

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Local Plan Eastern Oregon

Submitted by
Eastern Oregon Workforce Board



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Strategic Portion

Section 1: Vision and Leadership

It is expected that Section 1 responses will be greatly influenced by the members of the local workforce development board and other community stakeholders. Further, it is expected that there will be strong alignment with the current WTDB Strategic Plan and Joint Priority Setting.

Please answer the questions in Section 1 in eight (8) pages or less. Provide a response for all items identified. Reports and/or expanded analysis can be included as links and/or attachments.

Strategic Vision and Goals

1.1	20 CFR 679.560(a)(5): Strategic Vision and Goals
A. Provide the local board’s strategic vision and goals for its local workforce system; B. Describe how the local board’s strategic vision and goals: ● Support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency (as defined) in the local area; ● Prepare an educated and skilled workforce for work or to attain employment including youth and individuals with barriers to employment in the local area; and ● Provide performance accountability in the local area including WIOA primary indicators of performance.	

Vision

Eastern Oregon has a qualified labor pool that contributes to a healthy local economy.

Mission

To connect eastern Oregon employers, individuals, and communities to address shared workforce challenges and leverage opportunities collaboratively.

2024-2028 Goals

- **Employer Resources:** Identify employer workforce needs, and coordinate solutions to help area businesses thrive.
- **Emerging Workforce:** Encourage youth participation in career connected experiences that engage their interests and connect them to employers.
- **Customer-Centric System:** Ensure the workforce system is accessible and effective.
- **Qualified Workforce:** Eastern Oregon’s workforce is qualified to enter and advance in high-wage high-demand jobs.
- **Community Awareness:** Eastern Oregon employers and community members are aware of workforce development programs and services available to help them.
- **Organizational Sustainability:** Create long-term organizational sustainability through effective performance measurement, assessment, and accountability.

EOWB's strategic vision and goals. EOWB's:

- **Employer Resources Goal, Qualified Workforce Goal and Community Awareness Goal** support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency by:
 - Supporting our local employers and their success.
 - Ensuring that the area has the talent needed to contribute to business and individual prosperity.
 - Ensuring that the local workforce development system is accessible and effective.
- **Emerging Workforce Goal, Customer-Centric Workforce Goal and Qualified Workforce Goal** contribute to preparing an educated and skilled workforce for work or to attain employment, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment by:
 - Offering opportunities to learn about and receive training in high-wage careers in eastern Oregon.
 - Providing more ways for eastern Oregon community members to learn about and receive assistance in identifying and qualifying for high-wage jobs.
- **Organizational Success Goal** provides a plan for ongoing performance accountability.
 - Capturing measurable outreach and performance statistics will help identify areas of opportunity to increase equitable outreach and improve service and employment and training outcomes.
 - During the 2025-2026 modification period, EOWB will place additional emphasis on converting recent innovations and system improvements into sustainable, repeatable practices that improve access, strengthen employer engagement, expand work-based learning, and increase accountability across the Eastern Oregon workforce system.
 - This implementation focus supports EOWB's existing goals by strengthening business-facing services through sector engagement, employer outreach, on-the-job training, internships, work experience, and a clearer employer support pathway that helps businesses connect to available workforce resources.
 - EOWB will expand career-connected learning and paid work-based learning opportunities, including internships, youth work experience, and partnerships with schools, post-secondary institutions, employers, and community partners.
 - EOWB will continue improving access to WorkSource Oregon services through virtual access points developed.
 - EOWB will strengthen fiscal stewardship, grant development, provider accountability, performance tracking, and use of a local board scorecard to support data-informed governance and continuous improvement. These priorities support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency by helping employers access qualified workers, helping job seekers access training and career pathways, and helping the Board use data to identify service gaps and investment priorities.

1.2 WTDB 2023-2024 Strategic Plan Alignment (Oregon Requirement) WTDB 2025-2026 Strategic Plan and Scorecard Alignment (Oregon Requirement)

Describe how the local board's vision and goals align with and/or supports the vision, mission, and imperatives of the Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB):

The WTDB approved their [2023-2024 Strategic Plan](#) in March 2023.

Vision

Equitable Prosperity for All Oregonians

Mission

Advance Oregon through education, training, jobs and careers by empowering people and employers.

Imperatives

- An inclusive workforce system that advances equitable prosperity.
- Clear understanding of and improved use and impact of the workforce system.
- The WTDB is embraced by the Governor as an accountable convener, empowered facilitator and informed advisor.
- Strategic and close alignment between education, economic development, and workforce development, including public and private partners.

Vision and Mission Alignment

~~EOWB aims to make Good Jobs (as defined by the U.S. Department of Labor) accessible to all Oregonians. This is achieved by ensuring all individuals have the guidance and support needed to become qualified contenders in the labor market through accessible training and development services. When rural and other historically underserved groups begin to participate in the labor market and benefit from increased wages and better benefits, they can move out of poverty.~~

~~Employers are empowered when they have access to a qualified workforce to help them grow and thrive in Oregon.~~

~~As eastern Oregon businesses have access to a qualified workforce, our communities can thrive, and together we achieve the goal of Equitable Prosperity for All Oregonians.~~

Goal Alignment

~~EOWB's strategic goals. EOWB's:~~

- ~~EOWB Employer Resources Goal, Emerging Workforce Goal, Customer-Centric Goal, Qualified Workforce Goal, Community Awareness Goal, and Organizational Success Goal all support an inclusive workforce system that advances equitable prosperity, by:~~
 - ~~Supporting our local employers and their success.~~
 - ~~Ensuring that the area has the talent needed to contribute to business and individual prosperity.~~
 - ~~Ensuring that the local workforce development system is accessible and effective.~~
 - ~~Offering opportunities to learn about and receive training in careers in eastern Oregon that will provide upward career mobility.~~
 - ~~Providing more ways for eastern Oregon community members to learn about and receive assistance in identifying good jobs.~~
 - ~~Capturing measurable outreach and performance metrics will help identify areas of opportunity to increase equitable outreach and improve service and employment and training outcomes.~~
- ~~Emerging Workforce Goal, Customer-Centric Goal, Community Awareness Goal, and Organizational Success Goal help provide a clear understanding of and improved use and impact of the workforce system, by:~~
 - ~~Helping young people participate in career experiences that engage their interests and connect them to employers.~~
 - ~~Making sure the workforce system is effective and easy to access.~~

- ~~Ensuring eastern Oregon employers, individuals, and community partners are aware of EOWB programs and services available to help them.~~
- ~~Increasing community collaboration.~~
- ~~Improving performance measurement, assessment, and accountability to inform system programs and projects for improved service and maximum impact.~~
- ~~EOWB Employer Resources Goal, Emerging Workforce Goal, Customer-Centric Goal, Qualified Workforce Goal, Community Awareness Goal, and Organizational Success Goal all support the WTDB being embraced by the Governor as an accountable convener, empowered facilitator and informed advisor, and contribute to strategic and close alignment between education, economic development, and workforce development, including public and private partners by:~~
 - ~~Fostering collaboration among area stakeholders.~~
 - ~~Creating economies of scale through collaboration and resource sharing.~~
 - ~~Breaking down silos that create and fuel continued duplication.~~
 - ~~Bringing together business and communities to a table to address shared challenges and take advantage of opportunities.~~
 - ~~Capturing meaningful data that contributes to good decision making.~~
 - ~~Piloting innovative workforce solutions and sharing across the state.~~

Alignment with the WTDB 2025-2026 Strategic Plan and Scorecard

EOWB's vision, mission, goals, and current implementation priorities align with the Workforce and Talent Development Board's 2025-2026 Strategic Plan and Scorecard. The WTDB's vision of equitable prosperity for all Oregonians and mission to empower Oregon's workforce and employers through an inclusive, coordinated training and education system are closely aligned with EOWB's role as the regional convener, funder, system-builder, and accountability body for workforce development across Eastern Oregon.

- EOWB supports an inclusive workforce system that advances equitable prosperity by prioritizing access for rural and frontier communities, low-income individuals, youth, justice-involved individuals, individuals with disabilities, English language learners, tribal communities, migrant and seasonal farmworkers where applicable, and other populations with barriers to employment.
- EOWB will continue expanding access to employment, training, education, and supportive services through WorkSource Oregon centers, virtual access tools, re-entry services, expungement clinics, internships, and targeted training investments. These strategies are designed to help more individuals enter, remain, and advance in employment that supports economic self-sufficiency.
- EOWB supports strategic alignment of systems and partners toward shared workforce goals by convening workforce, education, economic development, employer, community-based, and state agency partners around shared regional workforce needs. EOWB will continue aligning resources through WorkSource Oregon coordination, sector engagement, employer outreach, internships, re-entry partnerships, referrals, and coordination with education and training providers.
- During the modification period, EOWB will place special emphasis on strengthening WorkSource Oregon onboarding and referral literacy so partners better understand available services, eligibility pathways, and handoff processes. This will support

improved coordination, reduce duplication, and help customers move more effectively through the workforce system.

- EOWB supports clear understanding of and improved use and impact of the workforce system by making services easier to find, explain, and access. Local strategies include continued development of virtual access tools, public-facing service pages, monthly board updates, employer outreach materials, and partner communication tools.
- EOWB will also continue collecting center check-in data, customer feedback tools, referral system tools, and other tracking mechanisms to better understand customer flow, referral activity, employer engagement, and service gaps. These tools will help EOWB and partners identify where customers enter the system, what services they request, how referrals move between partners, and where additional improvement is needed.

EOWB supports accountable workforce system leadership through board governance, provider oversight, fiscal stewardship, monitoring, performance review, and continuous improvement.

1.3 Joint Priority Setting (Oregon Requirement)

Describe how the local board's goals, strategies, programs, and projects align with and will contribute to achieving the priorities established in September 2023 through Joint Priority Setting:

- Concretely improve the connection between employers and the workforce system consistent with economic development priorities.
- Concretely deepen the integration of K-12 education in the entire workforce system.
- Improve workforce system impact by investing new and existing targeted resources that support work-based learning.
- Advance equity by identifying and closing the largest gaps in participant access to education, training, and job placement services.
- Complete necessary steps to align data in the WSO System to result in shared state and local performance reports/scorecards.

~~EOWB's goals, strategies, programs, and projects align with and will contribute to achieving the following priorities through Joint Priority Setting with eastern Oregon employers, schools, community partners and residents:~~

- ~~Concretely improve the connection between employers and the workforce system consistent with economic development priorities. EOWB has acquired:~~
 - ~~An Employer Engagement Coordinator to increase employer participation and to support the area's economic development priorities.~~
 - ~~A Community Outreach Coordinator to increase awareness and develop its relationship with community partners and residents.~~
- ~~Concretely deepen the integration of K-12 education in the entire workforce system and improve workforce system impact by investing new and existing targeted resources that support work-based learning.~~
 - ~~EOWB has hired a Youth Program Coordinator to strengthen connections between schools and the workforce system and to align goals and programs. The new Youth Program Coordinator is a shared position with the Greater Oregon STEM Hub (GO STEM) which work together to support career connected learning initiatives.~~
- ~~Advance equity by identifying and closing the largest gaps in participant access to education, training, and job placement services.~~

- ~~EOWB is working with its service providers and partners to identify gaps in participant access to services and create plans to address the gaps.~~
- ~~Complete necessary steps to align data in the WSO System to result in shared state and local performance reports/scorecards.~~
 - ~~EOWB will collect and report program and participant data to stakeholders to contribute to improving Oregon's workforce development system.~~

~~In addition to connecting individually and with specific groups of stakeholders, EOWB will schedule community feedback events throughout the year to help identify opportunities to work on priorities collaboratively.~~

EOWB's current implementation priorities continue to align with Oregon's Joint Priority Setting priorities.

- EOWB will improve the connection between employers and the workforce system by strengthening sector engagement, developing a clearer business support pathway, using employer feedback to inform services, and connecting businesses to OJT, internships, work experience, training resources, and WorkSource Oregon partners.
- EOWB will deepen integration with K-12 and postsecondary education by expanding internships, career-connected learning, school-year and summer work-based learning, career pathway conversations, and coordination with education partners.
- EOWB will improve workforce system impact by investing in work-based learning, including internships, youth work experience, EOCC/conservation workforce opportunities, and employer-connected training pathways.
- EOWB will advance equity by using customer-flow data, referral data, partner feedback, and local outreach to identify gaps in access to education, training, supportive services, job placement, and WorkSource Oregon navigation, especially in rural/frontier communities and among priority populations.

High Performing Board

1.4 20 CFR 679.560(b)(17): High Performing Board

Describe the local board's goals, strategies, programs, and projects as they apply to becoming or remaining a high performing board consistent with the two resources below:

1. In [Building a High-Performing State Workforce Board: A Framework and Strategies for States](#), the National Governor's Association describes a high-performing state workforce board as one that provides leadership to the entire education and workforce system to create sustainable change including three key roles:
 - a. Communicate the Vision for the workforce system;
 - b. Model and manage Strategic Partnerships that achieve the vision; and
 - c. Use data and accountability systems to Keep the System Accountable to the vision.
 These are not exclusive to state workforce boards.
2. In [A Call to Action for Workforce Development Boards](#), the United States Department of Labor outlines four strategic roles that all high-performing boards will play:

- a. Strategist: Understanding trends, setting the collective vision.
- b. Convener: Bring partners together, align services and vision.
- c. Manager: Design and manage customer-centered service delivery.
- d. Optimizer: Use data to drive decisions, continuous improvement.

Vision for eastern Oregon's workforce system: Eastern Oregon has a qualified labor pool that contributes to a healthy local economy. We work toward this by ensuring:

- Employer workforce needs are identified, and solutions are coordinated to help area businesses thrive.
- Improved access to career experiences for youth that engage their interests and connect them to employers.
- The workforce system is becoming more effective and easier to access.
- The workforce is increasingly qualified to enter and advance in high-wage, high-demand jobs.
- More eastern Oregon employers, individuals, and community partners are aware of EOWB programs and services available to help them.
- Long-term organizational sustainability is achieved through collaboration and effective performance measurement, assessment, and accountability.

~~EOWB seeks to provide leadership to the workforce system to create sustainable change through:~~

- ~~Setting and communicating the Vision for the workforce system as a strategist:~~
 - ~~Goal—Eastern Oregon Workforce System partners are aware of and participate in the Vision for the workforce system.~~
 - ~~Strategy—Hold community listening sessions of employers, community partners and residents to learn more about what specific workforce needs are in eastern Oregon communities.~~
- ~~Modeling and managing Strategic Partnerships that achieve the vision as Convener and Manager of eastern Oregon's workforce system:~~
 - ~~Goal—Expand eastern Oregon's network of connected and engaged community partners.~~
 - ~~Strategy—Visit with community partners and strengthen relationships, identify where we can serve each other or additional connections that can be made.~~
 - ~~Project—Maintain a database of community partners and stakeholders for ongoing communication and collaboration.~~
- ~~Using data and other tools to keep the system accountable to the vision as an optimizer:~~
 - ~~Goal—We have information that tells us what we accomplished in the previous program year and which areas need attention.~~
 - ~~Strategy—Develop quarterly and annual reporting tools to capture information about what programs and projects are accomplishing.~~
 - ~~Project—The Benefits Navigator project will create a system for collecting and reviewing data across the entire system to help improve access to and navigation within the system, as well as capturing and duplicating best practices across the state and nation.~~

EOWB seeks to provide leadership to the workforce system to create sustainable change through the following 2025-2026 implementation priorities:

- As strategist, EOWB will communicate the vision for the workforce system through monthly board updates, annual reporting, board orientation materials, Jobs Council engagement, partner communication, and public-facing outreach. These tools will

- help Board and Jobs Council members better understand the workforce system, local service delivery, employer needs, customer access issues, and strategic priorities.
- As convener and manager, EOWB will model and manage strategic partnerships by bringing together employers, education partners, economic development, WorkSource Oregon partners, service providers, community-based organizations, correctional facility partners, and local elected officials around shared workforce goals.
- EOWB will also continue building repeatable systems for provider accountability, referral tracking, employer engagement, and customer access so improvements are sustained beyond individual projects or one-time funding.

Key Definition

Self-Sufficiency: This refers to the [The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Oregon](#) (current version). This measure is aspirational for Oregon and describes how much income families of various sizes and compositions need to make ends meet without public or private assistance in each county in Oregon. The Self-Sufficiency Standard is a measure of income adequacy that is based on the costs of basic needs for working families: housing, child care, food, health care, transportation, and miscellaneous items, as well as the cost of taxes and the impact of tax credits. This varies by family type.

Section 2: Data and Analysis

It is expected that Section 2 include both data and relevant analysis for each local area. Further, it is expected that Questions 2.1 – 2.3 will be a collaborative effort between the local workforce development board and the Oregon Employment Department’s regional economist and workforce analyst stationed in each local area.

Please answer the questions in Section 2 in eight (8) pages or less. Provide a response for all items identified. Please limit the inclusion of tables and charts to those that are critical to your analysis. Reports and/or expanded analysis can be included as links and/or attachments.

Economic and Workforce Analysis

2.1 20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(i): Economic Analysis – Part 1 Overall

Provide an analysis of the economic conditions in the local area.

The Eastern Oregon Workforce Area is comprised of eight counties (Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, and Wallowa). The region represents roughly 40% of the state’s total land mass while representing just 4.5% of the state’s total population. Counties in the region have a varied mix of industries, resources, demographics, and seasonality. Many of the population centers are geographically isolated and there is minimal economic cohesion with other population centers, making understanding the economic health of the region as a whole more complicated.

Occupational Employment Projections for Eastern Oregon show more than 94,000 total job openings from 2021 to 2031. The majority (94%) of expected openings will come from workers who leave their current occupations for unrelated occupations. A smaller share of openings will come from workers who retire, or who exit the labor force for some other reason. Thus, workers already circulating in the labor force will likely fill the majority of job openings, with a smaller share of openings filled by new workers entering the labor force.

The following analysis of the Eastern Oregon workforce area attempts to address the region’s economy as a whole, while drawing some attention to county level details to provide a better understanding. However, it should be noted that this areawide analysis fails to provide an economic understanding of the individual counties in the same way that an analysis of the United States as a whole fails to provide an economic understanding of the individual states.

Not as Economically Interconnected as Other Workforce Areas

Most Oregon Workforce Areas are apportioned a small number of counties, which cover a relatively minor portion of the state’s geographic area. Because of this, each of these Workforce Areas, generally speaking, is focused on a largely interconnected economy. The Eastern Oregon Workforce Area, however, is an outlier due to its large geographic area.

Long distances and difficult or hazardous travel conditions between the region’s population centers make casual commuting and reliable shipping a challenge. A commutable distance in the Portland-Metro area is not necessarily a commutable distance in Eastern Oregon. Cities in Grant, Harney, and Wallowa counties struggle due to lack of proximity to major highways and primary shipping corridors such as Interstate 84. Even cities that lie along I-84, suffer from winter weather issues that make commuting and shipping difficult during several months each year. Cities in Baker and Union counties struggle due to mountain passes that close often during winter months. Issues with commutability and shipping create geographic isolation within the region, which

limits economic interconnectedness. These regional mobility constraints inhibit a population center in one area of the region from sharing in economic benefits realized in another area of the region. In other words, micro economies in the region are not necessarily structurally similar or dependent on each other, and therefore gains or losses in one area do not necessarily impact or benefit another.

A quick look at Eastern Oregon's total nonfarm employment shows growth of 5.8% over the last decade. On the surface, private-sector employment shows a much larger gain of 11.7%, while public-sector employment shows a small loss of 1.0%. But a lot has happened since 2019. Officially, we entered a short-lived pandemic induced recession in February 2020 that ended in April 2020; the first month of expansion was therefore May. Regionally, the COVID-19 pandemic began to impact employment in March 2020, at first causing job loss primarily through government-imposed business closures. Non-forced preemptive closures, supply-chain disruptions, and demand decreases followed, as did direct effects of the disease as workers became ill, which required them to stay home during recovery.

The COVID-19 pandemic increased demand in certain industries and some businesses benefited from an increase in available labor supply allowing for expansion and increased production. Businesses in general had the chance to benefit from sudden widespread access to government funds at low, or even zero percent interest rates, and depending on how a business used the funds, loans could be forgiven altogether.

Much of the economic gain achieved since 2020 should be considered recovery rather than expansion, and a significant portion of the gain, and loss, was no gain or loss at all but rather a clerical shifting of employment from one industry to another due to industry employment reclassification.

Majority of Eastern Oregon Counties Continue to Gain Population

Portland State University's Population Research Center estimates that Oregon's population grew roughly 10.3% from 2012 to 2022. In comparison, Eastern Oregon's population grew 3.9% (+7,170 people) during this period but rose only 0.4% (+837 people) from 2021 to 2022.

The majority of population growth centered in Umatilla and Morrow counties from 2012 to 2022. Both counties continue to gain residents at a relatively fast pace as Hermiston and Boardman, the two largest population centers for the two counties respectively, continue to grow in popularity and size. Grant County was the only county to see a decrease in population for the ten-year period. Grant County continues to experience population loss as deaths outnumber births, net migration remains low, and the population ages over time.

Umatilla County alone is responsible for nearly half of Eastern Oregon's population gain since 2012. Umatilla continues to see sizeable and sustained growth as Hermiston expands at a rapid pace. Hermiston became the county's largest population center in 2010, surpassing Pendleton as the largest population center in all of Eastern Oregon.

Eastern Oregon population centers have seen mixed results when it comes to maintaining or increasing their number of residents. Heppner, John Day/Canyon City, Pilot Rock, Union, and Vale have all seen a decline in population over the last five years. For smaller more remote cities such as these, population loss is a persistent issue. These cities struggle to attract new residents and keep young residents because they lack access to housing, as well as convenient access to amenities, activities, and job opportunities. Cities that have relatively convenient access to at least some of these, however, continue to add to their ranks slowly and surely.

2.2 20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(i): Economic Analysis – Part 2 In-Demand Industries

Describe existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the local area.

In-Demand: WIOA section 3(23) defines “in-demand industry sector or occupation” as,

- an industry sector that has a substantial current or potential impact (including through jobs that lead to economic self-sufficiency and opportunities for advancement) on the State, regional, or local economy, as appropriate, and that contributes to the growth or stability of other supporting businesses, or the growth of other industry sectors; or
- an occupation that currently has or is projected to have a number of positions (including positions that lead to economic self-sufficiency and opportunities for advancement) in an industry sector so as to have a significant impact on the State, regional, or local economy, as appropriate.
- The determination of whether an industry sector or occupation is in-demand under this paragraph shall be made by the State board or local board, as appropriate, using State and regional business and labor market projections, including the use of labor market information.

Occupational Openings Highlight Imbalance in High-Wage vs. High-Demand

An occupation is considered “high-demand” if its total number of expected openings for the ten-year period is above the median number of expected openings for the region, which is 29 openings. The average number of expected job openings for the 10% of high-demand occupations with the highest number of openings (23 occupations) in Eastern Oregon is 1,865 over the ten-year period. The 23 occupations collectively contribute to approximately 46% of all expected openings in the region.

Most of the growth in the **Leisure and Hospitality** industry is expected to come from jobs that were lost during the COVID pandemic being added back over time. Leisure and Hospitality lost 860 jobs in 2020 on an annual average basis. In 2021 the industry recovered 480 of those lost jobs and an additional 520 jobs in 2022 to surpass full recovery.

Private Education and Health Services also saw a loss during the pandemic, although to a lesser extent. The majority of loss came in Malheur, Umatilla, and Union counties, although other counties dropped as well and remained below recovery in 2022. The vast majority of growth for the industry is expected in Health Services, not in Education. Private education is a relatively small portion of the overall industry in Eastern Oregon and is not expected to show much growth.

Manufacturing dropped by 480 jobs during the pandemic and lost another 100 jobs by the end of 2022. Roughly half of the industry’s projected growth for the decade is expected to come from adding back jobs lost rather than from pure growth. Over half of the industry’s projected growth is expected to come in the Columbia Basin (Morrow and Umatilla) where expected gains are primarily in durable goods.

Retail trade saw no overall job loss during the pandemic. Instead, the industry remained strong, adding 590 jobs in 2020 and 2021, then adding an additional 190 jobs in 2022. **Wholesale trade** dropped by 90 jobs over 2020 and 2021, added back 40 in 2022 but is not expected to add much in the way of projected growth. Retail trade should be responsible for a significant portion of the projected job growth in the combined industry.

Occupations with a median wage above \$18.86 per hour are considered high-wage for Eastern Oregon. High-wage occupations account for roughly 33% of all projected job openings for the region. In all, there are 235 occupations listed as high-wage. The minimum education level for 73 of these occupations was high school diploma, with less than high school as a requirement for an additional seven. When looking at competitive

qualifications, a high school diploma is listed for only 35 of these high-wage occupations. Post-secondary training is listed for 39 occupations, associate degree is listed for 27, and the remaining 134 have a competitive education level of bachelor's degree or higher.

2.3 20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(ii): Employment Needs of Employers

Describe employment needs of employers in the local area in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors occupations described in 2.1.B.

The Oregon Employment Department's 2021-2031 Industry Employment Projections show total projected growth of 8% or 6,200 jobs over the coming decade. The private sector is projected to add 5,100 jobs while the public sector is projected to add 1,100 jobs. The top three private-sector industries by projected growth are Education and Health Services (+1,300 jobs), Leisure and Hospitality (+600 jobs), and Wholesale and Retail Trade (+600). Construction should also see sizeable growth adding 500 jobs by 2031.

2.4 20 CFR 679.560(a)(2): Knowledge and Skill Requirements

- A.** Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area; and
- B.** Describe specific knowledge and skill requirements needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Only 139 occupations were considered both high-wage and high-demand as opposed to 235 considered high-wage and 230 considered high-demand. Many high-wage jobs, as well as many high-demand jobs, aren't found on the combined high-wage and high-demand list. Roughly 52% of bachelor's degree or higher occupations on the high-wage list are expected to have fewer than 29 total openings from 2021 to 2031. Even so, occupations with this level of education account for nearly half of those on the combined list when considering competitive education. In addition, over half of occupations on the combined list required post-secondary education or above as a minimum education requirement, and nearly four out of every five had a competitive education level of post-secondary or above.

All totaled, 78% of projected job openings are in occupations that require no more than a high school diploma as a minimum education requirement, with 41% of openings projected in occupations that don't even require a diploma. Occupations with high wages tend to have high minimum education requirements. They also tend to attract competition, which requires applicants to have a level of education above the minimum to be competitive for open positions. A high school diploma is the competitive level of education for 53% of projected job openings over the next decade, while less than high school is not the competitive level of education for any occupation in Eastern Oregon. Occupations that don't require at least a high school diploma tend to be low skill, low wage, and often-times seasonal. Occupations with higher wages and no diploma requirement as a minimum are projected to have comparatively few job openings in Eastern Oregon over the coming years.

Only two of the top 23 occupations require a bachelor's degree as a minimum requirement. One requires postsecondary training (non-degree) and the other 20 require a high school diploma or less. The 11 occupations with the highest number of expected openings require a minimum qualification of high school diploma or less and pay a relatively low median wage. Most are entry-level service jobs: fast food workers, cashiers, retail salespersons, wait staff, and laborers. Nine of the top 23 occupations do have a competitive education level of post-secondary or above. These occupations include substitute teachers, correctional officers, and some

supervisory positions. While one benefit to these jobs is a higher median wage, an added benefit is often the potential for more career growth opportunities.

2.5 20 CFR 679.560(a)(3): Workforce Analysis

- A. Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data;
- B. Provide information on local labor market trends; and
- C. Describe the educational and skill levels of the local workforce including individuals with barriers to employment.

Total employed, or the number of people who reside in Eastern Oregon that are actively employed, was 79,652 in 2008. Total employed was at a peak in 2008, during the Great Recession. Total employed trended downward through 2013, dropping by 5,050. The measure regained its footing in 2014 and then trended upward to reach 79,867 in 2019, slightly above the 2008 peak. The pandemic brought a slight dip in 2020, but the measure quickly rebounded, jumping to a new peak of 82,955 in 2022.

A significant portion of the 2021 jump might be in self-employment. Although there's no regional data to directly support this, national and state level survey data suggests that the number of self-employed people increased uncharacteristically in this short window during the pandemic. Given the decrease in total nonfarm from 2019 to 2021, and the increase in total employed for the period, as well as the inclusion of self-employment in total employed, there is indirect evidence to suggest self-employment increased in Eastern Oregon as well.

Unemployment Status of Resident Labor Force Matches Low Point in 2022

The size of the labor force dropped to a low of 80,785 in 2015. This marked the end of a downward trend since the 2009 peak of 88,372, which came when unemployment was nearing its record high. Since 2015, the labor force has been on an upward swing, reaching 87,020 in 2022. A portion of this gain (17.1%) came during the pandemic as unemployment rose, but the trend continued with 27.7% of the gain coming in 2022, even as unemployment dropped.

For Eastern Oregon labor force participants, employment conditions rebounded quickly during the pandemic and remained favorable in 2022. All counties were very near historic low unemployment rates in 2022. Given that unemployment rates remain near historic lows, labor market levels suggest employment opportunities are meeting the needs of job seekers. In other words, job seekers are able to find employment if they choose to. This has created a tight labor market that may not be so favorable for employers however, as they are met with increasing difficulty finding qualified workers to fill job openings.

There were 68,011 households in Eastern Oregon in 2021.

Couples with their own children accounted for 28.1% of all households. Married couples, in general, represented 50.1% of all households. Married couples with children represented 19.4% of all households, and 38.7% of married couple households. Children five years old or younger were present in 46.2% of these married couple households with children.

Single parent households represented 8.7% of all households in Eastern Oregon - single parent household refers to those without a spouse present. Children five years old or younger were present in 40.1% of single parent households and these households represented 3.5% of all households in the region. Females were head-of-

household for nearly three-fourths of single parent households, yet a larger share of single parent males had children five years or younger: 52.9% for male parent households compared with 35.5% for female parent households.

Larger Share of Older and Younger Workers in Eastern Oregon

Compared with the state, Eastern Oregon had a larger share (26%) of workers 55 or older in 2022 and a smaller share (61%) of workers in their prime working years, 25 to 54. This varied significantly among the eight counties. In line with previously mentioned population issues, counties with less access to housing, amenities, activities, and job opportunities had the largest share of older workers and the smallest share of younger workers: specifically, Grant, Harney, and Wallowa counties. Counties with better access had the smallest share of older workers and the largest share of younger workers: specifically Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, and Union counties. Baker County was somewhat in the middle.

Eastern Oregon, along with several of the region's individual counties saw a larger share of workers under the age of 25, both in the private sector and in overall employment, although this was more pronounced in the private sector. This, along with data on "flow" employment, speaks to the difficulty faced by employers in the region in filling open positions and retaining workers who fill those positions. Workers under the age of 25 are much more likely to leave a job for any number of reasons. Flow employment data shows the share of workers under the age of 25 is on average 5.1 percentage points higher than it is for stable employment. In other words, the region's employers use a larger share of young workers to fill open positions and those workers are much less likely to remain with those employers for a full year.

Close to the State in Overall Racial Diversity, But Varied by Individual Race

Eastern Oregon's racial structure in 2021 was nearly unchanged from the previous year. Year-to-year changes are generally small; however, the region's racial structure does continue to change incrementally over time. The region is predominately white (90.7%), slightly higher than the state's 88.0% mark. American Indian and Alaskan Native (4.6%) was the second largest group by race. Asian (1.5%), African American (1.4%), and Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (0.7%) account for just 3.6% of the region's population. Umatilla, Morrow, and Malheur were the most racially diverse counties in the group. Umatilla saw 87.1% of residents identify as white while in Morrow it was 89.2% and in Malheur it was 90.6%. Harney County was the least racially diverse at 97.3% white.

Hispanic Share of Population Larger Than State, But Only in Three Counties

Ethnic diversity was more predominant for the region overall and for three specific counties. Residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino accounted for 21.6% of Eastern Oregon's population in 2021, compared with 13.6% of the state's overall population. Morrow, Malheur, Hispanics accounted for 37.8% in Morrow County, 34.7% in Malheur County, and 27.8% in Umatilla County, representing a much larger presence than the other five Eastern Oregon counties, which remained relatively low at or below 5.5%.

Lower High School Diploma and Bachelor's Degree Rates Than the State Overall

In 2021, roughly 86% of Eastern Oregonians over the age of 25 were high school graduates, however just 18.7% held a bachelor's degree or higher. This was lower than the high school graduates rate for Oregon overall (91.5%), and slightly more than half the bachelor's degree or higher rate (35.0%). Educational attainment varies widely by county.

Baker, Grant, Harney, Union, and Wallowa have high school diploma rates above 90%.

- Baker and Union have bachelor's degrees or higher rates of 24.2%.

- Grant and Harney have bachelor's or higher rates of 17.4% and 15.4%, respectively.
- Wallowa 27.6% holding a bachelor's degree or higher.

Malheur, Morrow, and Umatilla all have significantly lower graduation and degree rates, with their large populations placing downward pressure on Eastern Oregon's overall high school graduate and degree holder rates.

- Umatilla County's diploma rate is 83.2% and bachelor's degree holder rate is 18.2%.
- Morrow County's diploma rate is 77.5% and bachelor's degree holder rate is 10.4%.
- Malheur County's diploma rate is at 81.5% and 14.1% for degree holder.

Higher Rate of Disability Creates More Barriers to Employment

The Census Bureau's 2021 American Community Survey (ACS) shows that 15.4% (15,453 residents) of the civilian noninstitutionalized population aged 18 to 64 in Eastern Oregon had some type of disability; many people also have more than one disability. The state's overall rate of disability was 12.0%. In general, older residents have a higher rate of disability and the region's higher rate of disability is likely tied to its higher ratio of older residents to younger residents. This also suggests that most workers with a disability are in older age groups.

The ACS estimates that 43.3% (6,686) of residents aged 18 to 64 with a disability in Eastern Oregon were in the labor force, which leaves 56.7% (8,767) not in the labor force. In comparison, 79.8% of residents without a disability were in the labor force. The majority of residents with a disability in the labor force (87.1%) were actively employed in 2021. For residents without a disability this was 94.6%. The unemployment rate was 12.9% for workers with a disability compared with 5.4% for workers without a disability. People with a disability accounted for 9.0% of Eastern Oregon's labor force overall compared with 7.2% for the state's overall labor force.

Lower Rate of English Proficiency Creates More Barriers to Employment

The ability to speak a foreign language can enhance a job applicant's potential to employers. However, proficiency in English is likely a requirement for most jobs. In Eastern Oregon, 80.7% of residents aged 18 to 64 speak only English. For Oregon overall this was 83.5%. A higher share of residents aged 18 to 64 speak only English compared with residents aged 5 to 17. This is likely due to school age populations among foreign language speakers, who learn and speak English in school, but who can also use a language other than English when communicating with parents, relatives, or individuals in the community. In Eastern Oregon, this group is primarily the growing Hispanic youth populations in Malheur, Morrow, and Umatilla counties.

In total, 20.5% of residents aged 5 to 64 (28,824 people) in Eastern Oregon speak a foreign language. Among residents speaking a language other than English, Spanish is the majority language spoken. Spanish speakers represent 18.9% of this population of residents (aged 5 to 64) and 64.6% of these Spanish speakers speak English "very well." Among the youth population that speaks Spanish or another foreign language, more than three-fourths also speak English very well; among youths that speak Spanish this was greater than 80%. Among the adult population that speak Spanish, only 58.5% speak English very well, whereas 75.6% of adults that speak another foreign language also speak English very well.

Priority Populations and Communities

2.6 Priority Populations and Communities (Oregon Requirement)

- Based on the Economic and Workforce Analysis, the local area's demographic data, and the local board's understanding of local underserved populations and communities, identify and describe the populations and communities that will be prioritized for services in the local area.
 - Based on this analysis, describe the local investment strategy toward Priority Populations.

EOWB will focus additional strategic efforts and resources on the following target populations:

1. Low income and households receiving TANF or SNAP;
2. Communities of color;
3. Women;
4. Rural and frontier communities;
5. Disengaged and at risk youth;
6. Incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals;
7. *English language learners;
8. Members of CTUIR and Burns Paiute tribes;
9. Individuals who identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community;
10. Long-term unemployed;
11. *Individuals lacking basic literacy skills;
12. Individuals with disabilities;
13. Individuals who disproportionately experience discrimination in employment on the basis of age; and
14. *Migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

*Overall in Eastern Oregon these percentages are low. However, due to the higher percentages in specific counties, these populations will be included in those counties with significant numbers.

EOWB's investment strategy limits the majority of its funding to serving the priority populations identified in the area.

Key Definition

In-Demand: WIOA section 3(23) defines "in-demand industry sector or occupation" as,

- an industry sector that has a substantial current or potential impact (including through jobs that lead to economic self-sufficiency and opportunities for advancement) on the State, regional, or local economy, as appropriate, and that contributes to the growth or stability of other supporting businesses, or the growth of other industry sectors; or
- an occupation that currently has or is projected to have a number of positions (including positions that lead to economic self-sufficiency and opportunities for advancement) in an industry sector so as to have a significant impact on the State, regional, or local economy, as appropriate.
- The determination of whether an industry sector or occupation is in-demand under this paragraph shall be made by the State board or local board, as appropriate, using State and regional business and labor market projections, including the use of labor market information.

Section 3: Alignment and Improvement

It is expected that Section 3 responses will be based on strategic discussions with the local board, partners in the local area, and business and industry leaders. Further, it is expected that there will be strong alignment with the Economic and Workforce Analysis and Priority Populations and Communities in Section 2.

Please answer the questions in Section 3 in twelve (12) pages or less. Provide a response for all items identified. Reports and/or expanded analysis can be included as links and/or attachments.

Strategic Partnerships and Alignment

3.1 20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(i): Local Area Programs and Partners

Identify the programs, partners, and providers that are included in the local area's workforce development system. Include both organizations that provide WorkSource Oregon Programs (as defined) and Other Workforce Programs (as defined).

WorkSource Oregon Programs and Partners Eastern Oregon Workforce Board (EOWB)

Training & Employment Consortium (TEC)

- Title I of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA):
 - Adult and dislocated worker programs
 - Youth workforce programs

Oregon Employment Department (OED)

- Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker programs - WIOA Title I;
- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Grants (RESEA) Programs authorized by the Wagner-Peyser Act;
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Supplemental Employment Department Administrative Fund (SEDAF);
- Trade Adjustment Assistance programs authorized by Title II of the federal Trade Act of 1974;
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants;

Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC)

- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act programs authorized by WIOA Title II;
- HECC's Workforce General Fund and programs authorized under ORS 657

Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS)

- Employment and training programs authorized by the federal Food and Nutrition Act of 2008;
- Vocational rehabilitation programs authorized by the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
- Employment and training programs under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program authorized by the Social Security Act;

Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC)

- HECC's Workforce General Fund and programs authorized under ORS 657

Easterseals Goodwill

- Senior Community Service Employment Program

Oregon Commission for the Blind (OCB)

- Vocational rehabilitation programs authorized by the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973;

Oregon Human Development Corporation (OHDC)

- Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker programs - WIOA Title I;

Partners Delivering Additional Workforce Development Programs and Resources:

- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)
- CTUIR 121 American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation (AIVR) program authorized by the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Burns Paiute Tribe
- Baker Technical Institute (BTI)
- Area Education Service Districts
- Economic Development
- Eastern Oregon University (EOU)
- ODHS - Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS)

3.2 20 CFR 679.560(a)(6): Local Area Program Alignment Strategies

Considering the analysis in Section 2, describe the local board's strategy to align the WorkSource Oregon and Other Workforce Programs and resources identified in 3.1 to achieve EOWB's strategic vision and goals.

~~EOWB's strategy to align WorkSource Oregon (WSO) and other workforce programs and resources includes:~~

- ~~• Ensuring EOWB has reliable data that informs on what is accomplished each program year and which areas might be improved.~~
- ~~• Making EOWB known for being a strong workforce partner in eastern Oregon.~~
- ~~• Making more schools, students, and communities aware of and connected with WSO programs and resources.~~
- ~~• Ensuring WSO resources are simple to find and shared at events and through WSO partners.~~
- ~~• Ensuring EOWB and partners are informed of customer needs and workforce related interests.~~
- ~~• Learning what is important to the community, where to connect with them, and how to serve them.~~
- ~~• Creating more avenues for students to participate in work based learning opportunities.~~
- ~~• Helping more job-seekers get connected to more employers with open jobs.~~
- ~~• Expanding EOWB's network of community partners.~~
- ~~• Providing more outreach and training for priority groups.~~
- ~~• Offering more training opportunities to qualify for high-wage and high-demand jobs.~~
- ~~• Increasing accessibility to easily request WSO services.~~
- ~~• Helping more employees enroll in and complete training to advance in their careers.~~
- ~~• Increasing referrals processed between WSO partners.~~
- ~~• Increasing the number of employers participating in sector partnerships.~~
- ~~• Creating more opportunities to serve, connect with, and support area businesses.~~
- ~~• Increasing connections with economic development.~~

EOWB's strategy to align WorkSource Oregon (WSO) and other workforce programs and resources includes continued coordination around shared referrals, customer pathways, employer engagement, training access, and partner communication.

- During the modification period, EOWB will emphasize the use of systems allowing for trackable partner referrals, WSO check-in systems understand customer access and flow in WorkSource Oregon centers, and tools to improve virtual and self-directed access to services.

- [EOWB will work with partners to strengthen WorkSource Oregon onboarding and referral literacy. This effort will help staff and partners better understand program roles, eligibility requirements, referral points, and available services, reducing confusion for customers and improving the quality of handoffs between partners.](#)
- [EOWB will continue creating more avenues for students to participate in work-based learning, helping more job seekers connect to employers, increasing referrals processed between WSO partners, increasing employer participation in sector partnerships, and strengthening connections with economic development partners.](#)
- [These strategies support stronger alignment between workforce, education, economic development, and community partners while improving access for customers and employers across Eastern Oregon's large rural and frontier service area.](#)

3.3 20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(ii) and (b)(9): Coordination with Education

Building off the response in 3.2, describe how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities in the local area including, but not limited to, Essential Employability Skills (as defined) and Career and Technical Education (CTE) [Programs of Study](#) to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

EOWB will coordinate with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to strategize service enhancement and reduce duplication by:

- Strengthening relationships between EOWB and local education partners by providing workforce development coordination and support through youth internships and other career connected learning programs,
- Identifying opportunities to collaborate and work toward aligning key soft skills training (ie., Essential Employability Skills training) standards to teach to the area's employer needs,
- Collaborating with Career and Technical Education (CTE) partners to coordinate [Programs of Study](#) strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.
 - Map career pathways across eastern Oregon to identify where duplication exists
 - Investigate opportunities to offer multiple pathways, such as certificates, credit and non-credit options, and customized solutions to serve individual training needs.
- Participating in Comprehensive Local Needs Assessments for the local area.

3.4 20 CFR 679.560(b)(12): Coordination with Adult Education and Literacy

Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. Include how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with 20 CFR 679.370(n).

EOWB will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities by working directly with Title II providers in the area to perform an annual review of service to identify potential areas for improved coordination.

EOWB will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II by convening a subcommittee made

up of stakeholders for Title II related services in eastern Oregon.

3.5 Leverage Strategies (Oregon Requirement)

- A. Identify the sources of current leveraged funds outside of WIOA Title I funding and state general funds to support the workforce development system in the local area.
- B. Describe how this leveraged funding will impact the local system.
- C. Describe the local board's strategies for acquiring additional/future leveraged funds.

Sources of current leveraged funds outside of WIOA Title I funding and state general funds:

- Greater Oregon STEM Hub (GO STEM)
- Oregon Conservation Corps
- U.S. Department of Labor

Funding secured through GO STEM has created shared projects to work with eastern Oregon's education partners by collaborating on internships for students, creating learning events for educators, and by connecting more projects across the area to achieve economies of scale.

Funding received from the Oregon Conservation Corps will help strengthen the natural resources sector in eastern Oregon by collaborating on projects that serve as an introduction to the industry for youth and provide valuable natural resources protection in the region.

U.S. Department of Labor funding will support WSO services to adults in custody at eastern Oregon's four correctional facilities. WSO services will be offered to incarcerated adults inside state facilities as they near re-entering society, helping to prepare them for success upon release.

EOWB plans to acquire additional funds through grant applications and increased partnerships.

3.6 Next Generation Sector Strategies (Oregon Requirement)

- A. Identify and describe each industry in the local area where a next generation sector partnership (as defined) is currently active. Include in the description, the rationale for each active next generation sector partnership, recent outcomes, and how it will align with industry consortia where appropriate.
- B. Identify and describe each industry in the local area where there will be an attempt to convene a new sector partnership within the timeframe of the local plan. Include in the description, the rationale for each new next generation sector partnership and how it will align with industry consortia where appropriate.
- C. Identify and describe the strategy for any additional targeted sectors in the local area where the next generation sector model is not being used.

Manufacturing

- **Rationale** - Manufacturing is one of the high-wage, high-demand industries in eastern Oregon and several champions were on board to participate in the launch of the partnership.
- **Outcomes** - One of the most recent outcomes of the manufacturing sector partnership is the creation of Eastern Oregon WORKS, eastern Oregon's Summer internship program. This program was created in part to address one of the partnership's priorities of creating more opportunities for manufacturing employers to connect with local youth.
- **Alignment with industry consortia** - This partnership has not participated in recently created industry consortia at this time.

Healthcare

- **Rationale** - The Healthcare industry was identified as a high demand industry with one of the strongest long-term projected growth in the 2020-2024 strategic plan. Healthcare is a critical focus for rural Oregon because it is a key marker for economic and community sustainability.
- **Outcomes** - One of the Healthcare partnership's priorities was to connect with the student population more, both for educational opportunities and for recruitment. Since identifying this as a priority, there have been an increased number of career fairs and expos throughout eastern Oregon highlighting the healthcare industry specifically. The events have all been well attended by secondary/postsecondary students and industry employers. EOWB and its WorkSource partners have collaborated to make these events more accessible to industry employers, as well as to provide a variety of events throughout the region and the year so there is more access for students to participate.
- **Alignment with industry consortia** - Eastern Oregon's Coordinated Care Organization fosters "Local Community Health Partnerships" (LCHPs) - county-based consortia of invested partners. These groups share initiatives, collaborate, and amplify healthcare events, creating alignment and efficient resource coordination. LCHPs and healthcare partnerships share priorities, streamlining efforts for a healthier eastern Oregon.

Early Childhood Education

- **Rationale** - Although not identified in the 2020-2024 strategic plan, childcare became a focus industry due to ongoing conversations with other prioritized industries.
- **Outcomes** - The ECE sector partnership recently determined that they had three priorities in eastern Oregon: the child and adult care food program (CACFP), policy/legislative change, and recruitment/retention/outreach. A recent success this partnership had was to advocate for continuing the waiver for the CACFP sponsor to provide virtual visits.
- **Alignment with industry consortia** - The eastern Oregon ECE partnership partnered with other state workforce boards on providing input on legislative changes on a statewide basis. This statewide initiative consists of industry experts, industry employers, support partners, and legislative advocacy groups. This group works in a way to help broadly support the ECE industry as well as boost workforce development, and streamline educational requirements.

Natural Resources

- **Rationale** - The Natural Resources industry was identified as a potential priority industry in the previous strategic plan, and the future industry growth still remains strong. The EOWB was approached by an existing industry consortium to participate in a workforce development resource team, which has the potential to develop into a full-fledged sector partnership.
- **Outcomes** - This sector partnership is still being explored and no priorities or outcomes have been identified yet.
- **Alignment with industry consortia** - The Northern Blues Restoration Partnership is a consortium of natural resources organizations that also has a workforce development resource team. The plan is for the sector partnership to exist within that resource team which will also be able to bring in additional partners from WorkSource.

Transportation

- **Rationale** - Transportation was identified in the 2020-2024 strategic plan as a priority industry, but due to staffing commitments we were unable to coordinate a full sector partnership. We instead focused on developing the labor pool by partnering with our Title 1 provider to provide paid training. WorkSource Oregon partners helped to place those trained participants with local employers.
- **Outcomes** - This initiative produced a high number of CDL trained participants, of which a high percentage were placed with local transportation employers.

3.7 20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(i): Employer Engagement in Workforce Development

Describe the strategies and services (as defined) that will be used in the local area to facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

~~Strategies and services to facilitate employer engagement in workforce development programs:~~

- ~~• Facilitates and supports the organization of employer events.~~
- ~~• Participates in regional business services coordination and outreach efforts.~~
- ~~• Employers from high-wage and high-demand industries, as well as other industries, are engaged in workforce advancement activities such as internships and sector partnerships.~~

Strategies and services to facilitate employer engagement in workforce development programs include:

- Facilitating and supporting employer events, sector convenings, and business outreach activities that connect employers to workforce partners and available services.
- Participating in regional business services coordination and outreach efforts, including coordination with economic development partners and WorkSource Oregon partners with employer-facing roles.
- Engaging employers from high-wage, high-demand, and emerging industries in workforce advancement activities such as internships, work experience, on-the-job training, sector partnerships, and training pathway development.
- Developing a clearer business-facing pathway that helps employers connect to OJT, work experience, internships, training support, recruitment assistance, and WorkSource Oregon partner services.
- Improving CRM-style tracking of employer engagement so EOWB and partners can better understand employer needs, follow-up responsibilities, referrals, services provided, and outcomes.

3.8 20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(ii): Meeting the Needs of Businesses

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to support a workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses.

Strategies and services to support a workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses.

- EOWB coordinates with WSO partners that have employer facing roles to ensure our focuses align.
- EOWB's sector partnerships bring together employers, educational institutions, and other support partners to make sure that decisions are aligned with the needs of employers and businesses.
- Eastern Oregon employers have an active role on EOWB's Board of Directors to ensure businesses from across the area have the opportunity to share their perspectives, making EOWB programs more responsive to employer needs.
- EOWB's Employer Engagement Coordinator(s) regularly interact with employers throughout the region to stay knowledgeable on the issues that employers face and what can be done to support them.
- Develop and strengthen the various pathways that make it easier for employers to access the talent pool.
- Regularly incorporate employer feedback into the WorkSource Oregon system to improve employer facing services.
- During the modification period, EOWB will strengthen this work by developing a clearer business-facing pathway that helps employers understand and access workforce resources such as OJT, work experience, internships, training support, recruitment assistance, sector partnerships, and other WorkSource Oregon partner services.

- This pathway will help employers access services through a simpler front door and will help EOWB and partners track employer interest, referrals, services provided, and outcomes. EOWB will also continue improving use of CRM-style tracking to support business engagement, reduce duplication, and maintain better follow-up across staff and partners.
- EOWB's employer engagement strategy will continue to include sector engagement, employer convenings, business outreach, work-based learning, internships, and coordination with economic development partners. These strategies are intended to help employers build talent pipelines while helping job seekers connect to local career pathways.

3.9 20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iii) and (b)(4): Coordination with Economic Development

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development including the promotion of entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

Coordinate with economic development partners in the area on a regular basis, both directly and through organized meetings and/or events.

Jointly advocate for funding opportunities that benefit workforce development and economic development. Collaborate together to utilize and leverage opportunities for employer recruitment.

Collaborate with the WorkSource centers, Business Oregon, and SBDC to promote business incubators and link them to WorkSource resources.

3.10 20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iv): Linkages to Unemployment Insurance

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between WorkSource Oregon (as defined) and unemployment insurance programs.

Where applicable, job seekers are given contact information of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division staff and UI claimants can register in WSO centers.

Relationships between the one-stop delivery system and UI programs have been strengthened through development and adoption of the official Rapid Response Procedure, which ensures that area UI representatives are included in Rapid Response communications and are invited to participate in Rapid Response sessions.

Continuous Improvement

3.11 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(i): Expand Access to Services

Describe how the local board will work with entities in WorkSource Oregon (as defined) to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.

~~The EOWB and their core partners expand access by continuously reviewing existing analysis of the regional economy and workforce. The regional analysis will determine existing and emerging in-~~

~~demand sectors and occupations. This, in turn, establishes the knowledge and skills needed by an emerging workforce, which include youth and individuals with barriers to employment. EOWB and its core partners continuously review the various modes of training to improve and expand methods that will best meet the needs of the emerging workforce in eastern Oregon.~~

EOWB will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services by strengthening both in-person and virtual pathways into the WorkSource Oregon system. Strategies include continued use of center check-ins and customer-flow data, [tools for virtual intake and service connection](#), [EOWorks.org](#) for public-facing information and self-directed navigation, referral [tracking tools](#), and partner coordination to improve timely handoffs.

These tools are especially important in Eastern Oregon because long travel distances, limited transportation, weather, and rural/frontier geography can make in-person access difficult. EOWB will continue working with WorkSource Oregon partners to ensure customers can access services through centers, virtual tools, direct linkage through technology, and referral pathways.

EOWB and its core partners will continue reviewing regional economic and workforce data to identify in-demand sectors, occupations, and knowledge and skill needs, while using customer-flow and referral data to identify access gaps and improve service delivery for youth, adults, dislocated workers, and individuals with barriers to employment.

3.12 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(ii): Career Pathways

Describe how the local board will work with entities in WorkSource Oregon (as defined) to facilitate development of career pathways.

EOWB will do the following to facilitate development of career pathways:

- Map career pathways across eastern Oregon to see where duplication exists
- Help collaborate to bridge gaps in existing pathways.
- Provide updated industry and sector data, including history and projections
- Help bring WSO to the table to assist with implementation

3.13 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(ii): Co-enrollment

Describe how the local board will work with entities in WorkSource Oregon (as defined) to facilitate co-enrollment in WSO programs.

The EOWB works with the LLT to determine how to improve utilization of co-enrollment in core programs to maximize efficiencies and use of resources.

Cross-training between WSO center partners is completed periodically to ensure dissemination of program eligibility parameters and changes, and to identify comparable benefits to eliminate the duplication of service efforts. Co-enrollment is encouraged when appropriate and enhanced through releases of information (ROIs) and sharing agreements, to better inform participants of the availability of services.

The LLT will explore development of a more formalized communication strategy that would include communication with workforce partners regarding active participants. A formalized referral process will be discussed to assist with communication and follow-up.

3.14 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(iii): Improve Access to Postsecondary Credentials

Describe how the local board will work with entities in WorkSource Oregon (as defined) to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

EOWB will work with entities in WSO to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential by:

1. Increasing awareness through improved outreach to communities, partners and employers, and
2. Helping communities understand what educational services are available by which area providers.
3. Utilizing sector partnerships to bring greater awareness of relevant credentials and degrees.

3.15 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(i): Continuous Improvement of Eligible Providers

Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers through WorkSource Oregon (as defined) and that such providers will meet the employment needs of employers, workers, and job seekers in the local area.

~~EOWB will monitor outcomes and update contracts to ensure providers are meeting employment goals and improving processes.~~

~~Process mapping sessions will be conducted annually, as needed, to help identify areas for improvement and streamlining processes. Feedback mechanisms will be distributed and reviewed regularly to ensure feedback is received that can help improve service delivery.~~

~~EOWB will ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers through stronger contract expectations, monitoring, data review, customer feedback, process mapping, and partner coordination. Contracts and scopes of work will be used to clarify expectations for service delivery, employer engagement, referrals, reporting, documentation, and participant outcomes.~~

~~EOWB will review provider performance, customer feedback, referral activity, fiscal status, and compliance items to identify areas for improvement and determine whether technical assistance, corrective action, or contract revisions are needed. Feedback mechanisms and process mapping will continue to be used to improve service delivery and strengthen alignment with employer, worker, and job seeker needs.~~

3.16 20 CFR 679.560(b)(20): Intake and Case Management

Describe any recent innovations, promising practices, or efforts to increase and streamline access to programs and services at WSO centers particularly as it relates to case management.

~~EOWB has recently hired a Workforce Benefits Navigator to capture data that will help to create additional access points to WSO services and increase referrals between WSO partners, both within and outside of one-stop centers.~~

~~Oregon Workforce Partnership has received grants that they will be distributing to local boards to expand WSO services in correctional facilities. The eastern Oregon area has four correctional facilities that these services will be offered in.~~

Recent and planned innovations to increase and streamline access to programs and services include trackable partner referral Tools, virtual service access through, customer-flow analysis, and clearer processes for WorkSource Oregon partner handoffs.
EOWB will continue working with providers and partners to clarify expectations for timely referrals, case management access, employer services, participant follow-up, and service continuity. These efforts are intended to reduce fragmentation, improve customer experience, and strengthen accountability across WorkSource Oregon centers and partner services.
EOWB will also continue supporting re-entry service coordination in Eastern Oregon correctional facilities and community-based settings, helping justice-involved individuals connect to WorkSource Oregon services, training, employment planning, and partner referrals before and after release.

Key Definitions

WorkSource Oregon (WSO) Programs: The WTDB approved a [WorkSource Oregon Definition](#) dated May 24, 2023 on June 9, 2023. For the purposes of local planning, WorkSource Oregon refers to the “WorkSource Oregon Primary Programs and Resources” included in the definition.

Other Workforce Programs: These represent the entire workforce system in addition to “WorkSource Oregon Primary Programs and Resources”. For the purposes of local planning, these include “Additional WorkSource Oregon Programs and Resources” identified in the [WorkSource Oregon Definition](#) dated May 24, 2023 that are a part of WIOA and also programs such as K-12 and postsecondary education, workforce-related/supporting community-based organizations, labor and apprenticeship, and allied partners.

Essential Employability Skills: They go by many names, such as soft skills, interpersonal skills, essential skills, social skills, 21st century skills, and applied skills. They are the collection of skills necessary to succeed in the workplace that can be learned in academic settings and are enhanced through simulated and actual workplace experience. They are sometimes referred to as behaviors and traits but can be learned and refined through modeling and practice. They include, but are not limited to, adaptability, critical thinking, communication, empathy, open-mindedness, problem-solving, teamwork, and work ethic. The number of EES and the individual importance of each cannot be disconnected from industry and occupation.

Next Generation Sector Partnership: [Next Generation Sector Partnerships](#) (aka Next Gen Sector Partnerships) are partnerships of businesses, from the same industry and in a shared labor market region, who work with education, workforce development, economic development and community organizations to address the workforce and other competitiveness needs of the targeted industry. Next Gen Sector Partnerships are Industry-Driven, Community-Supported, and Sustainable over time. Next Gen Sector Partnerships are active all over the country.

Employer Services Strategies: May include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, or utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies in the local area.

Operational Portion

Section 4: Services and Activities

Please answer the questions in Section 4 in twelve (12) pages or less. Provide a response for all items identified. Reports and/or expanded analysis can be included as attachments.

Available Workforce Development Activities

4.1 20 CFR 679.560(a)(4): Workforce Development Activities – Part 1 Adults (Includes both WIOA Adults and Dislocated Workers)

- A. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities for adults in the local area including education and training and including individuals with barriers to employment;
- B. Describe specific strengths and weaknesses of these adult workforce development activities in the local area to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers;
- C. Describe the capacity to provide these adult workforce development activities in the local area to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers;
- D. Identify successful models and best practices in the local area for adult workforce development activities.

The skilled personnel at Worksource Oregon in Eastern Oregon stays updated with industry developments and job trends. Staff are aware of the needs of employers, businesses and jobseekers. By being aware of the customers' needs they are able to put together programs that are available and accessible to everyone. The skilled, trained personnel at our centers remain updated with industry developments and job opportunities. They provide timely services to our customers. They offer dependable and timely support to customers in need of our service. These services and programs are designed to address the needs of targeted populations, including adults, dislocated workers, veterans, homeless individuals, SNAP recipients, and others. The overarching goal in our programs is to enhance employability and competitiveness of individuals in the workforce by offering the opportunities for skill acquisition and advancement.

EOWB's service provider offers the following:

- Basic Career Services for all Eastern Oregon residents.
 - Initial needs assessment and evaluation of work history and educational attainment.
 - Registration on the iMatchSkills website.
 - Labor exchange services, such as job search and job placement assistance and support.
 - Basic job search assistance, including resume writing and interview skills.
 - Labor market information.
 - Information on available supportive services.
 - Assistance through trained and available staff members, either on site at a WSO center or by telephone or other technology, after filing unemployment compensation claims.
 - Referrals to other programs and services available through the One Stop system.
- Individualized Career Services for individuals who meet the program-specific eligibility requirements and who need additional support beyond the basic career services level. Services may include the following:
 - Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs.
 - Development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and information on available training and training providers.

- Assistance in establishing eligibility on non-WIOA financial aid for employment and training programs.
- Group and individual counseling.
- Career planning.
- Short-term prevocational services, including the development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, and personal maintenance skills, as well as professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.
- Internships and work experiences linked to careers.
- Financial literacy services.
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance.
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.
- A comprehensive On-the-job training (OJT) program helps employers secure talent and job seekers secure jobs with paid training while they learn new skills.
- Individual Training Accounts (ITA) empower eligible individuals to access high-quality training programs that enhance their skills and qualification which ultimately leads to improved employment prospects.
- Work Experience helps individuals develop skills, build their work history, and increase network opportunities and employability.
- Follow-Up Services are provided to individuals who were enrolled as participants in a specific program and obtained employment as a participant in the program.

Eastern Oregon's individualized adult workforce development services are effective due to strong relationships with local employers and training providers.

The area's basic career services could be improved by providing them more consistently across the area. EOWB and its WSO partners are preparing to offer a new Essential Employability Skills training program to align soft skills training across the area.

The capacity to consistently deliver services has always been a challenge due to the large geographic area. However, recently it has been even more difficult due to an increased frequency of staff turnover as a result of the highly competitive labor market.

EOWB works with its service provider and WSO partners to find ways to create efficiencies and economies of scale that will help to deliver services more efficiently and cost effectively.

The most successful adult workforce development program in Eastern Oregon has been the CDL training program in Umatilla County. The program has a high rate of success and placement in high-wage high-demand jobs.

4.1 20 CFR 679.560(b)(8): Workforce Development Activities – Part 2 Youth (Includes WIOA Youth)

- A. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities for youth in the local area including education and training and including individuals with barriers to employment;
- B. Describe specific strengths and weaknesses of these youth workforce development activities in the local area to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers;
- C. Describe the capacity to provide these youth workforce development activities in the local area to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers;

D. Identify successful models and best practices in the local area for youth workforce development activities.

In addition to the services offered to adults, EOWB's service provider(s) makes the following program elements available to Eastern Oregon's youth residents to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants:

- Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction, Dropout Prevention Services, as applicable:
 - Academic support and tutoring;
 - Helping youth identify areas of academic concern;
 - Assisting overcoming learning obstacles;
 - Providing tools and resources to develop learning strategies;
 - Literacy development;
 - Active Learning experiences;
 - After-school opportunities; and
 - Individualized instruction.
- Alternative Secondary School Services and Dropout Recovery Services include basic education skills training, individualized academic instruction, English as a Second Language, credit recovery, educational plan development, and counseling to assist youth who have struggled in traditional secondary education to re-engage and persist in education that leads to the completion of a recognized credential.
- Occupational Skills Training provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by a certain occupational field at entry, intermediate or advanced levels.
- Education Offered Concurrently With Workforce Preparation and Training for a Specific Occupation is only added when other specific services are being provided, including workforce participation activities, Basic academic skills, or hands-on occupational skills training connected to a specific occupational cluster, or career pathway.
- Leadership Development Opportunities provide exposure to postsecondary educational possibilities; community and service learning projects; peer-centered activities; organizational and team work training; training in decision-making; citizenship training; civic engagement activities; and other leadership activities that place the youth in a leadership position.
- Supportive Services enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities by reducing barriers.
- Adult Mentoring offers youth with an individual mentor with whom the youth interacts on a regular basis. TEC Career Specialists may serve as mentors when adult mentors are sparse.
- Follow-Up Services are offered to help ensure youth are successful in employment and/or postsecondary education and training after exiting from the program.
- Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling is made available to participants, as appropriate. When referring participants to necessary counseling that cannot be provided by TEC, the Career Specialist will coordinate with the organization it refers to ensure continuity of service.
- Financial Literacy Activities are available to support the ability of participants to be able to successfully manage their finances.
- Entrepreneurial Skills Training addresses the basics of starting and operating a small business.
- Services That Provide Labor Market Information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the Eastern Oregon area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.
- Career awareness begins the process of developing knowledge of a variety of careers and occupations available, skill requirements, working conditions and training prerequisites, and job opportunities across a wide variety of industry sectors.
- Career exploration services help youth choose an educational path, training or a job which fits their interests, skills, and abilities.

- Career counseling or guidance provides advice and support in making decisions about what career paths to take.
- Postsecondary Preparation and Transition Activities prepare youth for advancement to postsecondary education after attaining a high school diploma or High School Equivalency.
- In addition, TEC has strong coordination and linkages with other community partners to assist in providing services to youth, including referrals, assistance with training or job /work experience information, etc.

WIOA youth funds have positively changed the lives of many youth and youth adults which without this help would not be where they are. Here are few strength that we believe it has:

- The most important strength of the WIOA is the collaboration among area partners. It helps to establish an integrated system, pooling resources to bolster training and career prospects, particularly for youth navigating diverse challenges.
- The attention to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion helps youth to learn how to work with and appreciate others, and how to recognize their own value in the workforce.
- Work Experience equips youth with the skills, knowledge, and experience needed to succeed in the workforce and achieve their career goals.
- Workforce preparation workshops/programs enable youth to acquire and apply skills while they are in work experience programs.
- The investments made on occupational training are targeted towards occupations with career pathways leading to sustained employment opportunities.
- Supportive services remove barriers that may hinder the successful participation of youth in education, training, and employment opportunities.
- Follow up services help to ensure their success in post-secondary education or unsubsidized employment.

TEC uses the braided funding model. This resource allocation strategy occurs when different funding streams are used together to support different needs for the same customer while maintaining documentation to support the charging and allocation of costs to multiple separate funding streams or programs. Braiding funds allows a TEC to provide more comprehensive services to participants while maximizing partner resources available to assist our participants.

For example, the Title I WIOA Youth program and the DHS Independent Living Program (ILP) can provide complementary services to youth and can be used together (braided) to serve eligible youth ages 16-24 where each program's age eligibility overlaps. TEC receives both Title I Youth funding and ILP funding and may braid these funds and enroll eligible youth into both programs. Title I resources can be utilized to provide youth with such services as career guidance, exploration, and planning; work experience; and leadership development; ILP resources provide training and classes for daily living and educational assistance to prepare youth to live independently.

When used together, multiple funding sources can increase the capacity of our programs to help participants meet their employment and educational goals.

Serving such a large, geographical area can be very challenging especially with decreases in funding. The distance between offices is vast and the needs of the customer increases due to limits on other available services.

A successful model for youth workforce development is the Eastern Oregon Works Internship program. It pairs youth with local employers, mentors, and basic soft skills training, to work in paid summer work experiences. This gives the real world experience in the workforce with the support of mentors and training. It also gives

them the opportunity to try out careers they are interested in and decide if they want to continue on that path. All of these experiences are paid and the majority of them are also eligible for school credit. EOWB is considering expanding the opportunities to be available during the school year as well.

4.2 20 CFR 679.560(b)(6): Employment and Training Activities

Considering the response in 4.1, provide a specific description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

By strong collaboration between the Oregon Employment Department (OED), EOWB, and its service provider, we continue to develop all around services for business and individuals seeking employment in all eight counties in our area. Our services include:

Basic Career Service:

- Assessment of skill levels and service need
- career guidance
- Job search

Individualized career service:

- Development of Individual Employment plans
- Workforce Preparation
- Short term-pre vocation service

Secondary Education and skills:

- GED and High School Diploma

Training Services:

- Occupational Skills Training
- On-the-job Training
- Work Experience

Supportive Services that may be provided as needed includes:

- Transportation Assistance
- Uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work related tools
- Child care Assistance

Follow Up Service (Non-monetary):

- Career planning and counseling
- Assistance with work-related problems
- Peer support groups
- Referrals
- information regarding educational opportunities

4.3 20 CFR 679.560(b)(18): Training Services

- A.** Describe how training services outlined in 20 CFR 682 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts. If contracts for training services are used describe how they will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under 20 CFR 682; and
- B.** Describe how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how training services are to be provided.

EOWB training services for eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth are provided through Individual Training Accounts (ITA). Using ITA funds, EOWB's service provider purchases training service from eligible training providers that WIOA eligible participants select in consultation with a workforce professional. Participants are expected to utilize information such as skills assessments, labor market conditions/trends, and training providers' performance, and to take an active role in managing their employment future through the use of ITAs.

An ITA is limited in cost and duration and must result in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment. ITAs are provided to eligible participants on the basis of an individualized assessment of the person's job readiness, employment and training needs, financial, social and supportive needs, labor market demand and potential for successful completion, as documented on the participant's individual Employment Plan (IEP). Participants choose career training with Eligible Training Providers in consultation with the career specialist.

Continued funding of an ITA is contingent on availability of WIOA funds and on the participant's satisfactory progress in training. Providers will review the participant's training progress and expenses quarterly or more frequently depending on the training schedule. An individual's progress will be considered satisfactory upon meeting specific outcomes.

Priority must be provided and [Attachment K: P-007 Priority of Service](#) needs to be followed.

To ensure maximum customer choice and use of the fund, WorkSource Oregon staff provide detailed explanation of available training options and financial resources available to support individuals in their pursuit of a new career. Staff also make sure that the connection between the employment goal of the participant and regionally targeted high demand, high skill or high wage occupations exist, and the training requested is in line with participant's employment goal or career pathway.

4.4 20 CFR 679.560(b)(7): Coordination with Rapid Response Activities

Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

EOWB's Rapid Response Procedure follows both state and federal guidance to facilitate the effective coordination of layoff aversion and support strategy with WSO partners. WSO partner connections with local businesses help ensure that potential layoffs or closures are met in a timely manner with an appropriate response. The goal is to avert the layoff totally or minimize the disruption to the employers and employees.

EOWB's Dislocated Worker Liaison works with the Rapid Response Coordinator to ensure efficient and comprehensive services are delivered to local employers and their employees when services are warranted. EOWB and WSO in eastern Oregon follow EOWB's Rapid Response Procedure, which is outlined below:

1. Initial notification of layoff or closure - WSO learns about a layoff or potential layoff and shares with Dislocated Worker Liaison, who shares the information with the Designated Communication List.
2. Confirmation and investigation - Rapid Response Coordinator investigates and gets details on layoff/closure. Any relevant updates are shared with the Designated Communication List throughout the process.
3. Initial on-site meeting - Rapid Response Team meets with employer to discuss services available and set up a plan.
4. Layoff Aversion - EOWB and its service provider(s) present layoff aversion strategies as a first response during a rapid response.
5. Transition Team and pre-layoff services - The Rapid Response Team may also establish a transition team to help affected employees transition easier.
6. Employee Survey - Prior to or at the information session, a survey is distributed to learn what services are needed and other necessary information to provide services.
7. Employee Information Session - For small Rapid Responses, these can be 1-on-1 meetings, for large Rapid Responses these are on-site with the employees.
8. Programs and Services Planning - The Rapid Response Information Session provides feedback and guidance on services needed, the Rapid Response Team will implement a plan to provide the services as necessary.
9. Employer Feedback and Follow-up - This is to help keep employers and employees informed about WSO services and next steps, as well as to help WSO and EOWB obtain information that may help with an improved system response to future layoffs.

4.5 20 CFR 679.560(b)(10): Coordination with Supportive Services

Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities in the local area with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services.

WIOA Title I funded supportive services are not an entitlement. Their provision depends on the unique financial and employment/training needs of each WIOA Title I enrolled individual and the supportive service budget of the WIOA Title I service provider.

These services are provided when necessary to enable individuals to participate in career or training services and/or retain unsubsidized employment. They are typically offered when no other assistance is available in the individual's community.

Referral Process & Coordination with Community Resources:

- WIOA Title I service providers must be familiar with community support systems. When requested supportive services are needed, providers must first coordinate with community organizations and refer individuals to resources known to provide those services.
- Allowable WIOA Title I Funded Supportive Services: During program participation and follow-up, eligible WIOA Title I enrolled individuals can access various supportive services. Some of the allowable services include:
 - Child care assistance
 - Transportation assistance
 - Job search and placement assistance
 - Tools, equipment, and uniforms
 - Supportive services for individuals with disabilities

- Other services necessary for participation in WIOA programs

These services are tailored to meet the specific needs of participants and enhance their success in employment and training endeavors. Career Specialists must ensure that all other resources have been exhausted prior to use of WIOA funds and that the support services follow the limitations of the providers support service policy.

4.6 WorkSource Oregon/One-Stop Delivery System (Oregon Requirement)

List all WorkSource Oregon (WSO) Centers in the local area and provide for each site the:

- Location (City);
- WSO Center Type (Comprehensive, Affiliate, Partner Site/Specialized);
- List of Partners Represented; and
- Means of Service Availability by each Partner (physically present, direct linkage through technology, or referral only).

Each Center must be consistent with the One-Stop Center definitions and requirements contained in the One-Stop Certification Policy (including Attachment A - WSO Centers and Other Sites – Requirements Matrix, Attachment B - One-Stop Center Certification Minimum Requirements, Attachment C - Certification Documentation Requirements, and Attachment D - References.) and the Memorandum of Understanding and Cost Sharing Policy (and attachments).

The Eastern Oregon WorkSource Oregon Centers are located in the following areas, classifications included:

- Hermiston, affiliate in Umatilla County;
- Pendleton, Comprehensive in Umatilla County;
- La Grande, affiliate in Union County;
- Baker City, affiliate in Baker County;
- Canyon City, affiliate in Grant County;
- Burns, affiliate in Harney County;
- Ontario, affiliate in Malheur County,
- Ontario, Partners Site at Treasure Valley Community College in Malheur County.
- [Enterprise, Partner Site/Specialized in Wallowa County at the Wallowa Resources Building;](#)

The means of service for the Oregon Employment Department and for the Title 1B Service Provider are “physically present” at all centers. Oregon’s Department of Human Services (ODHS) shares space in the La Grande, Hermiston, and Baker WSO Centers. Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC) shares space in the La Grande WSO Center. Easterseals shares space in the Hermiston WSO Center. All other partners are by “direct linkage through technology” and/or “referral.”

4.7 One-Stop Operator Procurement (Oregon Requirement)

- A.** Identify the One-Stop Operator.
- B.** Describe the procedures and timelines for future procurement of a One-Stop Operator consistent with the One-Stop Operator Procurement Policy (including Attachment A - Process for Local Workforce Development Boards as One-Stop Operator).

Eastern Oregon Workforce Board is currently the area's One-Stop Operator, due to a failed Request for Proposals.

The One-Stop Operator is chosen through a procurement process. The current procurement covers a four-year term that commenced on July 1, 2021, with the possibility of renewal for an additional three years. The subsequent procurement is planned to take place in Spring of 2025 for a four year period to begin July 1, 2025.

4.8 One-Stop Center Certification (Oregon Requirement)

Identify the established procedures for ongoing certification of one-stop centers consistent with One-Stop Certification Policy (including Attachment A - WSO Centers and Other Sites – Requirements Matrix, Attachment B - One-Stop Center Certification Minimum Requirements, Attachment C - Certification Documentation Requirements, and Attachment D - References.

EOWB Procedure for one-stop center certification:

[Attachment L: EOWB One-Stop Certification Procedure](#)

4.9 WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards (Oregon Requirement)

- A. Do all Comprehensive and Affiliate WSO Centers in the local area provide services that meet or exceed the WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards effective June 9, 2023?
- B. If not, please describe the strategies to bring WSO Centers into compliance.

The One-Stop Operator assists with identifying potential duplication of services and works with the LLT to coordinate those services.

☒ Yes

☐ No

4.10 20 CFR 679.560(b)(11): Improving Service Delivery

Describe plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services and other services provided through WorkSource Oregon (as defined).

~~EOWB works with providers and partners to improve coordination of service referrals with customer claims. EOWB is focusing on streamlining delivery of services through: data gathering surveys, new/improved referral tools, process mapping of existing methods, and the creation of new/improved methods for clients to access services. EOWB is also working on streamlining the experience of clients at WorkSource centers in Eastern Oregon; so that customers get the same level of professional help and quality of service regardless of their location. EOWB is also exploring methods of virtual access to service providers, so that clients can submit claims in remote areas, during inclement weather, and during times when WorkSource centers may be closed. Additionally, EOWB hopes that the proposed addition of virtual access points will improve the accessibility of services for persons with disabilities and other barriers to employment and training. EOWB conducts annual inspections of the WorkSource Oregon centers in Eastern Oregon. These annual inspections, along with ongoing~~

~~reviews of services and procedures provide measurable assurances that Eastern Oregon WorkSource center services will be of good quality for clients.~~

~~EOWB works with providers and partners to improve coordination of service referrals, reduce duplication, and streamline the customer experience across Eastern Oregon WorkSource centers. EOWB is focusing on improving service delivery through customer-flow data, feedback surveys, referral tools, virtual pathways, process mapping, and clearer partner handoff procedures.~~

~~EOWB is also working to ensure that customers receive a consistent level of professional help and service quality regardless of location. This includes expanding virtual access to service providers, improving referral follow-up, and exploring center-based technology that allows customers to connect with partners who are not physically present in a center.~~

~~Annual inspections, ongoing center reviews, customer feedback, and data from Waitwhile and Oregon CIS will provide measurable information to support continuous improvement and help ensure Eastern Oregon WorkSource center services remain accessible, coordinated, and responsive to customer and employer needs.~~

Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

4.11 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iii): Accessibility

- A. Describe how entities within WorkSource Oregon (as defined), including one-stop operators and one-stop partners, will comply with 29 CFR, Part 38, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities.
- B. Describe how entities within WorkSource Oregon (as defined), including one-stop operators and one-stop partners, will comply with 29 CFR, Part 38, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities.
- C. Considering the response in A. and B., describe how entities with WorkSource Oregon (as defined) provide staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

EOWB works with WSO center staff to ensure accessibility to all WorkSource Oregon Centers and services. The annual review of the WSO centers will be a primary tool in assessing compliance with state and federal regulations and guidelines.

EOWB works with WSO partners to ensure that service programs, technology portals, and materials are easily accessible to individuals with disabilities.

EOWB ensures WSO staff are properly trained to address the accessibility needs of all individuals through the use of workshops, seminars, and other staff training sessions.

4.12 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(ii): Virtual/Remote Access

Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through WorkSource Oregon (as defined), including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.

~~The goal of the EOWB is to develop or adapt a software package that will serve as an overarching link for WSO referrals that anyone can access from anywhere. EOWB is also researching online service points, through the use of computer tablets in WSO centers and also through the use of~~

~~kiosks placed at strategic points throughout communities. EOWB is working on streamlining the existing service referral system so that referrals to WSO service providers and communication back to customers happens in a timely manner. The goal is that each customer will progress smoothly through the service referral system to the completion of their goals, because they are given “next steps,” as they work with WSO service providers.~~

EOWB will facilitate access to WorkSource Oregon services in remote and frontier areas through a combination of technology, partner coordination, direct linkage, and public-facing navigation tools.

EOWB will continue developing approaches that allow customers to begin the service process online, by phone, through a WorkSource Oregon center, or through partner referral. These strategies are designed to reduce the impact of distance, transportation barriers, weather, limited office coverage, and partner availability across Eastern Oregon's large service area.

Where appropriate, EOWB will also explore center-based virtual connection points that allow customers physically present in a WorkSource Oregon center to connect live with a partner who is not on site. This supports more timely intervention while preserving a human handoff from center staff to the appropriate partner.

Section 5: Compliance

Please answer the questions in Section 5 in ten (10) pages or less. Most responses should be staff-driven as each are focused on the organization's compliance with federal or state requirements. Provide a response for all items identified. Required documents can be included as attachments.

Local Board

5.1 20 CFR 679.320: Local Board Membership (TEGL 27-14, cited in Policy, is no longer active)

Complete the Local Board Membership Roster form provided (same as Attachment C - Local Board Membership Roster Template) consistent with [Oregon WTDB Policy Local Board Membership Criteria](#) (including [Attachment A - Local Board Membership Requirements](#), [Attachment B - LWDB Membership Calculator \(Excel\)](#), [Attachment C - Local Board Membership Roster \(template\) \(updated 11/1/2021\)](#), and [Attachment D - References](#). Submit the Local Board Membership Roster form as an attachment.

[Attachment A - EOWB Board Membership Roster](#)

5.2 20 CFR 679.320: Local Board Membership Policy (TEGL 27-14, cited in Policy, is no longer active)

Submit as an attachment the local board policy and process for nomination and appointment of board members compliant with [Oregon WTDB Policy Local Board Membership Criteria](#) (including [Attachment A - Local Board Membership Requirements](#), [Attachment B - LWDB Membership Calculator \(Excel\)](#), [Attachment C - Local Board Membership Roster \(template\) \(updated 11/1/2021\)](#), and [Attachment D - References](#).

[Attachment B - Local Board Policy and Process for Nomination and Appointment of Board Members](#)

5.3 20 CFR 679.310(a): Local Board Certification

Complete Local Workforce Development Board Certification Request form provided (available in October 2023 through Basecamp) consistent with [WIOA Title I Policy Appointment and Certification of Local Workforce Development Boards](#) (including [Attachment A - LWDB Certification Request Letter Template](#), [Attachment B - LWDB Board Certification Process](#), and [Attachment C - References](#)). Submit the Local Workforce Development Board Certification Request form as an attachment.

[Attachment C - EOWB Board Certification Request 2023-2025](#)

5.4 Equal Opportunity Officer (Oregon Requirement)

Provide the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for WIOA within the local area.

Farideh Alvijeh, Eastern Oregon Workforce Board
(541) 963-3693 | Farideh@eowb.org

5.5 Local Board Documents (Oregon Requirement)

Provide completed copies of the following local board approval forms as an attachment:

- Statement of Concurrence-Attachment D
- Partner Statement of Agreement- Attachment E
- Assurances- Attachment F

WIOA compliant versions of these documents are available in October 2023 through Basecamp.

[Attachment D - EOWB Statement of Concurrence](#)

[Attachment E - EOWB Partner Statement of Agreement](#) (to be signed upon finalization of the Plan)

[Attachment F: EOWB Assurances](#)

Required Elements

5.6 20 CFR 679.560(b)(14): Responsible Entity for Grant Fund Disbursement

Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in 20 CFR 679.420, as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under the same section (20 CFR 679.420).

EOWB has been designated by the Eastern Oregon JOBS Council to be responsible for managing the disbursement of grant funds.

5.7 20 CFR 679.560(b)(15): Competitive Process for Subgrants

- A. Describe how the local board remains a neutral broker of adult, dislocated worker, and youth services consistent with [Oregon Executive Order 13-08](#) by describing the competitive process that will be used to award subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.
- B. Submit an organization chart as an attachment that depicts a clear separation of duties between the board and service provision.
- C. Provide the current names of contracted organizations and the duration of each contract for WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services.

Eastern Oregon Workforce Board (EOWB) adheres to its procurement policy, developed in alignment with the guidelines and stipulations outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations. This policy aims to guarantee open competition and fair costs. A formal Request for Proposal (RFP) outlining precise service requirements and criteria for selecting contractors. An impartial panel comprising board members is assembled to thoroughly assess and evaluate proposals, subsequently presenting recommendations for service provider selection to the board.

[Attachment G - EOWB and Service Provider Organizational Chart](#)

Training and Employment Consortium	Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services	Ends 6/30/2023 and is renewable at the discretion of the board until 2026
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5.8 20 CFR 679.560(b)(12): WIOA Title II Application Review

Describe how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with 20 CFR 679.370(n)(1).

The Title II providers are members of the local workforce board. In accordance with the EOWB bylaws, the EOWB Chair will create a committee of board members to review and evaluate applications. The committee will make a decision and bring it to the board and the final decision will be made by voting after the primary decision was discussed among board members.

5.9 20 CFR 679.560(b)(13): Local Cooperative Agreements

Submit as an attachment executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in WorkSource Oregon (as defined) to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination consistent with 20 CFR 679.370(n)(3).

[Attachment H: EOWB Cooperative Agreement](#)

5.10 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iv): Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement

Describe the roles and resource contributions of the WorkSource Oregon partners by providing as an attachment the current Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement for the local area.

Currently, the MOU is the only cooperative agreement in place between the EOWB and the Department of Human Services' Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, which allows the sharing of information and encourages collaboration between all WSO center partners. A review of the services offered to individuals with disabilities

and other individuals will be conducted by the One-Stop Operator and recommendations to enhance the provision of services will be shared with the EOWB and the Local Leadership Team.

[Attachment I - EOWB WSO Cooperative Agreement \(MOU\)](#)

5.11 20 CFR 679.560(b)(16): Negotiated Performance

Provide as an attachment, the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with 20 CFR 677.205-230, to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I subtitle B, and the WorkSource Oregon delivery system in the local area.

[Attachment J - EOWB Performance Measures - Negotiated Rates](#)

5.12 20 CFR 679.560(b)(21): Priority of Service

Describe the direction given by the Governor ([WTDB Priority of Service Policy](#)) and the local board to the one-stop operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and 20 CFR 680.600.

EOWB's Priority of service policy aligns with WIOA regulations and state policy to ensure priority of service requirements are met.

[Attachment K - EOWB Priority of Service Policy](#)

5.13 20 CFR 679.560(b)(19): Public Comment Period

Describe the process used by the local board, consistent with 20 CFR 679.550(b), to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations.

All EOWB Board members and the Local Leadership Team are encouraged to share this information with businesses and labor in the area. Opportunity for Public Comment: The plan will be posted online for a minimum of 30 days before being submitted. The local plan is posted on the EOWB website at www.eowb.org. Updates to Note in Plan Post Public Comment Period: 4.10 of Program Design and Evaluation As per EOWB's policy, P-006 Youth Services Eligibility, defines Needs Additional Assistance and Basic Skills Deficient for both In-School and Out of School youth. The policy is intended to assure eligible youth have the skills to become employed and continue along career paths that lead to greater self-sufficiency. See Attachment O Youth Services Eligibility for detailed information.

5.14 Compliance Concerns (Oregon Requirement)

State any concerns the local board has with ensuring the compliance components listed below are in place. Copies of documents are not required at this time but may be requested during monitoring.

- Administration of funds
- Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local elected officials
- Agreement between the Local Elected Officials and the Workforce Development Board
- Local Workforce Development Board Bylaws
- Code of Conduct
- Approved Budget
- Required policies on the following topics:
 - Financial Management including cost allocation plan, internal controls, cash management, receipts of goods, cost reimbursement, inventory and equipment, program income, travel reimbursement, audit requirements and resolution, annual report, property management, debt collection, procurement, allowable costs
 - Program Management including equal opportunity for customers, supportive services, needs related payments, file management, eligibility, self-sufficiency criteria, individual training accounts, layoff assistance, priority of services, grievance for eligible training providers list, determination of an insufficient number of eligible training providers in the local area (if applicable), transitional jobs, stipends, training verification/refunds,
 - Risk Management including records retention and public access, public records requests, monitoring, grievance, incident, disaster recovery plan
 - Board Policies including board appointment, board resolutions, conflict of interest
 - Human Resources including employee classification, benefits, holidays and PTO, recruitment and selection, employee development, discipline, layoffs, terminations, and severance, drug policy, sexual harassment, equal opportunity/non-discrimination
- Professional Services Contract for Staffing/Payroll Services, if applicable
- Contract for I-Trac Data Management System

EOWB has no compliance concerns.