

<b>Policy Area:</b> Programs and Services	
<b>Title of Policy:</b> Business Services Requirements	<b>Number:</b> 403-01
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**I. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategic vision of business service provision in the Commonwealth of Virginia and data collection requirements of Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and American Job Centers (also called One-Stops), which includes all mandated WIOA partners in providing services to business customers. This policy presents required actions of WIOA partners to create the capacity to provide business services and capture data on business services provided to business customers.

**II. Summary and Impact**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 created a comprehensive workforce development system that places an emphasis on the role of business as a primary customer in the One-Stop Delivery System. Provision of services to businesses is value added to businesses, jobseeker customers, and the community. WIOA mandates that LWDBs develop strategies to establish and sustain lasting partnerships for the delivery of business services that will last beyond changes in One-Stop operators or career services providers. Local areas must establish and develop relationships and networks with employers and their intermediaries; convene, or implement industry or sector partnerships; and may also provide other business services and strategies that meet the workforce development needs of their area employers in accordance with partner programs’ statutory requirements. All of these strategies must be reflected in the local plan.

WIOA envisions a high performance workforce development system – a system that is results oriented, flexible and continuously improving. Customized business services may be provided to employers, employer associations, and other organizations. Furthermore, WIOA regulations state that the delivery of business services are an important component of the one-stop delivery system as a whole.

Virginia’s strategic vision for its workforce development system is “every business has access to a qualified, job-ready workforce and every Virginian has the skills needed to connect with meaningful employment and advance in a career.” To help achieve this vision, Virginia will “increase business engagement and deliver value to our business customers” by effectively identifying, engaging and serving businesses; having integrated service delivery; forming sector based partnerships to address the needs of regional industries; and investing in technology and

professional development. Being more responsive to the needs of Virginia's businesses, workforce resources will yield an improved return on investment.

These goals will be accomplished by empowering the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) to more effectively identify opportunities to better partner with business in a strategic manner based upon career pathways and sector strategies. This will be implemented utilizing cross-agency, cross-programmatic groups that are designed to provide a comprehensive array of services to maximize the efficiency and expertise of system partners. These groups will create seamless delivery of services to businesses through a single point of contact strategy and be driven by partnership with local, regional, and state economic development entities. The goal is to serve 50,000 Virginia businesses each year and that 75% of business services are delivered to industries prioritized in the Governor's Economic Development Plan. Additionally, Virginia's public workforce system seeks to increase the number of businesses utilizing incumbent worker training and on-the-job training.

The workforce system will be demand-driven, coherent, and easily accessible to business customers. LWDAs must provide comprehensive services to businesses through American Job Centers (AJCs). Full integration of business services is critical to achieving a high performing workforce development system.

Virginia is committed to the principles of Customer-Centered Design and innovation in its service delivery strategy, including virtual products and services. Specifically, Virginia will build its product and service strategy around both career and business services. The responsive integration of these service delivery methods are expected to create better outcomes for the dual customers of workforce development, the jobseeker and business community.

An integrated approach to business services shall lead to improved skills, credentials, and employment attainment in areas driven by business demand. In total, this effort in conjunction with efforts by economic development activities are expected to enhance and grow Virginia's economic advantage in both recruiting and retaining businesses in the Commonwealth.

## **References**

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Pub L. 113-128)
- Code of Virginia Section 2.2-2472.1.
- United States Department of Labor, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Final Rule, 20 CFR 679.560, Subpart D, Regional and Local Plan
- United States Department of Labor, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Final Rule, 20 CFR 678.435, Subpart B, One-Stop Partners and the Responsibilities of Partners
- Virginia Workforce Letter 11-04: Business Services Model
- Combined State Plan - WIOA State Plan for the Commonwealth of Virginia
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter 19-16: Guidance on Services provided through Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs under the Workforce Innovation and

Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (ES), as amended by title III of WIOA, and for Implementation of the WIOA Final Rules.

- Training and Employment Guidance Letter 10-16: Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III and Title IV Core Programs

### **III. Policy**

#### **A. Role of WIOA Title I Administrator**

The WIOA Title I Program Administrator supports the strategic planning and implementation of revitalized or enhanced business engagement activities within the state. Business engagement will be supported by a continued focus on branding the one-stop system, delivering a universal message to identify the one-stop system and establishing standardized services. Interagency collaboration, forming partnerships, and leveraging resources will be a vital aspect of Virginia's success in meeting business' workforce development needs.

The WIOA Title I Administrator's Role is to establish a state-level business service team to provide guidance and support to the LWDA's in ensuring implementation of this policy. To ensure a strategic and focused approach to providing coordinated and consistent services to businesses the state-level business services team will consist of cross-agency, cross program leaders. This team will convene regularly to provide a strategic direction, monitor results, provide technical assistance, and recommend changes to program design to enhance service delivery. The WIOA Title I Administrator will identify a staff member to facilitate the activities of the state-level team.

The composition of the state-level business services team shall include business services leadership from:

- Virginia Community College System
- Virginia Department of Education
- Virginia Employment Commission
- Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services
- Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired
- Virginia Economic Development Partnership
- Department of Labor and Industry
- Department of Social Services
- A Local Workforce Development Board Executive Director or designee
- A business member from the Virginia Board of Workforce Development (VBWD)
- A State Labor Federations representative from the VBWD

The state-level business services team will be responsible for the following activities:

- Evaluate, identify, and establish appropriate statewide information technology solutions to assist in effective delivery of business services.
- Assure that all State workforce agencies are fully participating on the Local Workforce Development Board Business Services Team.

- Evaluate promising practices in business services delivery across Virginia, and the United States, and communicating those practices to local business services teams.
- Standardize business services outreach materials for local area adoption.
- Research and identify a statewide Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool utilized statewide.
- Analyze and address barriers to collaboration between state, regional, and local business services teams.
- Map business solution assets and provide training to business services staff on how to mobilize these resources including peer to peer learning opportunities.
- Provide direction on evaluating business customer satisfaction.
- Determine and provide technical assistance to LWDBs experiencing challenges in partnership maintenance and the delivery of business services.
- Provide an annual report to the Virginia Board of Workforce Development.

### **B. Role of LWDBs and One-Stop Centers (AJCs) in Providing Business Services:**

LWDB's will be responsible for ensuring the coordination of business service delivery to businesses in the local area according to their local plan and the combined state plan. Coordinated efforts should be focused on creating a streamlined business process and preventing duplicative services and contacts to businesses. LWDB's are expected to execute their role through the convening of a business team and the orderly coordination of the following activities:

- Building Relationships with Business and Business-focused Organizations
- Integrating and Streamlining Business Services
- Providing Informational Resources to Businesses
- Assisting Businesses in the Recruiting Process
- Assisting Businesses with Training Needs
- Providing Customized Services to Businesses

### **Business Service Teams**

Per Virginia's WIOA Combined State Plan, each Local Workforce Development Area is required to have a Business Service Team whose responsibility is to drive sector strategies within a locality, provide local employers with human resources solutions, and identify methods to shrink regional skills gaps. Business Services Teams are cross-agency, cross-programmatic groups, comprised of representatives of each of the core partner agencies, economic development, and other partners as appropriate. These teams are designed to ensure a comprehensive array of services are provided to businesses.

Local Workforce Development Boards are encouraged to create a methodology that maximizes the opportunities for businesses to create a relationship with the AJC. Each partner agency in the AJC has statutory requirements for creating relationships with businesses and assisting clients receiving services through their funding in finding employment opportunities. The single point of contact is not intended to be "one individual" responsible for all relationships in the LWDA

through which all businesses must go to access workforce services. All members of the business services teams are expected to create these relationships with businesses in the community in a coordinated and targeted manner.

### **C. Requirements for LWDB Business Services:**

The following minimum standards are required and must be evident and practiced in the delivery of services to business customers in each LWDB. The state-level business service team will facilitate the solutions to ensure these standards are implemented.

1. The LWDA AJC Operations Partner Agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) shall identify the role of each partner and reflect the strategic goals of the LWDA for business services as identified in the WIOA local plan. The agreement must include:
  - a. Standardized timeframes to respond to business inquiries and subsequent contact, in order to deliver specialized and collaborative solutions to meet business customer needs; alternative options must be provided if the LWDA cannot provide an affirmative response to the business customer's initial request.
  - b. The LWDA will implement a business satisfaction tool agreed upon by the state-level business service team to assist in demonstrating continuous improvement.
2. LWDA business service partners must have clear, convenient, and easily accessible content and outreach materials (including web-based content) for business customers that provides:
  - a. A list of all business products and services; and
  - b. Contact information for a business to contact through the identified "single point of contact" protocol
3. Business Service Teams will document they are working and making progress towards shared goals.

### **E. Business Services Reporting**

The LWDBs and state workforce development programs serving business customers are required to track and report the number, type, size, and services provided to businesses. Using a "report template," each WIOA Core partner or state workforce agency will collect the business data information from their local or regional areas, and each of these state workforce agencies is responsible for sending this information to the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) on a quarterly basis. The VEC will aggregate and compile this information and report it to the VBWD on an annual basis.

The "report template" will be used to track the following data:

- **Number of Businesses Served**
  - Tracked by establishment

- **Type of Business**
  - Tracked using the [NAICS Codes](#) (North American Industry Classification System)
  
- **Size of Business** (for each location)
  - Small (0-249 employees)
  - Other (250+ employees)
  
- **Type of services provided**
  - Assessments (Work Keys Profiles, Career Readiness or Foundational Skills Assessments)
  - Recruitment Services (Job Descriptions, Job Postings, Candidate Screenings, Job Fairs, Recruiting Events, Targeted Candidate Recruitment)
  - Labor Market Information
  - Consulting Services
  - Tax Incentives and Credits
  - Layoff Aversion
  - Registered Apprenticeship
  - Training (Examples: Pre-Employment Training, On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, Training in Employment Issues, etc.)

**Timeline for Business Reporting Implementation:**

- Sept. 2017: Provide Report Template to workforce partners and provide technical assistance or training to local programs
- Sept. 2017: Workforce Partners start tracking Business Services information
- Oct. 2017: Begin full implementation of Business Services Reporting
- Jan. 2018: 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Reports (Oct.-Dec.) due to Workforce Partners; Information compiled by VEC
- March 2018: Provide an update to the VBWD
- April 2018: 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Reports (Jan.-Mar.) due to Workforce Partner; Information compiled by VEC
- July 2018: 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Reports (Apr.-Jun.) due to Workforce Partner; Information compiled by VEC
- Sept. 2018: Business Services Annual Report to the VBWD

## **F. Evaluation**

Business Services for the LWDBs will be evaluated using the following metrics:

- A shared vision and strategy for business services shall be included in the AJC MOU and signed by all active partners
- A single point of contact protocol documented in the AJC MOU
- A Written Communication Plan shall be included in the AJC MOU
  - A unified approach and message that is focused on the workforce system instead of a program specific approach.
  - An outreach plan based on sector strategies identified in the local plan.
  - Identification of locally available resources and channels for outreach and how they will be used.
  - The role of each partner in performing outreach activities.
  - A method for determining how effective outreach efforts have been locally.
  - A description of additional partnerships to assist in communications and outreach to businesses including business roundtables, business advisory councils, or existing business visitation programs through economic development entities.
  - Standardized timeframes to respond to business inquiries and subsequent contact, in order to deliver specialized and collaborative solutions to meet business customer needs.
- A policy or procedure shall be established to ensure partner staff within the AJC are aware of the procedure for business services referral.
- A method to collect Business Services Satisfaction data based on criteria and tool to be provided by the State WIOA Title I Administrator
- The website must include SPOC (Standard Point of Contact) protocol including updated contact information for businesses and list of business services available within the LWDA.

The WIOA Title I Administrator will provide oversight and reporting for the above metrics. The state-level business services team led by the WIOA Title I Administrator will conduct an annual evaluation of data collected under Sections E and F and will report the results to the VBWD by October 31st of each year with the first report due in October 31, 2018.