system of performance-based interventions. The BFWDC collects and maintains performance information for WIOA Title 1 and follows Washington State and the Department of Labor protocols.

The BFWDCs integrated service strategies strive to enhance educational outcomes and seamlessly integrate WIOA Title 1B co-enrollment with WIOA Title II to include Adult Basic Education and Career and Technical Education programs. This comprehensive approach ensures that our interventions and accountability measures are strategically aligned with the goals of WIOA Title 1B, fostering synergy between workforce development and education. This integrated strategy underscores our commitment to delivering impactful educational and workforce development results, fostering a holistic approach that prepares individuals for success in their chosen career paths.

*The Trio is a group of three leaders representing the Employment Security Department (ESD Administrator), Career Path Services (WIOA Program Operator), and the WorkSource System Coordinator (WSC) who represents the Benton-Franklin Workforce Consortium (Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Employment Security Department, Career Path Services, and Columbia Basin College). The WSC serves as the agent of the Consortium, serving within the American Job Center (AJC).

The Trio is represented below.



Attachment A: Sector Partnership (See Regional Sector Partnerships)

Sectors to be served: Healthcare, Hospitality, Government, Manufacturing & Transportation, Small Business, Agriculture & Warehousing

Check one: Regional: Local:

Business Solutions work is best described as a circular continuum, with an overlap in each phase to address changing economic and business needs, the addition of new programs/services, and a growing/contracting team according to funding.

Examples of activities (including, but not limited to), frequency of review*, and intended outcomes for each of the parts of the cycle include:

Cycle Stage	Example activities	Frequency	Measured Area of Success
Team Formation	Sector identification and representative assigned; Update of marketing materials Media campaigning Team retreats and ongoing goal setting/review & adjustment	Minimum annual review based upon OID list & BST membership As needed based on sector strategy & team membership Ongoing Every 6 months	Increase Business Awareness Results – working toward common measures as identified under WIOA
Relationship Building & Team Training	Attendance at community events/recurring meetings Face to face outreach/networking Ongoing business training, such as LMI sessions with our local LMEA professional & business solutions based trainings	Ongoing Annual business based training, plus quarterly LMI trainings	Increase Business Engagement
Needs Assessment	Business U needs assessment implemented during business interviews Focus groups	Initial and ongoing conversations with local business As needed based upon needs assessments and work with training/education providers	Sector Strategies

Application of Business Solutions	Provision of services on menu of services Review and revision of menu of services based upon business needs assessment results/gap analysis process Implementation of business-led workshops to prepare job seekers	Ongoing Annually Implementation occurring in Spring 2024 with bi-annual reviews	Specialized Services
Gap Analysis	Identify additional business solutions that the Business Solutions Team can provide Advisory groups to inform needed training modules/programs for upskilling/preparing the workforce	Annually Ongoing as needed	Results – working toward common measures as identified under WIOA

*Note: these review periods are in addition to an overall review and evaluation of our local plan two years after implementation, per state requirements.

Attachment B: Regional Cooperative Service Delivery Agreement

Phase	Timeline	Activities	Anticipated outcome	Measure of progress
Phase I: Prepare Team Goal: build buy-in & support	Annually	Identify local area CORE partner leads at DSHS-DVR, DSB, DSHS, WP, Title I, ABE, L&I and others. Signing state and local Memorandums of Understanding surrounding partnerships, shared resources, leveraging of customer services, and integrated services delivery.	Support and commitment from all partners in improving the workforce system and structure and streamlining services.	Signed MOUs from each workforce system partner, including but not limited to DSHS-DVR and DSB, WP, ABE, Title I, L&I, and DSHS, with each partner's commitments outlined.
Phase II: Investigate Goal: determine options for coordinated service delivery	Ongoing	Understand WIOA partner customers and associated barriers and needs through a series of facilitated conversations at the LWDB level with agency leaders and on the front line to engage key program staff.	Valuable and ongoing feedback that leads to systems improvements and best practices over time.	A coordinated service delivery process is developed and documented with all partners. Continuous improvement surveys, processes, and procedures are developed.

Phase III: Inventory & Analyze Goal: build baseline knowledge	Established Partnership and Ongoing thereafter	Bring together WIOA-required partners (DSHS-DVR, DSB, CBC, WP, ABE, Title I, L&I, and DSHS) and others for a series of discussions to create awareness and education on services as well as to build a shared framework for customer-centered designed services highlighting job seeker	Increased awareness and knowledge of partner programs, service offerings, and areas of expertise. Jointly developed customer flow models that integrate the needs of all partners.	Partners inform all staff at all-staff meetings of available services. Cross-training
Phase IV: Convene Goal: build partnerships, prioritize activities	Ongoing	The team systematically takes each of the needs identified and develops a specific service delivery strategy tailored to assist in meeting each need.	Strategies developed to meet needs.	Specific strategies implemented.
Phase V: Act Goal: implement initiatives	Ongoing	The team implements the developed strategies to begin impacting the identified needs.	Implemented Strategies to help business needs.	Various outreach and media communication to our region.
Phase VI: Sustain & Evolve Goal: grow the partnership	Ongoing	The team continues to measure the impact of the implemented strategies and adjusts as necessary to ensure continuous improvement.	Best practices and lessons learned are communicated with peers across the state and possibly within the DOL Region and nationally.	The team is recognized as solution-driven industry leaders in our region and beyond.

Attachment C: Regional Economic Development Coordination Plan

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate in a multi-area region.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare Team Goal: build buy-in & support	January 2024-Complete	BFWDC staff participate in monthly economic development meetings for the BFEDD, TRIDEC, TCRD, and various regional chambers	Networking to identify workforce support opportunities.	Consistent presence at meetings
Phase II: Investigate Goal: determine options for coordinated service delivery	Ongoing	BFWDC participates in discussions regarding economic growth and business development within the region	The workforce is involved in discussions	Active partnership results in new businesses in the region
Phase III: Inventory & Analyze Goal: build baseline knowledge	Ongoing	Build an understanding of the scope of work for each economic development entity to understand how workforce development can support the efforts or initiatives.	Understanding the needs of each economic development organization within the region.	Understanding of Work scope and return on investment of partnership.
Phase IV: Convene Goal: build partnership, prioritize activities	Ongoing	BFWDC participates in specific workgroups and projects to support economic growth and ensure workforce needs are supported in the region.	Identification of workforce support needs.	Identification of service options.
Phase V: Act Goal: implement initiatives	Ongoing	Implementation of workforce services and programs that support projects and initiatives.	Implementation of service options.	Direct system service support to projects
Phase VI: Sustain & Evolve Goal: grow the partnership	Ongoing	Follow-up and feedback on implemented service options to identify continuous needs.	Feedback and follow-up.	Continuous improvement.

Attachment D: Local Area Profile
Local One-Stop System

Site	Type of Site	Site Operator(s)
WorkSource Columbia Basin	Comprehensive	Employment Security Department Career Path Services Columbia Basin College Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
TC Futures	Specialized (pending Certification)	Educational Service District 123 (ESD123) Career Path Services

Site	Type of Site	County/location
Grace Kitchen	Pending Connection Site	Franklin County- Pasco, WA
Mid-Columbia Library	Pending Connection Site	Benton County- Benton City, WA

WIOA Title I-B Service Providers:

Career Path Services is the provider for all WIOA Title I-B Services for Dislocated Worker, Adult and Youth programs.

Dislocated Worker Program List all current and potential service providers in the area	Indicate service(s) provided by each			WIOA funded?
	Basic	Individualized	Training	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: Comments regarding the adequacy and quality of Dislocated Worker Services are available. The description is in the narrative.

Adult Program List all current and potential service providers in the area	Indicate service(s) provided by each			WIOA funded?
	Basic	Individualized	Training	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Note: Comments regarding the adequacy and quality of adult services are available. The description is in the narrative.

Youth Program List all current and potential service providers in the area.	Indicate service(s) provided by each			WIOA funded?
	Youth Program Elements	Design Framework Services	Services for youth with disabilities?	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: Comments regarding the adequacy and quality of Youth Services are available. The description is in the narrative.

Attachment E Local Workforce Development Board Membership and Certification

Official Name of Local Board: Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council
Fiscal Agent: Benton-Franklin Workforce Development Council
Contact Name and Title: Cynthia N. Garcia, Executive Director

Complete this table to demonstrate Board membership in compliance with WIOA:

Required categories	Name/Title/Organization*	Nominated by
Business majority (greater than 50% of all members)		
1. Business	Alicia Perches, HR Partner, Tyson Foods	Tri-City Regional Chamber
2. Business	Amanda Jones, VP, Community First Bank	Tri-City Regional Chamber
3. Business	Jason Jansky, Labor Relations Manager, Central Plateau Cleanup Company	Tri-City Regional Chamber
4. Business	Lori Mattson, President, Regional Chamber of Commerce	Tri-City Regional Chamber
5. Business	Lynn Ramos-Braswell, HR Manager/Team Leader, Gesa	Tri-City Regional Chamber
6. Business	Richard Bogert, President, The Bogert Group	Tri-City Regional Chamber
7. Business	Sonny Virakpanyou, Chief Operating Officer, Sonar Insights	Tri-City Regional Chamber
8. Business	Todd Samuel, Group Manager, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory	Tri-City Regional Chamber
9. OPEN: 01/2023		
10. OPEN: 10/2023		
11. OPEN: 01/2024		
Workforce (20% of members. Majority must be nominated by organized labor)		
1. Labor	Bob Legard, Membership Development Representative, IBEW Local 112	Central WA Building & Construction Trades Council
2. Labor	Geoff Arends, Training Director, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	Central Washington Building and Trades Council
3. Apprenticeship	Andrew Cook, Apprenticeship Coordinator, SEWNEO Sheet Metal Training Trust	Central Washington Building and Trades Council
Education & Training		
1. Title II Adult Ed	Michael Lee, Vice President for Instruction, Columbia Basin Community College	CBC President
2. Higher Education	Kate McAteer, Vice Chancellor Washington State University - Tri-Cities	WSU - Tri-Cities
Government		
1. Wagner-Peyser	John Dickson, Eastern Regional Director,	Employment Security

	Employment Security Department	Department
2. Vocational Rehabilitation	Jessica Rusch, Vocational Rehabilitation Supervisor, DVR	DSHS Deputy Regional Administrator
3. DSHS	Adolfo de León, CSO Administrator, DSHS	DSHS Deputy Regional Administrator
4. Economic Development	Karl Dye, President/CEO, Tri-City Development Council	Tri-City Regional Chamber
Chief Local Elected Official		
1. Chief Elected Official	The Honorable Will McKay, Commissioner, Benton County (Non-Voting)	Benton County
2. Chief Elected Official	The Honorable Clint Didier, Commissioner, Franklin County (Non-Voting)	Franklin County

Attachment H

Public Comment

(See WIOA Sec. 108(b)(20))

The BFWDC recognizes the importance of public review and comment, especially concerning an important document like the 4-year Regional and Local Workforce Plan. Below are the various methods used to seek input utilizing 30+ days. The start date was March 1st. The end date was March 31st. This schedule allowed for the necessary time to meet the April 10, 2024, Draft Local Plan due date to the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board and Employment Security Department.

The BFWDC Regional and Local Workforce Plan Draft was posted to the website. In addition, a blog was written to inform the community of the ask for review and comment. A post was made on the BFWDC Facebook. The narrative included a link to the BFWDC Regional and Local Workforce Plan Draft on the website.

The BFWDC team utilized their robust business networks on LinkedIn to share narratives regarding public comment and provided the BFWDC Regional and Local Workforce Plan Draft website link.

The BFWDC created a public information notice regarding the BFWDC Local Workforce Plan Draft and utilized FlashAlert to have a widespread reach throughout our counties, region, and state. The BFWDC communicated with the public using the Tri-Cities Area Journal of Business, requesting review and comment on our Regional and Local Workforce Plan Draft. The BFWDC communicated with the public using the Tri-City Herald, requesting review and comment on our Regional and Local Workforce Plan Draft.

All BFWDC Board Members, Stakeholders, and System Partners (including all WIOA Titles) received direct e-mail correspondence asking for review and public comment on our Regional and Local Workforce Plan Draft. The link to the BFWDC website was provided. The BFWDC Staff communicated our solicitation of review and comment on the Regional and Local Workforce Plan Draft to numerous community forums and subsequent workgroups. The link to the BFWDC website was shared. Outreach included but was not limited to Tri-Cities Regional Chamber Board of Directors Meeting, Tri-Cities Research District, West-Richland Chamber of Commerce, Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Pasco Chamber of Commerce, and Educational Services District 123 Meetings.

Note: For ease of feedback and consistency, the BFWDC used the e-mail address BFWDCStrategicPlan@bf-wdc.org during the comment period. This streamlined the process significantly.

Attachment I

Performance Targets

WIOA Title I-B PERFORMANCE MEASURES PY22 – PY23

(PY24/PY25 negotiations are in progress)

The BFWDC has managed local I-B programs through a performance-based process. This occurs through monthly tracking of individual provider contracts that evaluates progress toward contract expenditures, enrollments, and service to specific target groups such as older workers, TANF participants, people with disabilities, drop-outs, females, and those ethnic groups present in the local region that includes Native American, Hispanic, Black, and Asian Americans.

Further, monthly tracking includes progress toward contracted performance based on the local area's annual negotiated targets with the state. Performance management provides desktop reviews monthly by local area staff, quarterly reviews of the full board at regular meetings, and local compliance and technical assistance monitoring with title I-B service providers.

Adult Program

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit – 68%

The percentage of adult program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program shall be 68% or greater.

Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit – 67%

The percentage of adult program participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program shall be 67% or greater.

Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit - \$5,900

The total quarterly earnings for all participants employed in the second quarter after exit shall be determined by either direct wage record match or supplemental wage information. The values of the collected quarterly wage information shall be listed from the lowest to the highest. The median earnings value shall be at least \$5,900.

Credential Attainment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit – 84%

The percentage of adult program participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in On-the-Job Training (OJT) and customized training) who attained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program, shall be 84% or greater.

Measurable Skill Gains Indicator – 50%

The percentage of adult program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary 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 shall be 50% or greater.

Dislocated Worker Program

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit – 74%

The percentage of Dislocated Worker program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program shall be 74% or greater.

Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit – 71%

The percentage of dislocated worker program participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program shall be 71% or greater.

Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit - \$8,200

The total quarterly earnings for all participants employed in the second quarter after exit shall be determined by either direct wage record match or supplemental wage information. The values of the collected quarterly wage information shall be listed from the lowest to the highest. The median earnings value shall be at least \$8,200.

Credential Attainment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit – 72%

The percentage of dislocated worker program participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in OJT and customized training) who attained 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, shall be 72% or greater.

Measurable Skill Gains Indicator – 52%

The percentage of dislocated worker program 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 shall be 52% or greater.

Youth Program

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit– 63.0%

The percentage of youth program participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exiting the program shall be 63.0% or greater.

Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 64.0%

The percentage of youth program participants in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exiting the program shall be 64.0% or greater.

Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit - \$4,089.00

The total quarterly earnings for all participants employed in the second quarter after exit shall be determined by either direct wage record match or supplemental wage information. The values of the collected quarterly wage information shall be listed from the lowest to the highest. The median earnings value shall be at least \$4,089.00

Credential Attainment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 73.0%

The percentage of Youth program participants enrolled in an education or training program who attained a recognized post-secondary credential or secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program shall be 73.0% or greater.

Measurable Skill Gains Indicator – 50%

The percentage of youth program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and achieving documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress toward such a credential or employment shall be 50% or greater.