



**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
(WIOA)
Local Plan
Program Years 2025-2028**

Local Workforce Development Area:

Name: Monterey County Workforce Development Board (MCWDB)

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Executive Summary

The Monterey County Workforce Development Board (MCWDB), a unit within the Monterey County Administrative Office's Intergovernmental and Legislative Affairs division, is proud to present the 2025-2028 Local Plan. This plan has been developed in accordance with the Regional and Local Planning Guidance issued on December 20, 2024.

As required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Local Plan ensures operational alignment with the strategic objectives of the Regional Plan, strengthens coordination with local partners, and outlines key service delivery strategies. It details braided funding resources, support for workforce system partners, and strategic collaborations that enhance service integration.

The 2025-2028 Local Plan builds upon the vision set forth in the Regional Plan by providing a comprehensive overview of local workforce operations and processes. Key focus areas include:

- CalFresh Employment and Training services
- Coordination with Local Child Support Agencies (LCSAs)
- Alignment with the Comprehensive Integrated Employment (CIE) Blueprint to serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities
- Workforce training for frontline staff, including digital fluency, distance learning, and cultural competencies
- Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion activities
- Youth workforce development initiatives
- America's Job Center of California (AJCC) Operator responsibilities

A core component of the Local Plan is the collaboration and coordination among local workforce partners to achieve the Regional Plan's vision. The plan highlights key cooperative agreements and core partnerships as defined under WIOA Section 121, including:

- WIOA Title II (Adult Education and Literacy)
- WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser Employment Services)
- WIOA Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation Services)
- Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education

The 2025-2028 Local Plan was developed with input and support from key stakeholders, ensuring alignment with local partners and a shared commitment to workforce development across Monterey County.

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WIOA Core and Required Partner Coordination

How Local Boards and AJCC partners will coordinate the services and resources identified in their MOU, as outlined in WIOA Memorandums of Understanding (WSD18-12).

As outlined in the WIOA Memorandum of Understanding (WSD18-12), the Monterey County Workforce Development Board (MCWDB) is committed to fostering a high-quality workforce development system that serves both job seekers and employers. Through strategic collaboration with county agencies, educational institutions, and the business community, MCWDB ensures the efficient delivery of employment and training services.

The MCWDB's MOU with its partners establishes three priority areas to enhance coordination within the America's Job Center of California (AJCC) delivery system:

1. Employer Engagement

The MCWDB prioritizes employer engagement to better align workforce development efforts with the needs of local and regional industries, particularly in high-priority sectors. Key strategies include:

- Strengthening employer engagement initiatives that connect job seekers with industry demands, with a focus on small businesses and priority industry sectors.
- Implementing common performance measures for all partners to track employer services and engagement activities effectively.
- Leveraging and expanding successful models such as the MCWDB's Sector Strategies, regional and local initiatives and Labor Market Information (LMI) systems to optimize employer outreach while minimizing duplication.
- Enhancing work-based learning opportunities, including internships, customized training, incumbent worker training, and apprenticeships to support workforce readiness.

2. Aligning Career Pathways and Sector Strategies

The MCWDB is committed to increasing the number of individuals who obtain industry-recognized credentials and degrees by aligning career pathways with regional sector strategies. These efforts include:

- Developing career pathways with multiple entry and exit points to serve a diverse range of job seekers, including youth and adult workers.
- Convening industry leaders to ensure training programs and curricula to meet evolving workforce demands.

- Collaborating with community colleges and training providers to align coursework with stackable, industry-valued credentials, creating seamless career advancement opportunities.
- Enhancing services for out-of-school and disconnected youth by expanding work experience and career opportunities in priority sectors.
- Implementing measures to track progress toward self-sufficiency, including livable wages, retention rates, credential attainment, job quality, and customer satisfaction.

3. System Alignment and Accountability

The MCWDB fosters system integration and continuous improvement by enhancing coordination across AJCC partners. These efforts focus on:

- Reducing service duplication and streamlining operations through enhanced partner presence at AJCC locations and through virtual services.
- Implementing human-centered design principles to improve customer flow, including intake, assessment, referral processes, and job placement services in demand sectors.
- Strengthening partnerships to better serve hard-to-reach populations, including individuals with limited English proficiency and basic skills deficiencies.
- Exploring cost-sharing strategies within the North Central Coast Regional Planning Unit to optimize resources related to procurement, staff training, web-based tools and applications, and evaluation tools.
- Providing cross-training opportunities for AJCC staff to increase awareness and improve service delivery for priority populations, including unemployed and underemployed individuals, low-income job seekers, veterans, individuals with disabilities, youth, and other at-risk populations.

By focusing on these key priorities, the MCWDB aims to drive continuous improvement, system efficiency, and workforce outcomes, ensuring that the region’s workforce system remains responsive to the evolving needs of both employers and job seekers.

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will work towards co-enrollment and common case management as a service delivery strategy, as outlined in Strategic Co-Enrollment – Unified Plan Partners (WSD19-09).

The MCWDB recognizes that strong partnerships with educational institutions are essential to delivering effective career pathways and co-enrollment opportunities. To enhance coordination between education and workforce activities, the MCWDB ensures ongoing communication between secondary and postsecondary institutions and other workforce system partners.

As part of the North Central Coast Regional Planning Unit (RPU), the MCWDB has collaborated with regional workforce development boards to align policies that promote co-enrollment, both in local and regional programs and grants. This alignment ensures that participants moving within the North Central Coast region can continue receiving uninterrupted services, fostering a seamless experience across workforce programs.

One key initiative demonstrating this commitment is the High Road Construction Careers grant, a tri-county apprenticeship preparation program for the construction industry. Funded by the California Workforce Development Board's High Road Construction Careers grant, this program helps participants gain the skills needed to enter and succeed in registered apprenticeships, supporting long-term career stability.

To further support co-enrollment efforts, the MCWDB strongly encourages service providers to:

- **Pursue co-enrollment** between Title I Youth Services and Title II Adult Education programs, fostering collaboration and educational persistence.
- **Develop credentialing benchmarks** in partnership with Title II Adult Education and community colleges, ensuring participants gain both basic and occupational skills on an accelerated timeline.
- **Facilitate Educational re-entry programs**, even on a part-time basis, while participants continue their education and training while still earning an income.
- **Strengthen partnerships with the Department of Rehabilitation** to identify and co-enroll eligible individuals, ensuring that all core workforce programs provide access to adaptive services and accommodations.

Additionally, AJCC satellite locations are designed to provide accessible meeting spaces and adaptive services to meet the diverse needs of customers. By prioritizing co-enrollment and common case management strategies, the MCWDB continues to enhance service integration, ensuring that participants receive comprehensive, uninterrupted support as they progress toward economic self-sufficiency.

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will facilitate access to service provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through technology and other means.

The MCWDB and its America's Job Center of California (AJCC) partners have implemented various technological solutions to ensure equitable access to workforce services, particularly for individuals in remote areas. The transition to digital service delivery was accelerated due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which required AJCCs and partner organizations to temporarily suspend in-person services. To address these challenges and maintain accessibility, the MCWDB issued Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) to expand virtual services, enhance online training opportunities, and continue delivering essential workforce development programs.

To support this effort, the following technology-driven services have been implemented:

- **Premier Virtual One-Stop System** – A digital platform providing interactive virtual job fairs to connect job seekers with employers in real time.
- **Virtual AJCC Services** – AJCC partners offer remote access to workforce services and programs, ensuring customers receive assistance regardless of their location.
- **Launchpad Event Planning and Communications System** – A digital software system to improve, automate and streamline the delivery of workforce development and employment services to job seekers and employers in Monterey County.
 - The existing Launchpad customer relationship management (CRM) system will be enhanced to develop planning, registration, recordkeeping and email notification systems in real time for job fairs including employers and job seekers with a digital process leveraging online CRM and business engagement tools.
 - Event Registration forms for both job seekers and employers in electronic format will be designed to assist in obtaining data including location, interests, and feedback on services.
 - Improved data access and reporting on the progression and outcomes of the job fairs for both the employers and job seekers provides the numbers of attendees, employers, zip code locations, and uploading of resumes.
 - Usage of email notification reminds both employers and job seekers of upcoming and registered job fairs. Information can be used to track job seekers in their continued efforts to secure gainful employment.
 - The MCWDB will be the lead on the ongoing development of the Launchpad system. This tool will allow MCWDB and its regional partners in Santa Cruz and San Benito counties to reach out to underserved areas and provide information on WIOA services and registration.

By leveraging technology and innovative service delivery models, the MCWDB ensures that workforce development programs remain accessible and effective, particularly for job seekers and businesses in rural and underserved areas. Moving forward, MCWDB will continue expanding digital resources to enhance workforce accessibility and engagement across Monterey County.

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will coordinate workforce and education activities with the provision of appropriate supportive services.

The MCWDB recognizes that supportive services play a critical role in removing barriers to employment and education, ultimately enhancing participants' success in the workforce. To ensure individuals receive the necessary assistance, the MCWDB has adopted a Supportive Services policy, which establishes funding levels for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth program participants.

This policy outlines detailed requirements for supportive services, including the development, documentation, and retention of records demonstrating the need for and provision of such services. Supportive services are designed to help participants overcome external barriers to employment, such as transportation challenges, childcare needs, and other essential support.

To facilitate the seamless integration of workforce, education, and supportive services, the MCWDB:

- Collaborates with program and education providers to ensure eligible individuals have access to needed services that support their training and employment goals.
- Outlines a service delivery strategy in the AJCC MOU through a service matrix, identifying which AJCC partners provide specific supportive services and how customers can access them—whether in-house, remotely, or through informational materials.
- Coordinates referrals and service provision with community-based organizations, government agencies, and other stakeholders to maximize resource efficiency and service accessibility.

By integrating supportive services with workforce and education programs, the MCWDB ensures that individuals receive the comprehensive support they need to succeed in their training, job placement, and long-term career development.

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will comply with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, assistive technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, as outlined in Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures (WSD17-01).

The MCWDB is committed to fostering an inclusive and barrier-free environment that ensures equal access to employment and training services for individuals with disabilities. The MCWDB and its AJCC partners adhere to WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, ensuring that all facilities, programs, services, assistive technologies, and materials are accessible and compliant with nondiscrimination and equal opportunity standards.

Monitoring and Compliance

To uphold these commitments, the State's Employment Development Department (EDD) provides annual or biennial compliance monitoring instruments to the MCWDB's Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer. These instruments assess the physical and programmatic accessibility of comprehensive and satellite AJCC locations, ensuring they remain fully usable by individuals with disabilities.

Additionally, the MCWDB conducts annual monitoring reviews, during which:

- Training providers complete an ADA Accessibility Survey, submitted for review.
- Site visits confirm that EO policies and procedures are effectively implemented.
- AJCC facilities are evaluated to ensure compliance with accessibility requirements and staff competency in serving individuals with disabilities.

Policies and Service Provision

The MCWDB has established specific policies to support and guide the provision of WIOA services for individuals with disabilities, including:

- Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures Policy and Guidance, providing the MCWDB's accessibility requirements for individuals with disabilities and/or limited English, detailing procedures for the MCWDB staff and WIOA service providers to ensure compliance and service accessibility.
- Reasonable Accommodation and Modification for Individuals with Disabilities Policy and Guidance.

Through the AJCC delivery system, individuals with disabilities have access to a comprehensive range of services, including:

- Outreach, recruitment, and eligibility verification.
- Assessment, job search assistance, and referral services.
- On-the-Job Training (OJT), Individual Training Accounts (ITA), work experience/transitional jobs, and supportive services.
- Referral systems for additional training and support services to ensure full accessibility to workforce programs.

To reinforce awareness of EO policies, all WIOA participants sign an EO acknowledgment form at the time of enrollment, confirming their understanding of their rights and grievance procedures.

Staff Training and Partnerships

To maintain high standards of service accessibility, the MCWDB:

- Requires AJCC staff to attend EO training every two years at a core partner location.

- Collaborates with the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), a mandatory AJCC core partner, and other disability service organizations to improve service access and delivery.
- Ensure DOR staff are scheduled at comprehensive and satellite AJCC locations as needed to provide direct support.
- Works with Monterey County Behavioral Health Department to offer assistance related to mental health and substance use disorders, as needed.
- Encourages DOR-led training sessions for AJCC partners to strengthen staff capacity in serving individuals with disabilities.

Adaptive Services and Assistive Technology

The MCWDB and its partners make every effort to accommodate customer needs through:

- Adaptive services tailored to individuals with disabilities.
- Accessible meeting spaces at comprehensive and satellite AJCC locations.
- Available Assistive technology resources.

Continuous Improvement and Oversight

The MCWDB leverages its Executive and Career Services Committee meetings to:

- Review services, performance outcomes, and initiatives.
- Assess outreach efforts to individuals with barriers to employment.
- Develop strategies for enhancing service accessibility and engagement.

By prioritizing compliance, staff training, accessibility, and strategic partnerships, the MCWDB ensures that individuals with disabilities receive equitable access to workforce development programs, supporting their full participation and success in the labor market.

State Strategic Partner Coordination

How the Local Board will coordinate with County Health and Human Services Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who access CalFresh Employment and Training services.

The MCWDB actively collaborates with the Monterey County Department of Social Services (MCDSS) and other local partners to provide comprehensive support and employment services to individuals accessing CalFresh Employment & Training (E&T) services. This collaboration ensures that underserved populations receive the necessary resources, training, and employment opportunities to achieve economic stability.

Enhanced Coordination and Resource Alignment

Beyond the COVID-19 pandemic response, which heightened the importance of inter-agency collaboration, the MCWDB remains committed to strengthening its partnerships through the following initiatives:

- **Public Comment & Listening Sessions:** The MCWDB has hosted community engagement sessions to review and improve CalFresh E&T services, particularly for individuals with disabilities.
- **Funding Integration:** The MCWDB strategically leverages WIOA funds to supplement traditional funding sources such as CalWORKs, Pell Grants, and Wagner-Peyser services, ensuring expanded access to training programs and supportive services.
- **Co-Enrollment & Resource Maximization:** The MCWDB and MCDSS work together to align resources and increase enrollment in CalFresh E&T programs, optimizing service delivery across workforce and social service systems.

Referral & Service Integration

To ensure seamless service delivery, the MCWDB continues to enhance its referral system, initially developed during the drafting of the previous Local Plan. This system enables cross-agency referrals and ensures that individuals:

- Have access to integrated services across the workforce, social services, and community-based organizations.
- Can transition between programs without unnecessary barriers or disruptions.
- Receive coordinated support from local partners, including those serving formerly incarcerated individuals, non-custodial parents, and those affected by the pandemic.

Ongoing Collaboration & Continuous Improvement

To strengthen partnerships and refine service delivery, the MCWDB facilitates:

- Monthly AJCC partner meetings to collect input, enhance collaboration, and increase efficiency.
- Improvements to referral processes, follow-up strategies, and inter-agency communication to ensure effective service coordination.

Commitment to High-Quality Career Pathways

As outlined in the North Central Coast Region's Regional Plan, the MCWDB prioritizes sector pathways that lead to "high-road" jobs—positions that offer:

- Living wages
- Career advancement opportunities
- Comprehensive benefits

The MCWDB recognizes that placing individuals in low-paying, stagnant jobs perpetuates economic hardship. To break this cycle, the MCWDB works closely with social service agencies and education and training providers to support individuals in entering and advancing within high-road career pathways, ensuring long-term economic mobility.

How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Child Support Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who are non-custodial parents.

The COVID-19 pandemic reinforced the critical need for strong local and regional partnerships. One such initiative, the *Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Development Initiative*, is a countywide coalition dedicated to providing coordinated support for emergency early childhood care and education. This initiative connects essential workers with the childcare resources they need while offering comprehensive support to parents.

The MCWDB continues to engage closely with the County Child Support Services Agency and community-based organizations (CBOs) to identify opportunities for improving child support services. Monthly meetings with CBOs and faith-based organizations provide a platform for discussing strategies to help program participants advance in their careers while ensuring their children receive quality care. The integration of braided supports and coordinated services remains a cornerstone of these efforts.

In collaboration with the Local Child Support Agency (LCSA) and Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG) partners, the MCWDB participates in monthly meetings and assists to identify and connect non-custodial parents with available resources. This partnership prioritizes support for unemployed, underemployed, and payment-delinquent non-custodial parents, offering pathways to financial stability and workforce participation. A key objective of this collaboration is the expansion of family law facilitator services, which assist recently released individuals in accessing support services and reintegrating as contributing members of society. Additionally, the partnership with *Encompass Community Services* provides employment assistance and support specifically tailored for parents, including targeted resources for fathers.

Another key initiative is the *GEO Re-Entry Program*, a collaborative effort between LCSA and the MCWDB that supports justice-involved individuals through evidence-based treatment and supervision programs. This partnership helps non-custodial parents gain the necessary resources to enter, remain, and advance in employment or educational pathways. The ultimate goal is to facilitate access to sustainable, high-quality jobs that enable participants to support themselves and their families.

The MCWDB and LCSA continue to refine and strengthen referral and outreach processes. The introduction of direct referrals to LCSA has enhanced service coordination and increased access to a broader range of resources. Additionally, LCSA conducts targeted outreach programs

within communities to encourage program participation and ensure that non-custodial parents are aware of the support available to them.

Through these strategic partnerships and initiatives, the MCWDB remains committed to fostering economic stability and workforce advancement for non-custodial parents, ultimately contributing to stronger families and communities.

How the Local Board will coordinate with local Partnership Agreement partners, established in alignment with the Competitive Integrate Employment Blueprint, and other local, regional, and statewide partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

The MCWDB works in close collaboration with the DOR to expand opportunities for individuals with disabilities, including those with developmental and intellectual disabilities. This partnership is guided by an agreement between the DOR and the State Board, which identifies four key policy priorities:

1. Services to Youth
2. Employer Engagement
3. Capacity Building
4. Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)

The MCWDB actively supports all four priorities through coordinated efforts with the DOR.

In 2018, the partnership agreement was revised to require Local Workforce Development Boards and Regional Planning Units to incorporate specific planning guidance into their regional and local workforce plans. This enhanced collaboration has led to several key developments, including the co-location of DOR staff at AJCCs for up to eight hours per month, during which they provide direct support, training, and updated guidance to better assist job seekers with disabilities. Additionally, the DOR conducts monthly meetings with AJCC staff to discuss strategies for improving service delivery, strengthening collaboration, and enhancing disability awareness training. These efforts have significantly contributed to capacity building and service integration across the workforce system.

The MCWDB and DOR also work together to strengthen employer engagement efforts by sharing information on hiring incentives, employer requirements, and best practices for recruiting and retaining individuals with disabilities. The DOR provides valuable input on regional workforce strategies, targeted industries, and career pathways that support youth and individuals with disabilities. Additionally, the DOR facilitates on-the-job training opportunities for job seekers with intellectual or developmental disabilities, helping them gain hands-on experience and develop essential workplace skills.

As part of its commitment to Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE), the MCWDB continues to coordinate with the DOR, AJCCs, and key stakeholders to implement regional strategies that promote inclusive workforce practices. Through stakeholder meetings and policy collaboration, the partnership ensures that individuals with disabilities have access to sustainable, competitive employment opportunities that align with their skills and aspirations.

By fostering strong partnerships at the local, regional, and statewide levels, the MCWDB remains dedicated to creating a more inclusive workforce that supports individuals with disabilities in achieving long-term career success.

How the Local Board will coordinate with community-based organizations and other local partners who serve individuals who are English language learners, foreign-born, and/or refugees.

Community-based organizations (CBOs) play a vital role in the MCWDB's efforts to support English language learners (ELLs), foreign-born individuals, and refugees. Monterey County is home to five WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy partners: Gonzales Adult School, Monterey Adult School, Pacific Grove Adult School, Salinas Adult School, and Soledad Adult School. Additionally, the MCWDB collaborates with Hartnell College, Salinas Valley Adult Education, and Monterey Peninsula College Adult Education consortia to support Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education programs. The mission of the MCWDB and its partners is to equip individuals with the skills and education necessary to secure high-road jobs that offer living wages and opportunities for career advancement within Monterey County.

The MCWDB's One-Stop Operator continues to facilitate monthly meetings with partners, including Adult Education providers that serve ELLs. These meetings provide a platform for updates on English as a Second Language (ESL) class locations, outreach initiatives for youth programs, cross-cultural customer service training, and other relevant services. By fostering regular communication, these meetings help ensure that resources are effectively coordinated and accessible to those in need.

The MCWDB recognizes that local partners are often the most effective bridge to underserved populations. To strengthen outreach efforts, the MCWDB collaborates with CBOs, non-profits, and other organizations to identify service gaps and tailor support for individuals who may be reluctant to engage with government agencies. For example, the undocumented community, which often faces barriers to accessing services, receives support primarily from three key non-profits. Through these partnerships, the MCWDB assists with coordination of General Educational Development (GED) attainment and dependent support services, ensuring that these populations receive the resources necessary for economic stability and career growth.

Additionally, the MCWDB works with partner agencies to enhance their focus on historically underserved communities. An updated referral process has significantly improved the coordination and delivery of interconnected resources, ensuring seamless access to services for

ELLs, foreign-born individuals, and refugees. To further support accessibility, the MCWDB website now includes a comprehensive list of AJCC partner organizations and their programs, making it easier for individuals to connect with available resources.

Through these strategic collaborations, MCWDB remains committed to empowering diverse communities, fostering inclusive economic opportunities, and ensuring equitable access to workforce development programs across Monterey County.

How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Veteran Affairs, community-based organizations, and other local partners who serve veterans.

The MCWDB is committed to ensuring that veterans and their eligible spouses receive priority of service and have equitable access to workforce services, programs, training opportunities, and supportive services. Through strategic partnerships with local veterans' groups, community-based organizations (CBOs), and other service providers, the MCWDB works to address the unique challenges faced by veterans, including those who are unemployed, underemployed, homeless, or disabled.

1. Priority of Service

The MCWDB has adopted the WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service policy, which mandates that priority of service be provided to:

- Veterans and their eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.
- Recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.
- Veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
- Individuals with family income under 250% of the poverty line and for whom it is determined that the individual is in need of and can benefit from services. Long-term unemployed individuals with a barrier to employment may be enrolled under this priority; employed individuals enrolled under this priority must have a barrier to self-sufficient employment. This priority population was established by the Local Board.
- Other individuals not included in WIOA priority groups.

2. Veterans and Eligible Spouses

The MCWDB prioritizes workforce services for veterans and their eligible spouses, with first priority given to those who are low-income, recipients of public assistance, or basic skills deficient. Veterans and eligible spouses who do not meet these criteria are still entitled to

priority of service, but they are not factored into the 51% priority of service requirement under WIOA guidelines.

A recent EDD directive emphasized the need for training in Veterans and Eligible Spouses Priority of Service (POS) to ensure that veterans and their eligible spouses are identified and informed of their priority at the point of accessing services and stated that, instead of asking a potential participant if he or she is a veteran, which many veterans assume is asking if they served in a war, the front desk staff should always ask, “have you or your spouse ever served in the U.S. Military?” This question must be asked of every customer who walks in regardless of gender. A customer’s Driver’s License or ID card may also provide the word, “Veteran,” to indicate that the individual has served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

The directive additionally emphasized the importance of using a script at the front desk to ensure that veterans and their eligible spouses are quickly identified and can familiarize themselves with the programs offered through the AJCC, their eligibility requirements, and other support that can be provided through the program.

3. Homeless and Disabled Veterans

Public feedback from a January 15, 2025, stakeholder presentation emphasized that homeless and disabled veterans often do not self-identify as veterans, making outreach and service coordination crucial. Additionally, a previous grant supporting homeless veterans highlighted the challenges some veterans face due to bad discharge status, which can limit their access to benefits and services. The MCWDB is actively exploring ways to improve outreach and ensure that all veterans—regardless of their discharge status—receive appropriate support.

4. Support Services and Workforce Development

To strengthen workforce outcomes for veterans, the MCWDB is committed to enhancing staff training and awareness regarding the unique needs of veterans and other at-risk populations. This includes:

- Specialized career counseling and job placement assistance for veterans.
- Connections to apprenticeship and on-the-job training programs tailored for veterans.
- Coordination with Veterans Affairs and local partners to expand access to employment-related services.
- Support for veterans facing barriers to employment, including those with disabilities or experiencing homelessness.

5. Programs and Resources for Homeless Veterans

While the MCWDB does not currently administer veteran-specific housing programs, it actively collaborates with community-based organizations and veteran service providers to connect homeless veterans with housing assistance and workforce programs. These include:

- VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) – A federal program providing rental assistance and case management.

- Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) – A program offering homelessness prevention, rapid rehousing, and supportive services.
- Local CBO partnerships that provide housing assistance, legal aid, and employment support for homeless veterans.

By fostering strong partnerships with local veterans’ groups, non-profits, and workforce development agencies, the MCWDB continues to expand opportunities for veterans to achieve meaningful employment and long-term stability.

How the Local Board will collaborate with the Strategic Planning partners to address environmental sustainability.

The MCWDB recognizes the critical role of environmental sustainability in shaping the future workforce and ensuring long-term economic resilience. As industries continue to evolve in response to climate change, technological advancements, and policy shifts, the integration of sustainable practices into workforce development is essential.

To support this vision, the MCWDB is committed to collaborating with Strategic Planning Partners, industry leaders, educational institutions, and community organizations to:

1. Promote Green Jobs and Workforce Development

The MCWDB will work with regional and state partners to identify and expand training opportunities in emerging green industries, including:

- Renewable energy (solar, wind, and battery storage)
- Energy efficiency and building retrofitting
- Sustainable agriculture and water conservation
- Electric vehicle infrastructure and alternative transportation
- Environmental compliance and waste reduction

Through partnerships with local employers, community colleges, universities, and apprenticeship programs, the MCWDB will ensure that job seekers—particularly those from underserved communities—have access to hands-on training and employment opportunities in high-demand green careers with industry certifications.

2. Support Businesses in Transitioning to Sustainable Practices

As businesses across industries adopt environmentally sustainable models, the MCWDB will support employers by:

- Coordinating with workforce and education partners for trainings that will incorporate sustainability principles into job training programs.
- Partnering with County Economic Development agencies to assist with attracting and retaining green businesses.
- Encouraging businesses to utilize clean energy, reduce waste, and adopt circular economy strategies.
- Helping workers to understand and adapt to sustainability-focused changes in their industries.

3. Incorporate Environmental Sustainability into Workforce Training

The MCWDB will include environmental literacy and sustainable workplace practices as part of workforce training programs, ensuring that workers across all industries understand:

- The importance of energy efficiency and conservation in their roles.
- Best practices for reducing environmental impact in various sectors.
- How to apply green skills and technology to everyday job functions.

4. Strengthen Partnerships to Advance Regional Sustainability Goals

To create a cohesive and strategic approach to workforce development and sustainability, the MCWDB will work with:

- Local and regional planning agencies to align workforce strategies with climate action goals.
- Work with educational institutions on how to expand green technology training programs.
- Coordinate with Industry consortia and business groups to assess future workforce needs in sustainability-related fields.
- Work with community-based organizations to ensure equitable access to green job opportunities where available.

By embedding sustainability concerns and issues into workforce development initiatives, the MCWDB aims to train workers with the skills needed to support a greener economy in Monterey County while also supporting businesses in meeting future sustainability goals. This approach ensures that Monterey County remains competitive, resilient, and forward-thinking in the face of environmental and economic shifts.

WIOA Title I Coordination

Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to gain and expand proficiency in digital fluency and distance learning.

The MCWDB is committed to providing ongoing training and professional development for both staff and partner organizations to ensure the highest level of service for customers. As digital literacy requirements continuously evolve alongside advancements in technology, it is essential that staff remain proficient in emerging tools and trends.

One significant new area of focus is the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into workforce services. To maintain excellence, staff and partners receive ongoing training on AI applications and other digital innovations, ensuring they can effectively utilize these new technologies to enhance service delivery to the MCWDB's customers. Incorporating and strengthening the use of digital literacy is a key priority, enabling the MCWDB to remain competitive and adaptive in an increasingly digital environment.

The MCWDB is dedicated to equipping staff with the necessary skills to do their jobs and stay ahead of current and future technological advancements. Continuous upskilling efforts help ensure that workforce professionals remain proficient in the use of digital tools and cybersecurity and maintain an understanding of the ethical considerations that will challenge workforce professionals in the future. The following key training areas have been identified to enhance staff digital literacy. These topics will be addressed through webinars led by qualified trainers:

- **Communication & Collaboration**
 - Effective use of social media in workforce development
 - Utilization of digital tools for engagement and productivity
 - Understanding key concepts in the digital era
 - Developing skills for meaningful digital engagement
- **Cybersecurity Awareness**
 - Identifying potential security risks and mitigation strategies
 - Responding effectively to cyber threats or attacks
 - Understanding how staff actions can contribute to cybersecurity risks
 - Use of AI and risks associated with it
- **Legal & Ethical Considerations**

- Best practices for sharing information via email
- Guidelines for discussing business and client matters on social media
- Maintaining confidentiality and data privacy standards

By prioritizing these training initiatives, the MCWDB ensures that staff and partners remain well-equipped to navigate the evolving digital landscape while delivering exceptional services to customers.

Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma-exposed populations.

The MCWDB is committed to providing continuous training and professional development for staff and partner organizations to ensure the highest level of service for customers.

In 2020, the MCWDB launched *WIOA University*, a comprehensive catalog of workforce professional training programs. As part of this initiative, WIOA staff and partner staff are required to complete 45 hours of training annually. To support this goal, the MCWDB offers the *Dynamic Works Professional Development Certification Training* to all staff. The *Foundations of Workforce Development Professional Certification* consists of nine courses, culminating in a final certification exam. These courses align with the National Association for Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) core competency areas, ensuring that staff receive industry-recognized training. The program has been highly successful with a 95% completion rate.

Additionally, the MCWDB collaborates with its partners to integrate cultural competence and trauma-informed care into daily operations. Annual training, as guided by Health and Human Services agencies, ensures that all staff understand the importance of fostering inclusive behaviors, attitudes, and policies. This training equips professionals with the necessary tools to work effectively in cross-cultural environments and provide equitable, empathetic service to all individuals.

In 2020, the MCWDB developed *Trauma-Informed Care* curriculum and began providing a three-part *Social Emotional Learning Workshop* covering key therapeutic principles of trauma-informed care. This initiative is part of a broader effort to ensure that workforce professionals are prepared to support individuals on their path to recovery and stability.

How the Local Board will coordinate Workforce investment activities in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as outlined in Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities (WSD16-04).

The MCWDB actively collaborates with regional and statewide partners to implement Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion activities, as outlined in WSD16-04. These efforts aim to support affected workers in returning to work as quickly as possible following layoffs—or to prevent layoffs altogether.

Regional Coordination and Strategic Investments

To enhance regional capacity and streamline business services, the MCWDB has partnered with Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties to secure Regional Planning Implementation (RPI) grants (2.0, 3.0). These grants have supported the development of regional infrastructure, allowing for:

- A uniform approach to Business Services alignment.
- A cohesive regional sector analysis that benefits local businesses and employees.
- Coordination of regional Rapid Response activities and services.

This cohesive strategy has improved efficiency and service delivery, ensuring businesses receive quick and effective support to mitigate workforce disruptions.

Ongoing Collaboration and Best Practices Sharing

The MCWDB actively engages with regional and statewide partners through:

- Quarterly roundtable meetings to discuss best practices and integrate them at the local level.
- Quarterly Business Engagement and Rapid Response meetings (primarily via Zoom) with participation from former regional planning partners, including San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties.
- Region-wide trainings and strategy discussions to ensure a consistent and effective Rapid Response approach.

These partnerships ensure that businesses and employees across the region receive timely support, consistent messaging, and access to critical resources.

Employer and Employee-Focused Support Services

The MCWDB offers a range of services to support both employers and employees:

Employer Benefits:

- On-the-Job Training (OJT): Reimbursement of up to 50% of training costs.

- CalJOBS Access: Job postings, labor market data, and workforce resources.
- Specialized Recruitments and Job Fairs.
- Layoff Aversion Strategies: Customized support to retain workers and minimize business disruptions.

Employee Benefits:

- Free Online Learning: Access to MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) through Coursera, EdX, and other top providers.
- Job Readiness Support: Resume building, interview preparation, and skills assessments.
- SkillUp Monterey Initiative:
 - 5,000+ online courses in Microsoft Office, Leadership, and Customer Service.
 - Career pathway tools and certification training (e.g., CompTIA, Amazon AWS Certified Developer).

Through these initiatives, the MCWDB ensures that businesses receive proactive support, and workers have access to upskilling opportunities that position them for career success in a rapidly evolving economy.

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area.

The MCWDB has adopted the WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service policy to guide the AJCC delivery system partners in meeting priority of service requirements. This policy ensures that priority is given to veterans and their eligible spouses, recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient

Adults receiving services beyond self-service and informational activities must be determined eligible, enrolled, and considered participants in WIOA Title I services. Individualized career services and training services are provided on a priority basis, regardless of funding availability. Monterey County has a long-standing commitment to serving these priority populations through its WIOA Adult Program, ensuring equitable access to workforce development services.

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Initiatives

The Monterey County Works initiative, spearheaded by the MCWDB, provides employment and training opportunities for adults and dislocated workers. Key programs under this initiative include:

- **Monterey County’s H.E.L.P. Program:** Provides a 12-week, paid work experience. Participants contribute to providing essential community services at local food banks in

Monterey and Santa Cruz counties, as well as working with the Coalition of Homeless Service Providers in Monterey County.

- **Monterey County’s 2022-23 Severe Winter Storms Project:** Offers eligible individuals 26 weeks of paid work experience at a rate of \$19.50 per hour for up to 32 hours per week, supporting winter storm recovery efforts in Monterey County.
- **Monterey County’s Community Health Worker (CHW) Certificate Training Program:** Since October 2021, the MCWDB has worked with Monterey Peninsula College and Tim Berthold, founder of the CHW Training Group and author of a highly acclaimed CHW textbook, to develop curriculum, train, and certify several cohorts of WIOA clients and incumbent (existing) workers in coordination with health care employers such as the Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital, Clinica de Salud del Valle de Salinas, and the Monterey County Health Department.
- **Monterey County’s Emerging Industries On-the-Job and Incumbent Worker Training Programs:** Since late 2022, the MCWDB’s Business Services team has been working with local companies representing emerging industries, including Bloom Energy, Tesla, and Joby Aviation, to establish a recruiting pipeline, implement on-the-job training programs, and provide training to incumbent workers to upgrade their skills.
- **North Central Coast’s Regional Equity and Recovery Partnerships Program:** Since early 2023, the MCWDB has led this grant with its regional education and training partners in Santa Cruz and San Benito counties to provide additional enrollments at regional community colleges under the State’s Regional Equity and Recovery Partnerships grant. Contracts were executed with Cabrillo, Gavilan, Hartnell, and Monterey Peninsula colleges to provide training to individuals in welding, CHW, phlebotomy, medical assisting, and other areas.

These targeted programs exemplify Monterey County’s proactive approach to workforce development, ensuring that dislocated workers receive meaningful employment opportunities while contributing to community resilience and recovery efforts.

A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the Local Area, as outlined in WIOA Youth Program Requirements (WSD17-07).

The MCWDB has designed youth workforce development services to be fully integrated into the America’s Job Center of California (AJCC) delivery system. These services are funded through WIOA and specialized grant programs and are delivered by Equus Workforce Solutions (formerly ResCare), Turning Point of Central California, and other workforce and community partners.

All youth have access to the AJCC system where they receive basic career services. During orientation and intake, youth customers self-identify any special needs and eligibility factors, ensuring appropriate service prioritization. An intake assessment evaluates language proficiency and accessibility requirements, with interpretation services available for Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals.

Assessment and Service Delivery

The MCWDB has transitioned to using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) as its primary standardized assessment instrument and using WorkKeys as an additional assessment to provide local businesses with a pool of qualified candidates to fill job vacancies.

WIOA-eligible youth also complete a comprehensive objective assessment to identify their skills, aptitudes, career interests, and service needs. Age-appropriate assessment tools ensure youth are actively engaged in the process. Based on assessment results, an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is developed, outlining short- and long-term career goals and the services needed to achieve them.

Eligible youth may choose from 14 WIOA youth program elements, which are made available through WIOA-funded programs and service providers. While youth service providers determine specific services based on assessment outcomes, the MCWDB's policy ensures all 14 elements are accessible to youth in Monterey County.

Commitment to Accessibility and Equity

The MCWDB is dedicated to serving individuals with disabilities, including youth, by maintaining a barrier-free environment within the AJCC system. The MCWDB collaborates with organizations such as the Department of Rehabilitation to enhance service access and delivery for youth with disabilities.

Resources for individuals with disabilities are available, and the AJCC system undergoes regular evaluations by the One-Stop Operator, subrecipient and State monitors, and the MCWDB's EO officer to ensure compliance with accessibility standards. Currently, both comprehensive AJCC and satellite locations have been evaluated and confirmed as accessible.

Career Pathways and Workforce Development Initiatives

To expand career pathway programs in high-demand industries, the MCWDB has launched initiatives designed to provide education, training, and workforce development opportunities at various career stages.

- North Central Coast Regional Planning Unit (RPU) Training Sessions: The MCWDB administers regional training sessions for workforce providers and stakeholders, offering technical assistance to enhance staff capacity in serving youth populations.
- The MCWDB works with Joby Aviation staff to provide summer internship and OJT opportunities.

Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Employment Programs

1. Monterey Bay Collaborative Pre-Apprenticeship Program

- Provides hands-on experience and industry-recognized certifications.
- Prepares participants for apprenticeships in Construction Laborers, Carpenters, Plumbers, Electricians, Operating Engineers, and other building trades.
- Includes training in blueprint reading, applied construction mathematics, green building techniques, and certifications such as:
 - OSHA 10-hour Safety Certification
 - CPR and First Aid Certification
 - Sexual Harassment Prevention Training
 - Multi Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) Certification
- Open to individuals with a high school diploma or GED, with preference for women, racial and ethnic minorities, disadvantaged youth (ages 18-25), and the formerly incarcerated.

2. Monterey Cadre

- Designed for young adults ages 18-24, this 12-week program fosters responsibility, leadership, and critical thinking around key sectors such as Health Care, Hospitality, Information Technology, and Environmental stewardship.
- Participants develop workplace skills, including:
 - Team coordination
 - Professionalism
 - Efficiency and problem-solving
 - Certifications
- Through civic engagement and humanitarian projects, participants work in their communities, laying the foundation for community service and career exploration.
- The MCWDB remains committed to enhancing youth workforce development services by ensuring equitable access, strong industry and community partnerships, and continuous improvement in its WIOA programs. Through its strategic initiatives, innovative training programs, and dedicated partnerships, Monterey County's workforce system provides youth with the resources and opportunities needed to achieve their career objectives and goals.

The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or the Governor and the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

The MCWDB is the Local Fiscal Agent and the responsible entity for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors. The MCWDB follows the Monterey County and local procurement policies, which involve a Request for Proposal process to award subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title 1 activities.

A description of how the Local Board fulfills the duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider as outlined in Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers (WSD22-13). This should include the name(s) and role(s) of all entities the Local Board contracts with.

The MCWDB follows the Monterey County and local procurement policies which involves using a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to ensure fair and objective decision-making when awarding grant funds to qualified applicants. The competitive procurement process is conducted in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

The MCWDB uses the competitive procurement process to select the One-Stop Operator of the local AJCC delivery system in accordance with WIOA Section 121 (d)(2)(A). The MCWDB similarly uses a competitive procurement process to award grants or contracts to Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth service providers, in accordance with WIOA Section 123(a).

The Local Board assures that it will continue to select the One-Stop Operator with the agreement of the Chief Elected Official (CEO), through a competitive process, or with approval from the local elected official and the Governor's Office.

The current AJCC Operator and provider of Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program services in North Monterey County:

Arbor E&T, LLC dba Equus Workforce Solutions
344 Salinas Street, Suite 201
Salinas, CA 93901

The MCWDB's Youth Program services provider in South Monterey County:

Turning Point of Central California, Inc.
344 Salinas Street, Suite 209
Salinas, CA 93901

Appendix A: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summaries

Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Development of comprehensive plans entails building broad and inclusive partnerships with regional and local entities in a variety of sectors. This includes engaging with employers, labor organizations, and community-based organizations as well as WIOA core, required, and strategic program partners. This approach ensures the inclusion of person-centered approaches to addressing multifaceted barriers to employment by utilizing input from the communities themselves.

Stakeholders participating in the planning processes should include, but are not limited to, employers, labor organizations, education partners, human services and housing partners as well as community-based organizations that provide services to target populations such as the following: justice-involved, English language learners, refugees, immigrants, youth, older adults, veterans, people with disabilities, and any other entities supporting historically unserved or underserved communities.

Using the template below, Regional Planning Units and Local Workforce Development Boards should provide a detailed description of how meaningful stakeholder involvement and community engagement was achieved when developing the Regional and Local Plans. This summary should be included as an attachment to both the Regional and Local Plans.

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
January 16, 2025 Zoom Meeting 3:30-5:00 p.m.	Public, Community Partners	Participants included:	
		Communities Organized for Relational Power in Action (COPA) for Monterey/Santa Cruz; America's Job Center of California (AJCC) One Stop Operator; staff to the Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito	*Identify strategies to partner with other workforce organizations in Monterey County Workforce/Partner organizations that we should be reaching out to including Mujeres en Accion. *Find different ways to outreach to share

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
		counties' workforce development boards, State of California's Employment Development Department – Wagner Peyser staff, and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR).	our services and programs with the communities we serve. *Do additional outreach to ensure that the community and other partners are aware of available services and resources; develop short PowerPoints that can be presented at different locations. *How can MCWDB partner with universities to offer higher levels of learning to the community, as well as including them in conversations to know what new career paths are emerging? *What outreach platforms are being used and what improvements can be made so that they are more effective? *Host regional meetings with employers. *Plan and host regional Job Fairs/Community events with DOR.
January 23, Zoom Meeting 3:30-5:00 p.m. and	Community College Partners	Participants included:	Comments:

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
February 10, 2025 Zoom Meeting follow-up 3:30-5:00 p.m.			
		<p>Cabrillo Community College, Hartnell Community College, Monterey Peninsula College, Gavilan Community College, and the Bay Area Community College Consortium</p>	<p>*Discuss possible co-location of services at the AJCC with Gavilan College leadership. *Submit formal written comments advocating for ETPL system reform. *Community colleges and workforce development boards to explore opportunities for regional cross-training. *Community colleges and workforce development boards to consider formalizing agreements beyond the Regional Equity and Recovery Partnership (RERP) grant.</p>
January 31, 2025 Monterey County AJCC, Salinas Job Center 10:00-12:00 p.m.	All Partners, Mandated Partners	Participants included:	Comments:
		<p>CALRegional; Monterey County Community Action Partnership; Monterey County Department of Child Support Services; Downtown Streets</p>	<p>*Responding to a question on Wagner Peyser, an EDD representative explained about EDD's Wagner-Peyser services versus other</p>

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
		<p>Team; Interim, Inc.; Monterey County Dept of Social Services; Monterey Peninsula College; CalWORKS Employment Services; Turning Point of Central California; Hartnell Community College; NCI Affiliates, Inc.; Gonzales Adult School; Salinas Adult School; MCWDB; Monterey Adult School; Dept of Rehabilitation, Salinas; Employment Development Department, Salinas; Equus Workforce Solutions; MTS Training Academy; Social Vocational Services; Veterans Services.</p>	<p>services under the EDD umbrella. *On a professional level, how can we provide training to more effectively serve our participants? *MTS would like to see additional partnerships to benefit WIOA participants. *Question on whether Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is being received within the jurisdiction? (Yes) Resource Guides, flyers, and cards were passed around for Immigration Rights. *Suggestion was made to have partners give presentations at WDB Board meeting so that the Board has a greater understanding of the services available in the community. *Are any local trainings geared to employers? *Need a local List of Resources to be updated frequently with changes.</p>

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
			<p>*If the employer is our most important customer, we should have a 'pocket guide' for local employers showing the business services and opportunities available to them. Staff can be the bridge to understanding what is being offered.</p> <p>*Invite the City of Salinas to the WDB Board meetings for a better understanding of what AJCCs offer.</p> <p>*Consider holding regular Business Engagement meetings to educate employers.</p> <p>*Reach out to local Chambers of Commerce to help them understand the AJCC's programs, services, and client population.</p> <p>*Develop an Employment Resource Guide that can be posted online.</p> <p>*Change the AJCC's Referral Form to make it a web-based, digital form, thus providing the ability to fill it out online – more effective than a paper form.</p>

Appendix B: Public Comments received that disagree with the Local Plan

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Appendix C: Signature Page

Instructions – The local CEO and Local Board chair must sign and date this form.

By signing below, the local CEO and Local Board chair request approval of Monterey County Workforce Development Board’s 2025-28 Local Plan.

Local Workforce Development Board Chair	Local Chief Elected Official
_____ Signature	_____ Signature
Erik Cushman _____ Name	_____ Name
Monterey County Workforce Development Board Chair _____ Title	_____ Title
_____ Date	_____ Date