

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Virginia Workforce Council

Policy Number:	13-01
Effective Date:	October 10, 2013
Title:	Business Services Requirements for Local Workforce Investment Areas

PURPOSE

In order to improve outcomes for the business customer by enhancing system-wide performance, it is the expectation of the Virginia Workforce Council that Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) will fully implement an integrated approach to business services, in order to improve outcomes such as, credential attainment and employment in skill set areas needed by businesses and driven by business demand, not only to increase the level of satisfaction from the business community, but the Commonwealth as a whole.

REFERENCES

1. 20 CFR 667
2. ETA TEGL 13-07
3. VWC Policy 10-01
4. VWL 11-04
5. Workforce Investment Act of 1998
6. WIAWP Integrated State Plan – 2012-2017

BACKGROUND

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 created a comprehensive workforce investment system that places major emphasis on the role of business in the workforce system. Businesses play a vital role in the structuring and implementation of the workforce system and they are one of the primary customers in the one-stop. Provision of services to businesses is value added to businesses, jobseeker customers, and the community.

POLICY STATEMENT

WIA envisions a high performance workforce investment system – a system that is , results oriented, flexible and continuously improving. Continuous improvement is the systematic and ongoing improvement of products, programs, services and process by small increments and major breakthroughs.

The workforce system should be demand-driven, system focused and therefore, coherent and easily accessible to business customers. LWIAs should provide comprehensive services to businesses through the local workforce system. Full integration of business services in the workforce development system is critical to have effective business services

and achieve a high performance workforce investment system.

Specific examples of business services, related activities and resources, such as, the Business Services Network, and current pilot of a LWIA business services model, are provided in Virginia Workforce Letter (VWL) #11-04. This VWL also describes four (4) qualities that should characterize the business service model in each LWIA.

This policy outlines the role and requirements of LWIAs and Virginia Workforce Centers in providing services to business customers and additionally, presents required actions by the LWIA in regard to implementation of business services to enhance the business customer's outcomes and satisfaction with the workforce system.

State and Local Level Collaboration

The VCCS, in its role as WIA 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 and delivering a universal message to identify the one-stop system and show that services are standardized. Interagency collaboration, forming partnerships, and leveraging resources will be a vital aspect of Virginia's success in meeting business' workforce needs. Partnering in creative ways and including state agencies that are not employer driven in those partnerships is critical to continue to efficiently serve one of the workforce system's primary customers, businesses. These efforts are aligned with the goal of enhancing services to business, as outlined in the Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Integrated State Plan.

Role of LWIAs and Virginia Workforce Centers in Providing Business Services:

- Build Relationships with Business and Business-focused Organizations
- Coordinate and Streamline Business Services by Virginia Workforce Center Partners
- Act as an Informational Resource to Businesses
- Assist Businesses in the Recruiting Process
- Assist Businesses with Addressing Training Needs
- Provide Quality Individualized Services to Businesses

Requirements for LWIA Business Services:

minimum standards are required and must be evident, documented, and practiced in the delivery of services to business customers in each LWIA. Minimum standards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) LWIA business services partners must commit to a shared vision and strategy for an integrated business-driven service delivery system, as evidenced by a document signed by all partners.
- 2) LWIA business services partners must develop a measureable framework indicating how the LWIA will achieve and track progress in providing optimal business service solutions, through a written communications plan that includes the following:
 - a) A 'single point of contact' protocol to streamline the process for businesses and ensure that all partners are informed of and respond to a business request.

- b) Standardized timeframes to respond to business inquires and subsequent contact, in order to deliver specialized and collaborative solutions to meet business customer needs; alternatives options must be provided if the LWIA cannot provide an affirmative response to the business customer's initial request.
 - c) Expected levels of customer service that will be provided by all members of the business service team and any additional staff who may be contacted by businesses to receive services.
 - d) A method to collect LWIA business services data and ensure business satisfaction to demonstrate continuous improvement.
- 3) LWIA 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, services, and additional resources that are available, to include but are not limited to, minimum skills training requirements and training resources.
 - b) Contact information for a business to call through the identified "single point of contact protocol.'

The preceding minimum standards must be evident, documented and embedded into LWIA business services policy and practice; LWIA business services must demonstrate minimum standards and identify challenges of implementation, no later than February 1, 2014. As LWIAs implement these practices, additional business services standards and criteria may be identified and required to be incorporated into LWIA business services policy and practice through guidance provided by the Virginia Community College System as the administrator of the Workforce Investment Act. VCCS staff will provide additional funds as available for LWIAs in conformance with this policy.

Business Services Performance

The Virginia Workforce Council may adopt state performance measures with implications to WIBs of a nature that are less affected by economic conditions and more indicative of the effectiveness with which LWIAs meet business needs. Such measures would be in addition to those required under the WIA and will be communicated accordingly.

APPROVED:

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**Virginia Community College System
Workforce Development Services**