

Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie

# Local Plan

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2025

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## Strategic Planning Elements

Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) and Regional Demand Lists are now maintained [online](#). Changes to the Demand Lists can be made by following the directions on the webpage.

I attest that the priority ranked list of the LWDA's demand occupations was last updated on [specify date in the text box below].

6/23/21

How is this information shared with the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)? What was the last date on which it was shared?

Information on local and regional demand occupations is shared and discussed regularly at the Board's Business Services Committee Meetings. The Business Services Committee is scheduled to meet 10 months of every year. The Committee Reports are available to all Board Members before the Board Meetings. In addition, Local Area Demand Occupations may be discussed at meetings of the full Board. The Board is scheduled to meet 8 months of the year. The most recent discussion of Local Area Demand Occupations occurred during the Business Services Committee meeting on June 17, and will be made available to the full Board through committee minute postings, and a report out at the September 1, 2021 Board Meeting.

a. Provide an analysis of regional economic conditions, including:

i. Existing and emerging in-demand sectors and occupations; and

Existing in-demand sectors continue to include advanced manufacturing, distribution centers and healthcare as well as agribusiness and farm-to-table enterprises and related industries such as yogurt and beverage (craft brewing, distilling, and wineries) which were emerging industries in our previous plan. The speed of the emergence of these industries was slowed by the COVID pandemic but has increased in recent months as COVID restrictions have eased and bars, restaurants, and schools have re-opened increasing the demand for these products.

ii. The employment needs of businesses in those sectors and occupations.

As we have heard from many businesses, the number one need of businesses in the sectors and occupations above is access to a quality talent pool for open positions followed by the means/resources to re-train their current workforce to meet the demands of a modern, technology-based industry. Although many businesses responded to the COVID crisis with short-term layoffs, the crisis has now eased, and employers are hiring for positions across all industries. But the unemployed workforce has not responded in any great numbers to these job openings, creating its own crisis. This may or may not be a direct response to the extended UI benefits. If that is the case, we may see an increase in job applications when the federal UI benefit extension ends. But it might also be related

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to continuing fear of COVID and returning to the workplace, lack of childcare, unhappiness with current wages offered, or finding that people are simply able to get by with less. NYS Department of Labor in partnership with the Business Council recently released the results of a statewide survey of Business needs. According to the respondents to the survey, 48% said that the top reasons why jobs were difficult to fill was lack of qualified candidates and 15% said that it was because of the availability of supplemental benefits.

- b. Describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to meet the employment needs of businesses, including those in in-demand sectors and employing individuals in demand occupations.

Whenever we meet with businesses regarding their needs, we continue to hear a common theme: the greatest weakness, beyond the lack of access to a large and diverse local talent pool, is that current applicants lack non-technical skills (soft skills) such as communication, self-motivation and initiative, time and attendance, time management, teamwork, and customer service. They also lack technical skills such as basic math and English, basic computer literacy, proficiency in Word products, and have wage expectations that are not matched by company offerings. Lack of child care and transportation, as well as insufficient education and training, and the inability to pass a drug test are also limiting factors that might be described as "inabilities." These are also born out by the recent survey of the NYS Department of Labor and the Business Council as previously noted.

- c. Provide an analysis of the regional workforce, including:

- i. Current labor force employment and unemployment numbers;

In regard to unemployment numbers across the three counties, after 15 months of COVID and UI rates for April 2020 of 16.6% in Fulton, 15.9% in Montgomery, and 12.6% in Schoharie, unemployment rates for April 2021 are 6.7% in Fulton County, 6.8% in Montgomery County, and 5.2% in Schoharie County. These rates are still higher than the April 2019 rates of 4.6%, 4.6% and 4.1% respectively, but we believe that the 2021 rates will continue to fall.

The 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) shows Fulton County has an estimated labor force of 25,982 with 24,632 employed and 1,326 unemployed. Montgomery County has an estimated labor force of 23,203 with 21,036 employed and 1,541 unemployed. Schoharie County has an estimated labor force of 15,250 with 14,429 employed and 817 unemployed. Although not addressed in the 2019 ACS, the 2018 ACS reported that in Fulton County, approximately 63% of employed residents work within the county while 37% commute out. In Montgomery County, approximately 55% of employed residents work within the county while 45% commute out. In Schoharie County approximately 59% of the employed residents work in the county, while 41% commute out. Employers in the three counties are all interested in tapping into the workforce that currently commutes out of their county each day as well as employees from neighboring counties that are not part of our Local Workforce Development Area.

- ii. Information on any trends in the labor market; and

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The workforce in Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties is greying, and many people are retiring. There is not a ready and trained workforce to fill these positions. Most positions now require a high school diploma or more, but that number may change as employers re-think and re-evaluate the need for an actual diploma as opposed to actual skills. Even entry level positions in distribution centers require technical skills such as computer skills as well as soft skills such as communicating in the workplace, team work, ability to work independently, and time and attendance. There is also a loss in the population of younger people, in part because they leave the area to attend college and do not return.

- iii. Educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.

In looking at a population of 25 years and older: in Fulton County approximately 35.7% have a high school degree, 18.6% have some college but no degree, 14.9% have an Associate's Degree, 9.8% have a Bachelor's Degree, and 8.4% have a professional or graduate degree. The remaining 12.7% have less than a high school diploma. Montgomery County is similar in that approximately 35.4% have a high school diploma, 19.9% have some college but no degree, 13.8% have an Associate's Degree, 10.3% have a Bachelor's Degree, and 7.5% have a professional or graduate degree. The remaining 13.2% have less than a high school diploma. In Schoharie County 35.7% have a high school diploma, 18.9% have some college but no degree, 12.6% have an Associate's Degree, 13.2% have a Bachelor's Degree, and 9.3% have a professional or graduate degree. The remaining 10.3% have less than a high school diploma.

In the population of 18 years to 64 years, it is estimated that in Fulton County 14.9% have a disability, in Montgomery County 14.2% have a disability, and in Schoharie County 13.3% have a disability.

Regarding populations with English as a Second Language, in people 5 years and older: In Fulton County 97.1% speak "English Only" at home, in Montgomery County 85.2% speak "English Only" at home, and in Schoharie County 95.3% speak "English Only" at home. The majority of "other language" speakers at home are: Fulton County with 2.9%, Montgomery County with 14.8% (primarily Spanish), and Schoharie County with 4.7%.

This information is taken from the American Community Survey of 2019 where data is based on a sampling and is a 5 year estimate.

- d. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region.
  - i. Identify strengths and weaknesses of these workforce development activities.

Our area includes one community college, one college of agriculture and technology, and two BOCES (Boards of Cooperative Educational Services) programs. All have strong educational programs, many of which can be customized to meet local employer needs including apprenticeship programs. Although all the education and training providers have strong links with local industries, the primary weakness is the need for a "critical mass" of

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trainees to make the customization of training programs profitable for the training providers. The Workforce Development Institute is a strong partner providing funding for many of these customized training programs as well as being active in their support of state-approved apprenticeship programs that can be utilized across employers.

There are a number of organizations in Fulton, Montgomery and Schoharie Counties that focus on workforce development activities as some part of their mission. These include the Fulton-Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce, the Sharon Springs Chamber of Commerce, the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth, 3 county economic development offices, and local IDAs, as well as the Regional Economic Development Council.

The strengths are in the commitment of many of these organizations and individuals to work within the workforce partnership to address workforce needs. The weakness lies in the fact that other organizations continue to be seen as existing as silos as opposed to integral parts of a larger jigsaw puzzle. They may not actually be existing as silos, but the perception from the outside is that there is not a connection. As the convener of workforce services, the Workforce Board continues to strive to educate the community to the partnership and integral relationship of the organizations and their services, and that there is no "wrong door" to enter the workforce development system.

- ii. Does the local area have the capacity to address the education and skill needs of the local workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of businesses? Please explain.

Addressing educational and skills needs of the local workforce begins many times when an individual seeks the services of one of our two Comprehensive Workforce Solutions Centers or our one Workforce Solutions Affiliate Center. They have already identified the training and degree or certificate they need to be competitive in a specific field and are looking for assistance in reaching that goal, reflecting our goal of preparing jobseekers for quality jobs. And, our local area also has a Business Services Team comprised of WIOA-funded and NYS Department of Labor staff that is always expanding its outreach to local and regional businesses to understand their needs. This reflects the other side of our vision - providing a well trained workforce for our businesses.

However, after almost 22 years of continued reduced or level-funded federal allocations, WIOA Title I staff is at a bare minimum, with less than 50% of the staffing in 2000. Because of reduced funding, one center has been downsized from a comprehensive center to an affiliate site. Wagner-Peyser staffing is also at an all-time low since 2000. ACCES-VR staff are also present in each of the two Comprehensive Centers, although not full-time.

While the staff that remain have the expertise to work successfully to identify the needs of job seekers and businesses, the staff capacity to provide in depth pre-employment services is strained. Because of the continuing reduction of federal workforce funding over the last 21 years, and no designated state funding except through the Consolidated Funding Application, the availability of training dollars is a challenge even when it is used in conjunction with other organizations' resources. It becomes even more of a challenge since only a percentage of the adult and dislocated workers allocations is available in July, with most of it not available until November 1. This is beyond the start of the first

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semester of many classroom-based training programs, limiting access to relevant training for many participants.

In addition, in response to COVID, many organizations stopped accepting applications from, or enrolling, new customers from March 2020 through March 2021, and schools and community colleges switched to remote teaching and/or reduced the number of courses and programs being offered. This resulted in reduced referrals to our WIOA programs. We also switched to primarily remote services for much of the last year, requiring that WIOA staff be nimble and able to provide quality services remotely. However, as COVID recedes in our rearview mirror, we have been reopening our Centers and expect that other workforce partners will reopen their offices as well. This will not eliminate the demand for remote services, but it will probably reduce the demand as some of our jobseekers actually prefer - or do best - with in-person services. Additionally, not all of our customers, especially in rural areas, have access to the internet. According to the American Community Survey of 2019, 86.4% of households in Fulton County have a computer, but only 77% have broadband access. That is similar in Montgomery County with 84.3% having a computer but only 73% having broadband access. In Schoharie County 81.5% have a computer but only 75% have broadband access. So across our three counties, about one-quarter of the households have no broadband access, limiting their ability to connect with the Workforce Centers or other workforce partners, particularly during COVID.

However, we believe that the combination of remote and in-person services going forward will result in a more vibrant, responsive and successful workforce system, giving people access to our system in a way that best works for them.

- e. Describe the LWDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

**Vision:** The Fulton, Montgomery, Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board and Partners envision a customer-focused, universal access, quality-driven system of workforce development services for job seeker and business customers that will provide a competitive workforce able to fuel a vibrant economy in the FMS WDB region. In short, the vision of the Board and Partners is: Creating Workforce Solutions.

**Goals:** Each of the three areas of Board focus below include goals that will assist in meeting the vision of the Board; specifically addressing improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary degree or credential, as well as other strategies for serving out-of-school youth and adults who have low literacy skills, are English Language Learners, or lack a high school diploma or the equivalent.

**Convener of Workforce Partners:** The Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board, Inc. will continue to coordinate and oversee a seamless system of services that is in sync with the State Plan, the Regional Plan, and the sector-based workforce strategies of the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council. The FMS WDB, Inc. will continue to promote collaboration of economic development, business, education and training resources, discouraging silos and encouraging integration of organization's services to meet the needs of jobseekers and businesses in the local workforce development area and the greater workforce region whether remotely or through on-site services in our three Centers.

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Coordination of Workforce Needs and Services: The FMS WDB, Inc. will develop a dialogue with economic development, businesses, educators, training providers, and other providers of workforce services to improve access to employment for all, with a specific focus of removing barriers to employment for veterans and their families, individuals with disabilities, formerly incarcerated persons, disconnected youth, adults with limited literacy or English language proficiency who lack a High School Equivalency diploma, adults with limited literacy who have an HSE, immigrants and refugees, and other special populations.

Services to be provided both in-person and remotely through this system of workforce services, and as described in this section, to jobseekers, including to out-of-school youth and adults who have low literacy skills, are English Language Learners or who lack a high school diploma include:

Marketing materials regarding services of all Partners in the FMS Workforce Solutions System;

Resource Rooms which are fully staffed and include internet access for job search activities, fax machines, telephones, and adaptive technology for people with disabilities, as well as monitors displaying activities and services provided in the centers, remotely, or with partners;

Provision of, or referral to, basic literacy and HSE preparation;

Basic skills training;

Basic computer training;

Basic academic education and occupational training with a focus on career pathways;

Access to Metrix and Coursera on-line training programs;

Job seeking and keeping skills;

Job match and referral, job posting, and job development; and

Referral to partner programs.

Accountability of the system's performance and quality: The FMS WDB's Workforce Solutions System strives to provide exemplary services to jobseekers and business customers, alike. In addition to working to meet or exceed state and federal performance measures, the Board is currently reviewing and updating additional instruments to measure areas such as jobseeker and business customer satisfaction, continuing improvement of quality and relevant services at a time of reduced funding, and a focus on training and job placement in career pathways reflecting local and regional priority demand occupations that will lead to quality jobs and financial independence for jobseekers and a quality workforce for our businesses. In addition, the Board, in conjunction with its WIOA subcontractor has developed a multi-faceted tracking tool to

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reflect all the services, by category, provided to businesses and job seekers both remotely and in-person on a monthly basis.

- i. How do the local area’s workforce development programs, including programs provided by partner agencies, support this strategic vision?

The workforce partners of the FMS Local Workforce Development Area have a long and successful history of working together to carry out local and workforce development programs. With the negotiations and development of each new WIOA Memorandum of Understanding, this partnership has only become stronger. As convener of this group, the FMS WDB is committed to supporting an environment where partners have been able to come together to establish a foundation that encourages personal and professional relationships that go far beyond just the names and signatures that appear on partner agreements and marketing materials. This environment is critical to the FMS WDB's and Partners' vision of a customer-focused, universal access, quality-driven system of workforce development services for job seekers and business customers that will provide a competitive workforce able to fuel a vibrant economic in the FMS WDB region.

- ii. How will the local area, working with the entities that carry out the core programs, align available resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals?

The original FMS WIOA Partners group, now a committee of the Board, was formed in the early years during the initial meetings of the MOU partners. It includes both core partners as well as other partners, and has developed a referral form and brochure of partner's services that has been used since 2017. Prior to the COVID pandemic, the WIOA Partners group was working on a plan for providing training for all partner staff to promote knowledge of and ability to make appropriate referrals to services provided by other partners, thus avoiding duplication of services and use of scarce resources while promoting integration of services and sharing of participants. While some in-person training and orientation of partner staff was initiated, it was put on hold during COVID. We plan to re-start that initiative in the fall of 2021.

- f. Describe the LWDB’s goals relating to performance accountabilities measures. How do these measures support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency?

The FMS WDB's Workforce Solutions System strives to provide exemplary services to jobseekers and business customers, alike. Although the NYS Department of Labor has recognized the difficulties presented by the COVID pandemic and has indicated that it is not intending to penalize LWDBs for their inability to meet state and federal performance measures previously negotiated, the FMS WDB remains committed to reaching out to current and new business and jobseeker customers to provide them with quality services, whether remotely or in-person. The Board will be developing new, on-line, instruments, in addition to the instruments we already utilize, to measure areas such as jobseeker and business customer satisfaction, continuing improvement of quality and relevant services at a time of reduced funding and the continuing effects of the COVID pandemic. We expect that a focus on training and job placement in career pathways reflecting local and regional priority demand occupations will lead to quality jobs and financial independence for jobseekers and a quality workforce for our businesses.

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## Local Workforce Development System

- a. Identify the programs, whether provided by the Career Center or any partners, that are a part of the local area's workforce development system, including:

- i. Core programs;

All six WIOA Core Programs provide services through their presence at the Comprehensive Centers. They are: WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth); Title III Employment Services including Wagner-Peyser, TAA (Trade Act Assistance), Veterans, UI (Unemployment Insurance); Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR); and Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy. Some Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy services are also provided at other sites.

- ii. Programs that support alignment under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006; and

SUNY Cobleskill and Fulton-Montgomery Community College provide services through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.

- iii. Other workforce development programs, if applicable.

Other workforce development programs include Catskill Center for Independence and Schoharie County Department of Social Services which have a presence in the Cobleskill Comprehensive Center. Additional workforce programs not present in the Centers but partnering closely to provide services are Montgomery and Fulton County Departments of Social Services, Fulton-Montgomery Community College and SUNY Cobleskill (other than Perkins), NYS Commission for the Blind, Job Corps, Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES and Captial Region BOCES, Schoharie County Community Action Program, Schenectady Community Action Program, Senior Community Service Employment Programs.

- b. Describe how the local area will ensure continuous improvement of services and service providers.

The FMS WDB and Workforce Solutions System continues to use formal in-center surveys, informal feedback, and formal monitoring of the WIOA Services Sub-Contractor to measure customer satisfaction with services and service providers in the Centers. The Leadership Team and One-Stop Operator work with the Workforce Systems Oversight Committee to review monthly program reports on customer services as well as monthly activity reports from the subcontractor, and to discuss ways to improve services to customers. The monthly activity reports were developed at the onset of COVID by the director of our WIOA subcontractor to track, by specific types, the number of services that the staff were providing remotely. This has continued, and now includes in-person services, as well. Training and staff development are provided by the One Stop System Operator, the staff of the Workforce Development Board, and other partner staff. With COVID retreating in our rear view mirror, the FMS WIOA partners will explore bringing staff development training on topics, such as the importance of referrals, including tracking and sharing, to all partners of the system.

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- c. Describe how eligible providers will meet the employment needs of local businesses, workers, and jobseekers.

We regularly review the programs of eligible training providers listed on our ETPL, or requesting to be placed on the ETPL, to confirm that the goals of the programs and the material itself meet the current needs of local businesses, employees, and jobseekers. Through partnership meetings, we share any information that we have from meetings with businesses, employees, and jobseekers with eligible training providers so that they can take this information into account when developing new programs or reviewing the appropriateness of current programs.

- d. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the Career Center partners.

All Center Partners contribute towards the infrastructure of the Comprehensive Center or Centers where they occupy space based upon a cost allocation plan that includes costs such as rent, utilities, technology, maintenance, phones, and copy machines. Individual cost is determined on a "per desk" basis which includes desk, chairs, computer with internet access, phone, bookcase, access to conference rooms, videoconferencing equipment, copy machines, and common space unless otherwise specified in a desk rental/lease agreement. Each of the Partners has a lease agreement with the Workforce Development Board based on these costs, unless otherwise specified in a desk rental/lease agreement, such as with NYS Department of Labor. Traditional desk rent is calculated based on the total infrastructure expenses, divided by the number of available desks and then multiplied by the number of desks the organization occupies. WIOA funding picks up the cost of any unoccupied desks or unmet costs in lease agreements.

Four partners have a full-time presence in the Amsterdam Comprehensive Center and four partners have a full-time presence in the Cobleskill Comprehensive Center. Three are members of a Center Leadership Team along with the One-Stop System Operator, and the Workforce Development Board Executive Director and the Program Management Assistant. The role of the Leadership Team is to assist the One-Stop System Operator in overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Centers, including being the point person for any Center emergencies such as difficult customer behaviors or other safety issues for customers and staff. They are also responsible for identifying any policies or procedures that may need to be reviewed or revised. Through regular, bi-weekly, meetings of the Leadership Team, issues regarding procedures or policies are discussed and taken back to the appropriate Board Committee by the Executive Director.

## Workforce Development and Career Pathways

- a. Describe how the LWDB will facilitate the development of career pathways, including co-enrollment in core programs when appropriate.

The Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board, Inc. was the grant recipient of a 4-WDB, three-year Workforce Innovation Grant, Steps up to Stem. The purpose of the grant was to introduce youth and adults to STEM careers, including providing career pathway training for new hires and incumbent workers in STEM related fields. Through its Workforce Solutions Centers and System, WIOA Title I staff

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worked with other partner programs and businesses, in this LWDA and 3 other LWDA's of the Greater Capital Region, to create opportunities for youth and adults to enter STEM career pathways at many different points on the path, depending upon the skills, abilities, and needs of the participant. Workforce Solutions Career Center staff continue to work with other WIOA Partners to expand the opportunities provided by Career Pathways and assure that they are representative of local demand industries and occupations. Center Business Services Representatives and Workforce Advisors continue to build on their successful record in working closely with jobseekers, businesses, and training organizations to include Title II and other WIOA partners in identifying and providing the proper mix for each individual as opposed to a cookie-cutter, one-size-fits-all-approach. Our focus for all jobseekers is a career pathway, not a job. Job seekers will be co-enrolled in core programs whenever appropriate.

- b. Describe how the LWDB will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials.

Working closely with local and regional workforce providers, the Board strives to promote participant access to all partner programs that will increase skills development, training, and provide supportive services necessary to success in attaining recognized postsecondary credentials. During the COVID pandemic, the Board, along with its WIOA subcontractor and other partners, expanded access to activities remotely. This includes the use of Coursera as well as Metrix as on-line training tools that may result in a certificate or credential. This also included promoting virtual workshops along with 3 other LWDBs of the Greater Capital Region, significantly increasing the number of jobseeker customers attending workshops that would have once been held "in-person" only.

- i. Are these credentials transferable to other occupations or industries ("portable")? If yes, please explain.

Many credentials are transferable to other occupations or industries. Mechatronics credentials, such as Semiconductor Manufacturing-Automation Systems/Mechatronics Certificate program and Electrical credentials, such as the Electrical Technology credentials at Fulton-Montgomery County Community College can also be used across manufacturing, distribution centers, hospitals and any other industry that uses automation or electrical technology. Health care credentials are portable to many other industries including schools, manufacturing concerns, and tourism. Another example is the Craft Brewing Certificate at Schenectady County Community College. It can and is being used with distilleries and wineries. SUNY Cobleskill, through its Institute of Rural Vitality, offers credit bearing certificate programs for farm and food-based entrepreneurs, including both dairy and meat processing. These certificates and credentials are also portable to other industries including schools, hospitals, hotels, super markets, and restaurants. We currently offer the EFood Credential which transfers across any industry that has a food service component. This includes both health care and education, each of which offers cafeteria services.

- ii. Are these credentials part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time ("stackable")? If yes, please explain.

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Many of these are, and we continue to promote and support "stackable" credentials, in Health Care and Manufacturing sectors, as well as Agribusiness and Farm-to-Table businesses. An example for Health Care stackable credentials is HHA (Home Health Aide) to CNA (Certified Nurse Assistant) to LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) to RN (Registered Nurse).

## Access to Employment and Services

- a. Describe how the LWDB and its partners will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.

The Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board, Inc. is committed to expanding access to its employment, training, education, and supportive services throughout its three Workforce Career Centers and the greater system. Services will be offered in-person, remotely (one-on-one regardless of location), and virtually (group workshops, job fairs, etc.). The FMS WDB, Inc. and its Workforce Solutions System relies on the expertise and guidance of the WIOA Partners Committee of the Board to ensure that the system is proactive in identifying needs, identifying existing programs, and developing solutions to unmet needs of those targeted populations with barriers to employment such as:

Ex-Offenders

Individuals who are Basic Skills Deficient

Individuals who are Low Income

Individuals with Disabilities

Older Workers

Out of School Youth, Ages 16 to 24

Veterans

While these expanded services to participants with barriers to employment may be addressed under specific sections of this plan, generally services will include:

Encouragement of Partners whose primary mission is to serve one or more of the above targeted populations to co-locate at a FMS Workforce Career Center, or to have a regularly scheduled physical presence for workshops, etc., within the FMS Workforce Career Centers;

Orientation Workshops at Center locations co-led by WIOA Title I and other Partner staff;

Center Orientations led by WIOA Title I staff on site at other partner locations;

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Invitations for providers of services to WIOA targeted populations to speak at Center Meetings in both Amsterdam and Cobleskill Workforce Solutions Centers as well as at FMS Board Meetings;

Participation of providers of services to WIOA targeted populations in the Board's WIOA Partners Committee, which helps form the direction of the Board in services to targeted populations with barriers to employment;

A marketing program developed in conjunction with all WIOA Partners that includes all Partner programs, contact information, and services provided;

An agreed-upon protocol for referrals between Partners, as well as a personalized (warm) handoff if the Partner is present in one of the Centers;

A monthly System Partner Report that shares all documented referrals between Partners;

Utilization of the FMS WDB's website and Facebook pages to reach participants with up-to-date information on workforce services, including workshops and employer recruitments.

Utilization of remote and virtual program services for those who are unwilling or unable to access services in the traditional in-person means of service delivery.

- b. Describe how the local area will facilitate access to services through the One-Stop delivery system, including remote areas, through the use of technology.

FMS, each year, purchases unlimited licenses for Metrix on-line learning programs. These programs are ideal for individuals not ready or prepared for college programs, those who only want to update current skills and those who prefer to focus on a specific job skill rather than a college education. These licenses are available at no cost to the participant and can be accessed on line from anywhere with internet access, after either an in-person visit to a Workforce Solutions Center for an initial assessment and introduction to the Metrix program or by on-line registration. Additionally, the FMS Workforce Solutions system participates in Coursera, an on-line learning program of courses, certificates, and degrees sponsored by NYS Department of Labor. Participants and potential participants who are unable or unwilling to access services through the traditional in-person method are encouraged to utilize remote and virtual program services. FMS also offers a hybrid model that includes all three ways to access services.

Our FMS Workforce Solutions website, [www.fmsworkforcesolutions.org](http://www.fmsworkforcesolutions.org) has links to weekly events, Center Calendars, workshop descriptions, business services fact sheets, and a direct link to Jobs Express, as well as a description of services offered through the FMS Workforce Solutions System. FMS is also a partner in the Greater Capital Region Career Centers which provides virtual job seekers workshops for all jobseekers in the 11 county, 10 Career Center, partnership.

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Additionally, the FMS Facebook page lists job fairs and mini-job fairs, customized recruitments, and position openings with local companies.

- c. Describe how Career Centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology-enabled intake care management information system.

FMS Career Centers are using OSOS as their intake case management information system. WIOA Title I Adult, DW, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, Jobs for Veteran State Grants, and UI staff are all using OSOS for their career center case management. TANF staff and other partners do not use OSOS at this time.

We support the use of OSOS by local Partners and continue to promote the development of this. Three years ago, FMS developed a system to track the number of referrals between individual Partners.

- d. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of programs and services provided to adults and dislocated workers in the local area.

We provide access to self-assessments, career zone, job zone, and other job-seeking tools in our Workforce Solutions Centers' Resource Rooms and on-line. Our Resource Room Coordinators are highly skilled and work closely with our job seekers, both in person and remotely. Customers use these services routinely and seem very satisfied as evidenced in our customer comment cards. Metrix on-line learning is very important to our customers, many of whom are not yet ready for classroom-based training with its goal of a credential or degree. We continue to see a large increase in the number of customers using Metrix to either brush up on pre-existing skills or explore new areas that include soft skills as well as the more traditional Microsoft Office programs. This is an important tool, as many in our current population base are not yet ready for classroom training leading to a certificate or degree. For those eligible and qualified, we also provide employer-based training and classroom training. Because of reduced funding, we cannot provide all services by ourselves, and we continue to work with our Partner programs to access additional services.

- e. Describe how workforce activities will be coordinated with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and appropriate supportive services in the local area.

FMS has a tradition of providing supportive services such as day care and transportation to FMS participants enrolled in classroom training. Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties are, with the exception of the cities of Amsterdam, Gloversville, and Johnstown, primarily rural and many people rely on cars to get to work, food shopping, etc. Montgomery and Fulton Counties have limited public transportation, with limited routes and hours. A round trip bus ticket costs \$14. The trip takes an hour each way and the stops are limited. A taxi or uber can cost \$35 one-way. During the COVID pandemic, most public transportation services were either suspended entirely or the frequency was decreased. However, with COVID in the rear view mirror, services are being re-instated.

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Currently the FMS WDB, in conjunction with FM Regional Chamber of Commerce and many local business partners are exploring ways to increase involvement with a Capital Region-based shuttle service to provide services to more businesses in Fulton and Montgomery Counties, most specifically along the Route 5s corridor in Montgomery County and the Route 30A corridor through Montgomery and Fulton Counties. Payment methods include costs to be born by the business, shared by the business and employee, or born by the employee. FMS is looking at providing supportive services to businesses who enter into an On-the-Job Training contract for a new hire.

Schoharie County Public Transportation is well established and prior to the COVID pandemic had both set routes and ability for "route deviation" for an additional fare. Beginning in March 2020, all regular bus routes were suspended, leaving only transportation for medical appointments. The service has recently resumed on a modified basis, with seating increased to 50% capacity. As the service returns to pre-COVID services features will include: Buses run between all villages in the county and the adult fare is generally \$1.50 per trip. Buses can be "flagged" similar to taxis. Youth bus passes are again available from June through August at a cost of \$30. This covers unlimited bus trips, encouraging youth to find and keep employment and to attend summer school. Unfortunately many of the time schedules for many of the routes do not relate well to business opening and closing times.

Although certain restrictions and social distancing were in place during the COVID pandemic, transportation has continued to be available from all three counties to the capital district, both the uptown state office campus and the state offices on the mall downtown. Ridership will continue to pick up as the state offices open up again.

- f. Describe the replicated cooperative agreements in place to enhance the quality and availability of services to people with disabilities, such as cross training to staff, technical assistance, or methods of sharing information.

General information on programs to serve people with disabilities is currently shared at all virtual WIOA Partner Committee meetings. Going forward, this same information will again be shared at Center Staff Meetings, either in person or virtually, to cross train staff. Information on specific customers with disabilities can only be shared by ACCES-VR if the participant is registered with them and has signed a release of information as part of their confidentiality agreement. WIOA participants also sign a release of information as part of their registration process, but if they are a person with a disability, working with ACCES-VR, they must also sign a release of information with ACCES-VR or by using the referral/release of information sheet developed by NYSDOL and its state partners, NYS Education Department and the Office for Children and Family Services, as part of the MOU referral process.

- g. Describe the direction given to the One-Stop System Operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

The One-Stop System Operator contract is a component of the WIOA Title I Services Contract. Requirements for priority of service for adult career and training services to

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recipients of public assistance, or other low-income individuals who are basic skills deficient are clearly spelled out in that contract. The One-Stop Operator is monitored for compliance by Workforce Development Board staff, specifically the Executive Director and the Executive Assistant/Program Management Assistant. Additionally, the One-Stop Operator reports to the Workforce Systems Oversight Committee of the Board.

h. Describe how One-Stop System Operators and One-Stop partners will comply with the nondiscrimination requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (section 188), and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding:

i. The physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, and services;

All 3 Centers; two Comprehensive and one Affiliate, have Handicap Parking spaces and Handicap accessibility to all areas of the Centers including bathrooms and staff cubicles. The two Comprehensive Centers also have automatic doors. During the COVID pandemic, information on programs and provision of services was also redesigned to include remote and virtual access. We anticipate that this hybrid model of providing services will continue, even with the ending of COVID restrictions.

ii. Technology and materials for individuals with disabilities; and

All Centers have resource rooms with assistive technology including:

Accessibility Inventory: Wheel chair accessible desk and adjustable chair

Programs:

\* Zoom Text - Magnification and screen reading software for the visually impaired

\*Image Reader with scanner makes printing accessible to people who are visually impaired or blind

\* Open Book - Scanner reader to use with written material

\*Jaws - Reader for computer text

\*FS Reader 3.0 - Works with jaws to adjust color and print

\* Zoom Text/video magnification & screen reading program that enlarges and reads aloud.

Equipment:

\*Large print keyboard

\*Large ball mouse

\*One-handed keyboard

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iii. Providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Prior to the COVID pandemic, training was available through monthly in-person staff meetings, presentations by partners, and webinars as available. Staff meetings were held in both Comprehensive Centers (Amsterdam and Cobleskill) with the staff of the Affiliate Center invited to the Amsterdam Center. The Amsterdam and Cobleskill Centers were joined through our videoconferencing system for specific staff meetings when needed. All partners located in the Centers were encouraged to attend. The presentations have included Initial Disability Awareness, delivered by ACCES/VR, NYS Commission for the Blind, Catskill Center for Independence, and Autism Awareness, presented by Catskill Center for Independence. Representatives of partner agencies were providing in-person training on a monthly basis, with presentations scheduled out for six months at a time. WIOA Title I staff were also available to give presentations to staff at other WIOA partner meetings. We are also planning to use videotaping to share staff presentations with other agencies. During the COVID pandemic, all Centers were closed and services were provided remotely. The three Workforce Career Centers are now open but staffed almost exclusively by WIOA Title I subcontractor staff. As soon as other partner staff return to our Career Centers, or begin to offer services at their own facilities, we will begin to phase in in-person training with an option to join the training virtually.

iv. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the One-Stop partners related to the nondiscrimination requirements of WIOA (section 188), and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

The FMS WDB continues to assume the responsibility of providing physical and technology resources in the three Workforce Solutions Centers. However, The Office of Children and Family Services/Commission for the Blind and NYS Department of Labor have also contributed to technology and equipment. The full roles and resource contributions can be found in the PY'20 FMS LWDA Partners MOU and Attachments A/B.

## Business Engagement

a. What strategies and programs, including training programs, will be used to facilitate engagement of businesses, including small businesses and businesses in in-demand sectors and occupations?

FMS utilizes employer-based training programs such as On-the-Job and Customized training to facilitate business engagement. Currently, FMS is exploring the use of apprenticeship programs and supportive services to businesses as well. FMS provides space at no cost to employers on-site in the Amsterdam and Cobleskill Workforce Career Center Comprehensive sites and the Gloversville Career Center Affiliate site for customized recruitment and mini-job fairs. FMS also co-sponsors an annual job fair with Fulton Montgomery Community College, the Fulton-Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce, as well as with the Capital Region BOCES in Schoharie County. FMS recently co-sponsored a job fair in conjunction with Fulton-Montgomery Community College and the Fulton-Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce at the campus of FMCC. A job

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fair is scheduled for Amsterdam at the Riverfront Center Mall for late July, 2021, and a job fair for Schoharie County at the Cobleskill Fair Grounds in late August is in the planning stages. FMS also supports the virtual job fairs sponsored by NYS Department of Labor as well as by individual employers.

FMS also has a Business Services and Employer Engagement Committee that is a committee of the Board. Membership is open to any business in the community as well as organizations that provide services to jobseeker/employees and businesses. Membership includes representatives of many of our in-demand occupations such as advanced manufacturing, distribution centers, and health care as well as organizations such as education, chambers of commerce, and providers of disability services. The Committee meets monthly to share common concerns, interests, and best practices.

- i. If applicable, describe the local area's use of business intermediaries.

Fulton-Montgomery Community College, SUNY Cobleskill, and regional BOCES all work closely with businesses and with the FMS WDB. FMS Workforce Solutions staff and WDB staff are members of, or participate in, the following; the HFM P-Tech Program, Fulton County Center for Regional Growth, Fulton-Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce, Montgomery County Business Development Center, Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council, Mohawk Valley Regional Business Services Team, the Perkins Advisory Committees, Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce, Schoharie County Chamber Committee on Business Development and Advancement, Schoharie Economic Enterprise Corp. (SEEC), Schenectady Community College HPOG Advisory Committee, and the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District.

- b. What strategies or services are used to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area?

The FMS WDB strives to support a workforce development system that meets the needs of local businesses in a number of ways. As stated previously, we utilize employer-based training and on-site recruitments for businesses, as well as advertising job openings in the Resource Rooms and on our website and Face Book page. But most important in all of these services is the strategy of paying attention to the "needs" of the employers as opposed to just marketing what programs we have to offer. This is much different from employment and training programs of years ago. Determining needs is accomplished through meetings with employers, surveys, and informal conversations. We share this information on business needs with all service providers and other partners as well as our FMS Business Services Consortium and the Board's Business Services and Employer Engagement Committee - the philosophy being "if we don't have it, someone else probably does. We don't need to provide every service, but we need to have a mechanism in place to provide good referrals".

- c. Describe how the local area's workforce development programs and strategies will be coordinated with economic development activities.

The FMS WDB staff work closely with the local Chambers of Commerce, local economic development organizations, the Mohawk Valley REDC, and the Mohawk Valley Economic

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Development District to ensure that its strategies and programs mesh closely with the needs of the area as reflected through these organizations. Additionally, one of the FMS WDB Board members is the head of one of the county's Economic Development and Planning Departments.

- i. Describe how these programs will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The Chambers of Commerce promote entrepreneurial skills training as does the HFM BOCES PTech program in Johnstown. Local economic development agencies may have access to microenterprise funding. Information on these programs can be found through links on the FMS website, posted on Face Book, or posted in our Career Center Resource Rooms. Referrals will be made when a customer indicates an interest or willingness to pursue information on one of these programs. Qualified UI customers can participate in the Self-Employment Assistance Program (SEAP) through the NYSDOL.

- d. Describe how the LWDB will coordinate its workforce investment activities with statewide rapid response activities.

The Trade Act Coordinator of the FMS Rapid Response Team is staff of the WIOA Title I Services subcontractor. The Trade Coordinator works closely with her NYS Department of Labor counterpart and staff of the Workforce Career Centers to coordinate activities and programs appropriate for Trade Act participants.

## Program Coordination

- a. How do the local area's programs and strategies strengthen the linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?

NYSDOL and WIOA Title I services staff are functionally aligned and together provide services to the UI customer. While WIOA Title I staff have been trained to provide information and assistance on Unemployment Insurance, UI customers are initially seen by a NYSDOL/Wagner-Peyser staff person. However, they may then be scheduled for a series of activities or appointments that include in-person or virtual Career Center workshops or working with Resource Room staff, WIOA Title I Workforce Advising staff and indirectly, Business Services Team representatives regarding classroom training or employer-based training. Prior to the COVID pandemic, the majority of these services were provided in person. During the pandemic, no NYSDOL staff were available to provide re-employment services, as all were reassigned to UI services. With the onset of post-pandemic services, we are planning for a hybrid model of services which takes advantage of in-person, remote, and virtual services for businesses and jobseekers for employment, reemployment, and unemployment insurance programs.

- b. Describe how education and workforce investment activities will be coordinated in the local area. This must include:
  - i. Coordination of relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs;

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The Board's vision is "Creating Workforce Solutions." The intent is to accomplish this in part by providing a qualified and skilled workforce for employers and access to quality jobs and career pathways for jobseekers. The FMS WDB works closely with the two regional BOCES programs, Fulton-Montgomery Community College, SUNY Cobleskill, and Schenectady County Community College partners and representatives to focus on programs that are sector-based, meet employers needs and emerging needs, and promote career pathways.

- ii. Activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies and enhance services; and

Organizations providing education and workforce development activities will continue to meet regularly through the WIOA Partners Meeting to identify any coordination issues and then develop, coordinate, and promote strategies that enhance services to our jobseeker and business customers.

- iii. A description of how the LWDB will avoid duplication of services.

Information on services and activities provided by the WIOA Partners Committee will be shared with the FMS WDB by Board staff who, along with Committee Co-Chairs, convene the WIOA Partners Committee Meetings. Appropriate committees such as the Workforce Systems Oversight Committee, the Accountability and Return on Investment Committee, and the Business Services and Employer Engagement Committee will review and work with WDB staff to update or develop new policies and procedures to be followed by WIOA Title I staff in the delivery of services to avoid duplication of services whenever possible.

- c. Describe plans, strategies, and assurances concerning the coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

FMS Workforce Solutions Center WIOA Title I and Wagner-Peyser Employment Service services have been functionally aligned and integrated prior to the statewide requirement in 2006. Staff in the FMS Workforce Solutions Centers does not provide services based on funding streams. WIOA Title I and Wagner-Peyser staff is assigned to functional work teams based on the services provided, not the funding streams supporting the services. Functional leadership and supervision is provided to each team by senior management/Leadership Team. Functional supervision is defined as oversight of staff in all areas other than Time and Attendance and Personnel Evaluations. Time and Attendance and Personnel Evaluations will be completed by funding stream supervisors after consultation with the functional supervisor. Functional supervisors will be providing leadership and guidance to staff who are not necessarily in their own funding stream/contract.

- d. Provide a list of executed cooperative agreements that 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 the local Career Center System. This includes agreements between the LWDB and entities that serve individuals eligible under the Rehabilitation Act. If no such

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agreements exist, provide an explanation why this is the case and/or progress towards executing such agreements.

The PY'20, FMS LWDA MOU, brings together all WIOA partners, including those entities that serve individuals eligible under the Rehabilitation Act, to capture each Partner's roles and responsibilities in the NYS Career Center System. The Catskill Center for Independence, although not a WIOA partner, is also a partner in the FMS LWDA Career System. The FMS WDB continues to explore developing MOAs with other providers of adult and dislocated worker services and youth services that are not part of the FMS WIOA Services MOU.

## Title II Program Coordination

- a. Provide a description of the LWDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, specifically addressing how to improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, as well as other strategies for serving out-of-school youth (OSY) and adults who have low literacy skills, are English Language Learners, or lack a high school diploma or the equivalent.

The FMS WDB's vision is "Creating Workforce Solutions." The goal of the WDB is to provide a quality workforce for businesses and access to quality jobs and career pathways for jobseekers. The WDB continues to work to build seamless partnerships, including a formal referral process, and quarterly meetings with service providers to ensure that out-of-school youth and adults who have low literacy skills, are English Language learners, or lack a high school diploma or the equivalent have barrier-free access to the training and education services required to access quality jobs and career pathways.

- b. Provide a description of how the LWDB will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services provided through the NYS Career Center System for Title II participants with barriers to employment.

These expanded services to Title II participants with barriers to employment will include:

- Encouragement of Title II partner co-location, or a regularly scheduled physical presence for workshops, etc., within the Workforce Career Centers;
- Orientation Workshops at Center locations for Title II participants co-led by WIOA Title I and other partner staff;
- Center Orientations led by WIOA Title I on site at Title II locations;
- Invitations for Title II providers to speak at Career Center Meetings in both Amsterdam and Cobleskill Workforce Solutions Centers as well as at FMS Board Meetings;

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Participation of Title II providers in the Board's Emerging Worker Committee, which helps form the direction of the Board in services to Title II populations;

A marketing program developed in conjunction with Title II providers that includes all partner programs, contact information, and services provided, as well as a personalized "warm handoff" if the Title II provider is present in one of the Career Centers;

- c. Utilization of the FMS WDB's website and Facebook pages to reach Title II participants with up-to-date information on workforce services, including workshops and employer recruitments.

- d. Identify how the LWDB will facilitate the development of a career pathways and co-enrollment in academic training programs.

FMS WDB staff and WIOA Title I Subcontractor staff, such Career Center Advisors and Business Services Representatives, work closely with both educational institutions and local and regional businesses, as well as economic development organizations, to identify and support career pathways that are recognized and developed to meet the needs of our business. This will encourage the enrollment of employees, as well as jobseekers, in academic training programs, including credentials, certificates, and degrees that lead to career pathways for our workforce as well as a better-trained workforce for our businesses.

- e. Provide a description of how the LWDB will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including those authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act to support service alignment.

The FMS LWDA is knowledgeable of, and seeks to support the strategy of the NYS State Plan to work with all entities that carry out core programs and other workforce development programs, by making sure that local and regional strategies are in alignment with state strategies. The State Plan strategies are taken into account when the WDB's WIOA Partners meet to plan their local and regional strategies for quality and inclusive workforce development strategies. Staff of the WDB and the WIOA Title I Subcontractor participate as members of the Fulton-Montgomery Community College and SUNY Cobleskill Carl D. Perkins Career and Education Act Committee to support and promote service alignment.

## Youth Activities

- a. Provide contact details of Youth Point(s) of Contact for your local area including: Name of organization, name(s) of Youth Point(s) of Contact, title, address, phone number, and email address. Youth Point(s) of Contact details are primarily used to refer young adults, parents, and partners about youth programs and posted on the [NYS DOL webpage](#).

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Private Industry Council, Jennifer Swart, Senior Youth Coordinator, 2620 Riverfront Center, Amsterdam NY 12010, 518-842-3676 x 3022, jswart@fmsworkforcesolutions.org

b. Provide the number of planned enrollments in PY 2021 for new Out-of-School Youth (OSY), carry-over OSY, new In-School Youth (ISY), carry-over ISY, and work experience. \*

i. New OSY

25

ii. Carry-over OSY

6

iii. New ISY

0

iv. Carry-over ISY

0

v. Work experiences

20

\*Please note that PY 2021 enrollments will provide the baseline estimate for the remaining three years of the Plan.

c. In Attachment F, Youth Services, located on the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) [website](#) under the Local Planning section, identify the organization providing the Design Framework which includes: Intake & Eligibility, Objective Assessments, and Individual Services Strategies (ISS), and 14 Youth Program Elements and whether the provision of each element is contractual, with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), or provided by the LWDB.

d. Explain how providers and LWDB staff ensure the WIOA elements:

i. Connect back to the WIOA Youth Program Design Framework, particularly the Objective Assessments and ISS; and

FMS WDB staff monitor the WIOA Services Title I subcontractor on a monthly basis, including review of the 14 required youth services. The FMS PIC, our WIOA Title I Services provider, has designated Youth staff who are very familiar with the required program elements, and the Individual Services Strategy (ISS) which includes all 14 program elements. The Youth Program Coordinator develops a plan that addresses each of the elements to meet the youth's goals and needs. This plan is reviewed and updated during

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program participation. The Youth Coordinator and youth are required to sign the ISS each time it is reviewed. This is their acknowledgement that this is an agreed upon plan of action. Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) have been developed with our partnering agencies who provide services that are part of the 14 elements. Through the years, many of our youth have been referred to these agencies for services.

- ii. Are made available to youth with disabilities by describing specific program practices, tools, and services that are tailored to serve youth with disabilities.

FMS WDB WIOA Title I Subcontractor staff have worked successfully with disabled youth for many years. ACCES-VR and Catskill Center for Independence have staff located in our two Comprehensive Career Centers, Amsterdam and Cobleskill. We share many customers to help them achieve their goals. We continue to make any accommodation to assist our customers in becoming successful.

- e. Describe successful models for youth services from your local area, including but not limited to virtual work experiences, OSY recruitment, and engagement strategies.

The FMS Subcontractor, the FMS PIC, has operated OS Youth Programs for many years under CETA, JTPA, WIA and currently WIOA. The programs have been very successful in meeting the needs of youth. Many of these initiatives have been deemed "best practices" and shared in workshops at state conferences. In addition, many of these "best practices" have been adopted by other areas of the state. And the Subcontractor continues to make the necessary changes and improvements to meet the need and desires of our participants. We provide HSE classes in the local Career Centers to prepare our youth to take the TASC exam as many of our students feel that they do not fit into the local school setting. Many are single parents who do not have the time or support to be full time students. They want to get away from the drama of the typical high school experience while working with a teacher who focuses specifically on their concerns. Our Instructor and Youth Coordinators offer that experience. They listen to the youth and provide a safe place for them, developing a mentoring relationship that often lasts beyond their program participation.

They also receive classes on study skills, writing skills, and financial education such as developing a personal budget. They complete Career Zone and Pre-Employment skills. Enrollment in Work Experience helps them develop skills and a reference to support their resume. During the pandemic, virtual HSE classes were developed to assist in meeting our youth's needs. Unfortunately, although the classes were developed and available, developing a virtual work experience was not successful. The worksites we often use were closed down and many of our youth did not have appropriate devices or internet connections. But even with agencies opening again, we are continuing to develop virtual services. We are conducting program orientations virtually for those who are able to connect and exploring ways to provide youth with their own tablets to access our virtual services and opportunities.

- f. Does your local area plan to serve ISY and/or OSY using the "Needs Additional Assistance" qualifying barrier for eligibility?

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Yes (Attach a Needs Additional Assistance policy that defines reasonable, quantifiable, evidence-based, and specific characteristics of ISY and OSY as described in Technical Advisory (TA) #19-2.

No (Not required to attach a policy)

g. Attach a Basic Skills Deficiency policy of youth program as described in the in TA #19-2.

## Administration

a. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official(s) (CEOs) or Governor.

Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties Workforce Development Board, Inc.

b. Describe the competitive process to be used to award subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities in the local area.

Competitive Negotiation: Invitations for the solicitation of proposals, with information on accessing complete Request for Proposal (RFP) packages shall be sent to potential service providers contained on the established bidder's list, as appropriate according to the type of goods and services to be procured. Notice of solicitation of RFP's may be published in local newspapers, distributed through FMS WDB mailing lists, and posted on the FMS WDB website. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 Section 123 "If a Local WDB chooses to award grants or contract to youth service providers to carry out some or all of the youth workforce investment activities, the Local WDB must award such grants or contracts on a competitive basis."

RFP's shall contain a clear and adequate description of the goods and services to be procured; technical requirement, outcomes, and specifications which bidders must fulfill; and factors to be used in evaluation/scoring bids or proposals, including the relative importance of each of the factors.

All proposals received in response to the solicitation shall be reviewed by the FMS Executive Director and other staff as assigned. Copies of the proposals and recommendations shall also be given to the appropriate committee of the FMS WDB for independent review, evaluation/scoring, and concurrence. The Committee and Executive Director will make a resolution to the full board for action.

All selected bidders will be required to participate in negotiations with the FMS WDB Executive Director and appropriate Committee members. The award of any contract or agreement shall be contingent upon the satisfactory completion of negotiations and the continued availability of funding.

Unsuccessful bidders shall be notified in writing within thirty (30) days of the final decision. Non-Competitive Negotiation: Circumstances include: Goods or services to be procured are available only from a single source; Emergency need for the goods or services that will not permit an extended time frame necessary to the RFP process;

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After solicitation of bids through the RFP process, competition is determined to be inadequate. The Federal awarding agency (NYSDOL) expressly authorizes a noncompetitive proposal in response to a written request from FMS WDB.

- c. Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO(s) to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the LWDB for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (when applicable), eligible providers, and the One-Stop delivery system, in the local area.

The Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie Counties WDB requested to negotiate performance goals for both PY'20 and PY'21. After negotiation, on October 21, 2020 FMS accepted all NYSDOL's counterproposals. These were accepted by NYSDOL on January 28, 2021.

Below are the negotiated and accepted performance goals:

PY'20 and PY'21 Adult

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit - 60.0%

Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit - 67.5%

Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit \$4,900

Credential Attainment 4th Quarter after exit - 41%

Measurable Skills Gains - 37.5%

PY'20 and PY'21 Dislocated Worker

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit - 69.5%

Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit - 69.0%

Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit - \$5,900

Credential Attainment 4th Quarter after exit - 24%

Measurable Skills Gains - 37.5%

PY'20 and PY'21 Youth

Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit - 69%

Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit - 64%

Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit - \$2,500

Credential Attainment 4th Quarter after exit - 35%

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Measurable Skills Gains - 40%

The requested negotiation and desired goals were discussed and agreed upon by Career Center Managers in the FMS LWDA.

- d. Describe the actions taken toward becoming or remaining a high-performing LWDB, consistent with factors developed by the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB). The LWDB will be defined as high performing if it meets the following criteria:
- i. It is certified and in membership compliance;
  - ii. All necessary governance actions and items have been accomplished, including executing a local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), selecting a One-Stop System Operator, and implementing all required local policies, etc.;
  - iii. All One-Stop Career Centers in the LWDA have achieved at least an 80% score in the Career Center Certification process; and
  - iv. The LWDA meets or exceeds all performance goals.

In the past, the FMS WDB has met the criteria regarding a Board that is certified, in membership compliance, and that all necessary governance actions have been accomplished, as well as meeting or exceeding all performance goals. Currently, the FMS WDB is in membership compliance, has submitted its PY'20 MOU for final review by NYSDOL, selected a One-Stop Operator, and implemented all required local policies. However, NYS DOL has not yet released the Career Center Certification Process or Biennial Board Recertification. The FMS WDB will engage in that process as soon as it is available.

## Training Services

- a. Describe how training services will be provided in the local area. This may include incumbent worker, on-the-job, and customized training programs.

WIOA Title I funded training services and TAA funded training services, are provided through the WIOA Title I Services Subcontractor. Training services are provided by the Workforce Advisors and Business Services Representatives as outlined in the subcontractor's contract. They are responsible for interviewing, evaluating and developing a career plan for the Adults and Dislocated Workers. Applicants determined to be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency or wages comparable to their previous employment after career services; are in need of training to reach self-sufficiency ; and possess the skills to successfully complete training are eligible for training services. Workforce Advisors will be responsible for ITA's and Business Services Representatives are responsible for developing OJT's and Employer Based Trainings.

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- b. Describe how contracts will be coordinated with the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).

Contracts are used with employer-based training such as On-the-Job and Customized Training. They are not used for Individual Training Accounts for classroom-based training.

- c. Describe how the LWDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how training services are provided.

Customers have access to LMI information, workshops on demand occupations, individual workforce advising, listings of local training providers and the training programs they offer. Workforce Advisors provide the NYS eligible training provider list to interested customers. They will assist them in researching area institutions that provide the training. Staff review program requirements, length of training, cost, and placement outcomes of the institutions. Staff are very knowledgeable and provide customers all necessary information to make a well informed decision. Staff also set up appointments for customers with the school's financial aid office to discuss grants, loans, and other assistance available.

## Public Comment

- a. Describe the process used by the LWDB to provide a period of no more than 30 days for public comment and input into development of the plan by representatives of business, labor organizations, and education prior to submission.

- b. As per NYSDOL Technical Advisory #21-02, there is a public comment period of no more than 30 days. There are electronic mailings to all Partners, Center Staff, FMS WDB Board Members, and Chief Elected Officials indicating that the Local Plan has been posted on the FMS WDB website for public review and comment. An announcement of posting is published on the FMS WDB Facebook page. In addition to being available electronically, a paper copy of the Local Plan is available to view at the 3 One-Stop Centers.

## List of Attachments

Please complete all attachments listed below.

**Attachment A** – Units of Local Government

**Attachment B** – Fiscal Agent

**Attachment C** – Signature of Local Board Chair

**Attachment D** – Signature of Chief Elected Official(s)

**Attachment E** – Federal and State Certifications

**Attachment F** – Youth Services Chart

Original signature pages for Attachments C, D and E, must be delivered to NYSDOL in one of the following two ways:

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- Electronic signature (if the LWDB has the capability for it) – Note that electronic signatures must follow the requirements and guidelines of the Electronic Signature and Records Act ([ESRA](#)). LWDBs choosing to submit signature pages via electronic signature may submit these pages via email with the Local Plan.

- Mail original versions – Hard copies of traditional signature pages may be sent to:

**Attn: Local Plan**  
**New York State Department of Labor**  
**Division of Employment and Workforce Solutions**  
**Building 12 – Room 440**  
**W. Averell Harriman Office Building Campus**  
**Albany, NY 12240**

All other attachments must be submitted via email with the LWDB Local Plan Template.

In addition to these attachments, LWDBs must provide copies of the agreements listed in the Program Coordination section of this template under [\(d\)](#). If possible, it is preferable to provide a list of hyperlinks to these agreements available on the LWDB website.

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