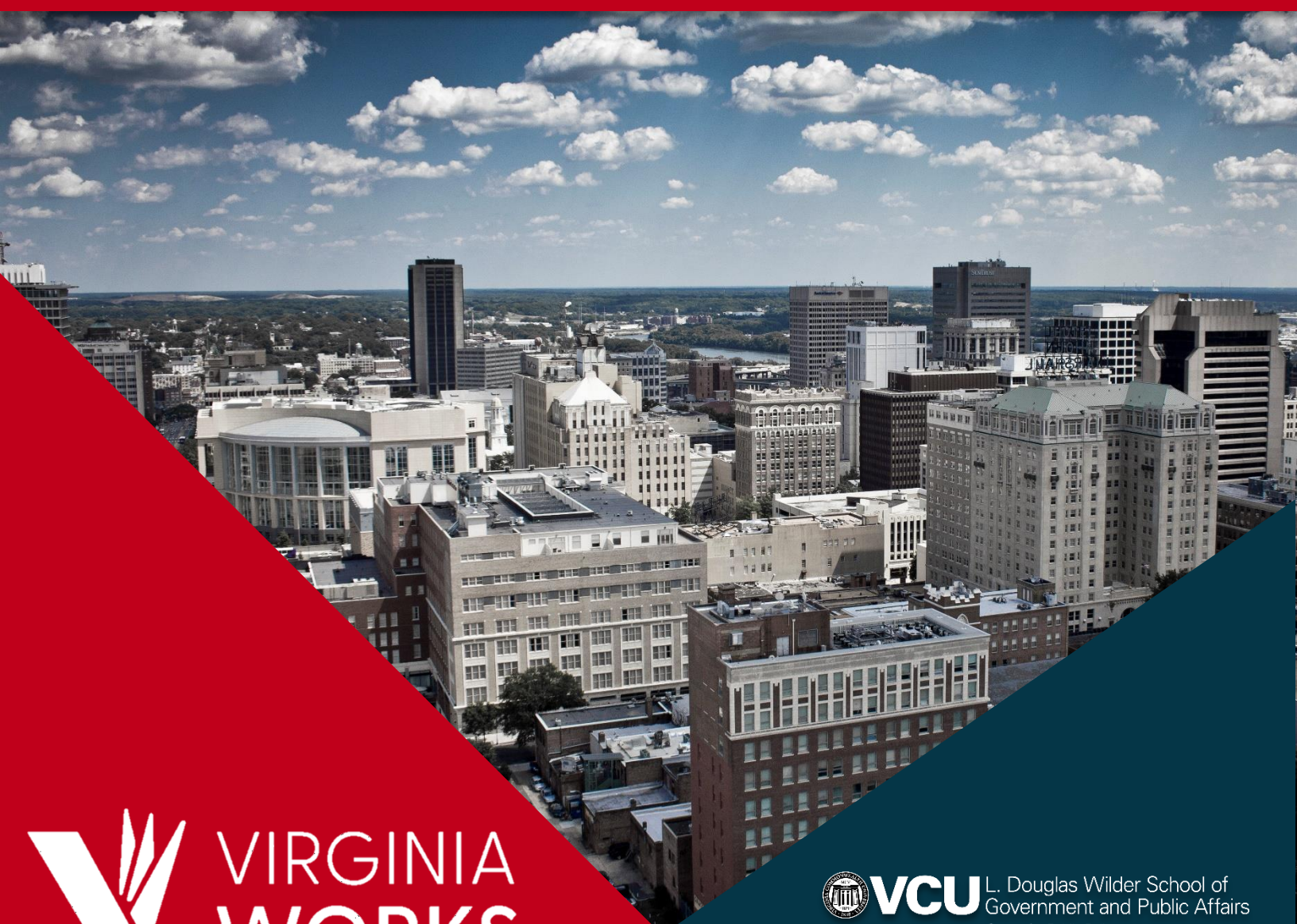


# WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) PY 2023

## ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2023 TO JUNE 30, 2024



**VCU**

L. Douglas Wilder School of  
Government and Public Affairs  
Center for Public Policy

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# Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

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## Program Year 2023

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This year's WIOA Annual Report is dedicated to the workforce development professionals across the Commonwealth and acknowledges their efforts in providing ongoing services throughout the program year.

## INTRODUCTION NARRATIVE

Virginia is pleased to submit the Program Year 2023 WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative for WIOA Titles I and III. For Program Year 2023 (PY23), Virginia's WIOA Title I and Title III programs (Workforce Partners) were able to provide quality programming and services to meet our customer needs by:

### Optimizing Workforce Development in the Commonwealth

Throughout PY23, Virginia's Secretary of Labor embarked on a major initiative to optimize the entire Virginia workforce development ecosystem. The establishment of Virginia Works (the Department of Workforce Development and Advancement) as the centralized agency for Virginia's workforce development initiatives has been the centerpiece of that initiative. Virginia Works proactively connects industry demand with talent capabilities across sectors and regions, all aligned to a shared vision for the future that brings the Governor's bold agenda into fruition.

*Virginia's nation leading workforce ecosystem will equip Virginians with the skills they need and enables employers to attract, grow, and retain them – ensuring the future of a thriving Commonwealth. In parallel with the stand-up of Virginia Works, we will accelerate the coordination, enhancement, and future-readiness of the Commonwealth's many workforce programs and stakeholders across the government and broader ecosystem through a formal process.*

Virginia Works will allow the major components of the workforce development ecosystem to work together toward a common goal: moving Virginia into the future of work. Examples of this collaboration will include:

- Coordinating with business engagement & outreach, as well as training institutions, to develop **internships and other work-based learning and OJT programs**.
- Partnering with businesses, associations, and employee organizations to **anticipate and be responsive to business talent needs**.
- Sharing **data insights** amongst partners to improve coordination, outcomes, and efficiency across the Commonwealth's workforce programs and partner organizations.

## Fostering Economic Development

Virginia continues to implement the multi-year plan initiated by the Office of the Governor to address labor participation for rural economic prosperity in Southwest Virginia. A consortium of organizations in the Southwest Virginia (SWVA) region continues to partner to address the nearly three times larger gap (29.3%) between the supply and need for childcare compared to the average across the Commonwealth (11.9%). SWVA has an insufficient labor force to meet the demand for high-paying jobs. SWVA is losing the young, talented workforce in the labor ecosystem with a major barrier to attraction and retention being insufficient access to childcare.

Seed funding is provided by the Secretary of Labor, in partnership with the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board, United Way of Southwest Virginia, and local non-profit Endless Opportunities (EO). The initiative will address regional challenges with Ready SWVA, a \$23 million initiative to develop a hub and spoke model. Over two years, the investment of WIOA Title I Governor's set-aside funds supports project management, shared services coordination, and the coordination for adult and emerging workforce programs.

Ready SWVA will use braided funding to regain a foothold on the regional economy by:

- Developing infrastructure for economic development prosperity through expanded access to affordable quality childcare,
- Strengthening the network of current providers, and
- Building a workforce of professional early childhood educators.

Ready SWVA is developing a Regional Workforce and Child Development Hub in Abingdon, VA. The Hub will:

- ✓ Allow current residents to return to work by providing quality, accessible childcare,
- ✓ Develop a regional workforce of professional, credentialed early childhood educators,
- ✓ Support regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies to attract new talent, young families, and higher paying jobs,
- ✓ Support entrepreneurs by developing an emerging industry sector as a sustainable small business with support from the shared services alliance, and
- ✓ Provide long-term outcomes of a healthy, appropriately educated, and trained, financing-stable workforce through high-quality curriculum preparing young students for lifelong success.

The Multi-Workforce Development Area Ready SWVA project is a pilot project for Early Childhood Education Career Pathway capacity building. More than 250 individuals will be trained using Early Childhood Foundation and Department of Education funds (individuals that need additional supports will be co-enrolled with WIOA Title I). Up to 100 incumbent workers will be trained and co-enrolled with WIOA Title I programs. By the end of this two-year project, 100 new early education teachers will be placed in the region, opening of approximately 800 childcare slots and potentially allowing 400+ adults to return to work.

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The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Consortium Board will provide general project oversight for activities conducted with WIOA Title I Governor's set-aside funds. The Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board will provide input and guidance for implementation within their local workforce development area. The two Boards will work together with EO to support project success. An outside entity will provide input and evaluation as the project progresses.

## Implementing New Workforce Metrics

In PY23, the Virginia Board of Workforce Development implemented a new policy that outlines Virginia's systemwide workforce metrics. The metrics are intended to provide a holistic and outcome-oriented view of service delivery at the local level, in addition to the data already captured at the statewide level. Virginia's 6 Core Workforce Development Metrics are:

1. Number trained
2. Total number of job placements
3. Total program cost
4. Job retention rate
5. Program cost per placement (or participant if program does not place individuals)
6. Starting and progressed wage growth

Starting in 2025, Virginia Works will report these metrics to the Board for the previous performance year ending June 30<sup>th</sup>. More information about this [policy is available here](#).

## Ranking No. 1 for Customized Workforce Training

For the second year in the row, the Virginia Talent Accelerator Program is ranked No. 1 in the United States for Customized Workforce Training in the 20th annual Business Facilities Rankings Report. This Program is an example of how Virginia's workforce development ecosystem is able to proactively and quickly respond to the needs of employers and jobseekers.

The Program is a workforce initiative created by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) in collaboration with the Virginia Community College System, with funding support from the Office of the Governor and the Virginia General Assembly. The program accelerates new facility startups through the direct delivery of recruitment and training services that are fully customized to a company's unique products, processes, equipment, standards, and culture. All program services are provided at no cost to qualified new and expanding companies as an incentive for job creation. The Program has helped to secure more than 13,000 jobs across Virginia since the program commenced operations for projects such as the LEGO Group, Tyson Foods, Inc., Church & Dwight Co., Inc., Tate Inc., Northrop Grumman Corporation, Haleon, Framatome, and Condair Group AG. More information about this Program [can be found here](#).

## PY 2023 Service Totals

In PY23, WIOA Title I program effectively served 4,825 Virginians through Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. Virginia's Rapid Response team provided services to a total of 55 WARN notices that impacted 4,985 workers. WIOA Title III programs served 60,192 individuals who utilized self-service employment assistance and 29,247 participants who received staff assisted services through Wagner-Peyser.

In PY23, WIOA Title I programs effectively served:



**4,825**

Virginians through Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs

Virginia's Rapid Response team provided services to a total of:



**55**

WARN notices that impacted 4,985 workers

WIOA Title III programs served:



**60,192**

individuals who utilized self-service employment assistance



**29,247**

participants who received staff assisted services through Wagner-Peyser

In total,



**12,955**

businesses were served by both WIOA Title I and Title III programs



**17,345**

businesses were served by all four WIOA Titles

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## Highlights of Virginia's WIOA workforce activities in PY23

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### APPROVED WAIVERS

*Identify each waiver that the state has had in place for at least one program year and provide information regarding the state's progress toward achieving the goals and performance outcomes in ET A's letter of approval for the waiver (sec 189(i)(3)(C)(ii)) and outlined in the state's waiver request (when applicable). Discuss how activities carried out under each approved waiver have directly or indirectly affected state and local area performance outcomes. To the extent possible, provide quantitative information.*

The Commonwealth of Virginia did not receive any waivers for PY 2023.

### EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

*Identify the two approaches the state has chosen for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicator pilot. If the state is piloting a state-established measure of Effectiveness in Serving Employers, or has any other metrics to assess employer engagement, describe the measure/metric as well.*

The Commonwealth of Virginia selected the Effectiveness in Serving Employers pilot measures of:

- Retention with the Same Employer
- Employer Penetration Rate

The total result of the joint efforts of the WIOA funded programs yielded the following results:

- Retention with the Same Employer: 61.6%
- Employer Penetration Rate 6.5%

The data collection on employer services, which included activities supported by WIOA funded programs and other non-WIOA funded workforce programs, provided the following results:

- 20,513 unduplicated businesses were served.
  - This number represents approximately 6.7% of the total employers in the Commonwealth.
- Workforce Recruitment Services were the most common type of service delivered.
- The top three types of businesses served by North American Industry Classification Systems (NAICS) were:
  - 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
  - 62 Healthcare and Social Assistance
  - 31-33 Manufacturing
- 73% of the businesses served employed less than 250 individuals per establishment.



## STATE EVALUATION ACTIVITIES AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

*Include brief descriptions of: (a) current or planned evaluation and related research projects, including methodologies used; (b) efforts to coordinate the development of such projects with WIOA core programs, other state agencies and local boards; (c) a list of completed evaluation and related reports and links to where they were made accessible to the public electronically; (d) State efforts to provide data, survey responses, and timely site visits for Federal evaluations; and (e) any continuous improvement strategies utilizing results from studies and evidence-based practices evaluated.*

For many years, Virginia's workforce delivery system functioned as a decentralized system, with responsibility for Virginia's workforce development system, comprised of nearly 60 programs, spanning across more than 12 agencies, nine secretariats, and 14 workforce development boards. As a first step, effective July 1, 2023, the new state agency Virginia Works was established to consolidate workforce development efforts across the Commonwealth.

Administrative responsibilities for Title I programs, Title III Wagner-Peyser employment programs, and Registered Apprenticeship programs are now housed within the new agency. This will enable centralized, informed-decision making and create a nation-leading workforce ecosystem hub that proactively connects job seekers, employers, educational institutions, and government services.

When fully implemented, Virginia Works will enhance service delivery and embrace several key operational characteristics including the opportunity to:

- ✓ Adapt to the accelerated pace of change.
- ✓ Prepare for the demands of tomorrow's workforce.
- ✓ Reimagine the delivery of critical skill-building.
- ✓ Redefine workforce preparedness services.
- ✓ Transform the way we deliver, message, and measure the success of our workforce programs.
- ✓ Optimize workforce readiness.

Transition to the new agency has been both a complicated and exciting venture. Program workstreams were established and monitored as part of a huge "lift and shift" set of activities to stand up the new agency. The level of inter-agency collaboration and partnership has been remarkable.

In addition, existing law and regulation require that large volumes of workforce development data be collected and reported to federal and state agencies. However, Virginia is already working to



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develop a simplified reporting system to better determine the level of progress being made quarterly and annually across all WIOA partners on key indicators, including:

- ✓ How many customers of the system got jobs,
- ✓ Which system programs are leading customers to getting jobs,
- ✓ How long those individuals remained in those jobs, and
- ✓ What were the wages of those jobs.

As part of the Virginia Works “metrics journey,” staff are engaged in an effort to collect metrics across programs involved in workforce development at the statewide level to understand program activity and performance. The effort is:

- ✓ Program-focused, not individual or cohort-focused – as in, we are gathering overall program data around activity during each reporting period, not tracking cohorts of participants over time.
- ✓ Intended to set baselines only after one full year of data collection.
- ✓ Focused on measuring individual program performance over time – not performance relative to each other.
- ✓ It is not longitudinal – as in, it does not track cohorts of participants and their outcomes over time.
- ✓ It is not gathering individual participant outcomes over time.

The point of having a wide array of workforce development metrics, arrayed in dashboard formats, is to help Virginia executives make decisions that benefit workforce customers -individuals and businesses – which ultimately helps make Virginia the best place to live and work in America.

In April of PY23, Virginia contracted with the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to conduct a Workforce Development Customer Discovery Report. Virginia’s workforce agencies worked with BCG to begin collecting qualitative and quantitative data on individual and employer understanding of how workforce services are delivered in Virginia with a focus on the formal workforce system and community colleges. This effort promoted surveys and focus group opportunities for job seekers, employers, and workforce practitioners to share their perspectives and insights on Virginia’s workforce system. The initial phases of this effort were conducted throughout the end of PY23 and included the VEC, Virginia Works, Adult Education, DARS, DBVI and many other state, local, and private sector partners. The work of this study is to be completed in PY24 and therefore the conclusions will be a part of next year’s report.

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## VIRGINIA'S APPROACH TO CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

*Describe the state's approach to customer satisfaction, which may include such information used for One-Stop center certification, in accordance with 20 CFR 678.800. This description should include: 1) the state's methodologies; 2) the number of individuals/employers who were provided customer satisfaction outreach, the response rate, and efforts made to improve the response rate; 3) the results and whether the results are generalizable to the entire population of customers; and 4) a description of any continuous improvement processes for incorporating the customer satisfaction feedback.*

### **Virginia's Customer Satisfaction Approach for PY23**

Virginia's customer satisfaction approach for PY23 was primarily based upon a multi-pronged method of surveying the jobseeker and business customers. As verified through the One-Stop Certification Process every three years, and through the statewide WIOA Title I monitoring team's annual review activities, the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) work with their American Job Center partners to implement a customer survey process for each American Job Center. The One-Stop Certification Process and the monitoring process are used to assure that each center has been determined to meet uniform certification standards.

Additionally, several of Virginia's agencies providing workforce services conduct agency specific customer surveys to validate the quality and appropriateness of their specialized workforce services. The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) each provide the opportunity for agency specific customer feedback during their service provision processes. These agency-specific customer surveys allow for an in-depth analysis of the specialized services provided. The Adult Education program is a decentralized, grant-funded network of providers, each of which has mechanisms to solicit and collect customer (student) feedback and suggestions that are acted upon by the grant administrative team.

Virginia's primary approach to evaluating customer satisfaction for the network of American Job Centers relies on the Local Workforce Development Boards to develop and implement customer satisfaction surveys. The fourteen individual local workforce development boards each have a customer satisfaction survey for their job seeker customers and for their business customers. In each of the areas, a customer satisfaction survey is made available to the job seeking customers through various means, such as available in the resource room in paper and electronic versions, offered to customers at the end of workshops/meetings/events in either an electronic or printed format. Some are made available on the LWDA website as well. The business customers are also offered an opportunity to provide customer service feedback at the LWDA level after each event/provision of service. Virginia also relies on the agencies providing specialized workforce services to develop and implement agency specific customer satisfaction surveys.

For Title III services provided by VEC and Virginia Works, customer satisfaction continues to remain a vital component in the delivery of services to customers and participants in Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), Jobs for Veteran State Grant (JVSG), Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). The Virginia Workforce Connection (VaWC) is the state system of record for Title III and is

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used for tracking and metrics reporting. This electronic service provision allows both employers and job seekers the opportunity to respond to a customer satisfaction survey once they have received Title III services and fosters an environment of continuous process improvement for Virginia Works.

The Title IV general vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency, DARS, works in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) to assess the perspectives of Title IV VR consumers who have not yet entered employment. Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 was the tenth year of assessing DARS satisfaction for consumers in service delivery (post Individualized Plan for Employment but prior to Employment). This innovative approach permits real-time assessment of services, allowing issues to be addressed prior to consumers exiting the program. Each month, a stratified sample based on office proportion is used to ensure that the sample matches as closely as possible the population proportions for DARS' offices as of survey selection. DARS also offers consumers the option of completing either a paper or online survey.

The Title IV VR agency that serves individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind, DBVI, partners with its SRC in reviewing the effectiveness of, and individual satisfaction with the VR services provided. All eligible individuals, who receive services, are provided the opportunity to participate in VR program evaluation through a customer satisfaction survey. The survey is provided with several ways for individuals to respond, in paper form by mail, online, or by telephone. The survey provides a systematic method of hearing the point of view of individuals being served. It is one measure of program effectiveness and a quality-of-service indicator. The results also support ongoing continuous program improvement and staff training activities. In the survey, participants can provide their level of satisfaction with received services, VR staff, and various aspects of the VR process. DBVI administers and distributes monthly surveys to assess consumer satisfaction. All survey recipients are provided with an explanation regarding (a) the purpose of the evaluation; (b) voluntary participation; (c) the due date for completion of the survey; (d) confidentiality of personal information and responses; and (e) alternative options to complete the survey if additional help is required.

Due to the combined nature of the approach to evaluating customer service, tracking the customer service feedback process and outcomes for the American Job Centers is done at the local level; while agency specific customer feedback for the specialized services provided by the VEC, Virginia Works, Adult Education, DARS, and DBVI is done through the state agencies. Each workforce customer is offered avenues for providing feedback that reflects their unique experience within the workforce system. Evidence from the One- Stop Certification Process and statewide monitoring indicates that all job seeker and business customers are provided an opportunity to participate in an American Job Center customer service feedback survey.

For the VEC and Virginia Works, in PY23, a total of 2,024 surveys were submitted via VaWC. 85 surveys were submitted by employers and 1,939 surveys were completed by job seekers. These responses are reviewed by staff and addressed as appropriate to support improvements in system and service delivery.

At the general VR agency, 2,396 consumers were selected to participate in the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 DARS survey. Per recommendation of the DARS SRC,



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VR consumers participating in the survey are offered the opportunity to waive their rights to confidentiality so that their responses can be shared with DARS staff. Thus, survey responses and comments for clients who desire to share their responses are provided in a summary document throughout the survey period. An annual document with survey highlights is developed after the end of each survey period. This document includes overall percentages for questions related to counselor relationship and consumers offices. Additionally, summary percentages for categories related to the following areas are included: the best thing that has happened to help them move towards their job goal and areas that would help them move closer to their job goal.

For the DBVI, in PY23, 241 individuals were provided the opportunity to participate in the DBVI VR consumer satisfaction survey. The current response rate is approximately 25%, consistent with the PY22 response rate. The overall satisfaction rate remains high, with 90% of participants responding as overall very satisfied or satisfied with VR services received from DBVI.

Currently the Virginia Career Works center customer service feedback results are only generalizable to the individual populations for each of the individual Local Workforce Development Areas, while the VEC, Virginia Works, Adult Education, DARS, and DBVI customer feedback was specific to the customers receiving their unique program services, respectively. For the most part, VEC and Virginia Works specific customers who reported poor experiences cited technical issues trying to file their Unemployment Insurance claims or trouble navigating the Virginia Workforce Connections to search for job postings. The DARS and DBVI specific responses cannot be overly generalized due to the unique nature of the combination of services provided to each customer.

Each Local Workforce Development Board has a process for collecting, analyzing, and incorporating the customer satisfaction survey results into their daily operations. The survey results are collected and analyzed by program managers or One-Stop operators. The results are shared with the partner team members, and any resulting actions needed to improve operations are implemented through the appropriate partnership of American Job Center staff.

In addition to the ongoing customer surveys at the state and local level, near the end of PY23, the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) was contracted to conduct a Workforce Development Customer Discovery Report. Virginia's workforce partners (VEC, Virginia Works, Adult Education, DARS, DBVI and many other state, local, and private sector partners) worked with BCG to begin to facilitate the distribution of surveys and set up focus group opportunities for job seekers, employers, and workforce practitioners to share their perspectives and insights on Virginia's workforce system.

These combined mechanisms ensure that continuous improvement is an integral part of the customer satisfaction feedback processes for both the Virginia Career Works centers jobseeker and business customers, and for the specialized agency specific workforce services being provided by the VEC, DARS, and DBVI as a part of the workforce system in Virginia.

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## DATA VALIDATION

Virginia has established processes for data validation that meet all federal guidelines issued by USDOL, which help to ensure the accuracy of the annual statewide performance reports, safeguards data integrity, and promote the timely resolution of data anomalies and inaccuracies as required by 2 CFR 200.328.

Quarterly performance reviews are completed to monitor for data errors, missing data, out-of-range values, and anomalies. These reviews assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements, and programmatic performance expectations are achieved. Annual data element validations are conducted to ensure the completeness of data and to identify and correct specific issues within the reporting process. The effectiveness of the data validation process will be assessed annually, and revisions will be made as needed. Staff will be trained regularly on data validation processes.

### Quarterly

The Participant Record Individual Layout (PIRL) report is run every quarter for local areas (WIOA Title I programs). The information from the extracted file is checked against our state system to ensure the information contained in all federal extract files are accurate. Data is reviewed for errors, inconsistencies, missing data out of range values and any anomalies. Virginia Career Works Centers (VCWC) are contacted to make corrections. The reviews are done prior to the submission in the federal reporting system WIPS. This proactive approach is conducted on a quarterly basis to ensure the local areas are aware of any issues and can receive technical assistance all year round. Local areas and VCWCs are required to address all findings and/or concerns that are identified in a timely matter.

### Annual

The annual report is run at the end of the program year, and the sample for data element validation is generated. For WIOA Title I programs, the sample is roughly 15% of the total program exiters (or a minimum of 650 participants) for the program year identified for review. For each sample file, the relevant required data elements listed in TEGL 23-19 are assessed. Each data element that is required to be validated and that is supported by acceptable documentation will be scored as “pass.” Conversely, each data element that is not supported by acceptable documentation, is scored as a “fail.” Validators use a combination of self-attestation (client statement with certification), cross-matching (i.e. wage data and employer documentation), detailed case and program notes (statements by VCWC staff entered into the Virginia Workforce Connection (VaWC) that identify the specific data element, the status of the element, the date information was obtained, staff name, and other relevant information), and electronic records (participant records stored in numeric and text formats) to validate the elements. The results of the element validation are shared with the local areas.

### Training

Annual data validation training is provided to state WIOA Title I monitoring staff. Training includes information on the importance of validating the data, what needs to be validated, and how data validation works.

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## Recommended Activities

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### WIOA COMBINED STATE PLAN PROGRESS

In PY23, workforce partners from all WIOA Combined State Plan programs collaborated to develop and submit the PY 2024-2027 Plan for Virginia. This Plan was submitted by April 1, 2024 and was approved on June 28, 2024. [The Plan can be accessed here](#). Virginia will implement this Plan throughout PY24-27.

### WIOA TITLE I YOUTH PROGRAM WORK EXPERIENCE AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH (OSY) EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENT

#### **WIOA Title I Youth Program – 75% Expenditure Requirement for OSY and 20% Expenditure Requirement for Work Experience**

The Commonwealth of Virginia, WIOA Title I Youth Programs met both the out-of-school youth (OSY) 75 percent expenditure and the youth work experience 20 percent expenditure requirements for PY23 funds.

For PY22 funds, the Commonwealth expended 86.5% of Youth funds on out-of-school youth. In the first year of availability for PY23 funds, the June 2024 monthly reports 85.9% of funds have been expended on out-of-school youth.

For PY22 funds the Commonwealth expended 24.6% of Youth funds on Youth Work Experience (WEX) and in the first year of availability for PY23 funds, the June 2024 monthly reports 26.6% of funds have been expended on Youth Work Experiences.

To ensure that each LWDA meets or exceeds the Youth Out of School and Work Experience requirement, the Virginia Works WIOA Title I Program reviews expenditure reports monthly and requires LWDA's that are below the minimum requirement to meet for technical assistance with the WIOA Title I Youth Program Coordinator and other Virginia Works staff as requested. For LWDA's that are below 15%, a written action plan detailing how the LWDA will meet the minimum requirement will be requested.

In addition, the Commonwealth implemented the following to increase youth enrollments and the 20% work experience expenditure rate for PY23:

- Virginia Works held an annual WIOA Youth Program webinar to discuss Virginia's 20% WEX requirement trend, best practices, and administrative tips, youth performance indicators, and tools (e.g., allowable expenditures) to meet the WEX and OSY expenditure requirements. This peer-to-peer call/webinar featured programmatic best practices.
- Reviewed the LWDB's monthly expenditure detail reports to make sure they tracked and reported expenditures in the appropriate allowable expense category.

- Encouraged LWDB's to provide more WEX to the in-school youth population in partnership with their local school systems CTE programs.
- Worked with LWDBs to ensure they conducted co-enrollment partnership with other youth development organizations such as Dept. Juvenile Justice, Dept. of Human Service, YouthBuild, Job Corps and Dept. of Rehabilitative Services.
- Encouraged LWDBs to work more closely with their State and local business/employer services teams to connect with employers and with identified youth WEX internship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities.

With this and many other statewide efforts, Virginia's LWDBs OSY enrollments and work experience rate for PY23 has increased and will continue to meet both required WIOA Title I Youth required expenditures.

Virginia Works continues to provide statewide TA training and encourage LWDBs to work closely and collaborate with other state agencies serving the same youth populations with similar goals and leverage local resources through braiding funds with the agencies serving OSY (YouthBuild, Job corps, Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, DVR, Dept. of Social Services, and Local High School Dual Enrollment/CTE Programs).

## VIRGINIA'S PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

### Virginia WIOA Title I 40% Training Expenditure Requirement

The Virginia Acts of Assembly 2015 session amended the Code of Virginia to require that Local Workforce Development Boards allocate a minimum of 40 percent of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers funds to training services as defined under Virginia Workforce Letter 14-7, Change 3 and Section 134 (c)(3) of the WIOA. These training services must lead to recognized postsecondary education and workforce credentials aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area or region. Local compliance with this requirement is reviewed on an annual basis.

### Virginia Workforce Metrics

Per Virginia Code section 2.2-214.3 Virginia's Secretary of Labor is responsible for conducting annual evaluations of the performance of workforce development and training programs and activities across state government. Virginia Works is the agency responsible for tracking workforce metrics.

Virginia has identified six core workforce metrics to establish consistent measurement across workforce development investments.

1. Job Placements (or jobs created for business services programs)
2. People Trained
3. Total Program Cost
4. Program Cost per Job Placement and Program Cost per Participant
5. Progressed Wage Growth
6. Job Retention Rate

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The first round of workforce metrics data collection was conducted in February 2024 with 62 programs and continues to be collected on a quarterly basis. The data collection process continues to be refined in the inaugural year.

### **Local Area Workforce Metrics**

At the March 2024 quarterly Virginia Board of Workforce Development meeting, the Systemwide Workforce Metrics at the Local Level Policy was adopted (VBWD #24-01). The purpose of the policy is to establish implementation of key performance metrics that apply to local delivery of workforce development services. The metrics are intended to provide a holistic and outcome-oriented view of service deliver at the local level. The operational definitions and data collection process is to be developed and piloted in program year 2024.

### **Primary indicators of performance**

During PY2023, Virginia met or exceeded 90% of the negotiated target for the primary performance indicators for the Adult, Dislocated, and Youth Programs. Virginia continues to conduct training for the LWDAs in an effort to improve their ability to provide participants with follow-up services.

The state's common exit policy, including which ETA-funded partner programs are included in the state's common exit policy. The following ETA-funded programs are included under the common exit requirement:

- Title I – Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth
- Title III – Wagner-Peyser
- Trade Act
- National Dislocated Worker Grants

Virginia uses the Geographic Solutions Virtual One-Stop application and established the common exit policy within the application.

### **Negotiated performance levels for local areas for Titles I and III core programs and for program years 2024 and 2025.**

During Spring 2024, Virginia negotiated state performance levels with the U.S. Department of Labor. In Summer 2024, using statewide goals and local statistical adjustment model results, the state negotiated local performance levels with each Local Workforce Development Board. See Appendix for Virginia's WIOA Titles I and III Performance Levels for program years 2024-2025.



## ACTIVITIES FUNDED BY THE STATE'S WIOA TITLE I SET ASIDE FUNDS

*Activities provided with the funds reserved by the governor, which can be up to 15% of the state's allotment. In this section of the narrative, states may describe activities undertaken in whole or in part with their Governor's Reserve and how those activities have directly or indirectly impacted performance.*

During the performance year, the following initiatives and services were supported with Title I state set-aside funds:

- **VEC Workforce Transformation:** To optimize workforce readiness for Virginia's current and future jobs, the Commonwealth seeks to improve how workforce development programs are managed, delivered, and measured in order to better equip Virginians with the skills they need, elevate their experience of getting and remaining employed, and increase their earning power. Expended \$3,267,744.
- **VOEE Virginia Skills Initiative:** Develop an Alumni Career Data Set and a Virginia Supply Side Skills Data Set. Expended \$950,502.
- **SW Virginia Childcare Support:** With seed funding provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia, United Way of Southwest Virginia in partnership with the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board and the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board will address regional challenges with Ready SWVA, a multi-million-dollar initiative to increase labor participation by addressing access to childcare. Expended \$509,296.
- **CTE High School Innovation:** The Career Technical Education High School Innovation Grant is a two-year planning grant to develop and expand opportunities for secondary students to earn postsecondary credentials and a high school diploma simultaneously. The initiative will support partnerships between a local school division, postsecondary institutions, business and industry, and workforce and economic development entities. Students will be provided with a sequence of courses that start in grade nine and culminate in the attainment of a high school diploma and associate degree in up to five years. The initiative will include authentic work experience, mentorships and internships designed to prepare students for a career in an identified career pathway. Expended \$387,551.
- **AJC Security:** Provides funding to support security personnel at comprehensive American Job Centers and American Job Centers that have a Virginia Employment commission physical presence. Expended \$23,158.
- **Workforce Innovation Grant:** These funds will support innovative service delivery approaches. Funds will be targeted on getting individuals back into the workforce in economically distressed areas of the Commonwealth that have an unemployment rate higher than the statewide rate and a poverty rate higher than the statewide rate. Expended \$598,978.
- **HR Strong:** WIOA state set-aside funds are being provided over an 18-month period for advanced training in shipbuilding, ship repair, offshore wind, and skilled trades workforce development in Hampton Roads in support of increased Navy ship construction, repair, modernization, and maintenance programs, the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project, and Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel expansion project. Expended \$259,465.

- **Statewide Grants:** These five set aside funding, including Supplement Opportunity Grant, Soft Skills, Technical Skills Development, Transportation to Learn, and Youth Marketing and Outreach Development, grants were targeted to assist the workforce boards to increase the number of participants in workforce development training activities statewide, with a specific focus in work-based learning activities, including but not limited to on-the-job training, registered apprenticeships, internships, and customized training. The training activities must lead to job placement in demand occupations. Expended \$774,374.

## RAPID RESPONSE AND LAYOFF AVERSION ACTIVITIES

### Rapid Response

In accordance with Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act requirements, Rapid Response staff contacted company officials within 48 hours of receipt of a WARN, held employer briefings with management, and planned employee briefings as desired by the employer. Most briefings were held before the workers left their respective companies. A team of local workforce development partners who offered direct services to impacted workers provided employee briefings, led by one of five Regional Rapid Response Coordinators. The Rapid Response Coordinators were instrumental in planning and resourcing job fairs, on-site employer resource centers, customized transition workshops and registration for WIOA and partner services.

WARN notices filed by employers and non-WARN information obtained by rapid response coordinators in PY 2023:

WARN Notices: 55

Number of Impacted Workers: 4,985

Non-WARN: 55

Number of Impacted Workers: 2,005

### Number of Companies Served and Number of Individuals Served

In PY 2023, Rapid Response Coordinators experienced an increase in the workflow of layoff notification and responses. Businesses began to return to the in-person protocols, as experienced in the past, while others continued to prefer the digital presentation method.

In most cases, Coordinators found that many businesses were eager to hire outgoing talent and approached the Coordinator, AJC staff, or employer directly about connecting with these employees. As a result, WIOA Title I dislocated worker enrollment was generally low statewide.

### Strategies for Linking Rapid Response Recipients to American Job Centers and Processes for Intake or Co-Enrollment in the Trade Adjustment Assistance and the Dislocated Worker Programs

The five Rapid Response Coordinators in Virginia each cover multiple local workforce development areas (LWDA), and each LWDA has a “go to” group of professionals in the American Job Centers who

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assist in providing services to impacted employees and companies. Rapid Response participants are provided the informational services required by the regulations and an additional survey on service needs and workshop interests is provided to the impacted employees to complete. Based on this information, additional services are provided on-site if allowed by the company or referrals are made to the various programs for additional follow-up. Whenever feasible, a targeted hiring event will be carried out for these employees often in conjunction with other hiring events geared towards the hiring needs within the workforce region.

In addition to these services, the Virginia Works' Economic Information and Analytics (EIA) division creates a workbook on open employment opportunities in the area based on the skills of the impacted workforce and this information is provided to the employees upon request. Dislocated Worker program enrollment opportunities are offered to impacted workers, including opportunities to start the enrollment onsite if possible. To document services provided to workers on-site, Rapid Response Coordinators add services to a generic program module in the Virginia Workforce Connection to track. Rapid Response Coordinators continued to work with businesses to provide information and referral services to the TAA program (now in sunset) and the Dislocated Worker program.

### **Layoff Aversion Strategy**

Virginia's layoff aversion strategy is focused on connecting workers to new employment opportunities prior to layoff and connecting workers to training opportunities such as on-the-job training (OJT), individual training accounts, TAA, and state funded training programs. To track the return on investment in Rapid Response services, the VBWD created metrics for the WIOA Title I Administrator and VEC to track, including information on training program enrollment, average duration of unemployment insurance benefits collected, return to work wages, and the estimated economic impact on state tax revenue of dislocated workers returning to employment.

### **How Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities are Aligned with Business Engagement, Sector Strategy, and Career Pathway Efforts**

Business services teams in the field identify companies that may be in distress and refer those companies to the WIOA Title I Administrator, LWDB, and Economic Development. Once such a company is identified, team members will identify potential strategies to assist the company in avoiding layoffs and provide those services as appropriate.

### **Specific Types of Services or Workshops Provided to Both Companies and Affected Workers.**

Services provided to companies include the basic host of informational services to employees, workshops such as resume writing, job search strategies and interviewing, targeted hiring events, and program enrollment opportunities for WIOA Title I and Affordable Care Act Coverage. If an impacted company is assessed as being potentially TAA impacted, TAA Navigators consult with the company and assist in preparing TAA Petitions. If petitions are certified prior to the layoff occurring, TAA Information sessions are held at the employment site for the impacted employees. Companies identified as being in distress are referred to state economic development and local workforce development boards to determine what efforts and funding may help the company retain jobs.

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## ACTIVITIES PROVIDED UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT EMPLOYMENT SERVICE SECTION 7(B)

Ten percent of the Wagner-Peyer Act funds allotted to the Commonwealth of Virginia are reserved for use by the Governor. These funds are identified and reported to DOL quarterly. The affiliated activities are tracked by job service staff time allocated to each identified group, grant, or program. These activities are found below.

The 10 percent set-aside funds were used for employment services to employers and job seekers who fell within high priority categories. These categories included:

- Job seekers looking for opportunities within in-demand occupations such as construction, IT fields, government, healthcare, and transportation, etc.
- Services to UI claimants to assist them with getting back to work. These services included job service, counseling, intake, and other activities.
- Services to employers who fall within priority industry sectors, including, but not limited to, manufacturing, agriculture, cyber security, energy, healthcare, logistics, tourism, advanced manufacturing, and big data.

## NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER GRANTS AWARDED

The Commonwealth of Virginia did not apply for or have any active National Dislocated Worker Grants During PY 2023.



## SUCCESS STORIES

### Success #1

1

The Central Virginia Workforce Development Board in Lynchburg has successfully supported more than \$27,000 in training provided to incumbent workers at four businesses in Virginia's Local Workforce Development Area 7 over the past nine months. Each of these employers took advantage of WIOA Title I funding to support their upskilling efforts after engaging with The Central Virginia Business Services Team. Each employer learned about Incumbent Worker Training funds as part of a broad menu of services provided through the one-stop workforce system. As a result of this successful outreach, the upskilling of 20 workers was supported with \$20,525 in WIOA Title I funds provided by the Central Virginia Workforce Development Board, with matching funds provided by each employer.



### Success #2

2

Staff of the WIOA Title I program in Virginia's Local Workforce Development Area VII connected with a high school student in Bedford County, Virginia, who was interested in pursuing carpentry as an occupation after graduation. This student was evaluated and determined to be eligible for support under the WIOA Title I program. After enrollment the student told his case manager/career navigator that he had a specific interest in working for Wright Choice Construction, a family-owned business that specializes in custom home building. The case manager notified the business services coordinator, who then reached out and worked to build a relationship with the owner of Wright Choice Construction. After several phone conversations and an in-person interview with the client, the owner of the construction business agreed to host a work experience. One challenge that had to be navigated was the fact that the business owner was only willing to host a work experience during hours that the student would be attending class at his high school. The student, eager to begin learning about his chosen occupation, agreed to complete his work experience during a two-week break from classes in December. Upon completion of the work experience, the business owner was so pleased that he gave the student a standing offer to come work for him full time, once he graduates from high school in May, at a salary of \$20 per hour.



# 3

## Success #3

A farrier's job is physically demanding. Contorting oneself into a pretzel under a 1,100-pound horse for several hours daily can leave even the fittest person with aches and pains. Because shoeing horses is physically demanding, there may be a misconception that it is a "man's job." Well, move over, guys; Southwest Virginia has a female farrier out to prove herself.

Savannah always wanted to have a career as a farrier. She knew she needed advanced training, so she researched training centers all over the country. She landed at the Oklahoma Horseshoeing School in Purcell, OK. The Dept. of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) could help her with room and board expenses, but she would need help with tuition. Her DARS rep contacted SWVA Works' Tazewell County Workforce Specialist Lisa Hubbard. SWVA Works is funded by the Southwest VA Workforce Development Board's WIOA grant. SWVA Works paid her tuition, and while she was there, she also completed work readiness skills training activities remotely to earn incentive payments. At the end of 8 weeks of training, she earned a workplace-recognized credential, and she returned home to Tazewell County, ready to start her own farrier business, but where would she begin?

SWVA Works helped her with small business entrepreneurship training, and DARS helped her with marketing ideas for getting business cards and a business logo. She worked with her Workforce Specialist, Lisa Hubbard, to get supplies, but shoeing horses also needed a reliable truck to haul an anvil and forge. How could she get a truck for her business when she was starting out? Lisa told her about a "Cars to Work" program that the Southwest VA Workforce Development Board had available from Tazewell County ARPA funds. Savannah applied and was approved. Staff found her a used Chevrolet Colorado truck with affordable payments for two years.

SWVA Works partnered with other agencies to help Savannah reach her career goal of becoming a farrier. Now, she can provide farrier services in all surrounding counties.

When asked how SWVA Works assisted her in her career, she stated, "Southwest Workforce has helped me with my business in so many ways. They sent me to Oklahoma Horseshoeing School for 8 weeks, and I got my professional horseshoeing certification. They helped pay for my tools, which was a blessing because I didn't need just my tools; I had to have chaps, a hoof stand, a forge, and an anvil. They also gave me a class on how to maintain and manage my own business. They helped me get my truck, which has had no issues, and has gotten me counties away from home to shoe horses. This program has given me many opportunities to meet new people and work on some amazing animals."



# 4

## Success #4

She is a mother of 4 children, she and her husband both work full-time, but Brittany wants to do more. The first year of LPN training at the Buchanan County Career and Tech Center has a flexible schedule, and she can work as a CNA and complete training at that same time, but it is not easy. It is a 60-mile round trip just to get to the BCTC. She knows the 2nd year will be even more difficult, with having to travel for clinical training and being unable to work as many hours as possible.

Brittany knew she could complete the training, but financially, she would need help paying tuition and the additional travel expenses. When BCTC held LPN interviews, Brittany saw SWVA Works WIOA Workforce Specialist Mike Elswick talking with students. She picked up a brochure and his business card and made the call. Mike enrolled her in the SWVA Works Adult WIOA program. She was able to get tuition and travel assistance.

Brittany is grateful for the assistance and can complete her 2nd year more easily while working fewer hours. Becoming an LPN will allow her to contribute more to her family.



## STATE WORKFORCE SYSTEM CHALLENGES

For many years, Virginia's workforce delivery system functioned as a decentralized system, with responsibility for Virginia's workforce development system, comprised of nearly 60 programs, spanning across more than 12 agencies, 9 secretariats, and 14 workforce development boards. In response to a widely recognized need to better coordinate, enhance, and modernize workforce development in Virginia, the new state agency Virginia Works was established and now houses administrative responsibilities for Title I programs, Title III Wagner-Peyser employment programs, and Registered Apprenticeship. The vision for Virginia Works is to enable more coordinated and informed-decision making and create a nation-leading workforce ecosystem hub that proactively connects job seekers, employers, educational institutions, and government services.

Virginia Works will enhance service delivery and set the tone across the Commonwealth for a workforce development ecosystem that is prepared to:

- ✓ Adapt to the accelerated pace of change.
- ✓ Prepare for the demands of tomorrow's workforce.
- ✓ Reimagine the delivery of critical skill-building.
- ✓ Redefine workforce preparedness services.
- ✓ Transform the way we deliver, message, and measure the success of our workforce programs.
- ✓ Optimize workforce readiness.

Another goal of the establishment of Virginia Works has been to support the coordination and reporting of metrics relevant to all workforce programs in order to better support informed

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decisions on additional workforce investments by policymakers at the state level, in alignment with federal metrics. Better data produces better decisions and better outcomes, and as discussed earlier in this report, Virginia Works' simplified metrics reporting process is already taking steps to address the challenge of data availability and coordination. This focused array of workforce development metrics, available widely to policymakers and leaders within the system, will help Virginia make decisions that benefit customers of the workforce ecosystem – both individuals and businesses – and ultimately help make Virginia the best state to live and work in America.





## APPENDIX

### WIOA Title I and Title III Negotiated Performance Measures

WIOA Performance Measures Final Negotiated Goals	PY 24	PY 25
<b>WIOA Title I Adults</b>		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	82.0%	83.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	80.0%	81.0%
Median Earnings	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 8,000.00
Credential Attainment Rate	75.0%	75.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	70.0%	71.0%
<b>WIOA Title I Dislocated Workers</b>		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	86.0%	86.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	84.0%	85.0%
Median Earnings	\$ 9,500.00	\$ 10,000.00
Credential Attainment Rate	73.0%	74.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	67.0%	68.0%
<b>WIOA Title I Youth</b>		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	77.0%	78.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	76.0%	77.0%
Median Earnings	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,700.00
Credential Attainment Rate	68.5%	68.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	67.0%	68.0%
<b>WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange (LEX)*</b>		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	70.5%	70.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	70.5%	71.0%
Median Earnings	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,500.00
WIOA Titles I and III: Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Baseline	Baseline