



## WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

VIRGINIA WORKFORCE LETTER (VWL) No. 24-02
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**TO:** Local Workforce Development Boards

**FROM:** Carrie Roth *Carrie Roth*  
Commissioner, Virginia Works

**SUBJECT:** Requirements for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Workforce Development Board Plans

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 09/06/2024

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**PURPOSE:**

To provide Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) guidance on the development and submission of local area plans under Title I of WIOA.

**REFERENCES:**

Commonwealth of Virginia WIOA Combined State Plan July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2028

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Sections 108 and 188

Code of Virginia §2.2-2670 & §2.2-2472

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; Employment and Training Administration; Labor; Final Rule, 20 CFR Part 670.500 through 659.580

**REVISIONS:**

VWL 20-08 Requirements for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Workforce Development Area Plans dated September 30, 2020. Updates the guidance for creating the PY 2024-2027 local plans.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**WIOA Title I Administrator**-The Commissioner or acting Commissioner of Virginia Works.

**BACKGROUND:**

Title I, Chapter 2, Section 108 of WIOA establishes the requirement that each Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) shall develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive four-year local plan, in partnership with the appropriate chief elected official.

Under 20 CFR Part 679.500, the WIOA Rules and Regulations state the local plans shall be comprehensive four-year action plans designed to:

- Develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies
- Support the State's vision and goals, as described in the Combined State Plan

The local plans shall set forth the strategy to:

- Direct investments in economic, education, and workforce training programs to focus on providing relevant education and training to ensure that individuals, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, have the skills to compete in the job market and that employers have a ready supply of skilled workers
- Apply job driven-strategies in the one-stop delivery system
- Enable economic, education, and workforce partners to build a skilled workforce through innovation in, and alignment of, employment training, and education programs

Local areas are encouraged to incorporate responses to the strategic planning guide in Appendix A, as appropriate. The state recognizes that many local areas have already engaged in robust strategic planning activities with local and regional workforce stakeholders. In those instances where strategic workforce planning efforts are already underway, this VWL should be used to ensure alignment with those efforts. For those local areas that are not already engaged in such activities, suggestions for implementing strategic planning activities are included in the guide.

WIOA requires local plans to be consistent with the Virginia Combined State Plan. The vision, goals, and strategies included in the Plan for PYs July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027 are listed in Appendix B. Instructions for submission of the local plan are listed in Appendix C. Please complete and submit the Local Plan Template provided in Appendix D. It is not necessary to address the policy emphasis areas separately from the specific plan content elements.

The WIOA Title I Administrator will lead the local plans review process on behalf of the Governor and present the results to the Secretary of Labor and the Virginia Board of Workforce Development. Program Year (PY) 2025 WIOA Title I formula allocations will be dependent on the approval of each LWDA plan.

**GUIDANCE:**

Appendix A – How to Create a Strategic Local Board Plan Under WIOA (not for submission)

Appendix B – Virginia Combined State Plan PYs 2024-2027 Executive Summary

Appendix C – Local Plan Submission Instructions

Appendix D – Local Plan Template, Statement of Compliance Plan Signatures, Fiscal Agent Designation, and Required Attachments (for submission)

Appendix E –Strategic Action Plan Template (not for submission)

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

Each LWDB shall develop and submit a comprehensive four-year local plan, in partnership with the appropriate chief elected official, according to the below timeline.

Event	Date
VWL with Local Plan Guidance Packet Released	September 6, 2024
Local Plans Due to WIOA Title I Administrator- <a href="mailto:LWDBinquiries@viriniaworks.gov">LWDBinquiries@viriniaworks.gov</a> *A LWDB may request a deadline extension if additional time is needed due to a pending LWDB meeting where the plan is set to be approved.	March 14, 2025*
Local Plan Evaluation Period	March 17 - April 11, 2025
Initial Approval Status and Summary Feedback Provided to LWDBs	April 14, 2025
Response from LWDBs Due (as needed)	May 13, 2025
Second Local Plan Evaluation Period (as needed)	May 14 - June 9, 2025
Presentation of Local Plan Review Results to VBWD	June 13, 2025
Final Approval Deadline	June 30, 2025

**SUBMISSION AND INQUIRIES:**

Please submit plans or inquiries regarding this VWL to:

Virginia Works

WIOA Title I Administrator

6606 W. Broad Street

Richmond, VA 23230

[LWDBinquiries@viriniaworks.gov](mailto:LWDBinquiries@viriniaworks.gov)

## **APPENDIX A – How to Create a Strategic Local Workforce Development Board Plan Under WIOA**

### **BACKGROUND**

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Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Virginia develops a Combined State Plan (CSP) every four years to outline how the Commonwealth will implement its workforce development vision and goals. Additionally, Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) are required to develop their own local plans based on the CSP. Rather than focusing on the work already completed, these strategic plans must demonstrate how the LWDBs is going to implement workforce development initiatives over the next four years. This guide will help LWDBs create their plans.

While each local area in the Commonwealth is different and has unique needs of its LWDB, this guide provides a common set of processes to develop a strategic plan that best fits your community. This guide can be adapted to your needs and used to guide your process in a manner that offers the best chances for success.

LWDBs have an opportunity with WIOA to change the identity of the workforce ecosystem from what many employers see as a social service to a highly valued talent resource. This change can only happen if the culture of the system changes from within. Strategies, policies, and investments made by the LWDBs must drive this change. Partner organizations must see themselves as part of a team with common goals and clear roles to play in achieving them. With innovative thinkers, local opinion leaders, and leaders of business and industry playing an active role in developing strategies, a LWDB can become a powerful economic driver for a community. A customer centric system is key to creating this environment. Our definition of customer must include the employers who have jobs to fill. Understanding how businesses want to work within the workforce ecosystem is crucial to the system's success.

Before you review the Local Plan Template, examine this guide with LWDB members and key stakeholders who will be integral to the creation of the plan. Consider how the processes suggested in this guide will help you create a strategic local plan that will serve the region as a useful tool for success.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO LWDB STRATEGIC PLANNING**

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### **Engage Stakeholders**

Do not develop the strategic plan in isolation. Engaging local stakeholders in the development of the strategic plan will create a better and more complete plan.

### **Manage the Process**

Consider utilizing internal facilitators, or enlisting a consultant, to facilitate the planning process. Encourage participants to take ownership to ensure accountability from planning through implementation and evaluation. Facilitators bring:

- Specialized exercises to encourage input, provide clarity in the process, and inspire “out-of-the-box” thinking
- A fresh, impartial perspective to navigate internal politics and keep the conversation constructive
- The ability to keep the focus on the big picture and away from the day-to-day details

### **Engage the Right People in the Right Setting**

Identify the people who need to be at the table for the planning session(s) and work with them effectively. Schedule and conduct the sessions either virtually or at locations convenient to all attendees. If meeting in person, select a location that allows all individuals to see and hear one another easily.

### **Speak the Language**

Establish a common planning vocabulary that is standard with all participants. Here are the important strategic planning terms:

- **Mission** – Who we are, what we do, and for whom
- **Vision** – How the world will be different if we accomplish our Mission
- **Environmental Scan** – Understanding the broader context that influences our work
- **Goals** – Broadly defined objectives that advance the LWDB toward its Vision
- **Strategies** – Methods for achieving the Goals
- **Metrics** – Measure the progress made in meeting the Goals

## PREPARING FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

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### Engage Stakeholders

A strategic plan developed through an open and inclusive process stands a significantly better chance of successful implementation and achieving the goals expressed in the document. A critical success factor in strategic planning for a multi-partner ecosystem is creating a sense of ownership among a wide range of individuals and organizations. Because the talent development system is much broader than a few federal funding streams, the LWDB's status as a go-to resource for talent is often more dependent on its ability to influence the decisions of others.

In an ecosystem designed to serve customers, which include business and industry as well as students, workers, and unemployed Virginians, successful implementation depends on buy-in from a variety of organizations directing numerous funding streams. A great LWDB has the potential to influence these organizations by creating an environment of cooperation and collaboration. If our process only addresses the funding streams we control, we will not provide our customers with the comprehensive approach they want and need to succeed.

### **Creating buy-in**

The most effective way to expand the influence of the LWDB is through a stakeholder feedback process. By allowing others to provide the LWDB with insight and recommendations, the LWDB can enrich its understanding and expand its influence beyond what it controls directly.

Not every idea or concept will or should make it into the final document. Providing others with an opportunity to be heard can go a long way when asking them to embrace the adopted strategies, commit their resources, and provide enthusiastic support for implementing action items.

### **Who should be engaged?**

Because of the nature of the ecosystem, there are some stakeholder groups that are especially important to include in the planning process. Those groups have knowledge, experience, and a value proposition for a better way of developing talent:

- Chief elected officials
- Business and industry leaders
- Mandated agency partners
- Frontline staff
- Economic development organizations
- Chambers of Commerce

- Organized labor
- Education and training providers
- Community-based organizations
- Parents and guardians, students
- Job seekers

### Engagement tactics

There are a wide range of techniques for gathering input and building ownership of the strategic plan among stakeholders. LWDBs should consider using some or all of these engagement tactics:

**One-on-one interviews** with key decision makers are an effective way to explore topics in depth and identify opportunities for collaboration. Identification of barriers to success and opportunities to align are some of the outcomes to be expected from successful interviews.

**A group discussion of stakeholder representatives** about a single or very small number of topics can create a dynamic exploration of common goals, promotion of collaboration, and build confidence in the LWDB's process of inclusion. The ideal group size is between eight and 12 individuals led by a facilitator who does not have a real or perceived agenda beyond leading the group in a productive discussion. Focus groups can reveal challenges and opportunities for collaboration. Creating group agreement is a desired outcome, but not the ultimate measure of success. In some cases, simply opening lines of communication that never existed can be a sign of success.

**A large gathering of stakeholder representatives** can produce input from interested parties at all levels in the system, depending on the invitation list. In addition to the opportunity to communicate ideas and concepts to those in attendance through presentations, speeches, and panel discussions, a forum designed to gather input should also include one or more interactive exercises. Often, attendees are divided into smaller groups of six to 12 participants each. These smaller groups can respond to a strategic question, brainstorm innovative ideas to solve a challenge, or develop a list of concerns, resources, barriers to success, etc. Groups report out to the larger group and a facilitated discussion may or may not follow.

**A survey**, usually web-based, is a good way to collect both objective and subjective data if there are a limited number of questions and simple responses are desired. Response rates, distribution lists, and a lack of opportunity to ask clarifying follow up

questions are some of the limitations of this type of input, but it does allow for a larger number of individuals to participate in the planning process.

### **Follow up**

When individuals volunteer their time, energy, and ideas to help create a strategic plan, most will want to know how their input is used and have an opportunity to see the results of the process. Following up with these volunteers demonstrates the value the LWDB places on their participation, can lead to further participation in the future, and can impact the LWDB's ability to implement, influence, and expand its reach.

To follow up effectively, collect stakeholder names, addresses, phone numbers, or email addresses at each input activity. A list of plan contributors should be created, maintained, and used to push out communications about the plan.

### **Manage the Process**

It is often valuable to use an internal or external facilitator who can help manage the entire planning process and lead sessions.

#### **Why use a facilitator?**

Experienced facilitators act as a neutral third party to support the achievement of the desired result. A facilitated session is a highly structured meeting in which the facilitator guides the participants through a series of predefined steps to arrive at a result that is created, understood, and accepted by all participants.<sup>1</sup>

An experienced facilitator has a unique set of training and experience grounded in group dynamics and decision-making. An experienced, professional facilitator can help you:

- Manage strong opinions and guide people to consensus
- Create a comfortable forum where all participants can share their ideas and perspectives in a constructive manner
- Serve as a content-neutral party that leads the process, ensuring participants that decisions are not based on predetermined outcomes
- Explore creative options when issues are complex and ready solutions are not apparent
- Implement expertise in group decision-making to advance the collaborative process

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<sup>1</sup> Wilkinson, M. *The Secrets of Facilitation: The SMART Guide to Getting Results with Groups*, (2004) Jossey-Bass, p. 23



- Establish and maintain a focus on tangible results

### **Guidelines for external facilitators**

To ensure consistency across all LWDB plans, the WIOA Title I Administrator requests all external stakeholders follow these guidelines:

1. Facilitators do not create the strategic plan in isolation. The LWDB, in consultation with Chief Elected Officials and stakeholders, must create the strategic plan while the facilitators guide the process.
2. Facilitators help the LWDB engage as many stakeholders as feasible in the strategic planning process
3. Facilitators help the LWDB and stakeholders understand the difference between an operational plan and a strategic plan
4. Facilitators provide the LWDB with the tools needed to implement the strategic plan

### **Engage the Right People in the Right Setting**

LWDB leadership should meet to determine the scope of work, planning objectives, and a planning schedule. Additionally, they should identify a Strategic Planning Team.

The Strategic Planning Team should be a small group that leads the entire process. They provide oversight, keep colleagues and stakeholders informed about the process, and do the majority of the preparation work. The Team may include:

- LWDB leadership
- Chief Elected Officials
- Representatives from local government agencies
- Representatives from the local business communities
- Any other key stakeholders in the region

### **Strategic Planning Team Member Roles and Responsibilities**

Suggestions for roles and responsibilities include:

#### **Strategic Planning Champion**

The Champion legitimizes and supports the planning process and rallies others as needed. This role typically is filled by a senior leadership member.

Responsibilities:

1. Work with the LWDB to establish goals for the planning process and determine who should participate in the process
2. Personally invite colleagues to participate
3. Discuss with participants expectations for the planning process and roles during implementation
4. Be the point of contact and common thread from preplanning through implementation

### **Strategic Planning Project Manager**

The Project Manager ensures the strategic plan is completed on time with all its necessary requirements.

Responsibilities:

1. Prepare a work plan for the completion of the strategic planning process
2. List all tasks to be completed, with corresponding timelines and deadlines
3. Work with the Coordinator to plan meetings and stakeholder engagement sessions

### **Strategic Planning Coordinator**

The Coordinator is in charge of planning session logistics:

Responsibilities:

1. Work with the Strategic Planning Champion and Project Manager to develop and disseminate agendas
2. Consult with the Strategic Planning Team to establish ideal session dates/times; coordinate schedules with session participants
3. Find appropriate in-person or virtual venues for planning sessions
4. Finalize catering services (if needed)

#### **What to look for in a venue (in-person or virtual):**

1. Conveniently located and/or the technology is accessible
2. Enough space for the expected number of attendees
3. Tables to split the group into smaller working groups or the ability to use virtual breakout rooms
4. Supplies such as flip charts and markers or the ability to use virtual whiteboards
5. Space has the necessary A/V technology
6. Broadband accessibility of attendees

### **Strategic Planning Author:**

The Author takes the finalized language and put it into one document to form a coherent plan:

1. Collects finalized language
2. Proofreads all language
3. Adds language and other information into an accessible document
4. Ensures the final document is accessible to stakeholders

### **What Makes a Plan Strategic?**

This guide demonstrates how to develop a strategic plan, rather than a tactical or operational plan.

### **Strategic Solutions Ask Why and What**

While tactical solutions simply ask how individual programs serve customers, strategic solutions focus on ensuring the bigger picture of the workforce ecosystem operates as a comprehensive, integrated, and streamlined ecosystem for all workers and businesses. Strategic thinkers ask why we have been using the same initiatives year after year and what innovative operations could we implement to serve the ecosystem as a whole.

### **Strategic Solutions Connect Activities to Mission, Vision, and Future Needs**

Rather than simply reviewing current workforce and occupational data, strategic solutions use this data to set goals, generate performance improvements, and ensure ecosystem excellence.

### **Strategic Solutions Focus on Emerging Economic Trends and Labor Market Patterns**

Rather than only focusing on current conditions, strategic solutions simultaneously plan for projected future needs. Those with a strategic mindset develop strong industry partnerships to support LWDB decision-making.

### **Strategic Solutions Build Ecosystem Capacity and Long-term Relationships**

Tactical solutions simply manage processes in day-to-day operations. Strategic solutions guide ecosystem development by defining goals and supporting connections between core programs and businesses.

### **Strategic Solutions Emphasize Regional Planning and Alignment**

While tactical solutions focus on short-term successes, strategic solutions develop system performance measures that take into account the regional economic development

strategies, the development of career pathways, and work-based learning opportunities for long-term success.

## THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

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### 1. Kick-Off Meeting

Hold a meeting of the Strategic Planning Team to begin the planning process. All members of the committee should attend. At this meeting, you may cover:

- Introductions and teambuilding
- Purpose of the strategic plan
- Planning process and timeline
- Roles, responsibilities, and expectations
- Communication
- Next steps

### 2. Document Collection

Collect relevant documents, plans, and other materials related to workforce, economic development, education, and other key areas. Sources may include economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, community colleges, local governments, regional planning organizations, and community-based organizations.

### 3. Stakeholder Engagement

When scheduling your chosen stakeholder engagement tactics, provide enough advance notice to allow for participation by as many individuals as possible. Even virtual events require advanced planning by many of your stakeholders. No matter what methods of input you select for inclusion in the process, it is important to provide those invited to participate with:

- Context for why you are asking for their feedback
- An estimate of the time commitment involved
- A brief explanation of how the results will be used
- What to expect during the interview, focus group, or forum
- Acknowledgement of the importance of their contribution
- Recognition that although everyone has a chance to be heard, it is not possible to include every idea in the final plan
- A thank you for their participation

#### 4. Strategic Planning Team Meetings

In subsequent team meetings, you'll take the information gathered during the document collection and stakeholder engagement tactics to develop the strategic plan. The team will determine the strategic plan mission, vision, core values, goals, and strategies. Additional details about this process is provided in the next section.

#### 5. Plan Writing

All materials prepared as a result of each of the preceding tasks should be provided to the plan Author in preparation for the writing of the first draft of the strategic plan. Recommended components of the plan are outlined in the LWDB plan template.

#### 6. Public Comment Period

The draft plan must be posted for 30-days and a notice provided in accordance with the state and local standards to allow for public review and comment on the contents of the plan. Special notices of the plan posting should be sent to those who participated in the feedback process. A compilation of feedback should be created with comments about content separated from those regarding grammar, punctuation, and formatting. The comments about content should be provided to the LWDB along with a copy of the draft plan document.

#### 7. Plan Submission

Once the draft plan has been updated with the relevant stakeholder feedback, the strategic plan must be submitted to Virginia Works by the deadline outlined in the Virginia Workforce Letter. The Virginia Board of Workforce Development (VBWD) staff will review the plan and submit it to the VBWD for approval.

#### 8. Final Plan Edits, if Applicable

VBWD staff may return the plan to your region if adjustments are required before the VBWD's approval. Those adjustments will be requested according to the timeline outlined in the Virginia Workforce Letter.

## CREATING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

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### Mission, Vision, Environmental Scan

**Participants:** Strategic Planning Team and other identified participants

#### Process Tips

- a. Limit the number of participants for the mission, vision, core values, and environmental scan discussions.
- b. Someone in each working group should record group consensus. The same should be happen with the results of the larger group discussion.
- c. These records can be referenced on the following days of the session, and also provide the foundation for the final summary.

### 1. MISSION STATEMENT

**PURPOSE:** Confirms who you are, what you do, and for whom.

**PROCESS:** As a group, discuss your LWDB's mission and how your region connects into the VBWD's greater mission. Review the discussion questions below. Reach consensus among participants on a final Mission Statement and record it.

### 2. VISION STATEMENT

**PURPOSE:** Presents a compelling picture of what will result if the LWDB is successful in fulfilling its mission. The vision statement connects your reason for being (your mission) and the strategy you will develop to reach your goals (strategic plan). It should be an aspirational picture of your LWDB's future success.

**PROCESS:** Define what it means for your LWDB to be successful. Review the discussion questions below. Use the themes coming out of this discussion to craft/revise your Vision Statement. Reach consensus among participants on the Vision Statement's final wording and record it.

### 3. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

**PURPOSE:** The environmental scan provides insight regarding the dynamic context within which you do your work. It takes into account the opportunities and challenges facing the region both within and outside of your LWDB (i.e., resources, cultural and leadership challenges, policy changes, etc.). The scan should include a facilitated discussion around the region's strengths, opportunities for growth, aspirations, and challenges given the internal and external factors.

**PROCESS:** Divide into smaller groups to discuss the environment. Review the discussion questions below. Instruct the groups to record the consensus answers, as well as the list of strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and challenges. These will inform the goal, initiative, and metrics discussions.

## Goals, Strategies, and Metrics

**Participants:** Strategic Planning Team and a cross-sectional representation of regional stakeholders.

### **Process Tips**

- a. Consider providing an opening summary of the mission, vision, and environmental scan discussions.
- b. Ground the planning work in the results of the environmental scan to boost awareness of the current landscape and the themes and trends affecting the region and the Commonwealth.
- c. The facilitator should guide the group to combine similar goals to arrive at a manageable number in less time

## **1. GOALS**

**PURPOSE:** What does the LWDB want to achieve over the next four years? What does success look like? The Goals should be easy to understand and represent continuous improvement potential over the long-term, not “on-off” projects or activities. Goals are a tool to stretch the LWDB to reach beyond its current accomplishments and continually strive for more going forward. Great goals are aspirational, but attainable.

**PROCESS:** Discuss what the group wants workforce development to look like in the region four years from now. Discuss how the LWDB will get to that point. Review the discussion questions below. Reach consensus and record responses.

### **Think about...**

1. How the CSP’s goals fit into the region’s vision for the future
2. How the group can create goals that reflect the region’s opportunities and strengths

## 2. Strategies

**PURPOSE:** How can the LWDB achieve their goals? What projects and programs should we continue, build upon, or initiate? Strategies outline the actual work of the LWDB toward the defined Mission, Vision, and Goals. Their implementation refers to a coordinated series of actions that will take place over a specified period of time.

**PROCESS:** Determine what action steps are needed to reach the Goals. Review the discussion questions below. Divide the Goals evenly among the small groups, and instruct them to develop regional strategies for their assigned Goals. Have them designate a timeframe for starting and completing each strategy, the resources necessary, and a person or group responsible for completing the strategy.

## 3. METRICS

**PURPOSE:** How will you know the LWDB has successfully met its Goals? The Metrics demonstrate the impact of the LWDB on the workforce development ecosystem.

### What makes a quality metric?

- Provide a gauge for leadership to track how well the LWDB is meeting its Goals.
- Good Metrics reflect the WIOA performance indicators and measures, found here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/performance-indicators>
- Strong Metrics align with the Systemwide Workforce Metrics VBWD policy, found here: [https://virginiacareerworks.com/wp-content/uploads/VBWD\\_24-01\\_Systemwide\\_Workforce\\_Metrics\\_at\\_the\\_Local\\_Level\\_FINAL.docx.pdf](https://virginiacareerworks.com/wp-content/uploads/VBWD_24-01_Systemwide_Workforce_Metrics_at_the_Local_Level_FINAL.docx.pdf)

**PROCESS:** Assign each small group the same Goals they previously worked on. Ask each group to determine how success will be measured. Review the discussion questions below. Reach consensus and record it.

## 4. ACTION PLAN

**PURPOSE:** What needs to be done? An action plan should provide a road map for the LWDB to lead the implementation of the Goals and Strategies. Action steps should be specific and direct tactics that build toward accomplishing Strategies and Goals. An effective action step clearly states what the individual task is, who is responsible for completing the task, and when the task will be completed.

**PROCESS:** Assign each small group the same Goals and Strategies they previously worked on. Ask each group to determine action steps needed to achieve the strategies, goals, and plan vision. Reach consensus and record decisions in Appendix G: Strategic



Plan Action Plan Template. Please note, this action plan is not part of the local plan submission document. It is provided for LWDB implementation support.

### **How to use the action plan**

Once the action plan has been created, it requires ongoing updates. When regularly reviewed and updated, the action plan serves as a tool for effective implementation. The action plan allows the LWBD to determine:

- Which steps are required to implement the strategic plan's Goals and Strategies
- Who is responsible for completing steps and their timeline for completion
- Which steps have been successful and which steps require additional support
- How successful the strategic plan is, when viewed overall

To use the action plan effectively, review the plan at each LWBD meeting. This review will allow the LWDB to determine if the action steps are on schedule and where additional support may be needed.

## MISSION – WHO ARE WE AND WHAT DO WE DO?

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### *Virginia Board of Workforce Development: Codified Purpose*

The purpose of the Board shall be to assist and advise the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Secretary of Labor in meeting workforce development needs in the Commonwealth through recommendation of policies and strategies to increase coordination and thus efficiencies of operation between all education and workforce programs with responsibilities and resources for employment, occupational training, and support connected to workforce credential and job attainment.

### *Local Workforce Development Boards: Codified Purpose*

As a "regional convener," the local workforce development board is responsible for coordinating business, economic development, labor, regional planning commissions, education at all levels, and human services organizations to focus on community workforce issues and the development of solutions to current and prospective business needs for a skilled labor force at the regional level.

#### **1. What is the purpose of our LWDB? Who are we and what do we do?**

#### **2. Whom do we serve?**

## VISION – WHAT ARE WE WORKING TOWARD?

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### *Virginia Combined State Plan Vision Statement*

Virginia's nation leading workforce ecosystem will equip Virginians with the skills they need and enable employers to attract, grow, and retain them – ensuring the future of a thriving Commonwealth. In parallel with the stand-up of Virginia Works, we will accelerate the coordination, enhancement, and future-readiness of the Commonwealth's many workforce programs and stakeholders across the government and broader ecosystem through a formal process.

#### **1. What do we hope to become?**

#### **2. What will our region look like under ideal workforce development conditions?**

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN – WHERE ARE WE NOW AND WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE IN THE FUTURE?

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*The following questions can guide these conversations for small groups*

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1. **Where have we been successful in the past? Why did we achieve success in this area?**

2. **What are our greatest strengths?**

**3. What are our greatest aspirations for our region? What opportunities are available to help us get there?**

**4. What challenges do we encounter?**

***Refer to your mission, vision, and your answers to the environmental scan questions to brainstorm a list of strengths, opportunities, and challenges to consider when developing your strategy.***

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**STRENGTHS/OPPORTUNITIES**

**CHALLENGES**

## GOALS – HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR MISSION AND VISION?

### *Virginia Combined State Plan Goals*

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**Goal #1:** Prepare Virginia’s workers for current and future career pathways that provide competitive wages.

**Goal #2:** Deliver workforce services that support business growth in Virginia’s leading-edge economy.

**Goal #3:** Provide outreach and recruitment services that increase awareness and access to Virginia’s workforce development ecosystem.

**Goal #4:** Reduce workforce system barriers through dynamic collaboration, coordination, and communication with Virginia Works as the hub-and-spoke model.

### **1. What are the top three to five workforce needs in our region?**

### **2. What are the most important services that the workforce system should continue to provide, change, or begin to offer in the next four years?**

**3. How can the workforce system be more effectively aligned to promote the state and regional Mission and Vision statements?**

**4. How can we align our region's Goals with the state-level Goals?**



## STRATEGIES – HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE OUR GOALS?

### *Virginia Combined State Plan – Strategies for Goal #1*

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**Goal #1:** Prepare Virginia’s workers for current and future career pathways that provide competitive wages.

Strategies:

- *Recalibrate Virginia’s workforce development ecosystem now and for the future:* Establish the Virginia Works hub-and-spoke model to strengthen the connections between Virginia’s education and workforce systems and the coordination and collaboration amongst Virginia’s workforce development investments.
- *Meet workers where they are:* Optimize outcome-driven service delivery to respond to the needs of current and future job seekers, including youth.
- *Decide using data:* Measure job placement rates, retention, and progressed wage growth of job seekers to determine program effectiveness and performance over time.
- *Scale what works:* Advance programs and services with proven success that empower both the unemployed and underemployed to obtain careers in both today’s and tomorrow’s economy.
- *Focus on jobs in high demand occupations:* Connect Virginia’s businesses and employers with educators throughout curriculum design and implementation of career pathways, credentialing priorities, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities that align with the needs of targeted sectors, as identified by Virginia’s high demand occupations list published annual by the Virginia Office of Education Economics.
- *Build system capacity:* Expand professional development of workforce professionals, career counselors, and educators to evolve alongside business and individual needs and equip all with an understanding of Virginia’s high demand occupations.
- *Invest in Virginia:* Collaborate with state transportation and infrastructure agencies on human capital planning efforts to outline how Virginia can address workforce needs using the investments provided by the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) and other funding sources

- 1. How will we respond to the top three to five workforce needs in our region?**
- 2. What do we need to do to continue providing our most important workforce services, changing these services, or begin offering new services in the next four years?**
- 3. How can the workforce system be more effectively aligned to promote the state and regional Mission, Vision, and Goals?**

## METRICS – HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL?

- 1. After four years, how much progress should we have made towards our Goals and Strategies?**
- 2. How much progress should we have made towards the 6 Core Workforce Development Metrics?**
  - Number trained**
  - Total number of job placements**
  - Total program costs**
  - Job retention rate**
  - Program cost per placement or participant**
  - Starting and progressed wage growth**

## APPENDIX B – CSP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Virginia envisions a state workforce system in which programs and resources are aligned to achieve the best possible results for Virginia’s businesses and job seekers.

Guiding the Plan is Virginia’s vision for the delivery of workforce development services:

*Virginia’s nation leading workforce ecosystem will equip Virginians with the skills they need and enable employers to attract, grow, and retain them – ensuring the future of a thriving Commonwealth. In parallel with the stand-up of Virginia Works, we will accelerate the coordination, enhancement, and future-readiness of the Commonwealth’s many workforce programs and stakeholders across the government and broader ecosystem through a formal process.*

### Goals and Strategies for PYs 2024-2027

#### **Goal 1: Prepare Virginia’s workers for current and future career pathways that provide competitive wages.**

Strategies:

- *Recalibrate Virginia’s workforce development ecosystem now and for the future:* Establish the Virginia Works hub-and-spoke model to strengthen the connections between Virginia’s education and workforce systems and the coordination and collaboration amongst Virginia’s workforce development investments.
- *Meet workers where they are:* Optimize outcome-driven service delivery to respond to the needs of current and future job seekers, including youth.
- *Decide using data:* Measure job placement rates, retention, and progressed wage growth of job seekers to determine program effectiveness and performance over time.
- *Scale what works:* Advance programs and services with proven success that empower both the unemployed and underemployed to obtain careers in both today’s and tomorrow’s economy.
- *Focus on jobs in high demand occupations:* Connect Virginia’s businesses and employers with educators throughout curriculum design and implementation of career pathways, credentialing priorities, apprenticeships, and other work-based

learning opportunities that align with the needs of targeted sectors, as identified by Virginia's high demand occupations list published annual by the Virginia Office of Education Economics.

- *Build system capacity:* Expand professional development of workforce professionals, career counselors, and educators to evolve alongside business and individual needs and equip all with an understanding of Virginia's high demand occupations.
- *Invest in Virginia:* Collaborate with state transportation and infrastructure agencies on human capital planning efforts to outline how Virginia can address workforce needs using the investments provided by the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA) and other funding sources.

**Goal 2: Deliver workforce services that support business growth in Virginia's leading-edge economy.**

Strategies:

- *Meet businesses where they are:* Leverage state and local Business Solutions Teams and Virginia's high demand occupations list to identify and respond to the needs of employers in real time, e.g., SWaM organizations.
- *Recalibrate Virginia's workforce development ecosystem now and for the future:* Partner with Virginia's businesses and employers to advance work-based learning opportunities, including for youth, to support sector growth.
- *Decide using data:* Measure outcomes for employers using workforce services to determine program effectiveness, performance over time, and opportunities for improvement.
- *Scale what works:* Build and deploy sector strategies that engage businesses and economic development partners to address business needs efficiently.
- *Focus on jobs in high demand occupations:* Train to the needs of businesses to align the skill-building of Virginia's talent supply with the needs of targeted sectors.
- *Build system capacity:* Expand professional development of Business Solutions Teams to be responsive to employer needs.

- *Invest in Virginia:* Convene businesses and education providers to coordinate strategies leading to winning federal grants provided under the CHIPS and Science Act.

**Goal 3: Provide outreach and recruitment services that increase awareness and access to Virginia’s workforce development ecosystem.**

Strategies:

- *Recalibrate Virginia’s workforce development ecosystem now and for the future:* Implement outreach strategies that communicate how Virginia Works for everyone and specific campaigns targeted to customer groups or programs (i.e., youth, work-based learning).
- *Meet customers where they are:* Promote workforce services provided through community-orientated access points, e.g., public libraries.
- *Decide using data:* Communicate the outcomes and benefits associated with receiving services from across the Virginia Works ecosystem to targeted customer groups.
- *Scale what works:* Increase communication throughout the workforce ecosystem to promote apprenticeships and work-based learning opportunities to targeted customer groups.
- *Focus on jobs in high demand occupations:* Strengthen engagement with state and local economic development partners to promote how Virginia Works for businesses.
- *Build system capacity:* Use data and technology, including the Workforce Data Trust and the high demand occupations list, to make workforce services more accessible and responsive to all customers.
- *Invest in Virginia:* Encourage the creation of new Registered Apprenticeship programs by focusing business outreach on the benefits provided by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and other funding sources.

**Goal 4: Reduce workforce system barriers through dynamic collaboration, coordination, and communication with Virginia Works as the hub-and-spoke model.**

Strategies:

- *Recalibrate Virginia's workforce development ecosystem now and for the future:* Drive coordination and connection between Virginia's education and workforce systems to improve labor force participation and educational attainment.
- *Meet customers where they are:* Implement the Virginia Works ambition for a next generation integrated digital entry point across the Commonwealth's workforce services and programs.
- *Decide using data:* Analyze labor market data to assess disparities in outcomes and develop solutions that increase opportunities for underserved populations.
- *Scale what works:* Leverage discretionary funds and support leading-edge initiatives to remove barriers to employment (e.g., affordable childcare, transportation, housing).
- *Focus on jobs in high demand occupations:* Collaborate across the workforce development ecosystem to identify and address barriers for job seekers and businesses to accessing work-based learning programs.
- *Build system capacity:* Work with Local Workforce Development Boards to engage non-traditional, non-mandatory programs targeting youth as service delivery partners.
- *Invest in Virginia:* Use the funding provided by the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) program to make transformational investments into broadband affordability and adoption across the Commonwealth.

## **APPENDIX C – SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Local plans for PYs 2024-2027 must be submitted in PDF format to [LWDBinquiries@virginiaworks.gov](mailto:LWDBinquiries@virginiaworks.gov) no later than 5:00 PM EST on March 14, 2025. A LWDB may request a deadline extension if additional time is needed due to a pending LWDB meeting where the plan is set to be approved. The WIOA Title I Director of Administration shall act on the behalf of the Governor to receive the local plans and lead the review process. The submitted electronic copy must contain all required signatures.

### **Formatting Guidelines:**

- Submit the completed Local Plan Template on 8 ½ in by 11 in paper with a one-inch margin on all sides
- Use a standard 12-point font, such as Segoe UI for body text and Franklin Gothic Book for headlines.
- All text must be double spaced
- Use black ink only. Boldface type, underlining, and italics may be used.

A confirmation response will be provided within two business days of receipt. Submissions will be reviewed for completeness, adherence to provided guidelines, content, development, and overall quality by a review committee of workforce development professionals from partner agencies. The results of the local plan review will be made available to the LWDB and Chief Elected Officials.

Each plan will be assigned an initial status of either approved, conditionally approved, or not approved. Technical assistance will be provided for local areas in need of additional support to obtain an approved status.

Local plan review results will be presented to the VBWD at the June 2025 meeting and the VBWD will make approval recommendations. Approvals will be issued by the Commissioner of Virginia Works.

All local plans submitted by March 14, 2025, or agreed upon deadline extension, shall be considered to be approved at the end of the 90-day period beginning on the day the WIOA Title I Administrator confirms receipt of the plan, unless a written determination during the 90-day period is made indicating one of the following:

- There are deficiencies in workforce investment activities that have been identified through audits and the local areas has not made acceptable progress in implementing plans to address deficiencies
- The plan does not comply with applicable provisions of WIOA and the WIOA



regulations, including the required consultations and public comment provisions, and the nondiscrimination requirements of 29 CFR part 28

- The plan does not align with the State Plan, including with regard to the alignment of core programs to support the strategies identified in the State Plan in accordance with WIOA sec. 102(b)(1)(E) and §676.105