WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
OF SOUTHEAST MISSOURI

Southeast Region
Strategic Plan
Program Year 2024-2028

Ms. Valada Harp, Board Chair   **Signature**

DocuSigned by:
Valada Harp
4F3C89E413E8435...

Burch Food Services, Inc.
108 Stallcup, PO Box 1667
Sikeston, MO 63801
573-471-3003
vharp@burchfoodservices.com

Mr. Mike Sauer, CLEO   **Signature**

DocuSigned by:
88A23F1CC0A74B5...

Perry County Commissioner
321 North Main, Suite 2
Perryville, MO 63775
573-547-4242
msauer@perrycountymo.us

Ms. Gretchen Morse, President/COO   **Signature**

DocuSigned by:
Gretchen Morse
C030154D7B584C3...

Workforce Development Board of Southeast Missouri
1021 Kingsway, Suite 1
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
573-334-0990
gmorse@job4you.org

Please be advised WDBSE may revise this document at any time to comply with regulations provided by the Missouri Division of Workforce Development and the U.S. Department of Labor. Section 108(d) of WIOA states the Plan will be made available 30 days prior to submission for public for comment. The Plan will be published on website: www.job4you.org or a paper copy may be obtained at 1021 Kingsway, Suite 1, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701.

Table of Contents

Required Policies and Attachments

1. List of Comprehensive, Affiliate, Specialized and Other Centers and One Stop Operators
2. Memorandum of Understanding with IFA and Cost Sharing Budgets with All Partner Signatures
3. Chief Elected Officials Consortium Agreement and Bylaws
4. Local Workforce Development Board Membership List, Standing Committees, & Certification Letter
5. Local Workforce Development Board By-Laws and Attestation Form - **Form provided**
6. Local Fiscal Agent
7. Planning Budget Summaries (PBS)
8. Conflict of Interest Policy - Local Workforce Development Board, Staff, and Contracted Staff
9. Financial Procurement Policy / Financial (General) Policy *(See pages 26-28 of the accounting policy)*
10. Complaints and Grievance Policy – Nondiscrimination, Programmatic
11. Sub-state Monitoring Plan and Policy
12. Supportive Services Policy – General, Needs Related Payments Policy for ADLT and DW
13. Adult Priority of Service Policy
14. Expenditure Rates Policy
15. Training Criteria Policy (AD & DW)
16. Youth Barriers Eligibility Policy – OSY ISY additional assistance barrier
17. Youth Incentive Payment Policy
18. Veterans Priority of Service Policy
19. Basic Skills Assessments (Testing) Policy
20. Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy
21. Eligibility Policy (Individualized Career Services)
22. Accessibility Policy – Persons with Disabilities
23. Accessibility Policy - Persons with Limited English Proficiency
24. Co-enrollment Policy
25. Adult Education and Literacy Policy (AEL Policy)
26. VR/RSB Coordination Policy
27. Youth Apprenticeships Policy
28. ETPL Policy
29. Employment Transition Team Policy
30. Business Services Plan and Policy
31. MOU (Cooperative Agreement) between the Community College & LWDB
32. Incumbent Worker Policy
33. Regional Plans (St. Louis / KC) *(not applicable to Southeast Region)*
34. Accommodation Policy
35. Confidentiality Policy

36. Customized Training Policy *(not applicable to Southeast Region)*
37. Facilities
38. Cost Allocation Policy
39. Cost Accounting Policy
40. Financial Reporting/Cash Draw Request Deadlines
41. Fraud, Waste, Abuse, and Criminal Activity Policy
42. Internal Accounting Policy
43. Local Bonding Policy
44. Payments to Employers Policy
45. Follow-up Policy Adults and Dislocated Workers
46. Follow-up Policy Youth
47. Harassment and discrimination Policy
48. Nondiscrimination Policy
49. On-the-Job Training Policy (including employer disputes, nepotism, and modifications)
50. Personnel Policies (leave, travel, facilities closing)
51. Records Policy (access, Sunshine, retention, and destruction)
52. Transitional Jobs Policy
53. Work Experience Policy – Adult
54. Work Experience Policy – Youth
55. Apprenticeship Policy
56. Selective Service Policy
57. Statement of Assurances - **Form provided.**

STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

1. Local Workforce Development Board's Vision

State the Board's vision for the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) and how this vision meets, interprets, and furthers the Governor's vision in the current WIOA Missouri Combined State Plan.

The vision of the Workforce Development Board of Southeast Missouri (WDBSE) is "A high quality standard of life for our region" which supports our mission statement, "To promote a state of economic well-being by helping to create a skilled, diverse, motivated and adaptable workforce".

Governor Parsons's vision is "We are working to move Missouri forward, and by focusing on workforce development and infrastructure – we can reach this goal."

The two visions complement one another, in that they both support workforce development and infrastructure. Without a skilled, diverse, motivated and adaptable workforce we cannot move forward with high-demand training and keep our infrastructure growing.

2. Local Workforce Development Board's Goals

Provide the Board's goals for engaging employers and preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

Engaging employers involves a combination of effective communication, networking, and showcasing the skills and values of those served by the Missouri Job Centers in the region. The goals of the WDBSE include: understanding what employers need and provide them with skilled applicants, understanding the job seekers needs, building a strong network of employers, preparing job seekers for employment, staying up to date on industry trends and changes, and ensuring young adults receive employment services.

Preparing youth and individuals with barriers to employment involves addressing a range of challenges they may face, such as lack of education, skills, limited resources, disabilities, or social disadvantages. Goals would include but not limited to access to quality education, comprehensive support to develop skills and confidence, establishing support networks, access to resources, financial literacy access, and person development support.

These goals are directly tied to the required performance outcomes of job seeker employment entry, employment retention, earning credentials, earning measurable skill gains and captured wages.

3. Local Workforce Development Board's Priorities

Identify the workforce development needs of businesses, jobseekers, and workers in the LWDA, and how those needs are determined.

Businesses in the Southeast Region are in need of skilled labor, to fill the gaps of our workforce. Incumbent Worker training is available to enhance existing employees' skills. This creates an opportunity for less skilled/entry level openings to enter the workforce. It's an excellent opportunity to hire new employees with the help of On-Job-Training (OJT), hiring events and assistance from the region's Business Representative Manager working closely with employers.

The Southeast Region's priority for our Adult and Dislocated Workers is to obtain suitable and self-sustaining employment. The Board saw the benefit and success with work experience and decided to incorporate work experience into our adult populations. Work experience gives the job seekers a unique

opportunity to explore different career paths and strengthen their soft skills. If needed, education is available for long term and short-term training. Case management is available in all avenues. Computers are available in all Job Centers offices for any job seeker to use and availability to connect via technology to any partner agency as needed.

The WIOA Youth program in the Southeast Region is diverse, with many rural areas which creates numerous barriers to employment and/or education. The WDBSE strives to support a high school diploma or its equivalent as a first priority. The WDBSE sees benefits in work experience, to strengthen their soft skills and help to identify a career path. Eliminating the barriers is often the biggest challenge. Through intense case management, building relationships with youth, career guidance, and support we achieve success.

Determining skilled labor needs in a local workforce area requires a systematic approach that involves gathering data and analyzing trends. The regions data analysis of economic conditions, labor market demands, and workforce needs can be found in sections 6-8.

4. Local Workforce Development Board's Strategies

Describe the Board's strategies and goals for operation, innovation and continual improvement based on meeting requirements for the needs of businesses, job seekers and workers. Required strategies are listed below. Please describe the strategies and objectives for:

By the very nature of WIOA, partnerships are developing and strengthening. We're continuing to seek innovative ways of communication and integration. This will allow for improvement to the current system, streamlining services, braiding funding, and working to create a seamless service system in our region.

a. Career Pathways

Career Pathways allow us to build an intentional and strategic plan to obtain employment and careers that will lead to self-sufficiency through education and training services provided by our programs. It is crucial for every enrolled participant to develop a career pathway so they have a completed plan with a time line to achieve the opportunities provided by the program including attaining credentials, finding employment, increasing wages, and advancing in career opportunities. While some WIOA participants have a plan that includes education, others may engage in work experience - the career path and services is specific to each individual based on their career pathway, assessment, needs, and barriers.

Labor market information is critical for each participant, this information will steer the career pathways initiative to ensure that participants are aware of job opportunities for both what they want to do and other opportunities available in the region. The sector strategies development in the Southeast Region will assist employers by providing qualified job seekers to those careers. Along with occupations that fall into the Southeast Regions Sector Strategies, participants should also be informed of high-wage, high-growth, and in-demand job opportunities. Which is a pathway to employment that leads to self-sufficiency being the key to success for the program, job seeker, and the employer.

b. Employer Engagement

We live in a different world. The WDBSE recognizes this and has prioritized meeting the current needs of employers, which in some cases are vastly different than they were prior to the pandemic. The Southeast Region has a dedicated Regional Business Representative Manager who works directly with employers and finds creative ways to assist them in the newest challenges they face; how to recruit, attract and retain adequate numbers of

employees. While not an exhaustive list, some of the most successful strategies for engagement have been the following:

- • Combining in-person hiring events with community resource events. When an employer identifies a job seeker with barriers to employment that they would like to hire, they can refer them to the appropriate community resource partners table for assistance.
- • Drive-thru hiring events. The Regional Business Representative Manager oversees the collection of applications, fliers, and other information from interested employers. The Business Representative sets up a parking lot workstation, employer job openings are distributed to job seekers allowing them to drive-thru and complete multiple job applications. This alleviates the childcare barrier for the job seeker and saves gas driving to various businesses. This approach also supports the employers who are faced with staffing shortages; therefore, an employee is not needed to oversee a table at a hiring event.

c.   Business Needs Assessment

As stated previously, we live in a different world than even two years ago. The needs of businesses may not be entirely different but are much more focused on navigating the prevailing issue of not having enough employees to maintain previous business practices, losing employees to competitors, recovering from employee loss due to COVID, and identifying ways in which they can be flexible enough in their mode of operations to stay in business. The Regional Business Representative Manager has made onsite visits/tours to facilities while reviewing affordable options with employers for retaining current and attracting new employees.

d.   Alignment and Coordination of Core Program Services

The Southeast Region has two Comprehensive (full service) Missouri Job Centers (CJC) and one Affiliate Missouri Job Center (AJC). These centers are tasked with aligning services within the centers by developing outreach for jobseekers, businesses, customer service, assessments, and supportive services. The Southeast Region continues to work at developing and maintaining meaningful inter-agency relationships to continue working as the hub for all services, making referrals and being the connection between job seekers and employers. Interagency alignment and coordination will be an on-going process. Through communication, staff meetings/trainings, the One-Stop staff continue to become more knowledgeable of the services available through core programs and mandated partners. This will enable all staff to give customers the information they need to improve their knowledge of resources. Partners used to align and coordinate with their core programs include:

- • WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, & Youth
- • Job Corps
- • MSFW-Migrant/Seasonal
- • Wagner-Peyser Act
- • AEL
- • Carl Perkins
- • Community Service Block Grant
- • Housing and Urban Development
- • Youth Build
- • TANF/MWA
- • Rehabilitation Services for the Blind
- • Vocational Rehabilitation

- Senior Community Services Employment Program
- Veterans Services
- Division Employment Security – UI
- SNAP

e. Coordination with Economic Development

The Southeast Region board member who represents Economic Development and is a great asset for the region. This involvement allows us to be kept up to date on economic development within our region with Economic Developers at the table. We are also apprised of anything that might influence workforce development in the Southeast Region. The Real-Time Labor Market Analysis developed by MERIC, provides a snapshot of current labor demands that can be helpful to current job seekers interested in who is hiring and for what occupations. The Labor Market Analysis provides both regional and statewide data found in job ads and is published every other month. MERIC and The Office of Workforce Development (OWD) will continue to explore how this data can inform workforce and economic development efforts to meet the needs of businesses around the state.

f. Outreach to Jobseekers and Businesses. (The LWDB should explain its outreach plan to attract WIOA eligible individuals. Please highlight any efforts to reach veterans, spouses of veterans, and displaced homemakers.)

Educational partners and agency partners across the region are major factors in meeting the needs of both job seekers and employers. WDBSE continues strong partnerships with our community colleges, our university and with our Vo-Tech schools. We need their expertise to develop curriculum to educate our workforce. Working together with both education and agency partners is not only the best use of the funding, but also our best option for meeting the needs of both job seekers and employers. The Southeast Region's outreach plan for businesses is designed to increase the awareness of available services to increase the number of businesses that use the Missouri Job Center products and services.

- Gather business intelligence to identify current economy
- Work with local and regional economic development professionals
- Provide one-on-one assistance to employers with job matching system
- Encourage entrepreneurship with economic developers.

Outreach to businesses is conducted through WDBSE and Job Center involvement with regional chambers of commerce, economic development departments, and contact from the Regional Business Representative Manager. The region's Missouri Job Centers offer an array of services aimed at making every job seeker a better job candidate. Through the website www.jobs.mo.gov and the mobile app, job seekers are able to have access to regional, state, and national job openings. Through labor market information, career exploration activities, job seeking assistance, resume preparation assistance, assessments, skills certifications such as the National Career Readiness Certificate, and workshops we can assist job seekers in the preparation of applying for jobs that match with their knowledge, skills, and abilities. We offer access to short and long-term skill-building training, employment services, supportive service information, job specific training, certifications, placement assistance, opportunities for on-the-job training, tuition assistance to build on the knowledge, skills, and abilities that a job seeker will need for their chosen career path. Methods of referral and opportunities for co-enrollment with

other workforce partners will continue to be refined. Collaborating with partner agencies to develop a triage approach to serving customers will increase awareness of area resources and avoid duplication of services. The Southeast Region has a Priority of Service Policy for Veterans and their eligible spouses. Veteran Representatives in the Southeast Region work closely with Veteran Organizations to assist in the outreach and recruitment of qualified and eligible veterans. The Southeast Region also has an additional income eligible tier, Priority Level Two Enrollments. This tier allows participants to enroll into programs for assistance if their income does not exceed 250% of the Lower Living Income Level as compared to Priority Level One enrollments whose annual income cannot exceed 150% of the Lower Living Income Level. This allows us to serve participants who need assistance to achieve or maintain a level of self-sufficiency but are currently working in an effort to make a better life for them and their families.

g. Access—Improvements to Physical and Programmatic Accessibility
The Southeast Region has two comprehensive Missouri Job Centers. One is located in Park Hills and the other located in Kennett. The region also has one affiliate Missouri Job Center located in Cape Girardeau and a satellite office in Sikeston. All locations include WIOA Adult, WIOA DW, SkillUp, RESEA, Wagner/Peyser, and WIOA Youth. There are WIOA Youth services available in all counties as well. Customer services include computer access, program information, program referrals, AEL service referrals, assessment services, and testing services. Local community partnership coordination exists throughout the region. The region also has three Access Points for areas without a physical office location to assist with transportation barriers in the rural communities within our region, this allows potential participants physical and programmatic access in areas where that we do not have a brick-and-mortar set-up. We continue outreach efforts to provide additional access points with plans to be implemented in the future. Information for job seekers is also distributed to partner agencies, food pantries, civic organizations, libraries, and other public facilities. Improvements to Physical and Programmatic Access:
 • Facilities are checked for ADA compliance as part of periodic Local Equal Opportunity monitoring, using the ADA Self-Assessment Tool, provided by OWD in local monitoring process.
 • Customers are provided reasonable accommodations upon request at the Job Centers. Job Center staff members have been trained to provide accommodations immediately for anything not resulting in a cost so that customers do not have to use specific phrases like "reasonable accommodation" or provide medical documentation to be granted an accommodation.
  • Training is provided to all staff members beginning on their first day of employment and continuing throughout employment.
 • Assistive technology is available at all full-service job centers in the region. All staff complete OWD EO and assistive technology trainings. Staff are also encouraged to refer customers to the Missouri Assistive Technology "free" Loan Program.
 • Sign language interpretation service is available for persons with hearing loss in addition to Braille documents from Rehabilitation Services for the Blind.
 • Telephone language interpretation services are available to customers with limited English proficiency.
 • Written translations for vital information are provided to customers with limited English proficiency when appropriate.
 • Tagline, Babel Notices on all written communications, announcements, brochures, flyers.

h. Customer Service Training

Upon being hired, all staff are trained in necessary policies, procedures, Equal Opportunity Information, and Assistive Technology within their office.

• Program training begins on the second day of employment and continues throughout employment via meetings, trainings, and updates.

• Staff are provided access to all OWD Issuances and WDBSE local policies through website links and new hire orientation materials.

• Staff have been provided with the jobs.mo.gov link for all other Equal Opportunity related needs and resources.

• Staff have been provided the link for www.job4you.org which has all our Equal Opportunity related policies and notices for easy and unlimited access to this information.

• Staff are trained in the Missouri Case Management System so they are able to fill in appropriate elements for all participants. These elements begin at enrollment and continue throughout their year of follow-up after exiting the program.

i. Assessment

All customers who visit a Missouri Job Center in the Southeast Region are given information on assessments that can immediately engage the customer in job center activities. This assessment, depending on the age, eligibility, and needs of the customer will identify skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, skill gaps, barriers to employment and/or supportive service needs. Assessments allow assistance with setting goals and developing next steps. Specialized assessment tools include but are not limited to: Basic Skills Assessment, O*Net, Talify, TABE, WorkKeys, Interest Profiler, CompTia, and Coursera. Assessments allow the customer to self-assess basic academic skills, identify high demand occupations and determine if their interest and qualifications match job requirements or if additional training is needed. Results obtained from these assessments are utilized by the customer to make informed choices in their attempts to connect to employment offering the best wages available at their current skill capacity. The information gained through assessments will be used with sector strategy data and/or Labor Market Information to help customers make informed choices regarding their training and careers and to develop their strategic employment plan.

j. Support Services

WIOA defines Supportive Services as those services necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA. Local Supportive Service policies have been developed and are included within the local plan. The region's Supportive Service policy provides assistance to WIOA eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth so they may participate in Title I activities or employment/training activities through other programs when we are braiding funds. Funds may be provided to assist with a wide range of needs, including transportation, housing, childcare, tools, uniforms, and daily living expenses. All other sources of funding must be sought before using WIOA supportive services funds. Referrals are made to partner agencies, such as the Salvation Army, food pantries, faith-based partners, and Community Partnerships. The Family Support Division, SkillUp Program, has specific guidelines for Supportive Service items and needs specific to SkillUp Participants.

k. Outcome measures assessment, monitoring and management

The WDBSE has charged the Compliance Manager and the Fiscal Manager to conduct monitoring as these staff members are not authorized to operate programs. This ensures that we have an adequate firewall between providing services and overseeing the provision of those services from a monitoring standpoint. Compliance and Fiscal Monitoring includes but

is not limited to fiscal expenditures, fiscal annual monitoring of subcontractor, WIOA program eligibility and compliance, Federal/State/Local policy adherence, and data system compliance. The OWD requires sub-state monitoring to be conducted quarterly on a statistically valid sample size. WDBSE compliance staff will monitor a percentage of new enrollments per program for each contract year. If 100% of the files are not monitored, a random sampling technique will be used to identify the selection of files to be monitored. OWD requires an annual monitoring report presented to the CLEO and board members regarding compliance and performance reviews. To fulfil this annual requirement the WDBSE Compliance Manager presents a Sub-State Monitoring Report to the full board and subcontractor during the quarterly board meeting following the completion of the Sub-State Monitoring. This annual report includes monitoring results, compliance concerns, performance reviews, adequacy of assessments, planning of activities and services, coordination with One-Stop Delivery System partners, and customer outcomes. If a problem is discovered during Sub-State or any other on-going monitoring, the WDBSE adheres to the WIOA regulations and requires that these problems be resolved by prompt and appropriate corrective action. The WDBSE Compliance Manager tracks and monitors the 5% over income exception and the 5% In-School Youth "needs additional assistance" barrier. WDBSE Fiscal Manager monitors and tracks youth expenditures to ensure they are in line with WIOA regulations - 75% Out-Of-School Youth, 20% Work Experience, etc. Data Validation Monitoring will be conducted quarterly by the WDBSE Compliance Manager. Through this mandated monitoring the Southeast Region will be able to keep a focus on staff input in the Case Management System and promptly correct any staff errors resulting in a negative outcome performance measure. Through the use of MOPerforms Rosters, the Southeast Region is able to look at upcoming performance outcomes and evaluate participant accounts for a participant being negative or positive in any performance measure. Using the tools of MoJobs reports and MOPerforms, we are able to monitor and track performance to work at reaching our regions negotiated performance levels.

5. Economic, Labor Market, and Workforce Analysis Source

Please indicate the source of the information. If using Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) data, please indicate the source is MERIC. If using another resource, please reference the source. MERIC regional representatives can be found online at: https://meric.mo.gov/about-us

6. Economic Analysis

Describe the LWDA's current economic condition, including the following information by county (if your LWDA includes more than one county) and the overall region:

a. Average personal income level;
In the Southeast Region, the per capita income was lower than the state average of $57,818 in all thirteen counties in 2022. The county with the highest per capita income in the region was New Madrid County ($50,951) and the lowest was Madison County ($40,923). The per capita personal income in eight of the 13 counties was above $45,000. In 2022, personal income for the US and Missouri increased 2.0 percent and 3.2 percent respectively when compared to 2021.

b. Number and percent of working-age population living at or below poverty level;
In 2022, the statewide poverty rate of working age persons, or those 18-64 years, was 12.3 percent. The poverty rate in ten of the 13 counties of the Southeast Region exceeded the state average. The highest poverty rate was in Pemiscot County (26.8%) and the lowest was in Ste. Genevieve County (7.0%).

Name	2022 Per Capita Personal Income	Working Age (18-64) Population living below poverty level	
		Number	Percentage
Missouri	$57,818	445,345	12.3%
Bollinger	$45,696	943	15.4%
Cape Girardeau	$49,636	6,852	14.3%
Dunklin	$43,916	3,461	22.5%
Iron	$41,712	1,101	20.3%
Madison	$40,923	779	10.9%
Mississippi	$42,471	1,487	24.8%
New Madrid	$50,951	1,615	17.6%
Pemiscot	$46,684	2,341	26.8%
Perry	$49,020	1,239	11.3%
Scott	$50,298	3,137	14.4%
St. Francois	$42,028	6,501	17.7%
Ste. Genevieve	$47,262	738	7.0%
Stoddard	$47,705	2,756	16.7%

Per Capita Personal Income - U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2022
Poverty Level - American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)

c. Number and percent of working age population determined to have a barrier to employment;

Barriers to employment can include homelessness, disability status, lower education levels, and limited proficiency with the English language. In the Southeast Region, the percentage of the working age population (18-64 years old) with disabilities was above the state average of 12.3 percent in all counties except Cape Girardeau County (10.9%) and Perry County (12.1%), with the highest percentage in Mississippi County (25.1%). The percentage of the working age population with English as second language in Missouri was 7.1 percent. Only Dunklin County at 7.5 percent was above the state average.

In Missouri, 10.8 percent of the working age population did not have a high school diploma in 2022. Eight of the 13 counties in the region had higher percentage of the working age population without a high school diploma than the state average. Pemiscot County had the highest percentage of the working age population without a high school diploma at 14.5 percent whereas Cape Girardeau County had the lowest percentage of the working age population without a high school diploma at 10.2 percent.

Barriers To Employment								
Area	Total Population	Total Population 18-64	% of 18-64 in Population	Total Population 18-64 with less than high school diploma	% of Population 18-64 without high school diploma	Total Population 18-64 with a disability	% of Population 18-64 with a disability	Total Population 18-64 who speak language other than English	% of Population 18-64 who speak language other than English
Missouri	6,154,422	3,697,543	60.1%	265,816	10.8%	449,967	12.3%	261,796	7.1%
Bollinger	10,658	6,201	58.2%	150	11.6%	948	15.5%	43	0.7%
Cape Girardeau	81,703	50,392	61.7%	3,462	10.2%	5,436	10.9%	2,353	4.7%
Dunklin	28,174	15,769	56.0%	930	13.7%	3,275	21.3%	1,189	7.5%
Iron	9,538	5,445	57.1%	281	12.7%	1,184	21.9%	114	2.1%
Madison	12,649	7,156	56.6%	318	10.7%	1,526	21.5%	145	2.0%
Mississippi	12,305	7,313	59.4%	319	13.9%	1,500	25.1%	95	1.3%
New Madrid	16,341	9,320	57.0%	872	12.7%	1,898	20.7%	337	3.6%
Pemiscot	15,555	8,828	56.8%	520	14.5%	1,880	21.5%	334	3.8%
Perry	18,970	10,955	57.7%	800	10.8%	1,319	12.1%	388	3.5%
Scott	38,055	21,929	57.6%	1,594	11.9%	3,680	16.9%	634	2.9%
St. Francois	66,814	41,363	61.9%	1,692	10.5%	7,413	20.1%	700	1.7%
Ste. Genevieve	18,494	10,739	58.1%	504	10.3%	1,580	15.0%	146	1.4%
Stoddard	28,656	16,619	58.0%	1,054	12.3%	3,080	18.7%	196	1.2%

Source: *American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)*

d. Unemployment rates for the last five years;

The unemployment rate in the Southeast Region is declining after peaking in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The unemployment rate for 2022 was below the state average of 2.5 percent in four of the 13 counties. In 2022, the highest unemployment rate in the Southeast Region was in Dunklin County and Iron County (4.0%) and the lowest was in Perry County (2.1%).

Unemployment Rate by County - Southeast Region					
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
US	3.9%	3.7%	8.1%	5.3%	3.6%
Missouri	3.2%	3.2%	6.1%	4.1%	2.5%
Bollinger	3.7%	3.8%	5.7%	3.9%	2.6%
Cape Girardeau	2.8%	2.9%	5.1%	3.4%	2.2%
Dunklin	5.5%	5.4%	7.3%	5.7%	4.0%
Iron	5.5%	4.7%	7.1%	5.5%	4.0%
Madison	3.5%	3.3%	6.5%	4.2%	2.9%
Mississippi	3.8%	4.0%	5.4%	4.4%	3.2%
New Madrid	4.8%	4.2%	5.9%	4.4%	3.0%
Pemiscot	5.5%	4.9%	8.0%	6.8%	3.8%
Perry	2.4%	2.6%	5.6%	3.0%	2.1%
Scott	3.4%	3.5%	5.3%	3.7%	2.4%
St. Francois	3.7%	3.6%	7.0%	4.5%	3.3%
Ste. Genevieve	2.8%	2.6%	5.0%	3.2%	2.3%
Stoddard	4.5%	4.6%	5.9%	4.2%	2.9%

Source: *Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Not Seasonally Adjusted*

e. Major layoff events over the past three years and any anticipated layoffs; and
Over the past three years, the Southeast Region has experienced seven (7) businesses that either laid employees off or permanently closed.

- Piramal Glass, USA Inc., located in St. Francois County laid off 165 employees in July 2020.
- Star Tek, located in St. Francois County laid off 472 employees in May 2020.
- Premier Glass, USA Inc., located in St. Francois County permanently closed displacing 243 employees in March 2022.
- ProPak Logistics, LLC, located in Cape Girardeau County permanently closed displacing 93 employees in December 2023.
- Tyson Foods, located in Stoddard County permanently closed displacing 683 employees in October 2023.
- Magnitude 7 Metals, located in New Madrid County permanently closed displacing 512 employees in January 2024.

f. Any other factors that may affect local/regional economic conditions.
Although the Southeast Region has experienced layoffs and business closings in the manufacturing industry it continues to be a strong sector. The diversification of manufacturing continues to expand, and local training has been developed to support this growth. There has been a recent increase in the number of small and mid-sized manufacturing companies in the region as well as diversification within the larger more traditional companies. The Southeast Region being a rural area can be a big factor affecting our economic condition. Various issues that arise out of this are not only finding childcare that is reasonable and affordable but having childcare available for those parents who work 2nd and 3rd shifts. In the most rural of our areas, people must travel several miles and even to other counties to find adequate employment to support their family.
In recent years there has been a trend in the need for healthcare workers. As healthcare facilities identify needs for additional employees the job centers in the Southeast Region assist with multiple resources to meet their needs.
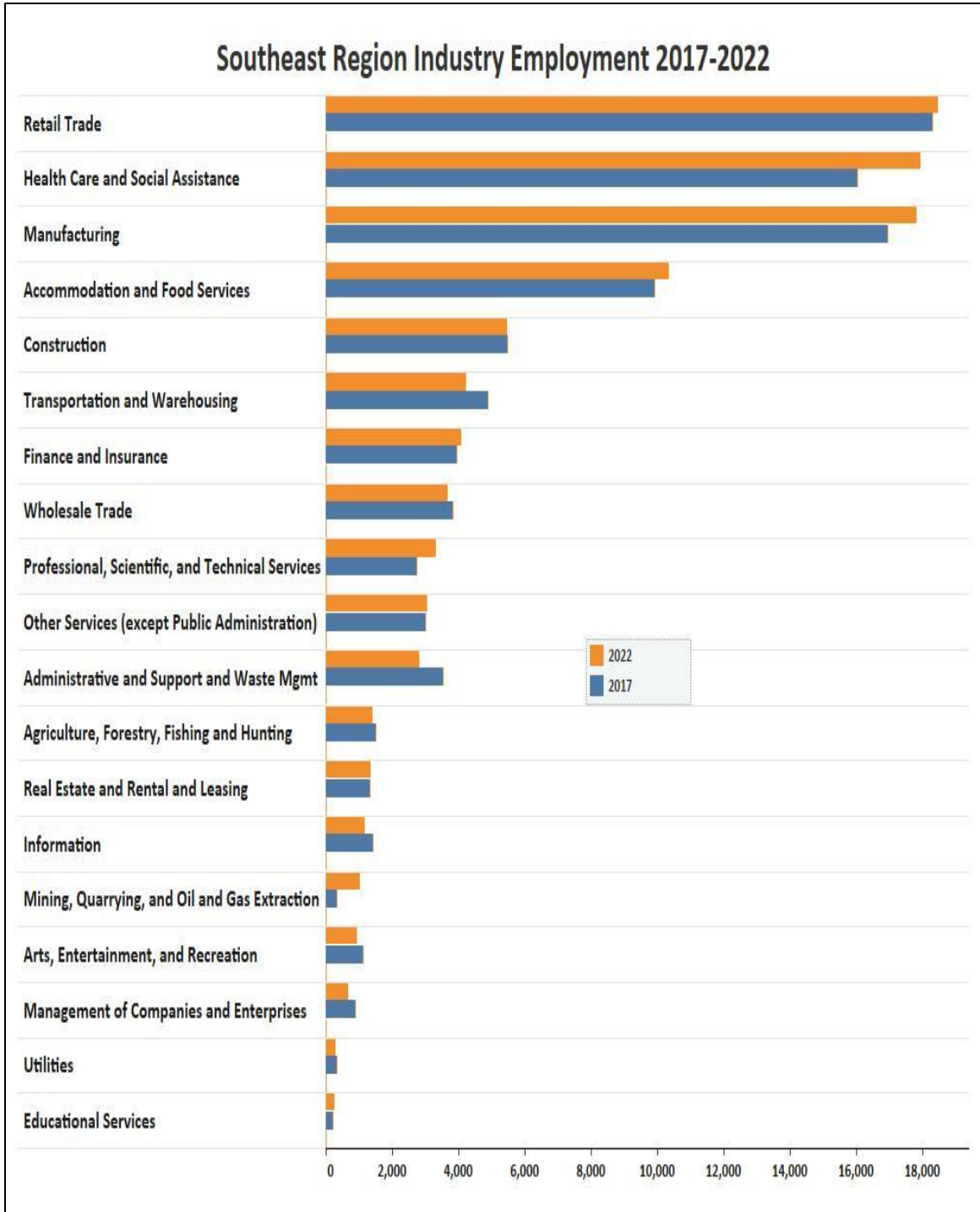
7. Labor Market Analysis

Provide an analysis of the LWDA's current labor market including:

a. **Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**
Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.
Current Industry Demand
Over time, several of the Southeast Region's industries have grown steadily. The Southeast Region had a positive compound annual growth rate of 0.6 percent over the past 5-year period from 2017 to 2022, with a 2.9 percent overall gain from 2017 to 2022. Nine industry groups increased employment over the period. Those industries were *Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction* (709 employment increase at 26.6% compound annual growth rate); *Educational Services (Excluding Government)* (80 at 7.1%); *Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services* (588 at 4.0%); *Health Care and Social Assistance* (1,914 at 2.3%); *Manufacturing* (882 at 1.0%); *Accommodation and Food Services* (451 at 0.9%); *Finance and Insurance* (132 at 0.7%); *Other Services (except Public Administration)* (61 at 0.4%); *Real Estate and Rental and Leasing* (23 at 0.3%); *Retail Trade* (179 at 0.2%); and *Construction* (14 at 0.1%).

Southeast Region Industry Employment 2017-2022

Source: MERIC

Southeast Region Industry Growth 2017-2022
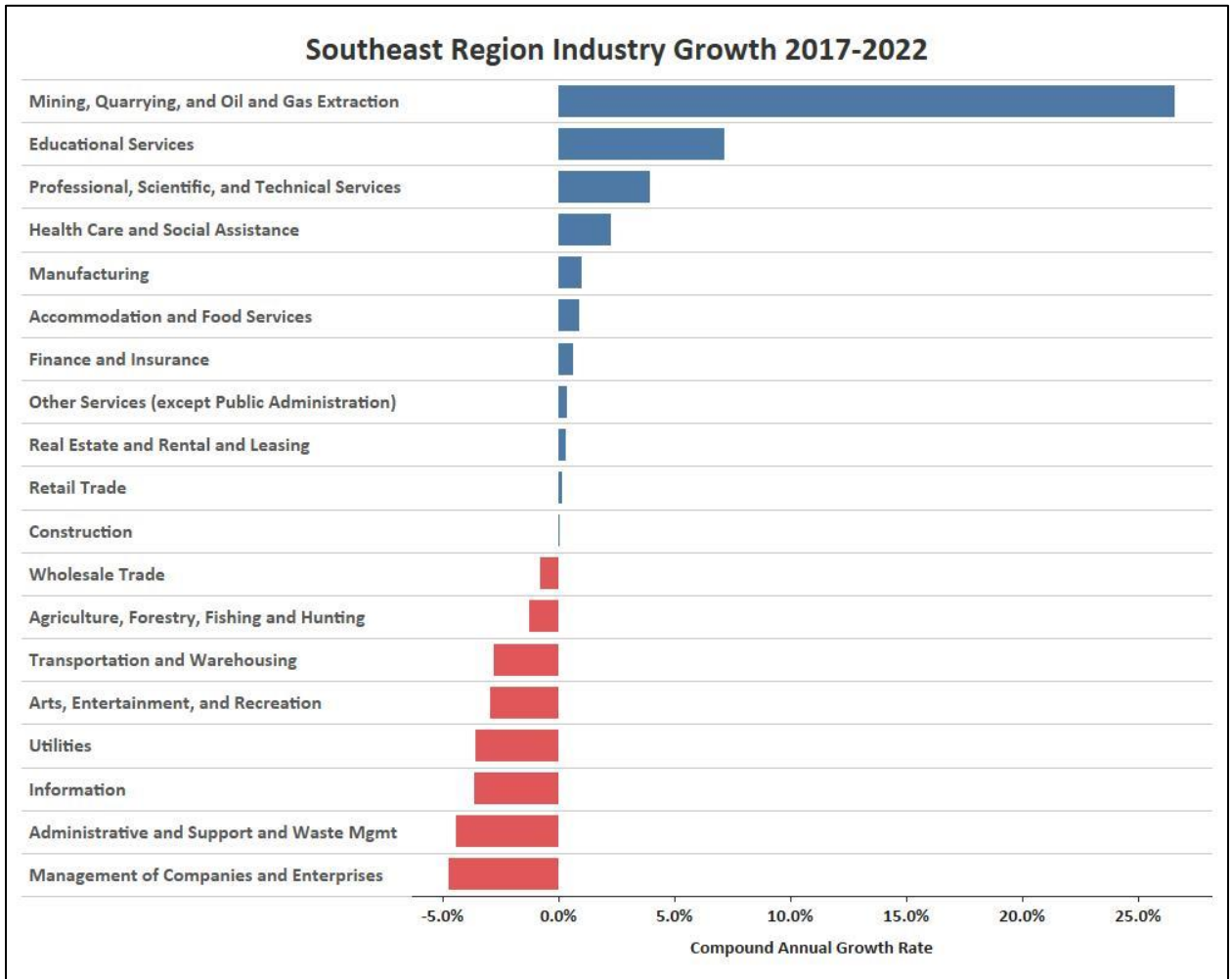
Source: MERIC

Location Quotient

Location Quotient (LQ) describes the concentration of an industry in a geographic region in relation to the nation. The national average is 1.0. Industries with an LQ higher than 1.0 indicate an above average concentration of that industry in the area.

In 2022, the Southeast Region had four industries with LQs of 2.0 or higher: *Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers* (3.1); *Crop Production* (2.8); *Social Assistance* (2.2); and *Truck Transportation* (2.0). Other industries with high LQs were *Nursing and Residential Care Facilities* (1.9) and *Support Activities for Agriculture and Forests* (1.6).

2022 Southeast Region Location Quotients

Industry	Employment	Location Quotient
Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers	2,907	3.1
Crop Production	1,412	2.8
Social Assistance	8,430	2.2
Truck Transportation	2,931	2.0
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	5,100	1.9
Support Activities for Agriculture and Forests	556	1.6
General Merchandise Retailers	4,359	1.5
Wood Product Manufacturing	570	1.5
Health and Personal Care Retailers	1,439	1.4
Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies	1,778	1.4
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	225	1.4
Goods-Producing	27,235	1.3
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	2,438	1.3
Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	490	1.3
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument	1,683	1.2

Source: *Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 2022 Annual Averages*

Current Occupational Demand

Current occupational demand can be attained through the job ads placed by employers. From November 2022 to October 2023, nearly 13,930 on-line job ads were placed for jobs located in the Southeast Region according to Lightcast.

Job ads were placed for positions at every skill and education level. Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next,** and **Later** to categorize jobs according to the typical education and experience required for success on the job. **Now** jobs typically require a high school education or less and short-term training. **Next** jobs typically require moderate to long-term training or experience or education beyond high school. **Later** jobs typically require a bachelor's degree or higher education.

Now occupations with the highest number of job postings included *Retail Salespersons; Home Health and Personal Care Aides; Fast Food and Counter Workers; Customer Service Representatives;* and *Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand.* Occupations with the most job postings in the **Next** category were *Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers; Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; Food Service Managers;* and *Nursing Assistants.* **Later** occupations with the highest number of job postings were *Registered Nurses; Occupational Therapists; Medical and Health Services Managers; Physical Therapists;* and *Speech-Language Pathologists.*

Many of the occupations with the most job postings also appeared on the list of jobs with the highest number of projected openings through 2030. The occupations with high numbers of job postings and high numbers of projected annual openings are identified with the star.

Top Job Ads - Southeast Region		
SOC Code	**Occupation Title**	**Online Job Postings**
NOW - Typically requires high school education or less and short-term training		
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	530 ★
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	500 ★
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	290 ★
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	220 ★
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	200 ★
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	190 ★
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	140 ★
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	130
41-2011	Cashiers	120 ★
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	110 ★
NEXT - Typically requires moderate/long-term training or experience or education beyond high school		
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	510 ★
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	430 ★
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	390 ★
11-9051	Food Service Managers	320
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	280 ★
27-1026	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	250
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	200 ★
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	170 ★
51-9199	Production Workers, All Other	140
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	120
LATER - Typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher		
29-1141	Registered Nurses	960 ★
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	180
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	180 ★
29-1123	Physical Therapists	160
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	150
29-1229	Physicians, All Other	140
25-1000	Postsecondary Teachers	110
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	110 ★
11-9199	Managers, All Other	90
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	80

Source: *Lightcast, job ads between Nov. 1, 2022 - Oct. 31, 2023*

★ *= Top Job Openings in Now, Next and Later categories, 2020-2030 Occupational Projections for Southeast Region, MERIC*

Missouri Workforce 2023 Survey

From February 20, 2023, to April 17, 2023, over 2,800 Missouri companies with five or more employees were surveyed to gauge the state of the workforce from the employer's perspective. A total of 1,705 employers started the survey but did not respond to all questions, and 1,183 employers completed every question in the survey. Seventy-three percent employers responded over the phone and 27 percent completed the online version of the survey. Companies were asked 26 questions, some with multiple parts, about hiring trends, skill needs and shortages, workforce initiatives, recruitment strategies, and education and experience requirements.

Companies interviewed were randomly selected from a categorized list of Missouri businesses from the Data Axle employer database. The sample was selected to be representative of Missouri's industry sectors and workforce regions. Regional quotas were based on the region's share of employment relative to the state. Over half (51%) of employers surveyed had 11-49 employees. The industries selected for the survey were chosen to represent a composite picture of the state's industry mix with a statistically significant sample surveyed from each of the industry sector matching the approximate ratio of these industries across the state.

To gauge employment trends, employers were asked about their staffing levels and future hiring plans. When asked about employment changes over the last 12 months, half (50%) said that *employment levels (total employment) remained the same as before* (47% in 2021, 57% in 2020, and 48% in 2019). In 2019, more employers reported increasing employment levels rather than decreasing (21% reporting a significant or slight decrease compared to 32% reporting a significant or slight increase). This flipped in 2020 and 2021, mostly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, about 28 percent of surveyed employers reported *increased* employment levels, either slightly or significantly, while 22 percent reported *significant or slight decrease* in employment levels.

For the third year in a row, *hiring new full-time employees* remained the top method of expanding employment, with 75 percent of employers stating they would *hire new full-time employees.* Fifty-nine percent of employers reported they would *hire part-time employees.*

Employers were asked about the barriers they encountered in expanding employment. *Lack of applicants overall* was a new option for employers in the 2023 survey, and 66 percent of surveyed employers selected this option, making it the top barrier to expansion of employment. The next highest barriers were *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* and *economic conditions*, which have been the top cited barriers since the survey began in 2019. *Shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* increased significantly from previous years, from 47 percent in 2019 and 2020, to 60 percent in 2021, and 65 percent in 2023. *Economic conditions* as a barrier to employment decreased from 37 percent in 2021 to 30 percent in 2023. Similarly, fewer employers encountered *government policies or regulations* as a barrier to expanding employment, dropping from 30 percent in 2021 to 13 percent in 2023.

Other significant barriers encountered in 2023 included *lack of childcare* and *transportation access,* with 21 percent of respondents reporting these as barriers to expanding employment.

The survey also asked employers to rate the importance of each barrier on a scale of one to five, with one being insignificant and five being critical. The highest weighted average response for any barrier cited this year was *lack of applicants overall,* getting an importance score of 4.05 out of 5. The next highest weighted response was *government policies or regulations* (3.88), followed by *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* (3.85). Although the share of employers choosing *government policies or regulations* as a barrier to employment expansion has decreased, for those that did encounter it, it was still a critical barrier. *Shortage of available training programs* dropped in importance from 3.98 in 2019 to 3.15 in 2023.

Companies employ workers in a variety of functional areas with different work responsibilities. *Patient Care* and *Skilled Trades* functional areas had the largest percentage of employers reporting shortages of skilled applicants at 65 percent each. Skill shortages in *Customer Service* have increased substantially, increasing from 25 percent in 2019 and 31 percent in 2020, to 47 percent in 2021, decreasing slightly to 45 percent in 2023.

To address the problem of skill shortages in the current workers, employers use several remedial measures, and *on-the-job-training* remains the most preferred method. Over 9 in 10 employers

(91%) stated they used *on-the-job training* to assist current workers in addressing the need for new or increased skills. However, there is a significant decrease in applying these remedial measures in 2023 when compared to 2021, most significantly in *providing a flexible schedule to pursue outside continuing education* (67% in 2021 vs. 46% in 2023) and *in-house classroom training* (60% in 2021 vs. 41% in 2023).

Relatedly, employers were also asked if there was any change over the last two years in flexibility for hiring applicants with less than the advertised preferred level of qualifications in education, experience, and skill level. Most employers said they stayed about the same in flexibility for hiring applicants. The majority that changed became more flexible in their consideration of applicants. Twenty-three percent of employers were more flexible with education requirements, 31 percent were more flexible with experience level requirements, and 29 percent were more flexible on skill level requirements.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increased interest in understanding remote work. Prior to pandemic, (February 2020) about 15 percent employers were having some workers working remotely. Remote work peaked in 2020 during the height of the pandemic, with over half of employers (56%) stating they had some workers working remotely, either full or part-time. This dropped significantly to 20 percent in 2021 and has increased slightly to 25 percent in 2023. When asked if they expected the number of remote workers to change over time, the vast majority (92%) of employers said they expected it to stay the same. In the question about workforce initiatives considered in the coming year, 13 percent of employers indicated considering *remote work*.

Employers evaluated various business concerns for the future on a scale of one to five, with one being not concerned and five being very concerned. Employers were most concerned about *attracting or retaining talent,* with a weighted average of 3.7. Several concerns decreased in importance from 2021, including *lack of information for decision making* (2.92 in 2021 vs. 2.38 in 2023) and *supply chain disruptions* (3.61 in 2021 vs. 3.1 in 2023). *Cost of health insurance* was among the major concerns reported in the 2023 survey.

Although employers are optimistic about expanding employment, with 44 percent planning to *increase employment levels* over the next 12 months, they continue to struggle to find skilled applicants. Sixty-two percent of employers had positions that took over 30 days to fill. A *lack of overall applicants* and *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* were the top barriers to expanding employment, with the *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* at the highest reported level it has been since the first survey in 2019. The most important business concern for employers was *attracting and retaining talent.* To try and retain existing workers, employers have *increased wages* (86%), *offered a flexible work schedule* (64%), or *offered additional training* (52%). Responses to this survey reinforce the widely-held experience of a tight labor market and difficulty finding workers.

b. **Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**
Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.
The long-term industry projections help determine the industries that are expected to add positions within their organizations over time. The latest round of projections is through the ten-year period ending in 2030.

The projections reveal several industries with both high employment numbers and above average growth rates compared to the regional average. The top five industries by numeric employment change were *Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Crop Production*; *Ambulatory Health Care Services; Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods;* and *Couriers and Messengers.*

Southeast Region Industry Projections 2020-2030					
		Employment		2020-2030 Change	
NAICS	Industry	2020	2030	Numeric	Percent
10	**Total All Industries**	**149,722**	**153,836**	**4,114**	**2.8%**
541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	3,163	3,700	537	17.0%
111	Crop Production	3,978	4,351	373	9.4%
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	7,065	7,376	311	4.4%
423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	3,035	3,264	229	7.6%
492	Couriers and Messengers	549	765	216	39.3%
713	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	876	1,054	178	20.3%
531	Real Estate	939	1,076	137	14.6%
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	6,022	6,144	122	2.0%
484	Truck Transportation	2,928	3,037	109	3.7%
811	Repair and Maintenance	1,128	1,220	92	8.2%
812	Personal and Laundry Services	800	885	85	10.6%
447	Gasoline Stations	2,480	2,550	70	2.8%
453	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	759	827	68	9.0%
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	1,093	1,156	63	5.8%
561	Administrative and Support Services	3,040	3,103	63	2.1%

Source: *MERIC 2020-2030 Long Term Projections*

Occupational Projections

Job openings occur due to three reasons – **exits**, **transfers**, and **growth**. **Exits** occur as people leave the workforce for reasons such as retirement. **Transfers** occur when workers leave one occupation for a different occupation. Occupational **growth** occurs as businesses grow and need more workers to serve their customers.

Emerging occupations can be identified through growth openings. The chart below identifies occupations that have the highest number of growth openings and higher than the average growth rate of 2.5 percent for the Southeast Region. The total number of openings indicates the projected number of vacancies that businesses will need to fill annually.

Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next** and **Later** to categorize occupations according to these levels. **Now** jobs typically require a high school education or less and short-term training. **Next** occupations typically require moderate to long-term training or experience or education beyond high school. **Later** occupations typically require a bachelor's degree or higher.

Growth openings are projected at all education and training levels and are listed by the highest number of growth openings. The highest number of growth openings in **Now** occupations were *Home Health and Personal Care Aides; Fast Food and Counter Workers; Waiters and Waitresses; Bartenders;* and *Stockers and Order Fillers.* The largest growth in **Next** occupations was in the occupations of *Cooks, Restaurant; Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing; Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Insurance Sales Agents;* and *Industrial Machinery Mechanics.* **Later** occupations with the highest growth were *General and Operations Managers; Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists; Accountants and Auditors; Medical and Health Services Managers;* and *Nurse Practitioners.* These occupations are consistent with the industries identified as emerging industries.

Southeast Region Highest Growth Openings 2020-2030						
Occupation	**Average Wage**	**Percent Growth**	**Annual Openings**			
			Exits	**Transfers**	**Growth**	**Total**
NOW - Typically requires short-term on-the-job training or less, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma						
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	$25,659	8.4%	566	500	**72**	1,138
Fast Food and Counter Workers	$22,667	9.4%	315	343	**29**	687
Waiters and Waitresses	$22,472	14.0%	132	214	**24**	370
Bartenders	$25,640	25.1%	34	92	**17**	143
Stockers and Order Fillers	$26,297	6.5%	146	250	**16**	412
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	$32,722	12.7%	49	81	**14**	144
Driver/Sales Workers	$26,691	15.9%	35	59	**13**	107
Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	$27,703	11.1%	80	60	**13**	153
Construction Laborers	$39,167	7.2%	37	85	**9**	131
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	$34,550	10.1%	24	62	**8**	94
NEXT - Typically requires non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training						
Cooks, Restaurant	$23,124	43.0%	93	135	**56**	284
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	$30,095	28.7%	24	58	**20**	102
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	$51,987	5.5%	132	218	**17**	367
Insurance Sales Agents	$69,727	21.6%	22	36	**13**	71
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	$48,456	22.2%	17	29	**11**	57
Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tender	$36,597	23.2%	9	23	**7**	39
Physical Therapist Assistants	$51,731	27.0%	11	19	**6**	36
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	$26,629	7.2%	47	49	**6**	102
Pharmacy Technicians	$31,258	6.7%	20	31	**5**	56
Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	$40,602	16.4%	11	18	**5**	34
LATER - Typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher						
General and Operations Managers	$78,342	5.9%	54	169	**16**	239
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	$50,246	21.2%	14	42	**11**	67
Accountants and Auditors	$52,832	7.5%	38	82	**10**	130
Medical and Health Services Managers	$112,232	20.2%	9	18	**7**	34
Nurse Practitioners	$100,553	36.5%	5	7	**7**	19
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Test	$84,739	21.4%	5	10	**4**	19
Financial Managers	$114,984	14.0%	4	11	**3**	18
Physical Therapists	$87,400	10.4%	5	6	**3**	14
Speech-Language Pathologists	$71,756	18.3%	4	6	**3**	13
Construction Managers	$84,357	8.6%	4	10	**2**	16

Source: *MERIC 2020-2030 Long-Term Occupational Projections*

c. **Employers' Employment Needs**

Identify the job skills necessary to obtain current and projected employment opportunities. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations, provide an analysis of the employment needs of employers. Describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Real-Time Labor Market Data

Job ads placed by employers offer another source of information on the knowledge, skills, and certifications requested by Missouri's employers. Lightcast tm is a data tool that spiders to over several thousand different web sites with job ads. The information found in the ads are placed in a database that can be queried to gain insight on employer needs.

The following table lists the specialized skills, certifications, and software and programming abilities requested most frequently by employers in job ads.

Generally, in the software and programming category, Microsoft Office and its products such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access rank at the top of the list across all industries therefore, in this list, these Microsoft products have not been included as those tend to crowd the list by appearing at the top across all the industries. Industry-specific programs identified in the job ads are listed in the table.

Employer Skill Needs - Southeast Region			
Industry	Specialized Skills	Qualifications	Software and Programming
Manufacturing	Forklift Truck	Valid Driver's License	SAP Applications
	Warehousing	Commercial Driver's License	PeopleSoft Applications
	Housekeeping	Forklift Certification	Warehouse Management Systems
	Merchandising	Hazmat Endorsement	AutoCAD
	Machinery	Tanker Endorsement	Spreadsheets
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Merchandising	Valid Driver's License	Inventory Management System
	Marketing	Registered Nurse (RN)	Programming Tools
	Auditing	Nurse Practitioner (APRN-CNP)	Web Browsers
	Housekeeping	Enrolled Agent (EA)	ArcGIS (GIS Software)
	Warehousing	Master Of Business Administration (MBA)	Dashboard
Construction	Construction	Valid Driver's License	Squeegee app
	Welding	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Database Software
	Hand Tools	10-Hour OSHA General Industry Card	On-Screen Takeoff (Estimating Software)
	Transformers (Electrical)	Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) Card	Sage 300 Construction And Real Estate
	General Mathematics	Forklift Certification	Spreadsheets
Accommodation & Food Service	Restaurant Operation	Valid Driver's License	SAP Applications
	Restaurant Management	ServSafe Certification	Payroll Systems
	General Mathematics	Food Safety Certification	Spreadsheets
	Food Services	Food Handler's Card	Translation Memory EXchange (XML Spec)
	Food Safety And Sanitation	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Inventory Control Systems
Wholesale Trade	Forklift Truck	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Inventory Management System
	Merchandising	Valid Driver's License	SQL (Programming Language)
	Selling Techniques	Registered Nurse (RN)	Python (Programming Language)
	Pallet Jacks	Pesticide Applicator License	Microsoft Azure
	Cash Register	Forklift Certification	SAP Applications
Management of Companies & Enterprises	Hoppers	Valid Driver's License	Business Software
	Fertilizers		
	Welding		
	Overhead Crane Operation		
	Flux-Cored Arc Welding		
Retail Trade	Merchandising	Valid Driver's License	Inventory Management System
	Cash Register	Registered Pharmacist (RPh)	Web Browsers
	Cash Handling	Certified Pharmacy Technician	R (Programming Language)
	Stocking Merchandise	Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification	Markdown
	Inventory Management	Immunization Certification	SAS (Software)
Information	Marketing	Valid Driver's License	Electronic News Production Systems
	Selling Techniques	Commercial Driver's License	UltiPro (HRIS Software)
	Machinery	OSHA Certification	Order Management Systems
	Journalism	Chauffeur License	Salesforce
	Social Media	Cisco Certified Network Associate	Spreadsheets

Source: *Lightcast, job ads between Nov. 1, 2022 - Oct. 31, 2023*

8. Workforce Analysis

Describe the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA[1]. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups[2] in the economic region and across the LWDA.

a. Employment and Unemployment Analysis

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data and trends in the LWDA.

Population Data

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that Missouri's population grew to over 6.15 million in 2022, up by 0.2 percent from the previous year. In the Southeast Region over the past year, the population in three of the 13 counties grew at a faster rate than the state. The highest population increase was in Cape Girardeau County, adding 617 residents from 2021 to 2022, and adding 3,690 residents from 2017 to 2022. During the same five-year period, the population of Dunklin County decreased by 2,731 residents.

Southeast Region Population Change by County				
	1 Year Change 2021-2022		5 Year Change 2017-2022	
NAME	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Missouri	**12,888**	**0.2%**	**79,122**	**1.3%**
Bollinger	(100)	-0.9%	(1,689)	-13.7%
Cape Girardeau	617	0.8%	3,690	4.7%
Dunklin	(418)	-1.5%	(2,731)	-8.8%
Iron	(68)	-0.7%	(748)	-7.3%
Madison	52	0.4%	423	3.5%
Mississippi	(671)	-5.2%	(1,611)	-11.6%
New Madrid	(317)	-1.9%	(1,689)	-9.4%
Pemiscot	(394)	-2.5%	(1,789)	-10.3%
Perry	(37)	-0.2%	(165)	-0.9%
Scott	(106)	-0.3%	(803)	-2.1%
St. Francois	(354)	-0.5%	566	0.9%
Ste. Genevieve	88	0.5%	612	3.4%
Stoddard	(156)	-0.5%	(978)	-3.3%

Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Population Annual Estimates*

Demographics

In all counties but Ste. Genevieve (14.4%), the percentage of the population in the age group 25-34 was below the state average of 13.2 percent in 2022. In the population group of 55 and over, eleven of the 13 counties had percentages over the state average of 30.6 percent.

The male/female gender split was close to the state average in all counties. In four of the 13 counties in the Southeast Region the percentage of male population was more than the percent female population. Pemiscot County had the lowest male percentage in the population in the region (47.0%) and St. Francois County had the lowest percent of female population in the region (46.9%).

Race/Ethnicity statistics were different from the Missouri averages in most of the counties in the region.
Three counties in the region had a higher percentage of citizens in the minority race classes than the state average.

County	Population						Gender		Race/Ethnicity								
	Total	Under 20	20 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 54	55+	Female	Male	White	Black or African American	Asian	American Indian and Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some other race	One Race	Two or more races	Hispanic or Latino
Missouri	6,154,422	25.0%	6.7%	13.2%	24.4%	30.6%	50.6%	49.4%	79.4%	11.3%	2.1%	0.3%	0.1%	1.5%	94.6%	5.4%	4.6%
Bollinger	10,658	23.4%	5.1%	10.3%	24.4%	36.8%	50.3%	49.7%	94.9%	0.6%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.7%	96.3%	3.7%	1.7%
Cape Girardeau	81,703	25.1%	10.3%	12.6%	22.7%	29.3%	51.1%	48.9%	86.0%	7.6%	1.6%	0.1%	0.1%	0.6%	96.0%	4.0%	2.6%
Dunklin	28,174	27.7%	6.1%	11.1%	23.1%	31.9%	52.1%	47.9%	80.2%	7.9%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.9%	89.3%	10.7%	7.2%
Iron	9,538	23.1%	4.9%	10.4%	24.1%	37.6%	50.1%	49.9%	92.5%	0.7%	0.9%	0.2%	0.1%	0.4%	94.8%	5.2%	2.0%
Madison	12,649	25.6%	5.9%	11.4%	23.9%	33.2%	49.8%	50.2%	95.4%	1.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.4%	97.4%	2.6%	2.6%
Mississippi	12,305	24.0%	5.6%	11.9%	27.0%	31.5%	47.0%	53.0%	71.5%	24.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	95.7%	4.3%	1.1%
New Madrid	16,341	25.6%	5.9%	10.9%	23.9%	33.7%	52.2%	47.8%	77.3%	12.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	89.7%	10.3%	2.1%
Pemiscot	15,555	28.2%	5.7%	11.8%	23.3%	31.0%	53.0%	47.0%	66.9%	26.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.8%	94.0%	6.0%	3.1%
Perry	18,970	25.2%	5.7%	11.3%	24.8%	33.0%	50.4%	49.6%	95.2%	0.7%	0.7%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	97.1%	2.9%	2.4%
Scott	38,055	26.1%	6.2%	12.9%	23.3%	31.6%	51.3%	48.7%	83.4%	11.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	95.1%	4.9%	2.6%
St. Francois	66,814	23.2%	6.3%	14.4%	26.2%	29.9%	46.9%	53.1%	91.4%	3.0%	0.5%	0.4%	0.0%	0.8%	96.1%	3.9%	2.0%
Ste. Genevieve	18,494	23.6%	5.0%	10.9%	23.3%	37.2%	48.4%	51.6%	94.5%	1.5%	0.5%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	97.0%	3.0%	1.3%
Stoddard	28,656	23.9%	5.9%	12.1%	24.3%	33.9%	51.1%	48.9%	94.7%	1.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.4%	96.7%	3.3%	1.9%

Source: *American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)*

Employment and Unemployment

The number of Southeast Region residents in the labor force has remained relatively steady over the past five years from 2018 to 2022, at close to 160,000. The unemployment rate for the region jumped to 6.0 percent in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, 2021 and 2022 data show continuation of recovery with the unemployment rate decreasing to 4.1 percent and 2.8 percent respectively.
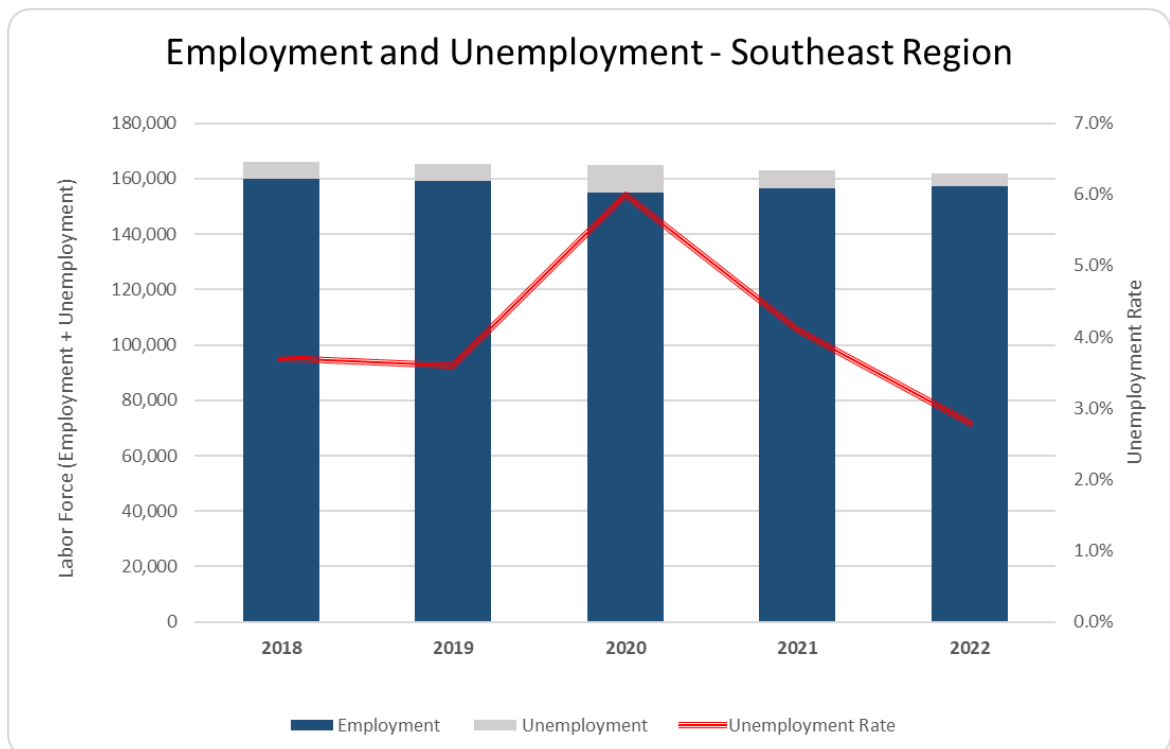
Source: MERIC

Labor Force Participation

The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The labor force participation rate is the labor force as a percent of the civilian population 16 years and older. Using American Community Survey, 5-year data through 2022, Missouri's labor force participation rate was 62.5 percent. In comparison, the rate for the Southeast Region was 57.0 percent. The county with the highest labor force participation rate in the region was Cape Girardeau County (64.6%) and the lowest was Mississippi County (45.6%).

Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate by County			
Region	**Population 16 years and over**	**Civilian Population 16 years and over (In labor force)**	**Labor Force Participation Rate (Civilian)**
Missouri	**4,940,395**	**3,087,517**	**62.5%**
Southeast Total	**287,094**	**163,650**	**57.0%**
Bollinger	8,677	4,903	56.5%
Cape Girardeau	66,066	42,698	64.6%
Dunklin	21,747	11,714	53.9%
Iron	7,735	4,053	52.4%
Madison	10,216	5,664	55.4%
Mississippi	10,017	4,566	45.6%
New Madrid	12,942	6,759	52.2%
Pemiscot	12,060	6,162	51.1%
Perry	15,203	9,555	62.8%
Scott	29,857	17,877	59.9%
St. Francois	54,479	28,172	51.7%
Ste. Genevieve	15,007	8,971	59.8%
Stoddard	23,088	12,556	54.4%

Source: *American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)*

b. **Labor Market Trends**
    Provide an analysis of key labor-market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.
    In-Demand Occupations

Over the long term, industry needs for certain occupations grow while for others decline. A trained and ready workforce is needed to fill employer demand and offer job seekers bright prospects of employment.

Long-term projections are produced in each state in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Since economies vary throughout the state, projections are also generated for the state and regions and provide insight on the occupations that are growing and declining. The total number of openings account for three different types of vacancies - **exits**, **transfers**, and **growth**. **Exits** occur as individuals leave the workforce for reasons such as retirement. **Transfers** occur as a person leaves an occupation to work in a different occupation. **Growth** simply means that more people are

needed to work in the occupation. No matter the reason for the vacancy, skilled workers are needed to fill the job openings.

Missouri adds value to the standard projections template by including the ACT Workkeys Assessment Levels typically required for success in each of the 800+ occupations. Since most of Missouri's counties participate in the Certified Work Ready Communities program, the levels help those researching careers find good options based on their personal assessment.

Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next,** and **Later** to categorize the occupations according to the training and education typically required for success on the job. **Now** occupations typically require a high school education or less along with short-term training. **Next** occupations typically require moderate to long-term training or experience and/or education beyond high school. **Later** occupations typically require a bachelor's degree or higher.

While long-term projections offer a solid understanding of longer-term employer needs, job ads placed by employers help in recognizing the current needs of employers. When projections predict a high number of future openings and job ads show current demand for the same occupation, the occupation may be a good career possibility.

The table below displays the top five jobs by the number of projected openings for the 10-year projection period through 2030 in the **Now**, **Next,** and **Later** categories for the region. The flame beside some of the occupations represents "hot jobs" determined by the number of job ads placed by employers.

Top occupations by the total number of annual openings in the **Now** category were *Home Health and Personal Care Aides* (1,138); *Cashiers* (714); *Fast Food and Counter Workers* (687); *Retail Salespersons* (547); and *Stockers and Order Fillers* (412). The reason for a high number of openings was turnover and transfers within these occupations.

Occupations with the highest number of annual openings in the **Next** category were *Nursing Assistants* (418); *Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers* (367); *Cooks, Restaurants* (284); *Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive* (258); and *Maintenance and Repair Workers, General* (153). Three of the top five occupations by the number of projected openings also saw a high number of job ads.

Later occupations with the highest number of annual openings were *General and Operations Managers* (239); *Registered Nurses* (175); *Accountants and Auditors* (130); *Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education* (110); and *Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists* (67). Two of the jobs listed in this category were also in high demand in the region according to the job ads.

Many high demand occupations correspond directly with the high growth industry groups, such as *Health Care* and *Retail Trade.* Other high demand occupations cross many industry groups, like *Cashiers, Bookkeeping and Accounting Clerks, General and Operations Managers,* and *Accountants and Auditors*.

Southeast Region Occupational Projections 2020-2030							
	2020	2030	Annual Openings				Average
Occupation	Employment	Employment	Exits	Transfers	Growth	Total	Wage
NOW - Typically requires short-term on-the-job training or less, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma							
Home Health and Personal Care Aides 🔥	8,476	9,191	566	500	72	**1,138**	$25,659
Cashiers 🔥	4,201	3,961	347	391	-24	**714**	$22,848
Fast Food and Counter Workers 🔥	3,101	3,392	315	343	29	**687**	$22,667
Retail Salespersons 🔥	3,923	3,944	220	325	2	**547**	$27,324
Stockers and Order Fillers	2,484	2,646	146	250	16	**412**	$26,297
NEXT - Typically requires non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training							
Nursing Assistants 🔥	3,514	3,475	224	198	-4	**418**	$28,403
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers 🔥	3,132	3,305	132	218	17	**367**	$51,987
Cooks, Restaurant	1,299	1,858	93	135	56	**284**	$23,124
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	2,911	2,567	139	153	-34	**258**	$32,163
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General 🔥	1,561	1,611	56	92	5	**153**	$37,838
LATER - Typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher							
General and Operations Managers 🔥	2,648	2,804	54	169	16	**239**	$78,342
Registered Nurses 🔥	3,486	3,441	92	87	-4	**175**	$60,719
Accountants and Auditors	1,326	1,426	38	82	10	**130**	$52,832
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	1,623	1,633	43	66	1	**110**	$44,822
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	523	634	14	42	11	**67**	$50,246

🔥Flame icon indicates occupations with high numbers of job ads between Nov. 1, 2022 - Oct. 31, 2023

Sources: *MERIC Long-Term Occupational Projections 2020-2030 and Lightcast, online job ads*

c. **Education and Skills Levels of the Workforce Analysis**
   Provide an analysis of the educational and skills levels of the workforce.
   Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is a measure of the highest level of education obtained by individuals aged 25 and up, or the population generally in the workforce. Ninety-two percent of Missouri's population age 25 and over was a high school graduate or higher in 2022. About 19 percent held a bachelor's degree and 12 percent held a graduate or professional degree.

In the Southeast Region, the educational attainment rates for individuals were higher than the state average for the categories of less than high school and high school equivalent. However, the percentage of people in the Southeast Region with some college but no degree, bachelor's degrees, and graduate or professional degrees were slightly below the state averages.

Educational Attainment - Southeast Region
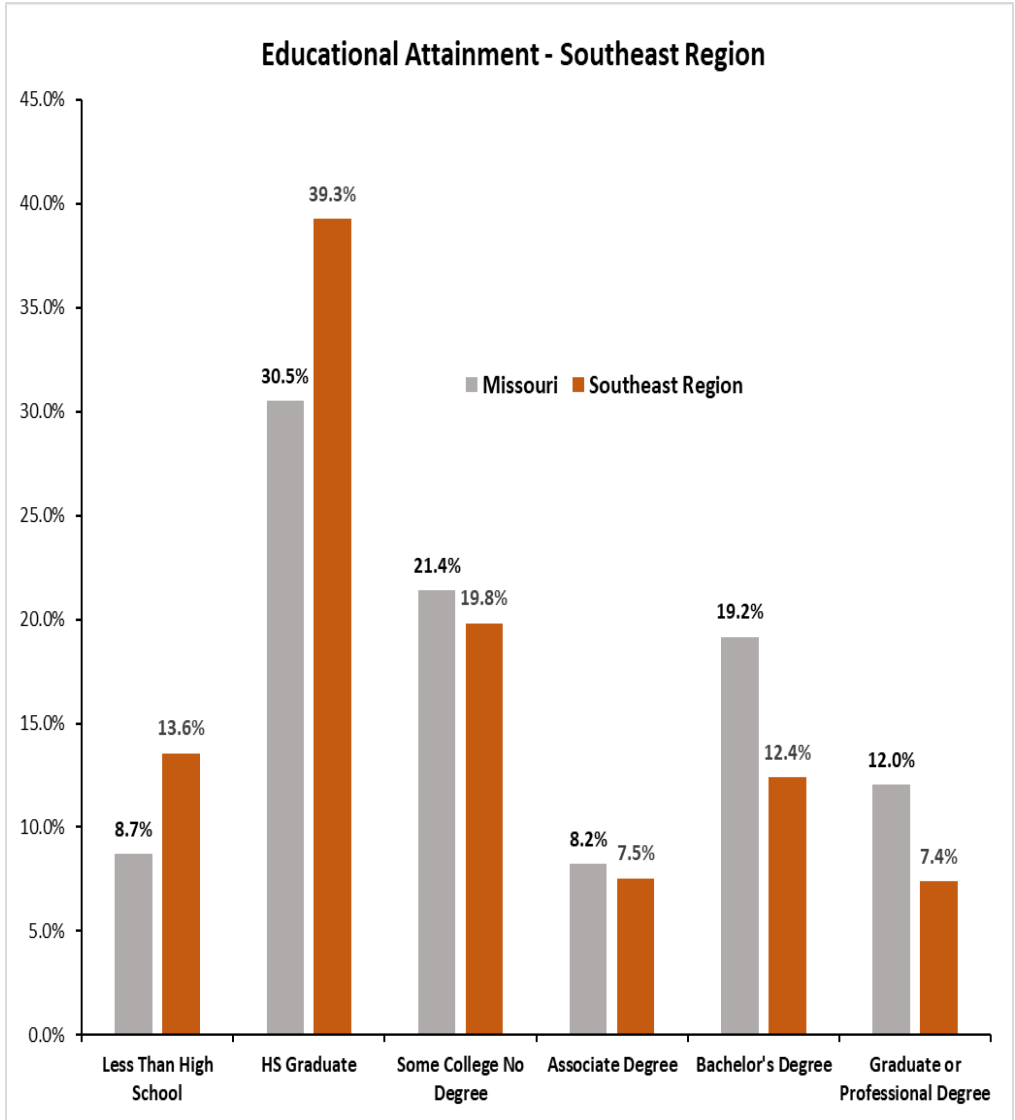
Source: *American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)*

Occupational Projections

Long-term projections are used to identify the fastest growing occupations, as well as occupations with a high number of openings through 2030.

The growth rate of an occupation measures the percentage of jobs added by an occupation between the base year and projected year. Occupations requiring a graduate degree are projected to grow at a faster rate in the Southeast Region. The occupation groups that are projected to grow the fastest are *Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations; Sales and Related Occupations; Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations;* and *Healthcare Support Occupations*.

Long-term projections also present data on expected job openings for each occupation through 2030. Openings in an occupation can occur due to an occupation growing, workers moving into a different occupation, or workers leaving the workforce entirely. No matter the reason, qualified individuals are still needed to fill job vacancies. Most openings will be in entry-level jobs, mostly due to high turnover rates as workers either transfer to other occupations or leave the workforce.

Southeast WDA 2020-2030 Projected Growth Rate

High School or Less: 3.0%
Associate/Post HS: 1.2%
Bachelor's Degree: 3.7%
Graduate Degree: 4.1%

Avg 2.9%

Source: *MERIC Long-Term Occupational Projections 2020-2030*

Southeast WDA Annual Openings 2020-2030

High School or Less: 11,139
Associate/Post HS: 1,731
Bachelor's Degree: 1,674
Graduate Degree: 273

■ Exits
■ Transfers
■ Growth

Source: *MERIC Long-Term Occupational Projections 2020-2030*

d. **Skills Gaps**
    Describe apparent "skills gaps" in the local area. How are the "skills gaps" determined?
    Missouri Workforce 2023 Survey (source)

    The Missouri Employer Survey has been conducted four times since 2019. Some questions have remained consistent each year, and others have changed to reflect current issues impacting the state's employers. Methodologies were held as consistent as possible from year-to- year. Comparisons to previous years are made throughout the report where applicable, but each survey indicates a snapshot in time. It can be used to infer changing trends in the labor market and employer sentiment but was not designed as a stringent time series analysis.
    Missouri has more than 230,000 payroll employers who provide jobs to over 2.8 million people. Understanding the current hiring trends and challenges faced by the state's employers is essential not only in providing targeted resources and services to help these employers but also in supporting the state's economic and workforce development. Keeping these objectives in view, over 2,800 Missouri companies with five or more employees were surveyed from February 20, 2023, to April 17, 2023. This helped gauge the state of the workforce from the employer's perspective, with 1,183 employers completing the survey. Throughout the report, data in the graphs may not add to 100 percent due to rounding or the ability to select more than one response.
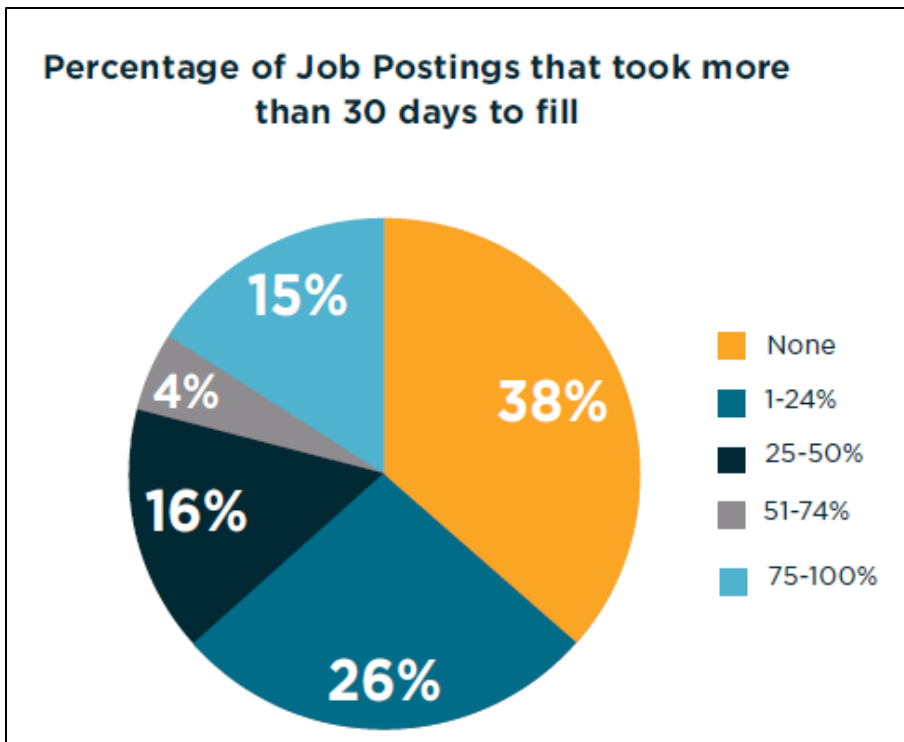   A few takeaways from this survey include:

• Employer's main concerns are hiring and retaining top talent.

• Sixty-two percent of employers had job postings that took more than 30 days to fill.

- The top barrier to expanding employment is a shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills, which has increased significantly from previous years (47% in 2019 and 2020, 60% in 2021, and 65% in 2023).

- Most employees work in person vs. working remotely.

- The top strategy used to retain existing workers is offering increased wages.

- Eighty-nine percent of surveyed employers have increased wages at an average of 11 percent in the last 12 months.

Difficulty hiring quality employees was a constant theme throughout the survey. Sixty-two percent of employers reported they had some positions that took over 30 days to fill and 38 percent reported to have their vacant positions filled in less than 30 days.

Fifteen percent reported 75-100 percent of their vacant positions took over 30 days to fill. Jobs that were the hardest to fill were in *healthcare*; particularly *nursing* occupations; *sales*; and *food service.*

Employers were asked about the barriers they encountered in expanding employment. *Lack of applicants overall* was a new option for employers in the 2023 survey, and 66 percent of surveyed employers selected this option, making it the top barrier to expansion of employment. The next highest barriers were *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* and *economic conditions*, which have been the top cited barriers since the survey began in 2019. *Shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* increased significantly from previous years, from 47 percent in 2019 and 2020, to 60 percent in 2021, and 65 percent in 2023. *Economic conditions* as a barrier to employment decreased from 37 percent in 2021 to 30 percent in 2023. Similarly, fewer employers encountered *government policies or regulations* as a barrier to expanding employment, dropping from 30 percent in 2021 to 13 percent in 2023.

Other significant barriers encountered in 2023 included *lack of childcare* and *transportation access,* with 21 percent of respondents reporting these as barriers to expanding employment.

The survey also asked employers to rate the importance of each barrier on a scale of one to five, with one being insignificant and five being critical. The highest weighted average response for any barrier cited this year was *lack of applicants overall,* getting an importance score of 4.05 out of 5. The next highest weighted response was *government policies or regulations* (3.88), followed by *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* (3.85). Although the share of employers choosing *government policies or regulations* as a barrier to employment expansion has decreased, for those that did encounter it, it was still a critical barrier. *Shortage of available training programs* dropped in importance from 3.98 in 2019 to 3.15 in 2023.

Barriers to Expanding Employment

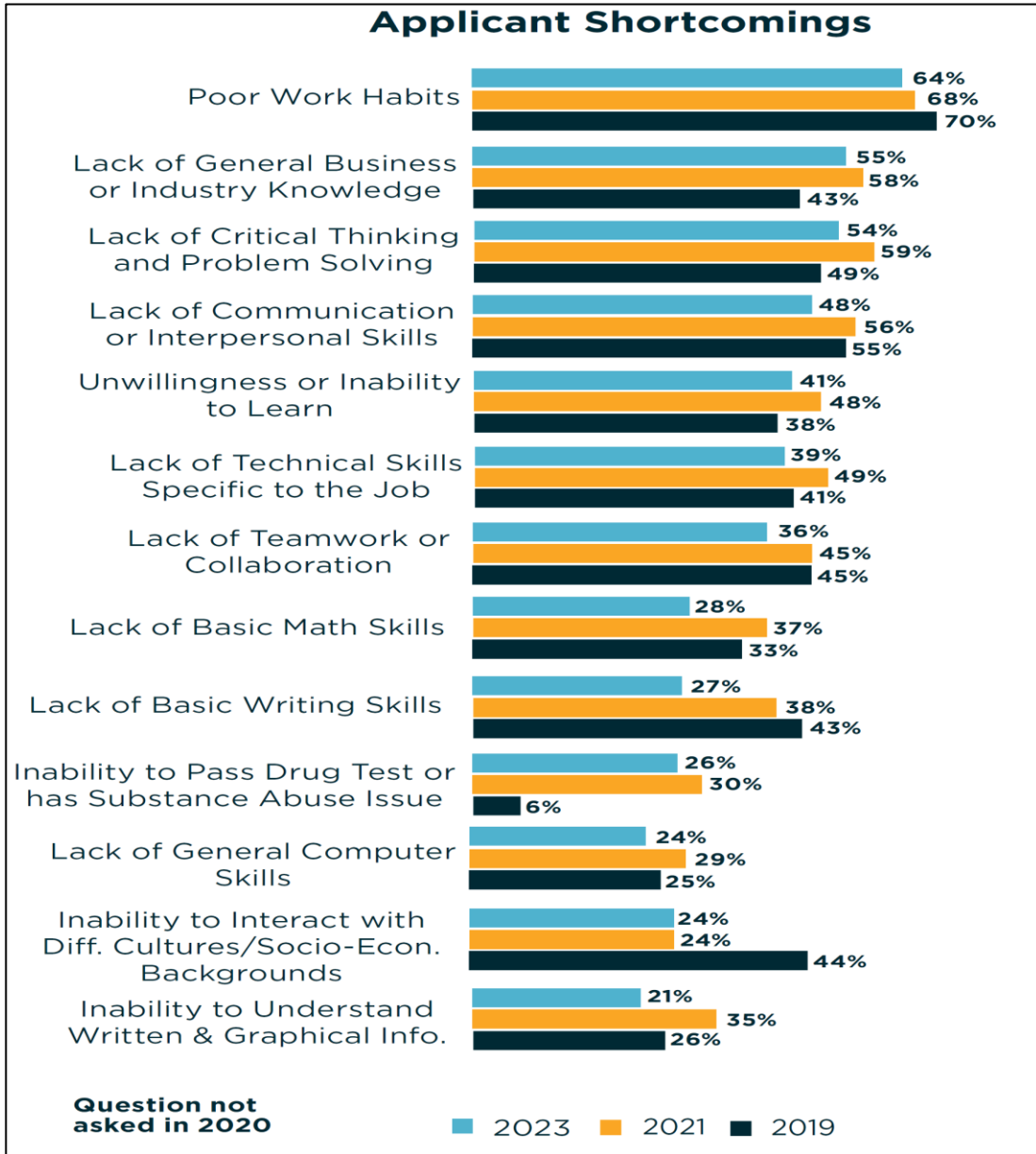| Barrier	2023	2021	2020	2019
Lack of applicants overall*	66%			
Shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills	65%	60%	47%	47%
Economic conditions	30%	37%	22%	33%
Lack of access to childcare for your candidates	21%	22%	17%	16%
Lack of access to transportation access	21%	19%	16%	17%
Supply chain disruptions*	16%			
Government policies or regulations	13%	30%	13%	23%
Shortage of available training programs	8%	13%	12%	14%
Lack of information regarding the occupation	9%	13%	9%	9%

*new for 2023

Sixty-one percent of employers stated they were experiencing a *shortage of skilled applicants.* This is slightly lower than the 68 percent reported in 2021 and much higher than the 28 percent cited in 2019.

Are you Experiencing a Shortage of Skilled Applicants

	2023	2021	2019
NO	39%	32%	72%
YES	61%	68%	28%

Employers were asked about possible shortcomings of applicants. As in previous years, *poor work habits* is the most frequently cited shortcoming at 64 percent (68% in 2021 and 70% in 2019). Other top shortcomings include *lack of general business or industry knowledge* (55% in 2023, 58% in 2021, and 43% in 2019) and *lack of critical thinking and problem solving* (54% in 2023, 59% in 2021, and 49% in 2019).

Since 2019, large changes have occurred in two less frequently mentioned shortcomings – *inability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds* and *inability to pass a drug test or having a substance abuse issue.* In 2019, 44 percent of employers cited applicant's *inability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds* as a shortcoming. This dropped to 24 percent in 2021 and 2023. *Inability to pass drug test or has substance abuse issue* increased from 6 percent in 2019 to 30 percent in 2021 and 26 percent in 2023.

Applicant Shortcomings

Shortcoming	2023	2021	2019
Poor Work Habits	64%	68%	70%
Lack of General Business or Industry Knowledge	55%	58%	43%
Lack of Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	54%	59%	49%
Lack of Communication or Interpersonal Skills	48%	56%	55%
Unwillingness or Inability to Learn	41%	48%	38%
Lack of Technical Skills Specific to the Job	39%	49%	41%
Lack of Teamwork or Collaboration	36%	45%	45%
Lack of Basic Math Skills	28%	37%	33%
Lack of Basic Writing Skills	27%	38%	43%
Inability to Pass Drug Test or has Substance Abuse Issue	26%	30%	6%
Lack of General Computer Skills	24%	29%	25%
Inability to Interact with Diff. Cultures/Socio-Econ. Backgrounds	24%	24%	44%
Inability to Understand Written & Graphical Info.	21%	35%	26%

Question not asked in 2020

Legend: 2023, 2021, 2019

Employers were also asked to rate importance of each shortcoming on a scale of one to five, with one being insignificant and five being critical. *Poor work habits* was the most cited shortcoming and also ranked as the most important, with an average importance score of 4.19 out of 5.0. *Poor work habits* was also ranked the highest shortcoming in 2019 and 2021. Other high-ranking shortcomings are *unwillingness or inability to learn* (4.04) and *inability to pass a drug test* (3.98).

Importance of Applicant Shortcomings

Sixty-one percent of employers stated they were experiencing a *shortage of skilled applicants.* This is slightly lower than the 68 percent reported in 2021 and much higher than the 28 percent cited in 2019
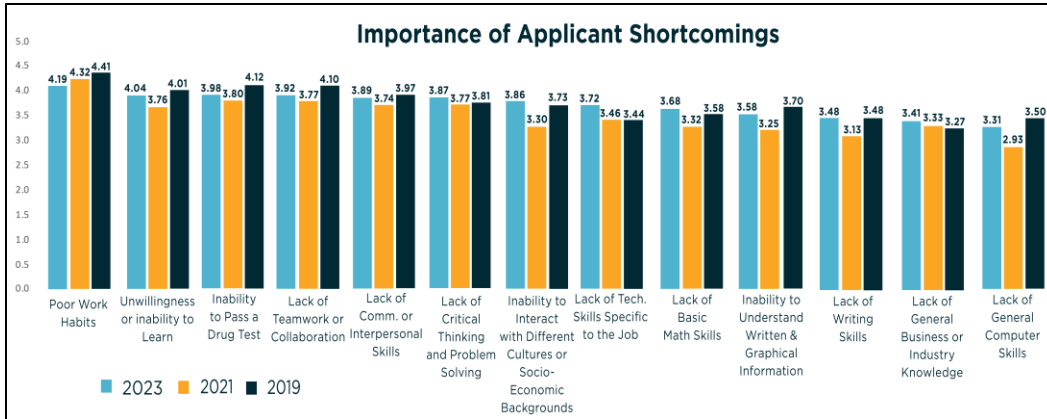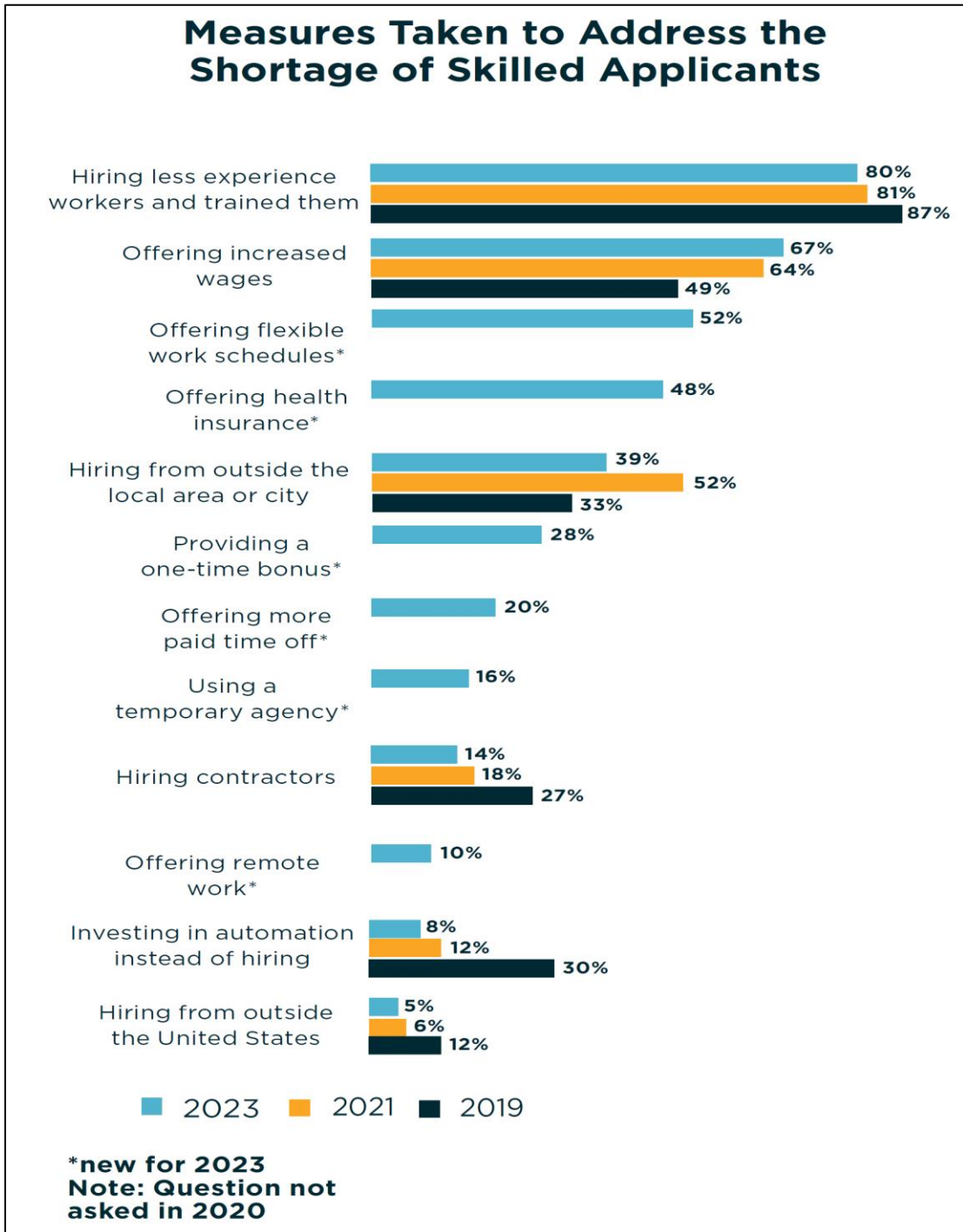

Are you Experiencing a Shortage of Skilled Applicants
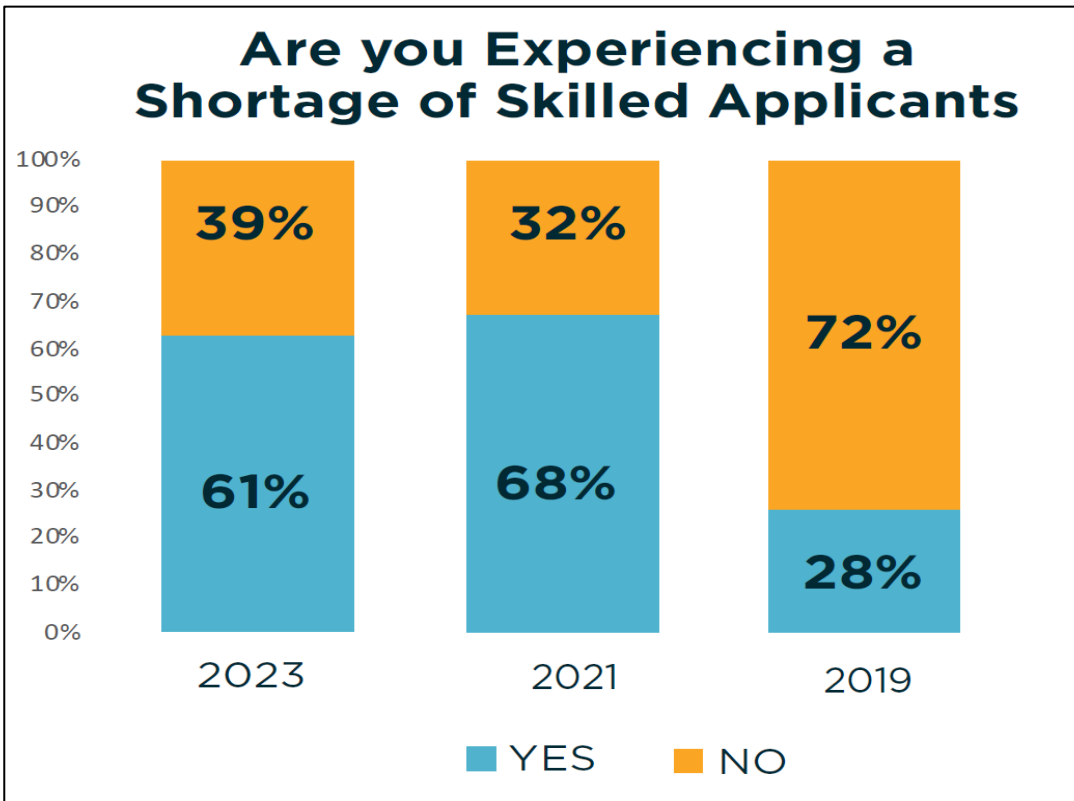
Employers take a variety of measures to address these shortages. Following the trend of previous years when this question was asked from the employers, 80 percent of the respondents reported hiring less experienced workers and train them as a measure to address skill shortages in the applicants (81% in 2021 and 87% in 2019). Other popular remedial measures were offering increased wages (67%) and offering flexible work schedules (52%). Offering increased wages rose as a remedial measure from 49 percent of respondents in 2019 to 64 percent in 2020 and 67 percent in 2023. Some less widely used measures, such as investing in automation instead of hiring, hiring from outside the United States, and hiring contractors, have decreased over the last four years.

Investing in automation instead of hiring decreased from 30 percent in 2019 to 8 percent in 2023, hiring from outside th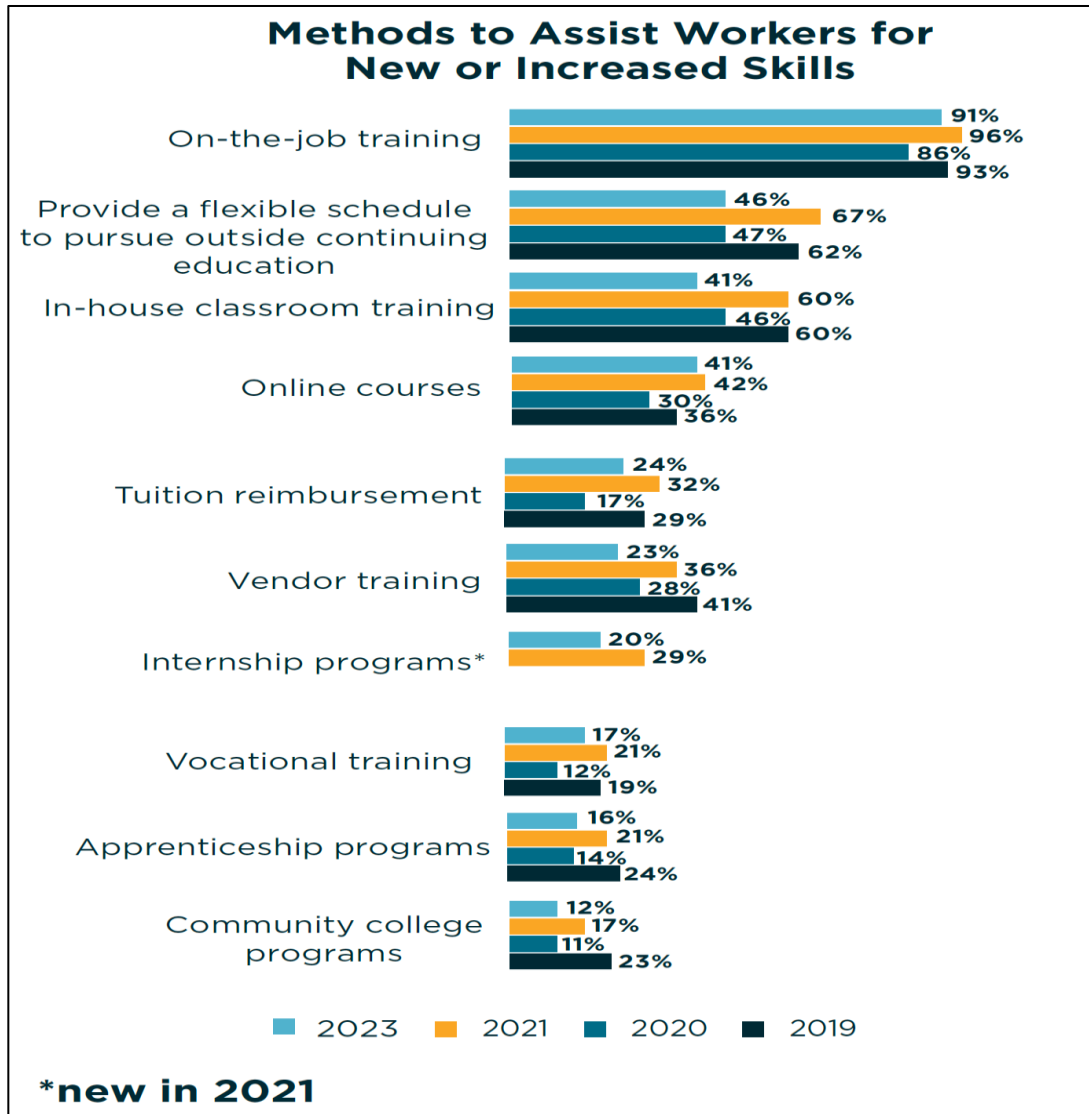e United States decreased from 12 percent in 2019 to 5 percent in 2023, and hiring contractors went from 27 percent in 2019 to 14 percent in 2023. Other remedial measures to alleviate the shortage of skilled applicants that were included in the 2023 survey were offering flexible work schedules (52%), offering health insurance (48%), providing a one-time bonus (28%), offering more paid time off (20%), using a temporary agency (16%), and offering remote work (10%).

Measures Taken to Address the Shortage of Skilled Applicants

Measure	2023	2021	2019
Hiring less experience workers and trained them	80%	81%	87%
Offering increased wages	67%	64%	49%
Offering flexible work schedules*	52%		
Offering health insurance*	48%		
Hiring from outside the local area or city	39%	52%	33%
Providing a one-time bonus*	28%		
Offering more paid time off*	20%		
Using a temporary agency*	16%		
Hiring contractors	14%	18%	27%
Offering remote work*	10%		
Investing in automation instead of hiring	8%	12%	30%
Hiring from outside the United States	5%	6%	12%

■ 2023 ■ 2021 ■ 2019

*new for 2023
Note: Question not asked in 2020

Companies employ workers in a variety of functional areas with different work responsibilities. *Patient Care* and *Skilled Trades* functional areas had the largest percentage of employers reporting shortages of skilled applicants at 65 percent each. Skill shortages in *Customer Service* have increased substantially, increasing from 25 percent in 2019 and 31 percent in 2020, to 47 percent in 2021, decreasing slightly to 45 percent in 2023.

Employers with a Shortage of Skilled Applicants by Functional Area

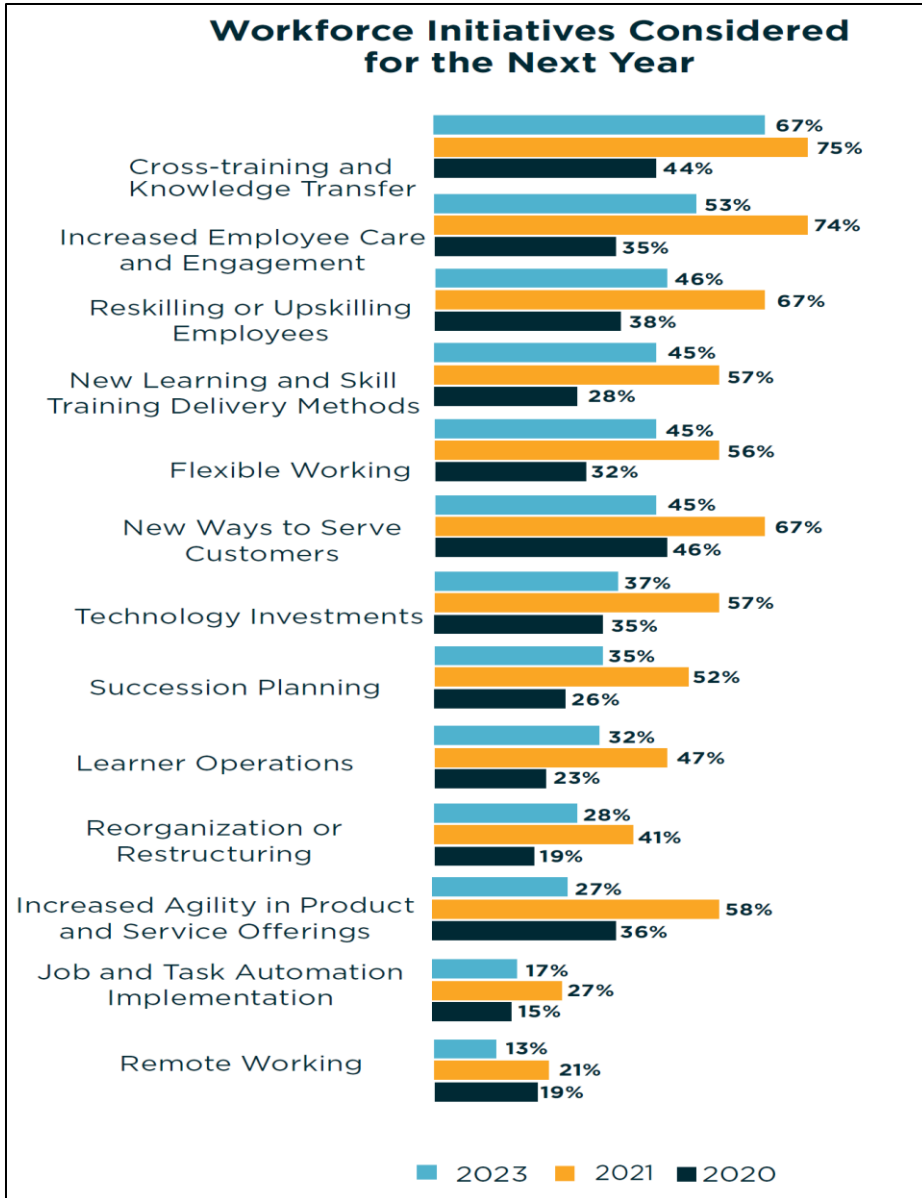| Functional Area	2023	2021	2020	2019
Patient Care	65%	62%	49%	58%
Skilled Trades	65%	72%	60%	49%
Manufacturing/Maintenance	55%	57%	40%	51%
Customer Service	45%	47%	31%	25%
Business Management	27%	24%	18%	28%
Information Technology	27%	25%	14%	33%
Accounting/Finance	24%	17%	16%	22%

To address the problem of skill shortages in the current workers, employers use several remedial measures, and *on-the-job-training* remains the most preferred method. Over 9 in 10 employers (91%) stated they used *on-the-job training* to assist current workers in addressing the need for new or increased skills. However, there is a significant decrease in applying these remedial measures in 2023 when compared to 2021, most significantly in *providing a flexible schedule to pursue outside continuing education* (67% in 2021 vs. 46% in 2023) and *in-house classroom training* (60% in 2021 vs. 41% in 2023).

36

Methods to Assist Workers for New or Increased Skills

On-the-job training
- 2023: 91%
- 2021: 96%
- 2020: 86%
- 2019: 93%

Provide a flexible schedule to pursue outside continuing education
- 2023: 46%
- 2021: 67%
- 2020: 47%
- 2019: 62%

In-house classroom training
- 2023: 41%
- 2021: 60%
- 2020: 46%
- 2019: 60%

Online courses
- 2023: 41%
- 2021: 42%
- 2020: 30%
- 2019: 36%

Tuition reimbursement
- 2023: 24%
- 2021: 32%
- 2020: 17%
- 2019: 29%

Vendor training
- 2023: 23%
- 2021: 36%
- 2020: 28%
- 2019: 41%

Internship programs*
- 2023: 20%
- 2021: 29%

Vocational training
- 2023: 17%
- 2021: 21%
- 2020: 12%
- 2019: 19%

Apprenticeship programs
- 2023: 16%
- 2021: 21%
- 2020: 14%
- 2019: 24%

Community college programs
- 2023: 12%
- 2021: 17%
- 2020: 11%
- 2019: 23%

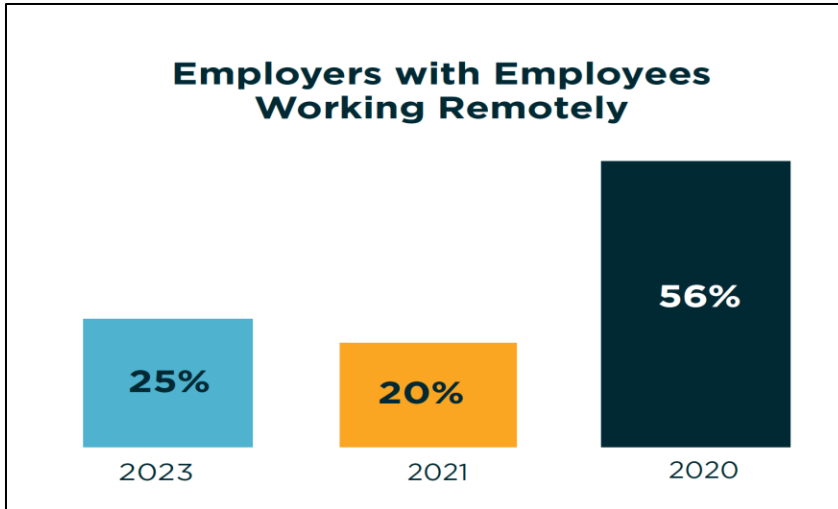Legend: ■ 2023 ■ 2021 ■ 2020 ■ 2019

*new in 2021

As the economy evolves, customers and workforce needs change. Now more than ever businesses must adapt to attract and retain quality employees, as well as serve customer's changing needs. Employers were asked which workforce initiatives they were considering for the next year.

Employer's likelihood to consider a variety of initiatives has changed significantly over the last three years. From 2020 to 2021, a large number of employers were considering these workforce initiatives. However, from 2021 to 2023, responses were lower for almost all initiatives. The *remote working* option decreased significantly from 21 percent in 2021 to 13 percent in 2023, indicating a return to physical/centralized workspaces.
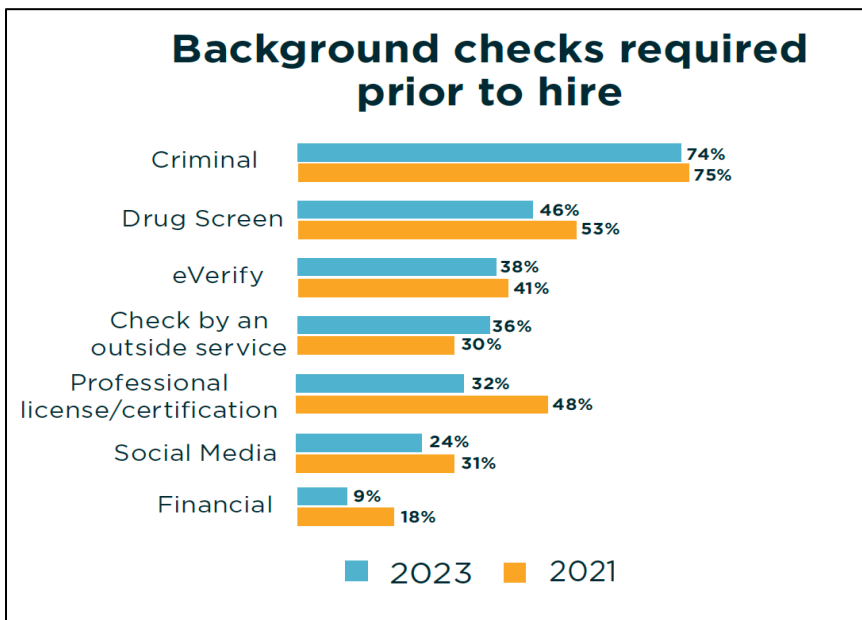
The top workforce initiative considered for the next year by employers was *cross-training and knowledge transfer* (67%), followed by *increased employee care and engagement* (53%) and *reskilling or upskilling employees to new ways of working* (46%).

Workforce Initiatives Considered for the Next Year

Initiative	2023	2021	2020
Cross-training and Knowledge Transfer	67%	75%	44%
Increased Employee Care and Engagement	53%	74%	35%
Reskilling or Upskilling Employees	46%	67%	38%
New Learning and Skill Training Delivery Methods	45%	57%	28%
Flexible Working	45%	56%	32%
New Ways to Serve Customers	45%	67%	46%
Technology Investments	37%	57%	35%
Succession Planning	35%	52%	26%
Learner Operations	32%	47%	23%
Reorganization or Restructuring	28%	41%	19%
Increased Agility in Product and Service Offerings	27%	58%	36%
Job and Task Automation Implementation	17%	27%	15%
Remote Working	13%	21%	19%

Legend: ■ 2023 ■ 2021 ■ 2020

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increased interest in understanding remote work. Prior to pandemic, (February 2020) about 15 percent employers were having some workers working remotely. Remote work peaked in 2020 during the height of the pandemic, with over half of employers (56%) stating they had some workers working remotely, either full or part-time. This dropped significantly to 20 percent in 2021 and has increased slightly to 25 percent in 2023. When asked if they expected the number of remote workers to change over time, the vast majority (92%) of employers said they expected it to stay the same. In the question about workforce initiatives considered in the coming year, 13 percent of employers indicated considering *remote work.*

Employers with Employees Working Remotely

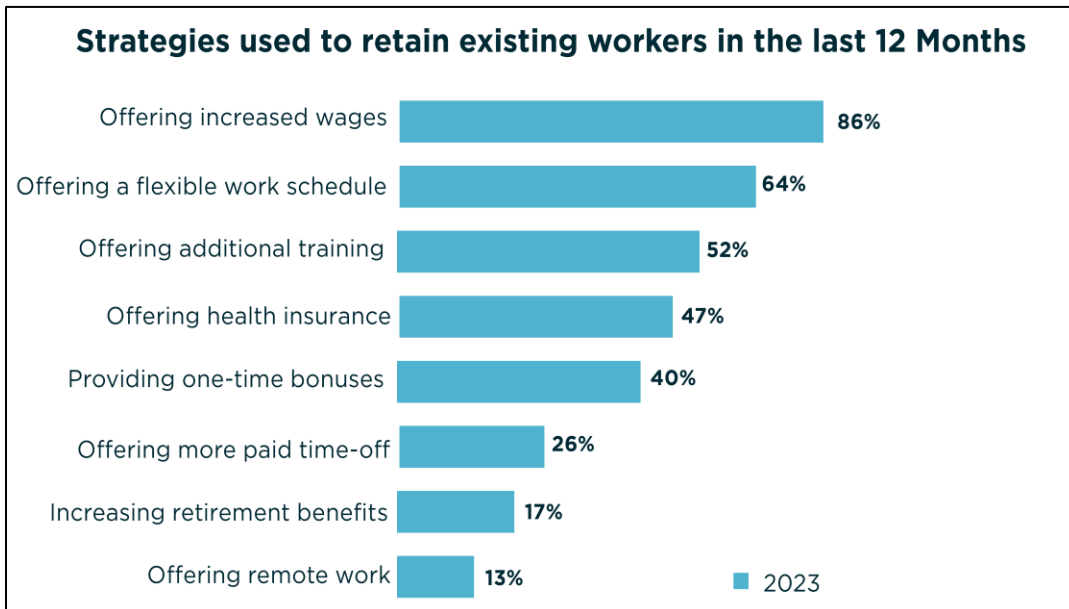| 2023	2021	2020
25%	20%	56%

Employers may perform a variety of screening processes before hiring an employee. *Criminal checks* were the most common types of background checks conducted prior to hiring, with 74 percent of Missouri employers reporting they perform one. *Drug screens* were next at 46 percent. In 2023, background screenings involving *professional license or certification, social media, drug screen, and financial checks* decreased significantly from 2021.

Background checks required prior to hire

Type	2023	2021
Criminal	74%	75%
Drug Screen	46%	53%
eVerify	38%	41%
Check by an outside service	36%	30%
Professional license/certification	32%	48%
Social Media	24%	31%
Financial	9%	18%

In 2019, less than one percent of Missouri employers *would not consider* hiring an applicant convicted of a felony offense who had completed his or her sentence and/or probation. This increased to 20 percent in 2020, was at 19 percent in 2021 and decreased slightly to 16 percent in 2023. Most employers (62%) reported it would *depend on the nature of the felony and time of the offense*, a significant increase from previous surveys Employers responding they would *consider for any job they are qualified for* decreased from 17 percent in 2020 and 2021 to 10 percent in 2023.

Hiring Justice-Involved Applicants

Depends on the nature of the felony and the time of the offense
- 2023: 62%
- 2021: 49%
- 2020: 51%
- 2019: 41%

Would not consider for any position
- 2023: 16%
- 2021: 19%
- 2020: 20%
- 2019: <1%

Would consider for some jobs
- 2023: 12%
- 2021: 14%
- 2020: 12%
- 2019: 43%

Would consider for any job they are qualified for
- 2023: 10%
- 2021: 17%
- 2020: 17%
- 2019: 15%

Legend: ■ 2023 ■ 2021 ■ 2020 ■ 2019

The top strategies used by employers in the last 12 months to retain existing workers included *offering increased wages* (86%), *offering a flexible work schedule* (64%), and *offering additional training* (52%). *Remote work* was listed as a strategy by only 13 percent of employers. When asked, "Have you increased wages in the last 12 months," 89 percent of employers said yes. Of the employers who increased wages, the average increase was 11 percent.

Strategies used to retain existing workers in the last 12 Months

- Offering increased wages: 86%
- Offering a flexible work schedule: 64%
- Offering additional training: 52%
- Offering health insurance: 47%
- Providing one-time bonuses: 40%
- Offering more paid time-off: 26%
- Increasing retirement benefits: 17%
- Offering remote work: 13%

Legend: ■ 2023

---

[1] [1] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English-language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[2] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

9. Workforce Development, Education, and Training Activities Analysis

Describe the workforce development services and activities, including education and training in the LWDA, to address the education and skills needs of the workforce. Include education and training activities of the core programs and mandatory and optional One-Stop Delivery System partners[3].

    a. **The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities**

       Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce developments services and activities identified above.

       Opportunities available to the customer through the Job Centers assist them in recognizing their skills and where they have weaknesses. Assistance is available to increase existing skills, market skills and work in areas of weakness. Skills assessments help to clarify the next steps needed in an individual's job search, their need for training or skill improvement. WorkKeys, along with Job Center workshops provide opportunities for enhancement of resume preparation, interviewing skills, networking, retaining employment, and more. All of this assists the customer in standing out as a job applicant, and in being a better employee once employed. Earning a National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) using the ACT skills certification system is an opportunity to take skills our customers have demonstrated on a national level. Our partners are working to ensure customers have a smooth referral process and access to valuable resources. Working together with our partners is the best way to assist our customers in their journey to a self-sufficient career pathway.

       To improve our job-seekers skills will enhance the productivity and competitiveness of our employers. While there is no single job training approach that is right for all workers, having access to accurate and up-to-date labor market data provided by MERIC and other sources, as well as information and guidance about career and training opportunities, helps our customers customize a plan through more informed education and employment decisions.

       Employers have indicated that finding workers, even with college degrees, with adequate basic essential skills is a challenge. Employers indicated that job applicants often lack basic personal effectiveness competencies such as communication skills, work ethic, discipline, critical thinking or interpersonal skills. Sharing the career pathways available in their local manufacturing areas and understanding the skills needed helps graduates be better prepared to move along the career continuum to on-the- job training, Career and Technical Education or higher post-secondary coursework. The negative side of the issues discussed is the complicated nature of the systems. The absence of aligned and standardized data systems makes it extremely difficult to track a client's progress. Jobs in today's world require more highly-skilled workers. Workplace skills are essential in all industries to advance in the fast-paced economy and to improve efficiency within our

region. The speed at which technology is changing at a rapid speed; this impacts even the employed and key skill deficiencies among the unemployed and underemployed population.

b. **Local Workforce Development Capacity**

Provide an analysis of the capacity of local entities to provide workforce development services and activities to address the identified education and skills needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the LWDA.

WIOA requires strong partnerships across all programs, the Southeast Region, over the past ten years, demonstrated that strength. Each partner has capacities that are evident in the scope of services they provide and the excellent performance levels of their programs, as measured both by federally reported performance measures and key business metrics such as total number of customers served, effective labor force attachment and skills progression. The capacity of all partners is expected to grow as we build an integrated, demand-driven workforce system where all are equally included. The WDBSE focuses on outreach services to customers, especially individuals with barriers to employment, through enhanced collaboration, coordination and partnership development with local community agencies and chambers. Our local business staff are working together to improve employer outreach strategies incorporating local economic development partners that benefit both employers and job seekers in the local area. We can more effectively engage with employers in key, high-demand industries by continuing to strengthen partnerships with our local economic development. Southeast will coordinate on-the-job training programs to provide training in these high priority occupations through a larger business team.

OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

Local Structure

10. Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Profile

Describe the geographical workforce development area, including the LWDA's major communities, major employers, training, and educational institutions (technical and community colleges, universities, etc.), population, diversity of the population, and relevant growth trends.

The Southeast Region is made up of 13 counties that include Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Dunklin, Iron, Madison, Mississippi, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Perry, St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, Scott, and Stoddard. This large area encompasses:

- 7,840 square miles
- Population of 355,902 individuals (2022)
- Labor force of 161,776 individuals (2022)
- 57 public schools and 26 private schools
- 7 Technical Training Schools
- 2 Community Colleges
- 1 State University

The largest city in the region is Cape Girardeau with a population of 82,899. The following is a list of each county, their major communities, major employers, training and educational institutes, population, diversity and relevant growth trends.

Bollinger County

Major Communities: **Marble Hill**

Major Employers: **Woodland Hills, Crader Distributing Co., Liley Monument Works & Funeral Services, Black River Electric Coop, Stitch-It, and the following school districts: Meadow Heights, Woodland, Leopold and Zalma**

Training and Educational Institutes: **none**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Bollinger County			
Total Population	**12,363**	**10,567**	**-1,796**
White	97.7%	96.3%	-1.4%
Black	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.6%	0.9%	0.3%
Asian (alone)	0.3%	0.3%	0%
Hispanic/Latino	0.8%	1.8%	1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Cape Girardeau County

Major Communities: **Cape Girardeau, Jackson**

Major Employers: **Saint Francis Healthcare System, Southeast Hospital, Procter & Gamble Paper Products, Mondi Jackson LLC, Drury, Delta Companies Inc., Lutheran Home, Cape, and Jackson Public School Districts, Cape Girardeau VA Healthcare Center**

Training and Educational Institutes: **Southeast Missouri State University, Cape Girardeau Career & Technical Center, Southeast Missouri Hospital College of Nursing, Southeast Missouri State University Law Enforcement Academy.**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Cape Girardeau County			
Total Population	**73,957**	**81,710**	**7,753**
White	93.1%	86.8%	-6.3%
Black	5.6%	8.1%	2.5%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.5%	0.4%	-0.1%
Asian (alone)	0.8%	1.9%	1.1%
Hispanic/Latino	0.9%	2.8%	1.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Dunklin County

Major Communities: **Kennett, Malden**

*Major Employers***: Wal-Mart Supercenter, Genesis Homecare, Steele Technologies, Greenbriar**

Training and Educational Institutes: **Southeast Missouri State University-Kennett and Malden Campus, Three Rivers Community College-Kennett Campus, Kennett Career and Technology Center, Southern Missouri Trucking Driving School.**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Dunkin County			
Total Population	**31,953**	**28,283**	**-3,670**
White	87.6%	85.4%	-2.2%
Black	10.1%	10.9%	0.8%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.5%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	0.4%	0.9%	0.5%
Hispanic/Latino	5.8%	7.5%	1.7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Iron County

*Major Communities***: Ironton, Arcadia**

*Major Employers***: Doe Run Company, Specialty Granules, Iron County Medical Center, Ironton Baptist Home, Disabled Citizens Alliance Inc.**

Training and Educational Institutes: **Mineral Area Outreach Center - Arcadia Valley Career Technical Center**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Iron County			
Total Population	**10,630**	**9,537**	**-1,093**
White	96.2%	95.5%	-0.7%
Black	1.6%	1.8%	0.2%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%
Asian (alone)	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%
Hispanic/Latino	1.3%	2.2%	0.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0%	0.0%

Madison County

Major Communities: **Fredericktown**

Major Employers: **Madison Medical Center, Wal-Mart Supercenter, Cap America, Versa Tech, Black River Electric Coop**

Training and Educational Institutes: **Mineral Area Outreach Center**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Madison County			
Total Population	**12,226**	**12,626**	**400**
White	97.8%	95.5%	-2.3%
Black	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.4%	0.6%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	0.4%	1.0%	0.6%
Hispanic/Latino	2.1%	2.8%	0.7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Mississippi County

Major Communities: **Charleston, East Prairie**

Major Employers: **Southeast Correctional Center, Freight Logistics & Transportation, American Homecare, Edwards Transportation Company**

Training and Educational Institutes: **Susanna Wesley Family Learning Center**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Mississippi County			
Total Population	**14,358**	**12,577**	**-1,781**
White	74.3%	74.7%	0.4%
Black	24.3%	22.6%	-1.7%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.2%	0.5%	0.3%
Asian (alone)	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%
Hispanic/Latino	1.7%	2.8%	1.1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	0.0%	0.0%

New Madrid County
Major Communities: **Sikeston, New Madrid, Portageville**
Major Employers: **SRG Global, Associated Electric Coop, Inc., Alubar Inc., Magnitude 7 Metals, SEMO Health Network**
Training and Educational Institutes: **Three Rivers Community College-Portageville Center, New Madrid County Area Technical School**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
New Madrid County			
Total Population	**18,956**	**16,434**	**-1,660**
White	81.9%	80.5%	-2,522
Black	15.9%	16.2%	-0.3%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.4%	0.1%
Asian (alone)	0.5%	0.4%	-0.1%
Hispanic/Latino	1.3%	2.2%	0.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Pemiscot County
Major Communities: **Caruthersville, Hayti**
Major Employers: **Isle Capri Casino, Pemiscot Memorial Hospital, Caruthersville Nursing Center, Arcosa Marine Products**
Training and Educational Institutes: **Pemiscot County Vocational School**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Pemiscot County			
Total Population	**18,296**	**15,661**	**-2,635**
White	71.0%	70.0%	-1.0%
Black	27.0%	26.2%	-0.8%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.4%	0.6%	0.2%
Asian (alone)	0.3%	0.5%	0.2%
Hispanic/Latino	2.0%	3.4%	1.4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Perry County

Major Communities: **Perryville**

Major Employers: **Gilster-Mary Lee Corp, Perry County Memorial Hospital, TG Missouri, Robinson Construction Company, Citizens Electric Corp.**

Training and Educational Institutes: **Perry County Higher Educational Center, Mineral Area College, Central Methodist College and Rankin Technical College**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Perry County			
Total Population	**18,971**	**18,956**	**-15**
White	97.5%	96.2%	-1.3%
Black	0.5%	0.7%	0.2%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.4%	0.5%	0.1%
Asian (alone)	0.5%	1.2%	0.7%
Hispanic/Latino	2.0%	2.6%	0.6%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

St. Francois County

Major Communities: **Farmington**

Major Employers: **SRG Global, Centene Corp, Spartech Plastics, Farmington Correctional Center, US Tool Group, BJC Behavioral Health Center, Southeast Missouri Mental Health, Parkland Medical Center, Walmart, Lee Mechanical Contractors Inc.**

Training and Educational Institutes: **Mineral Area College, Unitec Career Center**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
St. Francois County			
Total Population	**65,359**	**66,922**	**1,563**
White	93.6%	92.9%	-0.7%
Black	4.5%	4.1%	-0.4%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.4%	0.5%	0.1%
Asian (alone)	0.4%	0.5%	0.1%
Hispanic/Latino	1.3%	2.1%	0.8%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Ste. Genevieve County
Major Communities: **Ste. Genevieve, Bloomsdale**
Major Employers: **Mississippi Lime Co., Ste. Genevieve County Memorial Hospital, Holcim US, Tower Rock & Stone Company, Eric Scott Leathers Ltd, PIVA Windows**
Training and Educational Institutes: **Southeast Missouri State University-Ste. Genevieve**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Ste. Genevieve County			
Total Population	**18,145**	**18,479**	**334**
White	97.6%	95.7%	-1.9%
Black	0.8%	1.8%	1.0%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.3%	0.4%	0.1%
Asian (alone)	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%
Hispanic/Latino	0.9%	1.4%	0.5%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Scott County
Major Communities: **Sikeston, Scott City**
Major Employers: **Unilever, Saint Francis Healthcare, Ferguson Medical Group, Burch Food Services Inc., S&W Cabinets, Havco Wood Products LLC, Orgill**
Training and Educational Institutes: **Southeast Missouri State University-Sikeston Campus, Scott County Career and Technical Center, Three Rivers Community College-Sikeston**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Scott County			
Total Population	**39,191**	**38,059**	**-1,132**
White	86.3%	84.6%	-1.7%
Black	11.5%	12.3%	0.8%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.2%	0.5%	0.3%
Asian (alone)	0.4%	0.5%	0.1%
Hispanic/Latino	1.9%	2.8%	0.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Stoddard County
Major Communities: **Dexter, Puxico**
Major Employers: **WW Wood Products Inc., Dexter Public School District, Southeast HEALTH of Stoddard County, Wal-Mart Supercenter, US Poly Enterprise**
Training and Educational Institutes: **Three Rivers Community College-Dexter Campus, Stoddard County Career Learning Center**

Demographic Category	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change Over Period
Stoddard County			
Total Population	**29,968**	**28,672**	**-1,296**
White	97.2%	96.2%	-0.1%
Black	1.1%	1.4%	0.3%
America Indian/Alaska Native	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%
Asian (alone)	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%
Hispanic/Latino	1.4%	2.2%	0.8%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%

Source for each Counties data: US Census Bureau

11. Local Facility and Information

    a.   Identify the local <u>comprehensive</u> One-Stop Center(s), including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in **Attachment 1** to the Plan.

        See Attachment 1

    b.   Identify the local <u>affiliate</u> sites, including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in **Attachment 1** to the Plan.

        See Attachment 1

    c.   Identify the local <u>specialized</u> sites, including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in **Attachment 1** to the Plan.

        See Attachment 1

    d.   If your LWDA has any <u>other</u> additional service sites and the LWDA refers to them as anything other than comprehensive, affiliate or specialized centers, please list the service sites by the title your LWDA uses and describe the services provided in **Attachment 1**. Also, list the one-stop partners providing services at those locations.

        Not applicable

---

[3] Mandatory One-Stop partners: Each LWDA must have one comprehensive One-Stop Center that provides access to physical services of the core programs and other required partners. In addition to the core programs, for individuals with multiple needs to access the services, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the One-Stops: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Career and Technical Education (Perkins Act), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Insurance, Re-entry Programs, and Youth Build.

12. Local One-Stop Partner/MOU/IFA Information

a. **Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)**
Include in **Attachment 2** a copy of each MOU between the Board and each of the One-Stop partners (or one "umbrella" MOU for the same purpose) concerning the operation of the One-Stop Delivery System in the LWDA. The MOU must be up-to-date, signed and dated. Include the MOU(s) as Attachment 3. Missouri Job Centers must ensure that equal access to employment and training services are provided to the farm workers and agricultural employers in their LWDAs.
See Attachment 2

b. **Cost Sharing Agreement/Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA)**
Include as part of the MOU in **Attachment 2** the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and negotiated cost-sharing worksheet/workbook for each Missouri Job Center that includes the line items, dollar amounts and percentage rates for One-stop partners, OWD and the Board. Indicate the number of FTEs present and/or the amount of space (sq. footage) utilized by the partner.
See Attachment 2

Integration of One-Stop Service Delivery

13. Local Workforce Development System

Describe the workforce development system in the LWDA.

a. Describe how the Local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with rapid response activities.
The WDBSE utilizes the OWD regional team in our area for necessary information. This team is contacted at the first evidence or word that a lay-off is even being contemplated by any employer in our area. This team will notify other area coordinators if their area could be affected. This team will first utilize all elements of resources to prevent the layoff such as (but not limited to) Shared Work—Layoff Alternative. When the team has determined with the employer that no other measures can be employed to avoid laying off workers, transition services are provided which include no cost to the business or to the affected workers. The OWD team and the local workforce system staff are available to provide guidance to the employer and re-employment services for the affected employees. Staff will provide information including:
- Conducting employee assistance meetings
- Provide training program information for lay-offs affected by foreign trade
- Provide Unemployment Insurance information
- Connect employees with current job openings
- Assist employers with layoff obligations including providing information concerning legal requirements under the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act.

b. Describe how the Board will ensure the expenditure of funds for training providers are selected from both the Eligible Training Provider List/System approved for use by the State of Missouri as well as approved from the State list by the local workforce development board.
For initial local approval of an Eligible Training Provider program all eligibility criteria must be completed and approved by the State including the ability for the Eligible Training Provider to:

➢ Demonstrate they have been in business teaching a program for at least 12 months;
➢ Show documentation that they are certified by the appropriate governing body;
➢ Maintain a website including the program descriptions, tuition, fees, and supplies.

- Eligible Training Providers must agree to comply with all provisions listed in the Eligible Training Provider System Training Provider Applicant – Assurances Agreement.
- The program must be listed as approved on the Missouri Eligible Training Provider List. The program must be approved, not just the provider.
- The training program must be an in-demand occupation for the Southeast Region. In Demand occupations can be found in MERIC publication. In-Demand occupations are classified with a Career Outlook grade of B or above.
- The Eligible Training Provider must meet all local policy qualifications for approval in the Southeast Region. When the above criterion has been met, the Compliance Department at the WDB will select the Training Provider as locally approved in the Eligible Training Provider website interface so the program can be selected in the data system. The WDBSE Compliance Manager maintains access to locally approved or denied training programs within the state. These programs are reviewed and approved/denied on an as needed basis.

14. Accessibility

Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and one-stop partners will comply with WIOA section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and service, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. (See current OWD Issuance and the State of Missouri Non-discrimination Plan)

The Southeast Workforce Development Board, One-Stop Operator, WIOA Partners, and all WDBSE staff will comply with WIOA Section 188, Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Policies, and WDBSE Accessibility Policies. No qualified individual with a disability may be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of a recipient's service, program, or activity or be subjected to discrimination by any recipient because a recipient's facilities are inaccessible or unusable by individuals with disabilities. Recipients must also comply with physical accessibility standards specified in regulations implementing Title II and Title III of the ADA, if applicable, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Under Section 504, each facility or part of a facility constructed by, on behalf of, or for the use of a recipient or that is altered by, on behalf of, or for the use of a recipient must be designed, altered, and/or constructed in such a manner that the facility or part of the facility is readily accessible to and usable by qualified individuals with disabilities, if the construction and/or alterations were completed after November 6, 1980.

To Ensure Physical Accessibility, all WDBSE Job Center locations are reviewed for ADA Accessibility Compliance. The Comprehensive/Affiliate Job Center Certifications require accessibility audits to be performed on current job center locations. The WDBSE will consult with area organization to assist with physical reviews as needed.

To ensure Programmatic Accessibility, all WDBSE programs and activities must be programmatically accessible, which include but not limited to:

- Providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and/or making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures. One key aspect of ensuring equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities who are applicants, registrants, and participants for employment with regard to aid, benefits, services, and training is the provision of reasonable accommodations. The WDBSE programs are required to provide reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities to ensure equal access and opportunity. In general, a reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment in the way the program is administered that enables an individual with a disability to receive any aid, benefit, service, training, or employment equal to those provided to individuals without disabilities. Many forms of reasonable accommodations are available, and the individual with a disability and AJC programs should work together to identify the most effective reasonable accommodation for each individual. The process of identifying and providing reasonable accommodation should be provided as quickly as possible to avoid delaying access to services. Staff members have been encouraged to seek out resolutions for any reasonable accommodation that does not result in a funding cost and to act upon those requests immediately without the need for supervisory approval. In some circumstances, the WDBSE may not be able to provide specific reasonable accommodation if it would cause undue hardship.

- Administering programs in the most integrated setting appropriate. When reviewing current or new locations, the WDBSE must give priority to those methods that offer programs and activities to individuals with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate.

- Communicating with persons with disabilities as effectively as with others; and providing appropriate auxiliary aids or services, including assistive technology devices and services, where necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, the program or activity. Each Comprehensive Job Center is required to maintain specific Assistive Technology including: Window Eyes Screen Reader, Zoom Text, Big Keys I-X Keyboard, Trackball Mouse, Phone Amplifier, and Ubi Duo (Face to Face Communication, TTY, and Relay Service. Annual reviews of ADA equipment in our offices, ensuring proper functioning and training in the use of the equipment, are ways we attempt to increase the value of our services to individuals with a disability. The State of Missouri contracts to provide interpretive (ASL) services at all locations upon request. Specifics and a staff desk aid for these services are found at:
  https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/media/pdf/2022/07/sign_language_interpreter_desk_aid_checklist_user01-2020.pdf

Staff are trained on a continuous basis on Equal Opportunity related topics including disabilities and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. One Stop Centers in the local area are encouraged to reach out and attend meetings with other area resources and other agencies for opportunities to inform employees of multiple agencies about the resources in the area. Equal Opportunity Topics can include the demonstrating or purpose of ADA equipment, promising practices providing services to individuals with disabilities, and resources like Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) and Job Accommodation Network (JAN).
Please see Accessibility Policy and LEP policy for more information (attachments 22 & 23).

15. Assessment of One-Stop Program and Partners
   a. Describe how the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants.
   The WDBSE ensures continuous improvement of eligible providers of services by working

closely with these agencies and organizations on a regular and continuing basis. Services like On-the-Job Training and/or Work Experience require Case Manager interaction throughout the employment period. The Case Manager visits the site for midpoint and end-point monitoring as well as bi-weekly to collect the participant timesheets for their payroll. Work Experience and OJT outcomes are tracked by the WDBSE Compliance Manager to ensure successful outcomes and placements. Any trends of unsuccessful outcomes are investigated. OJT contracts include a requirement that the participant is retained by the OJT employer for a minimum of six months after the OJT has ended, unless there are grounds for termination or the participant quits; staff make monthly contact with the participants to verify any changes in employment, which allows us to ensure the employment needs are being met. Working with repeat employers allows us to assist with meeting the State employer performance measure. This allows us to build relationships with the employers so that we have an open line of communication for any issues that could arise. Eligible Training Providers are expected to meet the Governor's criteria for preliminary performance information per program, which includes credential attainment rate, employment six and twelve months after exit, and median earnings six months after exit. In the Southeast Region we have determined that if the state finds these expected performance levels to be acceptable, the Southeast Region will deem them as acceptable as well. The Southeast Region will also honor any waiver for performance levels by an institution if it has been approved by the state. The WDBSE ensures continuous improvement of training providers by evaluating and monitoring as required that fosters a culture of accountability from the providers on behalf of customers. The WDBSE also works closely with all participants served through a fundable training or employment service must have the training appropriateness questions answered in the Case Management System. These questions include linking the job placement and/or training program with the employment opportunities in the local area. Each service is a little different in considering what meets the definition for linking the employment opportunities in the local area and could have some extenuating circumstances that would allow for an approval outside of the in-demand need as reported by MERIC.

b. Describe the actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performance WDB.

The WDBSE will take action to retain a high-performance region. As felt across the state, WIOA funding changes mandates that the Southeast Board continues to work on refining processes, building partnerships, and reviewing consolidations as necessary - to ensure that we can continue a path of growth for the Southeast Region. Actions to specifically improve local WIOA Performance Rates include but are not limited to:

• Continuous monitoring reviews being completed by the case manager, program staff, quality assurance staff, and compliance department. These monitoring target the case management entries for validity.

• To ensure compliance in every grant program the Southeast WDB operates, monitoring will include a statistically valid sample of participants as deemed appropriate by the OWD Sub-State Issuance and/or the WDBSE President/COO. If 100% of the files are not monitored, a random sampling technique will be used to identify the selection of files to be monitored. Monitoring will align with federal, state, local, and grant specific monitoring elements that includes a review of eligibility and documentation, complaint and grievance procedures, compliance to the grant terms, assessments provided, employment planning, training plans, complaint and grievance procedures, supportive services and the appropriateness of participant payments, outcome and performance.

> • The WDBSE will conduct quarterly data validation reviews to verify that performance data elements reported by the WDBSE are valid, accurate, reliable, and integrity of the performance outcomes.
> • The Southeast Compliance Manager tracks negative performance outcomes for the region through the MOPerforms Database System. This system allows us to see who is and will be coming up in performance measures and allows us to investigate accounts showing a negative outcome to ensure all necessary information was put into the system. Monitoring the performance outcomes on at least a quarterly basis has allowed us to change some participants from negative status to a positive status and so far, allows us to meet all negotiated performance levels.
> • Refer to the WDBSE Sub-State Compliance and Monitoring Policy for more information on monitoring, compliance, and performance strategies.

Local Administration

16. Chief Elected Official (CEO)
Please identify the CEO. List the name, title, address, phone number and email address. Place it on a cover sheet in **Attachment 3.**
See Attachment 3

17. CEO Consortium Agreement and Bylaws
If the LWDA includes more than one unit of local government, the Chief Elected Officials (CEO) may develop a CEO agreement; however, it is not mandatory under WIOA law. If the LWDA is including a CEO agreement, please specify the respective roles of the individual CEOs and include the **CEO Consortium Agreement as Attachment 3 including any CEO Bylaws** that are in effect.
See Attachment 3

NOTE: (The CEO membership should be reviewed after each county and/or municipal election. If there are changes in the CEO membership, or leadership, a new CEO agreement will need to be signed and submitted to OWD by the first day of June following the election.) OWD must be notified with the contact information as soon as the CEO takes office.

18. Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Membership
Please list the **LWDB members in Attachment 4**. Identify the members of the Board, the organization or business they represent, and the category (i.e., business, labor, adult education and literacy, vocational rehabilitation, Wagner-Peyser/OWD, higher education, economic development, TANF, Other) The LWDB Certification Form may be used. See current OWD Issuance Local Workforce Development Board Membership Requirements and Recertification Procedures under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. **See attachment 4**

    a. **LWDB Standing Committees**
       List of all **standing committees** on a separate page in **Attachment 4**.

    b. **LWDB Certification Letter (most recent)**
       Include in **Attachment 4** a copy of the current **LWDB certification letter**

19. LWDB Bylaws
The Board must review its by-laws annually and complete the "Local Workforce Development Board's ATTESTATION FOR REVIEW OF BY-LAWS" form included near the end of this document. Include the

Board's current by-laws and the completed attestation form (copy is included in this guidance) as **Attachment 5** to the Plan. **See attachment 5**

Local Planning & Fiscal Oversight

20. Local Fiscal Agent

Identify the **Local Fiscal Agent**. Include contact information. Include the information as **Attachment 6**. See current OWD Issuance Policy on Designation of a Local Fiscal Agent by the Chief Elected Official. **See attachment 6**

21. Competitive Procurement

Describe the competitive (procurement) process used to award the grants and contracts in the LWDA for activities carried out under Title I of WIOA, including the process to procure training services for Youth and any that are made as exceptions to the ITA process. Include the information on the following processes: advertisement/notification to prospective bidders, time period bidders have to respond to the solicitation, evaluation and award/non-award notification. This may include those pages from the Board's procurement guidelines that describe the competitive-procurement process and the process to procure Youth training providers. Include the **Financial Procurement Policy as Attachment 9.**

See attachment 9, pages 26-28

22. Duplicative Costs and Services

a. **Eliminating Duplicative Administrative Costs**
Describe how the Board is working toward eliminating duplicative administrative costs to enable increased training investments.
Internal controls have been strengthened and expanded during the last program year. The goal for the WDBSE is to eliminate any possibility of duplicative administrative costs by striving to improve efficiency and reducing unnecessary expenditures. Therefore, administrative costs are tracked semi-monthly to assess and avoid duplications.

b. **Eliminating Duplicative Services**
Identify how the Board ensures that services are not duplicated.
As a way of eliminating duplication of services and administrative costs, the firewall between WDBSE and our subcontractor is very strong. Subcontractors are monitored by the WDBSE Compliance Manager in accordance with the sub state monitoring policy. Any issues related to the provision of services by subcontractor shall be handled by the WDBSE Compliance Manager and/or the President/COO with a corrective action notice being issued.

23. Planning Budget Summaries (PBSs)

Include the Planning Budget Summaries for the upcoming Program Year and Fiscal Year in **Attachment 7** to the Plan. (Instruction for this planning item will be sent after the locally negotiated performance goals are finalized.) **See attachment 7**

24. Complaint and Grievance Policy / EEO Policy

Establish and define the local policy and procedure for Complaint and Grievance Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of WIOA. Both policies should be incorporated into the MOU and disseminated throughout the LWDA for all workforce development professionals to understand and implement. This should adhere to federal and state complaint and grievance guidance and policy. Include either a statement that the Board will follow the state policy or develop a local policy

and include a copy as **Attachment 10** to the Plan. (See the State of Missouri Non-discrimination Plan.)
See Attachment 10

25. Planning Process and Partners

The expectation is that the Board will involve business, organized labor, local public officials, community-based organizations, WIOA service providers, and other stakeholders in the development and review of this Plan. Describe the local plan development process, including how input for the Local Plan was obtained by all the partners involved in the MOU. Also, see **Attachment 57** - **Statement of Assurances.** Board staff are charged with the preliminary draft planning and data gathering of the plan. The plan is reviewed by private sector board members, public sector board members, the CLEO, County Commissioners, along with the One-Stop Operator and other partners. The plan is presented to full board and if approved the plan is given a 14-30 day public comment period.
See Attachment 57

26. Performance Negotiations

Identify the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO to be used to measure the performance of the Board and to be used by the Board for measuring the performance of the Local Fiscal Agent (where appropriate), eligible providers, and the One-Stop Delivery System in the LWDA.

Program Year 2022 and 2023 Performance Negotiations.

	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth	Wagner Peyser
Employment Rate Q2	72.25%	79%	72%	68%
Employment Rate Q4	70.40%	73.5%	72.5%	68.5%
Median Earning	$6,900	$8,900	$4,000	$5,250
Credential Attainment	78.50%	75%	62%	N/A
Measurable Skill Gain	56.5%	49.5%	40%	N/A

Source: Office of Workforce Development

PY22 and PY23 Performance Negotiations were completed in September 2022. Performance Negotiations for Program Year 2024 and 2025 have not yet begun.

27. Public Comment

Describe the process used by the Board to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and labor organizations, and input into the development of the Plan, prior to submission of the Plan. Provide an affidavit of proof of this public announcement for comment. See **Attachment 57** - **Statement of Assurances. See Attachment 57**

The plan template has been shared with many partners, for input and information. One Stop Operator (OSO) has convened with WIOA partners and input was gleaned at those meetings. Sections of the plan were emailed to partners for their input and clarification. Through the process of writing the local plan we have had the opportunity to conduct research and update the services provided throughout our region. The plan is shared with WDBSE Board Members and CLEO. Each member will have the opportunity to review and prepare questions, before or at the full WDBSE meeting. After the board votes to approve, the plan including all attachments will be posted on the WDBSE website via a link for public comment during January-February 2024.

28. Assurances

Complete and sign the **"Statement of Assurances Certification" form** located in this guidance and

include this as **Attachment 57** to the Plan. **See Attachment 57**

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Service Delivery

29. One-Stop Service Delivery

Describe how the LWDA is assisting customers in making informed choices based on quality workforce information and accessing quality training providers. Provide a list of one-stop partner products and services available at each Missouri Job Center.

Missouri's Job Centers offer a variety of partner products and services to assist job seekers and employers. While the specific offerings may vary by location, here is a general list of one-stop partner products and services commonly available at MO Job Centers:

Job search assistance, career counseling and assessment, resume writing and interview preparation, training and education programs, Veterans services, labor market assistance, employer services, UI assistance, job fairs and hiring events, workshops, financial assistance programs, and referral services. These partner products and services are designed to create a comprehensive support system for job seekers and employers, helping them navigate the complexities of the job market and achieve their employment goals.

Utilizing MERIC information, WorkKeys scores, and other assessments, the Job Center staff recognizes in-demand occupations and provides opportunities for consumer-choice training accordingly. The State determines eligibility of training providers and WDBSE adheres to that. Job Center Workshops, ETPS, ACT Career Ready and offering Talify assists staff in guiding customers to make informed choices.

Job Centers offer free use of computers, printers, copiers, fax machines and phones for your job search activities. Assistive technology is also available, including: WindowEyes screen reader, ZoomText screen enlarger, CCTV, and height adjustable tables for individuals with disabilities. TTY service and Ubiduo™ devices are available to assist the deaf and hard of hearing.

Adult and Dislocated Workers

30. Title I - Employment and Training Products and Services

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of all Adult and Dislocated Worker employment and training activities in the LWDA. Please include how the Board uses products and services, such as workshops, assessment products (Key Train, WorkKeys /National Career Readiness Certificate [NCRC], Talify, etc.) and jobseeker products (such as Résumé Builder, etc.), to engage customers and assist with their re-employment efforts.

Each job center leverages products and services to engage customers in several ways; Offering Comprehensive Job Search Tools, Tailored Recommendations, Skill Development Resources, Networking Opportunities, Resume and Profile Optimization, Job Market Insights, Support for Specific Demographics, Integration with Social Media, and Feedback Mechanisms.

WIOA AD/DW re-employment services will be accomplished through immediately engaging clients through career and training level services as eligibility, appropriateness, and funding allows. The goal of each Missouri Job Center is to ensure customers leave the Job Center a better job applicant than when they walked in. To this end, staff-assisted services will be emphasized, and Missouri Job Center services will be continuously promoted. Available employment and training activities include: eligibility determination; outreach, intake, and orientation to the information and services available through the

one-stop delivery system; initial and specialized assessments including literacy, numeracy, English Language proficiency, aptitudes, abilities and supportive service needs; labor exchange services, job search and placement assistance; workshops, employment statistics information; performance information and program cost per eligible providers of training; local performance information; provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation; development of an individualized employment plan; short term pre-vocational services; adult work experience, occupational skills training; on-the-job training; skill enhancement services; adult education and literacy activities; retention assistance; and follow-up.

All of the products and services listed above have assisted with the increase of enrollments throughout the region. These products and services have also allowed the region to meet performance and self-sufficiency for individuals served.

31. Unemployment Insurance Claimant Services (UI)

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs. Provide a description of how Unemployment Insurance claimants will be provided reemployment services. Include how Worker Profiling and Re-employment Services (WPRS) will be delivered on a weekly basis between the Office of Workforce Development and partner staff.

Assistance with Unemployment Insurance is an important Missouri Job Center service to many of the visitors that come to the Center. When a customer comes to the Job Center for job search, the following will be checked:

- Job Center staff will explain how to apply for unemployment and give the customer information on unemployment.
- If a customer needs significate assistance OWD and Sub-contracted staff assist the customer filling their claim on the UInteract website.
- When a customer has questions about their unemployment, they will be referred to the UI telephone bank to talk to a Regional Claims Center staff person.
- The RESEA activity(s) focuses on identifying customers receiving UI benefits that may be expected to exhaust these benefits without skill development and job search assistance. This activity also has several direct links to UI services, since participation for identified customers is mandatory and UI benefits can be jeopardized if participation does not occur. As such, this activity will be managed by OWD and Sub-contracted staff to ensure that these critical UI linkages are maintained.
- Request RESEA Selection: The UI automated system will select worker profilers to be scheduled through the Missouri Job Center. In this letter, these customers will be informed of the specific services that they will receive from Missouri Job Center as part of the RESEA activity (s) as well as the specific date and time that they must attend an information session at the Missouri Job Center.
- RESEA enrollments: All customers that enroll in the program will have the following information entered into the MoJobs system (if it is not already entered): (1) their demographics, and (2) a career service. During enrollment customers will be given information that is required by the RESEA programs as well as job search advice and direction. Of critical importance, however, these customers will also be highly encouraged to participate in the services offered within the Missouri Job Center and these services will be described in some detail.

32. On-the-Job Training (OJT)

Describe the Board's on-going strategies for promoting and increasing the number of participants in work-based learning and On-the-Job Training (OJT). Provide a summary of the results.

The WDBSE has a strong network of ties in its community. The Business Representative Manager together with the local Business Services Team, works with employers, community agencies and

education institutions in order to promote the comprehensive programs that are available. The Business Services Team enhances the region's economic stability and prosperity by focusing on the demands and needs of the region. The team tackles the regular disparities in the local market by assisting businesses and jobseekers alike. The goal is to connect the jobseeker with employment opportunities and employers with a skilled labor force. The Business Services Team has networked with local employers to identify the skill demands for the local region. The Business Services Team works together as one unit, collaborating with each other to identify current underlying issues in the local workforce. Staff focuses on community outreach to local businesses and to the citizens. The goal is to provide the programs to the people and businesses it serves. The Job Center staff evaluates the skills, knowledge, and barriers of the job seekers while the Business Services Team coordinates with local employers to collaborate on the obstacles and hurdles they face when hiring employees. By working in a partnership together towards developing the talent pipeline that is in demand while creating a bright career path for individuals/families.

The results associated with OJT/WBL outreach initiatives are multifaceted and impactful, spanning across various stakeholders involved. Here's a breakdown of some key results typically associated with OJT/WBL outreach: enhanced employability, improved learning outcomes, skilled workforce, business growth, retention and employee satisfaction, community impact, partnership building, and lifelong learning culture. The results associated with OJT outreach underscore its significance as a catalyst for individual empowerment, economic growth, and societal progress.

33. Credential Attainment / WorkKeys Assessment
Explain the Board's strategies for increasing the attainment of credentials, degrees, and certificates by participants in your LWDA and any accommodations you have made to make attainment easier (i.e., collocation of AEL centers, extended hours, etc.). In addition, please describe the Board's approach to ensuring every Missouri Job Center customer has the opportunity to take the WorkKeys assessments and obtain a NCRC. This should include how the Board collaborates with the local community college(s) in the LWDA to provide space and/or proctoring services for WorkKeys assessments on an as-needed basis.

WorkKeys Assessments are promoted to the job seeker as a valuable tool to be utilized in their job search and as an identifier of their abilities. WorkKeys is promoted to employers as a tool to assist in identifying foundational skills needed. Job Center staff encourages employers to include NCRC preferred when posting job orders. Introducing WorkKeys to students 18 and over, by proctoring on-site, allows for an increase in training achievements. WorkKeys are highly encouraged but due to some accommodation limitations through ACT requirements, WorkKeys cannot be required. Utilizing WorkKeys in this fashion is the first step to identifying abilities and interests that lead to a fulfilling career pathway for our customers.

Once a career pathway is recognized, the Job Center staff, and partners, jointly assist in the attainment of needed credentials, degrees, or training. When needed, participants sign a Release of Information that allows us to contact the schools to get information on attendance and progress as well as the authorization to release required documents that are needed for performance-related documentation. Not all schools require this and some work well with our case managers, which increases our relationship with the school and the ability to get documentation needed based on the outcomes of training services. Partnerships with AEL, Career & Technology Centers, as well as Community Colleges allow for referrals, shared proctoring, and space.

34. ETT Services / Layoff Aversion
Describe how the Board coordinates with the OWD's Community Development Team to ensure that

information and services are delivered in a seamless fashion, including how pre-layoff services are coordinated and provided. In addition, please provide a description of the proactive measures that are taken to identify potential layoffs in the LWDA, how information is shared, and how layoff aversion strategies are coordinated. See current OWD Issuance Statewide Employment Transition Team Policy. Include as Attachment 29 the DW Employment Transition Team Policy.
See attachment 29

Youth

35. Youth Standing Committee Requirements
WIOA allows for a Youth Standing Committee if its membership and expertise meet the WIOA requirements [(WIOA sec. 107(b)(4)(C)]. Please document whether the Board will designate a Youth Standing Committee. If a Youth Standing Committee is not designated, then the Plan needs to state that the Board is not using a Youth Standing Committee. Whether the Board retains responsibility and oversight of Youth services or a Standing Committee is established, the Board should describe how the Board or Youth Standing Committee will meet the requirements of 20 CFR §681.100 and §681.120.
The WDBSE does not have a youth standing committee. The Southeast region's Workforce System Network Committee contains representation from AEL, Department of Social Services, judicial system, and private sector WDBSE members with interest in serving to make a difference in the youth of our region.

36. YSC Composition / Services / Procurement of Providers / Meeting Schedule & Agenda items
   a. Describe the composition of the Youth Standing Committee (if designated) and its participation in the design of Youth services in the LWDA
   The WDBSE does not have a youth standing committee. The Southeast region's Workforce System Network Committee contains representation from AEL, Department of Social Services, judicial system, and private sector WDBSE members with interest in serving to make a difference in the youth of our region.

   b. Describe the development of the Plan relating to Youth services
   The Workforce System Network Committee reviews services offered, enrollment numbers, activities, and performance. Plans are then put into place, with their input, regarding how best to service the WIOA youth population of the Southeast Region. Performance is monitored quarterly to ensure that all counties are being served equally.

   c. Provide an explanation of the YSC role in the procurement of Youth service providers, and recommending eligible Youth providers to the Board, ensuring the 14 elements are a part of the services planned and conducting oversight with respect to eligible Youth providers of Youth activities and the procurement of Youth service providers. See current OWD Issuance WIOA Standing Youth Committees Requirements.
   The WDBSE does not have a youth standing committee. The Southeast region's Workforce System Network Committee contains representation from AEL, Department of Social Services, judicial system, and private sector WDBSE members with interest in serving to make a difference in the youth of our region.   All program elements are provided by the WDBSE subcontractor. Subcontractor provides and coordinates services to meet the 14 youth elements. If an element requires coordination with another entity the subcontractor will conduct those coordination's. A common referral form is used with all partner agencies. The referral is a reverse referral form where the partner agency that is contacted reaches out to the youth to provide needed services to overcome barriers.

d. Also, provide information regarding the Youth Standing Committee meetings, such as any core agenda items that would be included, and the planned meeting schedule (i.e., the first Tuesday of every quarter, etc.).
The Workforce System Network Committee meets quarterly prior to each full board meeting. Additional meetings may be scheduled should the need arise. The agenda varies, but most often includes any updates related to youth services, enrollments, performance, and any other areas in need. Each county is reviewed separately to ensure that all counties are being served.

37. Youth Activities

Provide a description and assessment of the types and availability of Youth activities in the LWDA, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. This description should include:

a. How the Youth activities in the LWDA are developed to ensure the 14 program elements are available within the LWDA;
All program elements are provided by WDBSE subcontractor. Subcontractor provides and coordinates services for the 14 elements. If an element requires coordination with another entity, the subcontractor will develop those relationships. A common referral form is used with all partner agencies. The referral is a reverse referral form where the partner agency that is contacted reaches out to the youth to provide needed services to overcome barriers.

b. The actual services provided by the LWDA for Youth, the element they represent, and how they fit within DOL's themes (see TEGL 05-12) for the emphasis on serving Youth within a comprehensive Youth development approach;

- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery: All WIOA youth Case Managers provide individual tutoring. Staff work with high school counselors to re-engage youth in high school when possible.
- Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services: We do not operate Alternative Ed.; however, we provide AEL referral services. We work with all the established Alternative Education programs. Staff work with high school counselors to re-engage youth in high school when possible.
- Work Experience: 20% of WIOA budget goes towards paid work experience. Additionally, youth can participate, as appropriate, in unpaid work experience and job shadowing as well as paid and unpaid internships and OJT. This is monitored closely to ensure youth are in the appropriate Work Experience that will ensure success and long-term employment.
- Occupational Skills Training: After completing a series of career exploration activities as a part of our work readiness curriculum, we assist youth in applying for available financial aid. If the chosen program of study is not Pell eligible, we have the option to pay for some short-term training expenses. Most often we provide supportive services to assist the youth in getting started with schooling. We pay expenses such as application and testing fees. Periodic visits to the area Higher Education and Vocational Education campuses including Job Corp are arranged as the need arises.
- Education-Workforce preparation, specific to occupation or occupational cluster: We assist in all education-based programs for the youth. If the program of study is non-Pell eligible then the program may be used to pay for some short-term training expenses. Youth will be referred to WIOA Adult services as appropriate. Most often we provide supportive services to assist the youth in getting started with schooling. We pay expenses such as application and testing fees, deposits etc. Occupational education for recognized post-secondary credentials aligned with in-demand industry will follow in the same manner as any other educational training program.
- Leadership Development: Case Management staff provides leadership development

through exposure to postsecondary education, community projects, etc. Workshops are also offered throughout the year to youth on a rotating basis that can include topics such as empowerment strategies, financial and credit management, buying or renting homes, social networking, the value of volunteering, community services, and top jobs.

o Supportive Services and Incentives: It is the responsibility of the Case Manager to coordinate these services with applicable community agencies. See attached supportive service and Incentive policy. Incentive money is earned through earning credentials, training, and skill gains.

o Adult mentoring: All workplace placements require youth be assigned an adult workplace mentor to work directly with the youth focusing on appropriate workplace habits and behaviors. Mentoring activities may include Job shadowing and guidance provided by an adult to assist the youth to increase his/her academic performance; goal setting; support meetings to increase youth motivation; career exploration assistance; world ethics and social skills improvement.

o Follow-Up Services: Follow-up services are offered for at least twelve months after exit. This may include Regular contact with a participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise; assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development and further education; work-related peer support groups; mentoring; tracking the progress and earnings of participants in employment after training; and credential attainment post-program.

o Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling: Case Management staff provides a large amount of individual and group guidance and counseling related to career exploration, personal counseling, counseling, financial counseling, and goal setting as needed.

o Financial Literacy Education: Case Management staff provides training through Financial Literacy module and outside training from financial resources to create budges, initiate checking and savings accounts and learn how to effectively manage spending, credit and debt, teach the significance of credit reports and scores to include identity theft awareness and training.

o Services Provided for Labor Market and Employment Information: Case Management provides training through the modules provided in Work Readiness workshops as well as workshops provided by other resources such as the Missouri Job Centers.

c. The process for identification of Youth service providers;
Request for Proposal (RFP) process is reviewed, discussed, possibly revised, and approved by the Workforce System Network Committee. The committee recommends RFP to the full board. Notification is produced via email, social media, website, etc. of the request for bids. The committee reviews the received proposals, scores them, and makes a recommendation to the full board. Once a provider has been voted on and approved by the full board, the awarded bidder receives a phone call or personal visit within 24 hours from the President/COO to confirm acceptance of the contract. All other bidders get a letter within 3-5 business days notifying them of the decision. The awarded bidder is published on our website.

d. The evaluation of service providers for performance and impact (please provide details on frequency and criteria);
WDBSE staff work at the direction of the WDB President/COO, and the board itself, to verify that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulations are being upheld and the subcontractor or service provider are performing according to proposals submitted and contracts signed. WDB staff will monitor a percentage of all new WIOA past career enrollments per program (funding source-AD, DW, Youth) during the Program

Year Quarters of each contract year based on the direction of the WDBSE President/COO and the Board. WDBSE staff will also monitor appropriation programs during program operation to reduce compliance issues. A review of all files or a random selection technique based on OWD Issuance to be used to identify the files for that quarterly monitoring. All forms for eligibility documentation, services rendered, and payments are compared to MOJobs for data entry accuracy. Process for and findings of the monitoring process are presented to the full board and more information on the comments and findings is available on request. Participant files are reviewed for WIOA eligibility, priority of services, complaint and grievance procedures, employment plans, need for services past career, On-the-Job Training contracts, training plans, supportive services, assessments provided, outcome attainment, supplemental data, and the appropriateness of participant payments.

WDBSE staff also monitors for compliance with WIOA, Fair Labor Standards Act, and Americans with Disabilities Act, Child Labor Laws, and any other contracted grant requirements. Any findings from these reviews will be reviewed and reported to the board during the annual Sub-State Monitoring Report.

Data Element Validation Monitoring is also required Quarterly. The WDBSE follows OWD Issuance on Statewide Data Element Validation. Policy outlines the process and requirements for downloading the selected files from the Missouri Case Management System. All findings are Pass or Fail. Corrections are made when possible but if a record or element has already been reported federally, it must take a fail and be case noted as the only correction option allowed.

Equal Opportunity Staffing Data Analysis Reviews Employment Practices for the Southeast Board and any Sub-Contractor or One-Stop Operator broken down by demographics. The Equal Opportunity Program Data Analysis reviews the programs and services offered in the area broken down by demographics. The Staffing Analysis is completed in October of each year and the Program Analysis is completed each January so that performance information has been reported at the time of the review. These reports are included in the annually required Sub-State Monitoring Report.
Sub-Contractor and One-Stop Operators are also evaluated annually to ensure compliance with Job Description, Federal and State Requirements, Contract Requirements, and general direction of the way the programs are being run and operated. This report is also included in the annually required Sub-State Monitoring Report.

e.   The providers of the Youth services in the LWDA, including the areas and elements they provide.
The WDBSE subcontracts service provider for youth services in all 13 counties of the region. The subcontractor is required to provide or make available all WIOA Youth elements. This is monitored and reviewed quarterly by the Workforce System Network Committee.

f.   How year-round services are provided to Youth 14–24 years of age that are still in high school or out of school;
All counties have WIOA Youth Case Managers assigned. The case managers are mobile, working from various locations. Workshops, activities, and meetings are conducted year-round. Outreach to schools, and other locations youth frequent, are intensified as summer draws closer to promote WIOA youth services to in and out of school youth year-round. Youth case

managers are able to stay in better contact with out of school youth through maintaining partnerships with partner agencies such as AEL programs and other partner agencies. For the past few years case managers have also had the privilege of promoting the Jobs League Program through the Family Support Division, which offers summer employment opportunities for eligible youth, both in and out-of-school. This program provides short-term employment in a field the youth has expressed interest in, to provide the youth with work experience and soft skills. Youth Case Managers are able to maintain contact with the youth during the summer months which keeps the youth engaged. This has been a successful partnership with our local employers and has given much needed summer employment opportunities to rural youth.

g. An example of the flow of services for a Youth in the LWDA (please include all aspects, including intake, objective assessment process, assessment, coordination of services, follow-up, etc.)
All youth enrollments require an assessment before enrollment. The determination on the enrollment status of In-School or Out-of-School is made by what the youth is doing at the time they come in for enrollment/services. Based on that status determination the appropriate assessment is completed, please see the local Basic Skills Deficiency Policy, Attachment 19 for more information. Additionally, participants must complete Aptitude and Interest Testing prior to enrollment. The results of those tests as well as the Labor Market Information for their chosen or top career path helps to develop the WIOA Services that are needed and create the Employment Plan for a map of how they will get to the long-term goal of self-sufficiency. Youth participants have many different options available to them through the 14 youth program elements and the combination of services, barriers, and needs. All these options are used to provide the best assistance we can provide. Co-enrollment in other grants, depending on the participants' eligibility, are also considered as possible options to maximize their participation and outcome. If a youth is not ready to actively participate to be eligible for enrollment, they are given information and the Case Manager will follow up with the youth at a future date to determine if they are ready to follow through. Once a participant has gone 90 days without a countable service, based on completing the program or making the decision to not participate in the program their record will exit. Upon exiting the program, a youth participant is put into "Follow-Up" status which opens the availability to additional follow-up services including supportive services if justified and appropriate to assist the participant as they work towards all their ultimate employment goals.

h. The procedures for serving Youth that are most in need (homeless, disabled, offenders, etc.);
The Southeast region local agency partners, with many local agencies, address all at-risk youth through referrals and partnerships of committee involvement and community connections. This ensures that all areas of concern are addressed as available and includes the youth that are most in need. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.

- o Youth who are subject to the juvenile or adult justice system-after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered.

- o Youth who are disabled- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered.

- o Youth who are homeless- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered.

- o Youth who are pregnant or parenting- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered.

- o Youth who have dropped out of high school- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered.

- o Youth who are in the Foster Care Placement System are able to enroll into the WIOA Youth Program for services and assistance. When youth who are in the Foster Care System turn 18 many of those need additional resources to continue on their training and/or employment path. Working with area Foster Care organizations provides us with the ability to engage them in the program.

i. The identification of the partnerships and describe the coordination of services with other agencies within the LWDA.

For outreach with Jobseekers, the job center staff, youth staff, and WDBSE subcontractor staff have each made it a priority to get out into the communities and help to spread the word about the job centers, services, and openings. Through this targeted outreach, we have been able to connect with county and city resource organizations. This outreach can include setting up booths at events, collaborating through meetings and taskforces, sharing and gathering information, co-enrollment for braiding of resources, and offering services off-site.

Working with other partners and agencies to assist with coordination of services and/or braiding funds, when appropriate, ensures the maximum benefit to the participant and to the funds of the Southeast Workforce Development Grants. A list of local partnerships and agencies that the Board works with includes but is not limited to: foster care agencies, local churches, community partnerships, chambers, self-improvement agencies, post-secondary universities, colleges, and career centers, school districts including Alternative Education, JAG Programs throughout the region, AEL Programs, Probation & Parole departments, social services, outpatient counseling services, food pantries, etc.

All of these agencies assist with resources, referrals, and the ability to coordinate services to best assist participants in our programs and in other programs.

38. Innovative Service-Delivery Projects for OSY

Provide a description of any innovative service-delivery projects for OSY currently operating in the LWDA or a project the Board is planning to implement. Describe the Board's involvement in the projects, and the Board's efforts to continue involvement and funding for the continuation of these projects.

The Board is planning numerous innovative projects that can engage and empower out-of-school youth. These projects aim to provide valuable skills, support personal development, and foster a sense of community. As a Board we know first-hand, that developing any project, it's crucial to involve the youth in the planning process to ensure that the initiatives are relevant, interesting, and meet their needs and aspirations.

- Environmental Conservation Projects
  - o Engage youth in projects focused on environmental conservation, such as cleaning up local parks, planting trees, or participating in recycling initiatives. This fosters a sense of responsibility for the environment and community.
- Civic Engagement Initiatives
  - o Encourage youth to get involved in their communities by organizing initiatives such as

- community clean up events and projects addressing specific local issues.
- Social Enterprise Development
  - o Teach youth how to create and manage social enterprises that address local social issues. Projects such as poverty alleviation, education, and healthcare.
- Peer Mentorship Programs
  - o Establish mentorship programs by partnering with community organizations for mentoring out-of-school youth. This will provide guidance, support, and help them navigate challenges for making informed decisions about their future.

Agricultural Employment Services (AES)

39. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers / Agricultural Employment Services
WIOA section 167 provides the framework for agricultural services delivery. National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) services and grants are implemented at 20 CFR Part 685, as proposed. The current Section 167 Grantee, UMOS—United Migrant Opportunity Services, must be included in the MOU as the NFJP partner. The Plan should address how the LWDB will cooperate with UMOS and the State Agricultural Employment Services office to provide employment and training services to this population.
The Workforce Development Board of Southeast Missouri has an MOU with UMOS/AES in accordance with WIOA section 167 to provide employment and training services to this population. When participants are eligible for WIOA and UMOS, we refer them to the agency for dual enrollment. Allowing co-enrollment with both agencies allows us to offer a wider variety of services for that participant and allows the braiding of funding for any training and/or employment associated participant cost.

Business Services

40. Employer Engagement
Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the LWDA facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Southeast Regional Business Representative Manager, Job Center Lead, OWD Job Center Supervisors and the Veteran Representatives bring the team/process together. This team collaborates to share information so that all businesses may be served, targeting the WDBSE identified in-demand sectors. The case management is utilized to track all business services being provided to employers. Nexus meetings are held within the region, giving the local team insight into local employers' needs.

Business services offered may include OJT, job postings, labor market information, Incumbent Worker program, tax credits, bonding, etc. When the opportunity presents itself WDBSE staff speak at engagements about services available at each Job Center. Economic Developers are at the table, meeting with companies as well as participating in WDBSE meetings, Sector Strategy exercises, and other projects throughout the region.

41. Services to Meet the Workforce Needs of Employers
Describe how the Board coordinates and provides comprehensive and integrated workforce system services to businesses, including the development and delivery of innovative workforce services and strategies to meet the needs of area employers. Explain the collaboration with Missouri Job Center Jobs Teams to facilitate recruitment and meet business demand.

The services in the Job Centers are not only for Job Seekers but also for Employers, Organizations, and

Community Partners as well. Education and agency partnerships are major factors in meeting the needs of both job seekers and employers. WDBSE continues strong partnerships with our two community colleges, our university and with our many vo-tech schools. We need their expertise to develop curriculum to educate our workforce. Working together with both education and agency partners is not only the best use of the funding, but also our best option for meeting the needs of both job seekers and employers. Outreach to businesses is conducted through subcontractor and Job Center involvement with regional chambers of commerce, and economic development departments, as well as by contact from the Business Representative Manager. The Southeast Region's outreach plan for businesses is designed to increase the awareness of available services to increase the number of businesses that use the Missouri Job Center products and services.

- Gather business intelligence to identify current economy
- Work with local and regional economic development professionals
- Provide one-on-one assistance to employers with job matching system
- Encourage entrepreneurship with economic developers

By providing and promoting On-The-Job (OJT) training and Work Experience, the Southeast WDB is able to assist employers with their need for more workers informs the local Job Centers of the OJT Agreements as they are sanctioned by the Compliance Department. The Southeast Business Representative Manager combs the regional Job Center job postings to coordinate strategies to reach out to inform businesses of our numerous services that are available to them. As a service to the businesses utilizing our OJT program, the Business Representative Manager works closely with potential OJT candidates that match with OJT employer needs. Youth Case Managers communicate regularly with the Business Representative Manager to offer OJT to employers who employ youth. These youth work for said companies to develop an understanding of that particular industry, and if it is a fit for both the youth and the employer, an OJT agreement is put in place.

42. Economic Development

Describe how the Board will better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development including how the LWDB will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The Southeast Region sits within two Regional Planning Commissions: Bootheel Regional Planning Commission and the SEMO Regional Planning Commission. The WDBSE works in two ways: coordinating the disbursement of the Job Centers information to businesses and in turn relays business needs to the Job Center. The Southeast Region offers Incumbent Worker funds, On-Job-Training and Work Experience to our businesses.

43. Sector Strategy Initiative / Career Pathways

Describe the Board's sector-strategy initiative. Describe how the Board will be collaborating and aligning resources of all partners, public and private, toward developing a talent pipeline, and how that alignment will create meaningful career pathways for workers possessing skill levels serving important regional industries. Indicate how system services will be framed by industry sectors that are data driven, regionally designed, and guided by employers and how these strategies will be sustained. Include the methods the Board will be using to inform and engage key public and private stakeholders in the development of sector-strategies and career pathways.

The Southeast WDBSE, the subcontractor and the local Job Center staff work together to create a framework that aligns various stakeholders, resources, and activities toward common goals, fostering growth and innovation within the chosen sectors. Key components of a sector strategy initiative include needs assessment, stakeholder engagement, goal setting, resources, skill development, and evaluation. A sector strategy initiative aims to create a conducive environment for sustainable growth and competitiveness, fostering economic development within the targeted industry. This strategy is

sustained through various meetings throughout the region with key stakeholders involved.

44. Business Services Plan

Boards shall maintain a Business Services Plan, outlining team members, including WIOA core and combined partners, and the marketing and outreach roles and expectations of team members. The Business Services Plan also should outline the team's purpose, goals, and policies and procedures to ensure seamless delivery of services, avoid duplication, and ensure feedback to the Board's Job centers. The plan should explain how the services provided by business service staff will be recorded in the client case management system for the calculation of two types of Effectiveness in Serving Employers Measure. (1-number of businesses served and 2-market penetration of businesses in the area). Include the **Business Services Plan as Attachment 30**. **See Attachment 30**

The mission of the WDBSE Regional Business Services is to develop a seamless delivery system for businesses. Partners will coordinate efforts to ensure a point of contact to deliver training and employment services. The WDBSE Business Services Plan includes the following: OWD Veterans Representatives, OWD Regional Coordinator, Regional Business Support Unit, and the Regional One-Stop-Operator that will coordinate services to business sectors in the Southeast Region. The team will provide outreach to employers and promote Job Center services (i.e. OJT, Work Experience, Incumbent Worker funding, job orders, hiring events, etc.) Data input into MoJobs will keep all team members informed of region wide activities. The team will work with economic development partners to support attraction, growth and retention of businesses that bring wealth and provide jobs to the region.

Innovative Service Delivery Strategies

45. Missouri Re-entry Process /Ex-offender Initiative

Describe how the LWDB will support the Missouri re-entry process / ex-offender initiative. Include the services to be provided for ex-offenders and the process to be used to identify employers willing to hire ex-offenders.

WDBSE supports the Missouri Re-entry Process for the Ex-Offender initiative by closely partnering with Probation & Parole, OWD Veteran staff, and Department of Corrections. These agencies are included in the monthly One-Stop partner meetings and provide strategic input on making services viable and available to ex-offenders. The Business Representative Manager talks one-on-one with employers, promoting the talents of justice involved individuals. The Job Centers continue to work with justice involved individuals, exposing them to all services available. Staff encourage assessments, WorkKeys testing, attendance in workshops, education/training, and job placement.

46. Work-based Learning / Transitional Jobs

Describe the Board's innovative strategies for promoting and increasing enrollments in the work-based learning programs, such as Registered Apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Work Experience, Internships, Incumbent Worker Training, Transitional Jobs, and Customized Training. Include processes to target and encourage employer participation.

The WDB's strategy for promoting and increasing enrollments in the work-based learning programs is to partner closely with OWD Regional Workforce Coordinator, OWD Job Center Supervisors, Business Support Unit and the local Business Representative Manager. This partnership is accomplished by including them in the monthly One-Stop Partner meetings, the NEXUS meetings, as well as meetings to discuss appropriate businesses to target and ensure contact with businesses are coordinated so as not to duplicate visits, but to build relationships that will encourage participation with employers throughout the region.

The Southeast Region has encouraged Incumbent Worker Training for several years. The local Business

Representative Manager shares this program with companies and provides program information to small and large groups of businesses. On-Job-Training is promoted at these same meetings, including social meeting and shared at County Commission events.

Including all partners in discussions about local companies gives insight to local needs, example, if a company is expanding their business, our team will target that company for assistance. The team will offer hosting hiring events, virtual interviewing, OJT, job postings, etc. If a company is laying off, our team will target the employees, offering Job Center services, workshops, posting resumes, assisting with job search, paid training, etc. When the team works together with innovative ideas, coming together with a common goal to serve employers within the region, the outcome will be more successful.

47. Trade Adjustment Assistance

Describe the Board's strategies for ensuring customers are aware of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program and are co-enrolled into both WIOA Dislocated Worker and TAA, except in extenuating circumstances? (**Integration of Services or Co-enrollment Policy should be Attachment 24**)
See Attachment 24
The WDBSE will make every attempt to co-enroll all eligible Trade Act Participants into the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program. Enrolling an individual into every program for which they are eligible is to maximize the options available to them to overcome barriers and successfully obtain self-sufficient employment. OWD staff and WIOA staff in each Job Center work together closely with participants that are eligible for both programs to ensure we are meeting co-enrollment requirements and offering the activities necessary to assist the participant with employment and training needs they are eligible to access. At times, there are extenuating circumstances that would not allow us to co-enroll a participant into multiple programs.

48. Missouri Community Colleges

Describe how the Board will coordinate with the local community colleges. Please describe in depth the referral process of participants between the Community Colleges and Job Centers. Please include the **MOU (cooperative agreement) between the Board and Community Colleges** if your LWDA has any as **Attachment 31** to the Plan. **See attachment 31.**

The Board strives to strengthen the connections between its partnerships with the local community colleges by maintaining open communication between the job center staff the community college staff. Community college staff are involved in the monthly One-Stop partner meetings. Referrals are open lines of interaction on behalf of job seekers and students.

49. Incumbent Worker Policy

If the LWDB has an **Incumbent Worker Policy**, please include it as **Attachment 32**. If not please include a statement that the LWDB does not have an Incumbent Worker Policy.
See Attachment 32

Strategies for Faith-based and Community-based Organizations

50. Faith-based Strategies

Describe those activities to be undertaken to:

(1) Increase the opportunities for participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the One-Stop Delivery System; and
Engaging with faith-based organizations provides unique opportunities for community

development. Fostering dialogue and collaboration with faith-based organizations promotes understanding of the Workforce Development System. This will aid in mutual understanding, appreciations of diversity and the building of stronger community bonds.

(2) Expand the access of faith-based and community-based organizations' customers to the services offered by the One-Stops in the LWDA.
Strong partnerships are being built throughout the region. Most community-based organizations and many faith-based organizations are present and collaborating with local Job Centers. These partnerships are crucial in building trust and demonstrating genuine commitment to inclusivity for all customers.

Outline efforts for conducting outreach campaigns to educate faith-based and community organizations about the attributes and objectives of the demand-driven workforce development system. Indicate how these resources can be strategically and effectively leveraged in the LWDA to help meet the objectives of WIOA.
Actively engaging in community outreach efforts will assist in increasing awareness of the services and programs available throughout the region. This collaboration can facilitate cross-promotion of events, share resources, and broaden the reach of the local Board's and Job Center efforts.

REGIONAL PLANS

Regional Planning Guidance

51. Regional Plans

Missouri has designated 13 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). In accordance with WIOA sec. 106(c)(2), each of the LWDAs establish a Plan; however, collaboration must exist among the Kansas City and St. Louis Economic Regions for the creation of Regional Plans composed of the following:

1) For the Kansas City Region, one Regional Plan for the local planning areas of Kansas City and Vicinity Region and the East Jackson County Region; and

2) For the St. Louis Region, one Regional Plan for the local planning areas of: The City of St. Louis Region, the County of Saint Louis Region, the County of St. Charles Region, and the Jefferson/Franklin County Consortium Region.

While this establishes 13 Boards that are encouraged to collaborate, cooperate, and plan across common needs, they will not explicitly submit a Regional Plan. This establishes two Boards within the Kansas City Region that must contribute to a Regional Economic Plan for the Kansas City regional economy and four Boards within the St. Louis Region that must contribute to a Regional Economic Plan for the St. Louis regional economy.

Boards within the Kansas City and St. Louis regional economic planning areas must complete a regional planning requirement by including within each original LWDB Plan a Regional Economic Plan that is identically shared by all Boards in each economic region.

Include the **Regional Plan as Attachment 33 (not applicable to Southeast Region)** Copies of Local Plans from other LWDAs in the region are not required for your Local Plan. Please submit the combined portion of the Regional Plan with signatures of the CEOs, Chairs and LWDB Directors.

NOTE:
Following approval of the Local Plan and Regional Plan, plans will be required to be posted on the LWDB website. Any updates or plan modifications will be required to be posted by the LWDB after approval. Please keep a current Local Plan and Regional Plan, if applicable, available on your website at all times. **Not applicable to Southeast Region**

REQUIRED POLICIES AND ATTACHMENTS

All local policies relating to WIOA are required to be approved by OWD and listed as part of the required attachments to the local plan regardless of whether or not they are required by the LWDB, state or federal guidelines. The below list is not an all-inclusive list of federal regulations. At any time the LWDB, state, or federal guidelines may require additional policies beyond the list below.

See pages 2 and 3 of local plan