

NRWIB WIOA Local Plan Modification

I. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A. Chief Elected Official(s) (CEOs)

1. Identify the chief elected official(s) by name, title, mailing address, phone number and email address. A complete listing of the current Chief Elected Officials is attached in Appendix A.

2. If the local area includes more than one unit of general local government in accordance with WIOA sec. 107(c)(1)(B), attach the agreement that has been executed to define how the parties will carry out the roles and responsibilities of the CEO.

The local area includes more than one unit of general local government and therefore in accordance with WIOA Sec. 107 (c)(1)(B), an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) among the Municipalities is in place that defines how the parties will carry out the roles and responsibilities of the CEOs.

3. If applicable, attach a copy of the agreement executed between the CEO(s) and the LWDB.

A copy of the Intergovernmental Agreement is attached in Appendix B.

4. Describe the following:

- i. The nomination process used by the CEO to elect the local board chair and members;
- ii. The term limitations and how the term appointments will be staggered to ensure only a portion of membership expire in a given year;
- iii. The process to notify the CEO of a board member vacancy to ensure a prompt nominee;
- iv. The proxy and alternative designee process that will be used when a board member is unable to attend a meeting and assigns a designee as per the requirements at §679.110(d)(4) of the WIOA regulations;
- v. The use of technology such as phone and Web-based meetings that will be used to promote board member participation;
- vi. The process to ensure board members actively participate in convening the workforce development system's stakeholders, brokering relationships with a diverse range of employers, and leveraging support for workforce development activities; and,
- vii. Any other conditions governing appointments or membership on the local board.

The Intergovernmental Agreement (attached in Appendix B) sets forth the following: the nomination process used to appoint local board members, the term limitations and duration of term appointments; the process to notify the CEO of a board member vacancy to ensure a proper replacement; the proxy and alternative designee process that will be used when a board member is unable to attend a meeting and alternative designee as per the requirements at §679.110(d)(4) of the WIOA regulations; the policy for the use of technology for participation, such as phone and web-based meetings, that will be used to promote the board member participation.

The Bylaws of the Local Workforce Development Board (Appendix C) articulate the detailed committee structure, as well as the process to ensure that board members actively participate in convening the workforce development system's stakeholders, brokering relationships with a diverse range of employers, and leveraging support for workforce development activities.



5. Provide a description of how the CEO was involved in the development, review, and approval of the plan.

Consistent with the governance structure established through the Intergovernmental Agreement and NRWIB Bylaws, the Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) of the Northwest Workforce Development Area were engaged in the review of the two-year modification to the Local Plan. The proposed modifications, including updates to labor market information, workforce system activities, goals, and strategies, were presented to the CEOs for review and discussion at their annual meeting on June 10, 2026.

Following CEO review, the modified plan was presented to the NRWIB Board of Directors on June 11, 2026, for review and approval. Upon Board approval, the plan was released for the required 14-day public comment period in accordance with WIOA requirements.

B. Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)

1. Provide a matrix identifying LWDB members including the category each member represents and the term of service.

See Appendix D.

2. Provide a description of how the LWDB was involved in the development, review, and approval of the plan.

The Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board (LWDB) was actively involved in the review and approval of the two-year modification to the Local Plan. Board members were provided an opportunity to review proposed updates reflecting changes in labor market conditions, workforce priorities, service delivery strategies, economic development activities, and state and federal workforce guidance.

The proposed modifications were presented to the Board of Directors on June 11, 2026. Following discussion and review, the Board voted to approve the modified Local Plan. In accordance with WIOA requirements, the approved draft was subsequently released for a 14-day public comment period to provide stakeholders, partners, and members of the public an opportunity to review and provide feedback prior to final submission.

3. Provide an organizational chart for the LWDB and administrative support.

See Appendix E.

C. Local Administrative Entity and Grant Sub Recipient

1. Identify the administrative entity.

As is set forth in the Intergovernmental Agreement, the City of Waterbury is the grant recipient.

2. Identify the entity selected to receive and disburse grant funds (local fiscal agent).

The entity designated to receive and distribute the grant funds acting as the local fiscal agent is the 501(c)3 Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board, as is articulated in the Intergovernmental Agreement.

D. One-Stop System

1. Provide a description of the local one-stop system, including the number, type and location of full-service and other service delivery points.

The local one stop system continues to be anchored by the comprehensive American Job Center in Waterbury and affiliate service locations throughout the region. Since adoption of the original plan, NRWIB has strategically relocated services to improve accessibility, reduce infrastructure costs, strengthen partnerships, and increase service delivery capacity. This includes the relocation of the Torrington affiliate to the EdAdvance Career and College Accelerator and the relocation of the Danbury



affiliate to Western Connecticut State University. These relocations strengthen alignment with education and workforce partners, expand access to career and training services, and support the development of career pathways connecting students and jobseekers to regional employment opportunities. NRWIB will continue to explore innovative service delivery models and community based partnerships that increase access to workforce services across the region.

2. Identify the process to select the one-stop operator.

Resource Development Associates (RDA) is the operator of all three one-stops, located in Waterbury, Danbury, and Torrington. Upon review and discussion of responses to competitive procurement, the One-Stop Committee selected RDA for recommendation to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee met on May 7, 2025, and voted to move forward with the selection.

3. Identify the entity or entities selected to operate the local one-stop center(s).

Career Resources, Inc. (CRI).

4. Identify the entity or entities selected to provide career services within the local one-stop system.

Career Resources, Inc. (CRI) currently provides Title I career services and Jobs First Employment Services case management throughout the Northwest Workforce Development Area. Services are delivered through the American Job Center system, including the comprehensive center in Waterbury and affiliate locations in Danbury and Torrington.

NRWIB conducted a competitive procurement process for career services in Program Year 2025. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued on November 4, 2024, with a submission deadline of January 17, 2025. Three proposals were reviewed and scored by the One-Stop Committee using established procurement and evaluation criteria.

Following review, scoring, and discussion of all proposals, the One-Stop Committee recommended Career Resources, Inc. for continued service delivery. The NRWIB Board of Directors approved the Committee's recommendation on March 13, 2025, and CRI was selected as the provider of Title I career services and Jobs First Employment Services case management for the Northwest Workforce Development Area.

5. Identify and describe what career services will be provided by the selected one-stop operator and what career services, if any, will be contracted out to service providers.

NRWIB has separated the duties of the career service provider from those of the one-stop operator. All career services as outlined in the WIOA Regulations are provided by Career Resources, Inc. These include both basic and individualized career services and follow-up services. Services range from labor market information and information on partner programs to comprehensive skills assessment, career planning and the development of individual employment plans. Training will be made available to participants after assessment and evaluation determines that the individual requires training in order to obtain employment or remain employed. At this time, it is not anticipated that any career services would be contracted out to other service providers.

II. ENVIROMENTAL SCAN

A. Provide an analysis of the local area's economic conditions, including information on existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The Northwest Workforce Development Area encompasses 41 municipalities across Northwest Connecticut and is supported by a diverse economy that includes healthcare, retail trade, government, manufacturing, construction, professional services, transportation, education, hospitality, and other



service industries. The region includes urban centers, suburban communities, and rural towns, creating a labor market with both large foundational employment sectors and emerging areas of growth.

This analysis uses three complementary labor market sources to assess local economic conditions and identify in-demand industries and occupations. Tables 1, 2, and 3 provide the primary current and near-term analysis using the Lightcast Q2 2026 Data Set, 2026.2 – QCEW Employees, referred to throughout this section as the Q2-2026 data. The analysis also references the Connecticut Department of Labor’s Northwest Region 2022–2032 long-term industry and occupational projections and the Lightcast January 2025–May 2026 Job Posting Analytics report, both of which are included with this Local Plan as appendices.

Together, these sources show a regional economy led by Healthcare and Social Assistance, followed by Retail Trade, Government, Manufacturing, Accommodation and Food Services, and Construction. The Q2-2026 data identifies current employment, wages, location quotients, recent growth, and near-term projected demand; CTDOL projections provide a longer-term view of structural demand; and job posting analytics show real-time employer hiring activity. Taken together, the data helps identify growth sectors, high-demand occupations, replacement needs, skill transitions, and sector-specific labor shortages.

**Table 1: Top 15 Industry Sectors by Employment Size
Northwest Development Area, 2-digit NAICS****

NAICS	Description	2022 Jobs	2026 Jobs	22-26 % Change	2030 Jobs	26-30 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job	2026 LQ
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	37,454	42,920	14.59%	45,494	6.00%	\$81,224	1.38
44	Retail Trade	28,561	28,245	-1.11%	28,614	1.31%	\$57,217	1.38
90	Government	25,190	26,839	6.55%	27,762	3.44%	\$105,210	0.89
31	Manufacturing	22,503	21,632	-3.87%	21,376	-1.18%	\$121,662	1.28
72	Accommodation and Food Services	14,922	15,841	6.16%	16,662	5.18%	\$37,188	0.84
23	Construction	10,450	10,866	3.98%	11,208	3.14%	\$103,965	0.98
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	10,087	10,257	1.69%	10,456	1.93%	\$170,502	0.7
56	Administrative, Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services	8,631	8,789	1.84%	9,095	3.47%	\$78,812	0.73
42	Wholesale Trade	8,055	8,247	2.38%	8,465	2.64%	\$144,936	1.02
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	7,393	8,113	9.73%	8,412	3.70%	\$55,288	1.29
48	Transportation and Warehousing	5,380	6,130	13.94%	6,548	6.82%	\$114,211	0.68
61	Educational Services	4,332	5,339	23.25%	5,711	6.97%	\$75,244	1.22
52	Finance and Insurance	4,133	3,963	-4.12%	3,937	-0.67%	\$254,626	0.47
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,554	3,391	-4.60%	3,260	-3.85%	\$251,577	0.97
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,829	3,221	13.84%	3,361	4.35%	\$49,834	0.89

A location quotient (LQ) is an analytical statistic that measures a region’s industrial specialization relative to a larger geographic unit (usually the nation). An LQ is computed as an industry’s share of a regional total for some economic statistics (earnings, employment, etc.) divided by the



industry's share of the national total for the same statistic. For example, an LQ of 1.0 in mining means that the region and the nation are equally specialized in mining; while an LQ of 1.8 means that the region has a higher concentration in mining than the nation.* LQ's above 1.25 are considered to be the baseline for a firm economic base to the region. *Source: Lightcast Q2 2026 Data Set, 2026.2 – QCEW Employees*

Industry Analysis

Table 1 shows that the Northwest Workforce Development Area is supported by large foundational sectors, high-wage industries, and emerging growth areas. The region's largest industry is Healthcare and Social Assistance, with 42,920 jobs in 2026, followed by Retail Trade, Government, Manufacturing, Accommodation and Food Services, and Construction. Together, these sectors represent a major share of regional employment and continue to shape demand for workers across Northwest Connecticut.

Healthcare and Social Assistance is the clearest in-demand industry sector. It grew 14.6% between 2022 and 2026 and is projected to grow another 6.0% through 2030, reaching 45,494 jobs. CTDOL's 2022–2032 projections reinforce this finding, identifying healthcare as the region's strongest long-term growth sector, with approximately 4,945 additional jobs projected. The Job Posting Analytics report also confirms strong real-time healthcare demand, with hospitals, home health care services, nursing care facilities, physician offices, and assisted living facilities among the region's highest-posting industries.

Other growth sectors include Educational Services, which grew 23.3% from 2022 to 2026 and is projected to grow another 7.0% through 2030, and Transportation and Warehousing, which grew 13.9% and is projected to grow another 6.8%. Accommodation and Food Services is projected to grow 5.2% through 2030 and remains important for employment volume and entry-level workforce access. CTDOL's long-term projections also identify Accommodation and Food Services, Transportation and Warehousing, Educational Services, and Construction as significant growth sectors, while job posting analytics confirm active demand in healthcare, retail, logistics, hospitality, and customer-facing roles.

Construction is projected to grow 3.1% through 2030 and remains important because of its wage potential, skilled-trades demand, and connection to infrastructure investment. CTDOL projects approximately 1,236 additional Construction jobs from 2022 to 2032, with growth concentrated in specialty trades, heavy and civil engineering construction, utility system construction, and highway, street, and bridge construction. This supports continued focus on Architecture, Engineering, and Construction career pathways, apprenticeships, safety training, and work-based learning.

The region also contains several high-wage sectors that are critical to economic mobility, including Finance and Insurance, Management of Companies and Enterprises, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Wholesale Trade, Manufacturing, Transportation and Warehousing, Government, and Construction. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services is especially notable, with average earnings of approximately \$170,502 per job and CTDOL long-term projections showing approximately 1,202 additional jobs from 2022 to 2032.

Manufacturing requires a nuanced interpretation. The Q2-2026 data shows Manufacturing declined 3.9% between 2022 and 2026 and is projected to decline another 1.2% through 2030. However, CTDOL projects modest long-term growth of approximately 454 jobs. Manufacturing also remains one of the region's largest and most specialized sectors, with 21,632 jobs, average earnings of \$121,662, and an LQ of 1.28. Although it is less prominent in real-time job postings than healthcare, retail, logistics, or hospitality, Manufacturing remains a strategic priority because of its scale, wages, replacement needs, skill requirements, and importance to regional competitiveness.

Retail Trade also shows both opportunity and risk. It remains one of the region's largest sectors, with 28,245 jobs and an LQ of 1.38, but it declined slightly from 2022 to 2026, and CTDOL projects slight long-



term decline. Job posting analytics show that retail still generates substantial hiring activity, including postings for Retail Salespersons, Cashiers, and Stockers and Order Fillers. Retail should therefore be viewed as an important entry-level and turnover-driven employment sector rather than a primary long-term growth sector.

Overall, Table 1 points to a regional economy led by healthcare, education, transportation, construction, hospitality, and professional services growth, while continuing to rely on large foundational sectors such as retail, government, and manufacturing. Workforce strategies should balance growth-sector training with replacement hiring, incumbent worker training, upskilling, work-based learning, and career pathway development in high-wage and regionally specialized sectors.

While industry data identifies where economic activity is concentrated, occupational data provides insight into the specific jobs and skills needed to support the regional economy. Table 2 analyzes broad occupational groups by employment size, projected growth, annual openings, and earnings.

Table 2: All Occupations in Northwest Service Area, 2-Digit SOC

SOC	Description	2022 Jobs	2022 - 2026 % Change	2026 Jobs	2026 - 2030 % Change	2026 Avg. Annual Openings	2026 Avg. Hourly Earnings	2026 Median Hourly Earnings	2026 Median Annual Earnings
43	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	23,951	-5.92%	22,534	0.42%	2,601	\$26.97	\$24.77	\$51,513.41
41	Sales and Related Occupations	19,385	-0.88%	19,215	0.54%	2,727	\$25.91	\$18.67	\$38,843.51
11	Management Occupations	15,339	11.51%	17,105	3.24%	1,436	\$74.78	\$64.78	\$134,742.15
35	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	15,500	8.87%	16,874	4.66%	3,330	\$19.89	\$17.46	\$36,313.43
53	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	15,890	5.55%	16,772	4.66%	2,554	\$23.07	\$20.64	\$42,937.62
29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	14,282	13.01%	16,141	4.73%	1,091	\$54.02	\$45.06	\$93,730.07
25	Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	13,822	12.88%	15,602	4.56%	1,666	\$32.45	\$28.31	\$58,889.34
31	Healthcare Support Occupations	10,965	16.90%	12,818	7.84%	2,142	\$21.24	\$20.23	\$42,070.63
51	Production Occupations	13,005	-5.51%	12,289	-0.81%	1,389	\$26.83	\$23.26	\$48,380.30
13	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	8,926	2.44%	9,144	2.90%	796	\$45.78	\$41.19	\$85,675.18
47	Construction and Extraction Occupations	7,417	1.47%	7,526	3.39%	688	\$33.11	\$31.77	\$66,082.61
49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	6,633	3.93%	6,894	4.51%	711	\$32.34	\$30.43	\$63,290.84
37	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	6,193	11.08%	6,880	4.70%	1,025	\$21.38	\$19.40	\$40,347.05
39	Personal Care and Service Occupations	5,433	15.23%	6,260	4.28%	1,109	\$20.55	\$17.52	\$36,437.03
21	Community and Social Service Occupations	4,457	13.37%	5,053	5.79%	544	\$32.37	\$29.13	\$60,594.32



33	Protective Service Occupations	4,406	8.99%	4,802	4.03%	625	\$30.86	\$27.49	\$57,170.40
15	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	4,510	-4.05%	4,327	0.01%	258	\$53.61	\$49.63	\$103,239.60
17	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	3,447	-0.06%	3,445	1.89%	244	\$51.06	\$47.32	\$98,423.05
27	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	2,167	3.63%	2,246	3.11%	246	\$36.49	\$30.12	\$62,657.46
19	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,248	8.61%	1,355	5.09%	127	\$48.38	\$44.20	\$91,935.92
23	Legal Occupations	1,222	-0.40%	1,217	2.67%	89	\$65.77	\$49.82	\$103,634.34
45	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	627	9.85%	689	10.04%	124	\$18.81	\$16.49	\$34,307.34
	totals	198,824		209,186		25,522			

** SOC-55 Military-only Occupations and SOC-99 Unclassified Occupations returned zero data query results. Source: Lightcast Q2 2026 Data Set, 2026.2 – QCEW Employees

Occupational Analysis

Table 2 provides a broad view of occupational demand across the Northwest Workforce Development Area. The largest occupational groups include Office and Administrative Support, Sales and Related, Management, Food Preparation and Serving, Transportation and Material Moving, and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations, demonstrating significant demand across administrative, service, healthcare, logistics, management, and customer-facing roles.

The strongest growth is concentrated in healthcare, education, human services, and service-related occupations. Healthcare Support Occupations grew 16.9% between 2022 and 2026 and are projected to grow another 7.8% through 2030. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations, Educational Instruction and Library Occupations, and Community and Social Service Occupations also showed strong growth, reflecting continued demand for healthcare workers, educators, direct-care workers, and human services professionals.

Annual openings show that workforce demand is driven by both growth and replacement hiring. The largest openings are in Food Preparation and Serving (3,330), Sales and Related (2,727), Office and Administrative Support (2,601), Transportation and Material Moving (2,554), and Healthcare Support (2,142). These openings reflect turnover, retirements, worker movement, and ongoing employer demand across major sectors of the regional economy.

Several occupational groups require focused workforce strategies. Office and Administrative Support remains the largest occupational group, with 22,534 jobs, but declined 5.9% from 2022 to 2026 and faces longer-term transformation risk. Production Occupations also declined 5.5%, but this does not fully reflect the importance of Manufacturing to the regional economy. Manufacturing remains one of the region's largest and most specialized industries, but its workforce is spread across many occupational categories, including production, maintenance, engineering, logistics, supervision, and administrative roles. As a result, manufacturing demand is better understood through both industry-level data and employer feedback, not only through broad occupational rankings.



Overall, Table 2 shows that broad occupational demand is concentrated in healthcare, education, logistics, food service, sales, administrative support, management, production, and skilled technical roles. These trends provide the foundation for the more detailed occupation analysis in Table 3.

Detailed Occupation Analysis

Table 3 provides a more detailed view of the specific occupations driving employment volume and hiring demand in the Northwest Workforce Development Area. The region’s largest occupations reflect demand across healthcare, retail, logistics, management, education, food service, administrative support, and building services.

Table 3: Top 15 Occupations by Employment Size in Northwest Region by 5-DIGIT SOC								
SOC	Description	2026 Jobs	2022 – 2026 % Change	2026 – 2030 % Change	2026 Avg. Hourly Earnings	2026 Median Hourly Earnings	2026 Median Annual Earnings	2026 Annual Job Openings
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	6,983	21.72%	10.90%	\$19.78	\$18.71	\$38,918.85	1,281
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	6,393	5.66%	1.50%	\$20.25	\$18.08	\$37,613.73	953
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	5,627	1.94%	5.00%	\$20.15	\$19.12	\$39,761.57	974
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	5,475	3.71%	2.58%	\$77.13	\$62.35	\$129,683.03	463
41-2011	Cashiers	5,369	-12.41%	-1.68%	\$17.30	\$16.71	\$34,765.38	1,026
29-1141	Registered Nurses	4,908	16.30%	3.69%	\$49.31	\$47.16	\$98,101.06	297
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	3,886	13.83%	5.06%	\$16.88	\$16.06	\$33,404.34	944
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	3,162	14.14%	4.38%	\$18.62	\$17.44	\$36,269.11	435
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	3,149	8.12%	4.00%	\$19.98	\$18.12	\$37,685.09	481
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2,993	-3.18%	3.69%	\$21.30	\$20.00	\$41,603.12	440
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	3,004	11.74%	-0.01%	\$23.46	\$22.14	\$46,052.92	358
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	2,964	-9.00%	-1.66%	\$24.06	\$22.38	\$46,549.53	387
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	2,813	-5.21%	3.63%	\$22.04	\$17.55	\$36,495.56	590
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	2,875	0.15%	0.78%	\$37.40	\$35.99	\$74,864.38	278
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	2,625	-4.96%	1.69%	\$27.37	\$26.28	\$54,667.73	297

Source: Lightcast Q2 2026 Data Set, 2026.2 – QCEW Employees

When compared with CTDOL’s 2022–2032 projections and the January 2025–May 2026 Job Posting Analytics report, several occupation patterns stand out:

- **Healthcare is the strongest area of alignment.** Home Health and Personal Care Aides are the region’s largest detailed occupation, with 6,983 jobs, 21.7% growth, 10.9% projected growth through 2030, and 1,281 annual openings. CTDOL also identifies this as the region’s strongest long-term growth occupation, and the Job Posting Analytics report shows 3,893 unique postings for home-care roles.



- **Registered Nurses show the strongest real-time hiring pressure.** Table 3 shows 4,908 Registered Nurse jobs, 16.3% growth, and continued projected growth through 2030. CTDOL also projects long-term growth, while the Job Posting Analytics report shows 9,350 unique postings, making Registered Nurses the clearest real-time demand outlier.
- **Manufacturing remains underrepresented in the Top 15 occupation list.** Manufacturing is one of the region’s largest and most specialized sectors, with 21,632 jobs, average earnings of \$121,662, and an LQ of 1.28. However, manufacturing employment is spread across many roles, including production, machining, assembly, welding, inspection, maintenance, supervision, logistics, engineering, and administration. As a result, manufacturing demand should be evaluated through industry-level data and sector partnership feedback, not only the largest individual occupation titles.
- **Retail, logistics, food service, and administrative occupations remain major sources of hiring demand.** Retail Salespersons, Cashiers, Customer Service Representatives, Stockers and Order Fillers, Laborers and Freight/Stock/Material Movers, Fast Food and Counter Workers, Waiters and Waitresses, Office Clerks, and Administrative Assistants all generate significant openings or posting activity. However, several of these occupations show limited, flat, or declining long-term growth, suggesting that demand is often driven by turnover, replacement hiring, and entry-level workforce access rather than expansion alone.

Overall, Table 3 shows that the region’s in-demand occupations are concentrated in healthcare, home care, nursing, retail, logistics, food service, education support, management, administrative support, building services, and manufacturing-related roles. The strongest alignment across the Q2-2026 data, CTDOL projections, and job posting analytics is in healthcare and home care, while retail, administrative support, production, and customer-facing occupations require strategies focused on turnover, replacement demand, upskilling, and advancement pathways. A more detailed analysis of employer-requested skills, credentials, education levels, and qualifications is provided in Section C.

B. Provide an analysis of the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations.

Employer needs in the Northwest Workforce Development Area are shaped by growth in key sectors, high replacement demand in large occupations, and real-time hiring pressure reflected in job postings. The Q2-2026 data, CTDOL 2022–2032 projections, and the January 2025–May 2026 Job Posting Analytics report show that employers need a workforce system capable of producing trained, work-ready candidates for both high-growth sectors and high-volume occupations.

The strongest employment need is in Healthcare and Social Assistance, the region’s largest industry sector and the clearest area of alignment across all data sources. Employers need Registered Nurses, Home Health and Personal Care Aides, CNAs, LPNs, direct support professionals, medical assistants, and other patient-care workers. Strong real-time demand for Registered Nurses and home-care roles reinforces the need for healthcare career pathways, clinical training partnerships, short-term credentials, and incumbent worker advancement opportunities.

Employers also need workers in retail, logistics, hospitality, food service, transportation, education, construction, manufacturing, and administrative/customer-facing roles. Some of these occupations are growing, while others are stable or declining but still generate significant openings due to turnover,



retirements, and worker movement. This distinction is important because employer demand is not limited to net-new job growth; large sectors such as Retail Trade, Manufacturing, Government, and Office and Administrative Support continue to require workers because of their employment size and recurring replacement needs.

From a workforce system perspective, employers need:

- Access to trained candidates who can enter employment quickly in healthcare, logistics, food service, retail, construction, manufacturing, and administrative roles.
- Short-term occupational training aligned with high-demand jobs, including healthcare credentials, manufacturing skills, construction safety, logistics/material handling, customer service, and food safety.
- Curriculum development and training customization that responds to employer-identified skill gaps, especially through regional sector partnerships and direct business engagement.
- Work-based learning opportunities, including on-the-job training, internships, clinical experiences, apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and transitional job models.
- Incumbent worker training to help employers upskill current staff, improve retention, respond to technology changes, and create advancement pathways.
- Soft skills and work-readiness preparation, including reliability, communication, professionalism, teamwork, problem-solving, digital literacy, customer service, and adaptability.
- Supportive services for WIOA-eligible participants, including transportation, childcare, tools, uniforms, testing fees, licensing costs, and case management supports that help jobseekers complete training and retain employment.

Manufacturing requires a nuanced workforce response. Although it does not dominate the Top 15 detailed occupations or real-time job posting report in the same way as healthcare, it remains one of the region's largest, highest-wage, and most specialized industries. Because manufacturing employment is spread across many roles — including production, machining, assembly, welding, inspection, maintenance, supervision, logistics, engineering, and administration — employer needs should be addressed through sector partnership feedback, customized training, incumbent worker training, credentials, and replacement-demand strategies.

Retail, food service, administrative support, and customer-facing occupations should also be understood as high-volume entry points for many WIOA-eligible jobseekers. Employers in these areas need reliable, work-ready candidates with customer service, communication, basic math, digital skills, scheduling flexibility, and professionalism. These jobs can provide immediate employment while creating pathways into higher-wage sectors such as healthcare, business services, logistics, manufacturing, and management.

Overall, employer needs point to a workforce system that can respond to immediate hiring demand while also building long-term career pathways. NRWIB's business services, chamber partnerships, regional sector partnerships, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, and grant-funded training programs are critical tools for filling current openings and preparing residents for family-sustaining careers in priority sectors.

- C. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.



The knowledge and skills needed by employers in the Northwest Workforce Development Area reflect the region’s mix of high-growth industries, large foundational sectors, high-wage technical fields, and high-volume occupations with recurring replacement demand. Across the Q2-2026 labor market data, CTDO 2022–2032 projections, job posting analytics, and employer feedback, the common theme is the need for both technical skills and foundational work-readiness skills.

The Job Posting Analytics report shows strong demand for healthcare-related skills and credentials, including nursing, home health care, personal care, caregiving, medication administration, RN, BLS, CPR, ACLS, CNA, LPN, and BSN. It also identifies cross-sector needs in customer service, sales, inventory, material handling, food safety, Microsoft Office, scheduling, data entry, operations, leadership, and management.

Across industries, employers continue to emphasize communication, reliability, teamwork, adaptability, punctuality, problem-solving, professionalism, and digital literacy. For WIOA-eligible participants, these findings support training models that combine occupational skills, supportive services, case management, work-readiness preparation, and clear career pathways.

Table 4 summarizes the technical, credential, digital, and work-readiness skills needed for in-demand sectors and occupations. It draws from labor market data, CTDO projections, job posting analytics, employer feedback, regional sector partnerships, Chamber partners, training providers, and NRWIB business services engagement.

**Table 5: Technical Skills Needed for In-Demand Sectors
& Occupations in the Northwest Development Area**

Industry	In-Demand Occupations	Technical Skills	Foundational & Work-Readiness Skills
Healthcare & Social Assistance	Registered Nurses, CNAs, LPNs, Home Health and Personal Care Aides, Direct Support Professionals, Medical Assistants	Nursing care, patient care, home health care, personal care, caregiving, medication administration, activities of daily living, electronic health records, CPR, BLS, ACLS, CNA, LPN, RN, BSN	Compassion, communication, reliability, professionalism, confidentiality, teamwork, attention to detail, schedule adherence
Manufacturing	Production Workers, CNC Operators, Machinists, Assemblers, Welders, Quality Inspectors, Maintenance Technicians, Supervisors	CNC machining, blueprint reading, precision measurement, quality assurance, assembly, welding, machine operation, maintenance, OSHA/safety, lean manufacturing, automation basics	Attendance, precision, problem-solving, teamwork, safety awareness, adaptability, willingness to learn
Construction / AEC	Laborers, Equipment Operators, Electricians, HVAC/Plumbing Helpers, Construction Supervisors, CDL Drivers, Skilled Trades Apprentices	OSHA-10/30, construction math, power tools, blueprint basics, heavy equipment, CDL where applicable, electrical/HVAC/plumbing basics, site safety, materials handling	Safety culture, reliability, physical readiness, teamwork, communication, following instructions, punctuality
Transportation, Warehousing & Logistics	Stockers and Order Fillers, Freight/Stock/Material Movers, Warehouse Workers, Drivers, Dispatch/Logistics Support	Inventory systems, warehouse operations, shipping and receiving, forklift/material handling, scanning/RF systems, route basics, driver’s license/CDL where applicable	Accuracy, dependability, time management, teamwork, communication, pace, productivity
Accommodation & Food Services	Fast Food and Counter Workers, Cooks, Waiters/Waitresses, Baristas, Food Service Workers, Supervisors	Food safety, sanitation, ServSafe, kitchen equipment, meal preparation, POS systems, cash handling, customer service	Communication, customer service, cleanliness, teamwork, reliability, professionalism, conflict management
Retail Trade	Retail Salespersons, Cashiers, Stockers, Customer Service Representatives, Assistant Managers, Merchandisers	POS systems, cash register, cash handling, merchandising, inventory, selling	Customer service, communication, professionalism, dependability, problem-solving, patience, adaptability



		techniques, product knowledge, basic math, loss prevention	
Education & Human Services	Teaching Assistants, Community and Social Service Workers, Case Aides, Youth Support Workers, Direct Support Roles	Classroom support, behavior support, case documentation, mandated reporting, basic instructional support, trauma-informed practices	Communication, empathy, patience, cultural responsiveness, professionalism, teamwork, conflict de-escalation
Professional, Technical & Business Services	General and Operations Managers, Administrative Assistants, Customer Service Representatives, Business Support, IT/Technical Workers	Microsoft Office, Excel, Outlook, scheduling, data entry, customer relationship systems, project coordination, operations, basic accounting, digital tools	Communication, organization, problem-solving, professionalism, leadership, attention to detail, adaptability
Office & Administrative Support	Office Clerks, Administrative Assistants, Customer Service Representatives, Supervisors	Office software, data entry, scheduling, records management, phone/email systems, healthcare administration basics, customer service platforms	Digital literacy, communication, organization, confidentiality, reliability, service orientation
Building Services & Other Services	Janitors and Cleaners, Groundskeeping Workers, Maintenance Helpers, Facilities Support	Cleaning and sanitation, housekeeping, equipment use, basic maintenance, safety procedures, groundskeeping, facilities support	Dependability, attention to detail, time management, safety awareness, professionalism

Note: Table 4 is intended as a workforce planning tool. It synthesizes job posting analytics, labor market data, sector partnership feedback, employer engagement, and general occupational knowledge. It should not be interpreted as a complete list of every skill required by every employer, but as a summary of the most common and relevant skills needed to support regional workforce training, curriculum development, employer services, and career pathway planning.

In addition to providing data that supports and explains the region's employment needs, the Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board acts as the convener for industry-driven Regional Sector Partnerships in Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Architecture/Engineering/Construction. Below is a breakdown of the key areas of focus identified by industry that need to be addressed:

Northwest Manufacturing Regional Sector Partnership



The Northwest Manufacturing Regional Sector Partnership continues to bring together manufacturers, educators, workforce professionals, economic development organizations, and training providers to address workforce challenges and strengthen the region's manufacturing talent pipeline. Since its launch, the Partnership has grown significantly and has included dozens of employers representing

Northwest Connecticut's manufacturing industry.

Key priorities include:

- 1. Career Awareness and Industry Promotion** – Continue changing perceptions of modern manufacturing careers by highlighting advanced technologies, clean work environments, high-skill occupations, and family-sustaining wages available throughout the industry.
- 2. Talent Pipeline Development** – Expand awareness, training, credential attainment, and work-based learning opportunities that prepare individuals for careers in advanced manufacturing and support incumbent worker advancement.
- 3. Employer-Led Workforce Planning** – Utilize advisory and executive committees to identify emerging workforce trends, validate employer needs, and guide future workforce development initiatives and investments.



Northwest HealthConnect Regional Sector Partnership



Northwest HealthConnect continues to unite healthcare employers, educational institutions, workforce organizations, and community partners around the shared goal of strengthening the healthcare workforce throughout Northwest Connecticut. The Partnership continues to expand and serves as an emerging employer-driven forum for addressing healthcare workforce needs across the region.

Key priorities include:

1. **Youth Career Pathways** – Increase awareness of healthcare careers through employer engagement, classroom presentations, work-based learning opportunities, and partnerships with educational institutions.
2. **Adult Recruitment, Training, and Retention** – Support the recruitment, development, advancement, and retention of healthcare workers through training, career pathways, and employer-driven workforce strategies.
3. **Workforce Intelligence and Industry Leadership** – Engage healthcare employers through advisory and executive committees to identify workforce shortages, emerging trends, occupational demand, and future training priorities.

Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Sector Partnership



The State-Wide Architecture, Engineering, and Construction (AEC) Sector Partnership continues to convene employers, educators, workforce professionals, and industry stakeholders to address workforce needs within the construction and infrastructure sectors. The Partnership has expanded significantly and continues to serve as a key mechanism for employer engagement and workforce planning.

Key priorities include:

- A. **Career Awareness Building** – Increase awareness of AEC careers among youth, career-changing adults, educators, parents, and community stakeholders while promoting the broad range of opportunities available throughout the sector.
- B. **Talent Recruitment and Development** – Strengthen career pathways, training opportunities, and work-based learning experiences that support entry into skilled trades, engineering, construction management, and related occupations.
- C. **Workforce Health, Safety, and Well-Being** – Promote safe worksites, workplace safety culture, mental health awareness, and access to support services throughout the industry. Employers continue to recognize the importance of addressing mental health challenges, reducing stigma, increasing awareness of available resources, and supporting employee well-being as critical components of retention, productivity, and industry sustainability.
- D. **Employer Collaboration and Workforce Leadership** – Utilize employer-led advisory and executive committees to identify workforce challenges, guide sector initiatives, and inform future workforce development investments.



Collectively, the Northwest Manufacturing Regional Sector Partnership, Northwest HealthConnect, and the Northwest AEC Regional Sector Partnership have evolved beyond employer engagement forums into strategic workforce development assets for the region. As these partnerships continue to grow, NRWIB will leverage their employer leadership, workforce intelligence, and collaborative networks to identify emerging workforce needs, inform future training investments, and pursue additional state, federal, philanthropic, and private-sector funding opportunities. By strengthening employer-driven planning and regional collaboration, these partnerships will continue to support workforce innovation, talent pipeline development, and the long-term economic competitiveness of Northwest Connecticut's key industry sectors.

D. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Current Labor Force and Employment Data

Understanding demographic trends is critical to workforce development planning. Population growth, age distribution, and demographic composition directly influence labor force participation, talent availability, workforce replacement needs, and demand for workforce services. Tables 6 through 8 provide an overview of population trends within the Northwest Workforce Development Area and help identify factors that will influence future workforce development strategies.

Table 5: Population by age in Northwest Service Delivery Area 2022-2026-2030					
Demographic	2026 Population	2022-2026 Change	2022-2026 % Change	2026-2030 Change	2026-2030 Change
Under 5 years	27,222	(995)	(4%)	1,931	7%
5 to 9 years	29,767	560	2%	(233)	(1%)
10 to 14 years	32,209	(67)	(0%)	555	2%
15 to 19 years	34,451	374	1%	(1,872)	(5%)
20 to 24 years	31,719	(2,046)	(6%)	2,556	8%
25 to 29 years	31,559	1,492	5%	1,633	5%
30 to 34 years	33,150	282	1%	58	0%
35 to 39 years	36,087	1,695	5%	905	3%
40 to 44 years	36,114	2,796	8%	2,545	7%
45 to 49 years	34,330	2,383	7%	2,575	8%
50 to 54 years	32,567	(4,419)	(12%)	1,332	4%
55 to 59 years	37,241	(3,775)	(9%)	(4,068)	(11%)
60 to 64 years	38,771	(1,552)	(4%)	(3,117)	(8%)
65 to 69 years	37,778	3,284	10%	(1,226)	(3%)
70 to 74 years	31,565	4,598	17%	2,806	9%
75 to 79 years	24,678	3,782	18%	2,034	8%
80 to 84 years	15,816	3,156	25%	3,272	21%



85 years and over	13,947	1,123	9%	1,537	11%
Total	558,972				

Source: Lightcast Q2 2026 Data Set

Table 5 highlights several important demographic trends affecting the Northwest Workforce Development Area. While overall population levels remain stable, the region continues to experience significant growth among older age groups. Individuals ages 70 to 74 increased by 17%, ages 75 to 79 increased by 18%, and ages 80 to 84 increased by 25% between 2022 and 2026. Additional growth is projected among many of these age groups through 2030. At the same time, several traditional working-age cohorts, including individuals ages 50 to 64, experienced population declines. These trends suggest continued workforce replacement challenges as older workers retire while simultaneously increasing demand for healthcare and supportive services.

Table 6: Population Change Comparison 2026-2030 (Northwest Development Area, Connecticut, and the United States)				
Location	2022 Population	2026 Population	2022-2026 Population Change	
Northwest Development Area	546,301	558,972	12,671	2%
Connecticut	3,617,925	3,707,682	89,757	2%
United States	334,017,321	343,947,811	9,930,490	3%

Source: Lightcast Q2 2026 Data Set

Table 6 demonstrates that the Northwest Workforce Development Area continues to experience modest population growth. Between 2022 and 2026, the regional population increased by approximately 12,700 residents, representing growth of 2%, which is consistent with statewide growth during the same period. While the region is growing more slowly than the nation overall, population stability remains an important asset as employers across multiple industries continue to face workforce shortages and increased competition for talent.

Table 7: Race/Ethnicity in Northwest Development Area 2020-2024					
Demographic	2022 Population	2026 Population	% Change	Change	2026 % of Pop.
White, Non-Hispanic	347,328	335,413	(3%)	(11,916)	60.01%
White, Hispanic	84,421	97,625	16%	13,203	17.47%
Black, Non-Hispanic	60,625	63,980	6%	3,355	11.45%
Asian, Non-Hispanic	22,247	23,051	4%	804	4.12%
Black, Hispanic	12,855	15,737	22%	2,882	2.82%
Two or More Races, Non-Hispanic	9,331	10,968	18%	1,637	1.96%
Two or More Races, Hispanic	3,934	5,272	34%	1,338	0.94%
American Indian or Alaskan Native, Hispanic	3,281	4,558	39%	1,277	0.82%
American Indian or Alaskan Native, Non-Hispanic	1,081	1,001	(7%)	(81)	0.18%



Asian, Hispanic	641	691	8%	50	0.12%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic	354	427	21%	73	0.08%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Non-Hispanic	202	250	24%	48	0.04%

Table 7 illustrates the continued diversification of the Northwest Workforce Development Area. While White, Non-Hispanic residents remain the largest demographic group, their share of the population continues to decline as Hispanic, Black, Asian, and multiracial populations experience growth. Notable increases occurred among White Hispanic residents (+16%), Black Hispanic residents (+22%), individuals identifying as Two or More Races Hispanic (+34%), and American Indian or Alaska Native Hispanic residents (+39%). Hispanic residents now represent more than 21% of the region's population when all Hispanic demographic groups are combined. These demographic shifts highlight the importance of culturally responsive workforce development strategies, equitable access to training and employment opportunities, multilingual outreach efforts, and continued focus on serving an increasingly diverse workforce.

Collectively, Tables 5 through 7 demonstrate a region characterized by modest population growth, an aging population, and increasing demographic diversity. These trends will continue to influence labor force participation, workforce availability, service delivery strategies, and employer workforce needs throughout the Northwest Workforce Development Area. As a result, workforce development investments must continue to focus on talent attraction, workforce retention, upskilling opportunities, and expanding access to employment and training services for all populations.

FIGURE 1. LABOR FORCE STATISTICS IN NORTHWEST DEVELOPMENT AREA 2016-2026

Figure 1 provides labor force statistics for the Northwest Workforce Development Area from 2016 through 2026, including labor force size, employment, unemployment, and unemployment rate. This data helps identify changes in regional labor market participation, employment stability, and overall workforce availability over time. The 2026 data reflects a year-to-date average from January through April and should be considered preliminary.

Year	Period	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2016	Annual Average	320,013	304,713	15,300	4.8%
2017	Annual Average	320,368	306,321	14,047	4.4%
2018	Annual Average	320,855	308,335	12,520	3.9%
2019	Annual Average	322,430	310,942	11,488	3.6%
2020	Annual Average	311,054	286,959	24,095	7.7%
2021	Annual Average	308,066	288,520	19,546	6.3%
2022	Annual Average	321,325	308,278	13,047	4.1%
2023	Annual Average	317,596	307,225	10,371	3.3%



2024	Annual Average	321,736	311,001	10,735	3.3%
2025	Annual Average	321,886	308,601	13,285	4.1%
2026	YTD Average, Jan-Apr	314,146	296,347	17,800	5.7%

Source: Connecticut Department of Labor, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Northwest WIA/WDA annual average data, 2016–2025; 2026 year-to-date average, January–April.

The data shows that the Northwest Workforce Development Area’s labor force remained relatively stable between 2016 and 2019 before declining sharply during the COVID-19 period in 2020 and 2021. By 2022, the labor force had largely recovered, reaching 321,325, and remained near pre-pandemic levels through 2025. Unemployment declined from 7.7% in 2020 to 3.3% in both 2023 and 2024 before rising to 4.1% in 2025 and 5.7% in the preliminary 2026 year-to-date data.

These trends are important to the Local Plan because they demonstrate both the resilience and continued vulnerability of the regional labor market. While employment recovered following the pandemic disruption, the recent increase in unemployment and the preliminary 2026 decline in labor force and employment levels underscore the need for continued investment in job placement, career pathway development, occupational training, supportive services, and employer-driven workforce strategies.

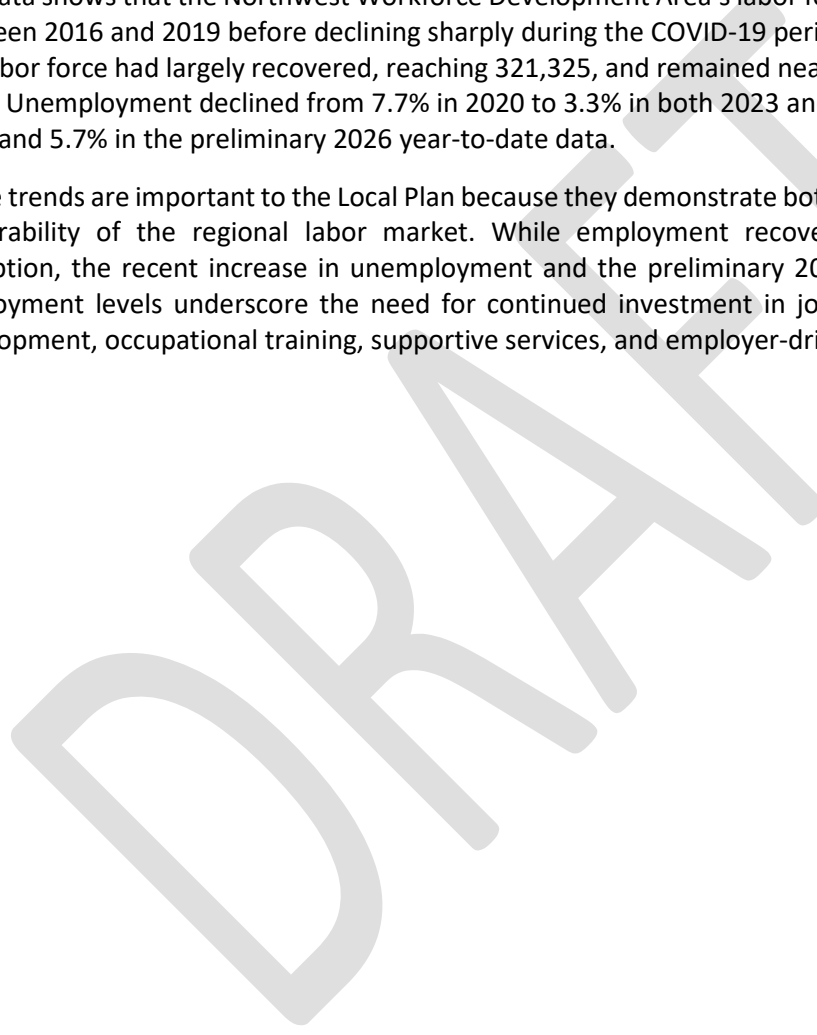


FIGURE 2. NORTHWEST DEVELOPMENT AREA UNEMPLOYMENT BY TOWN & PERCENT

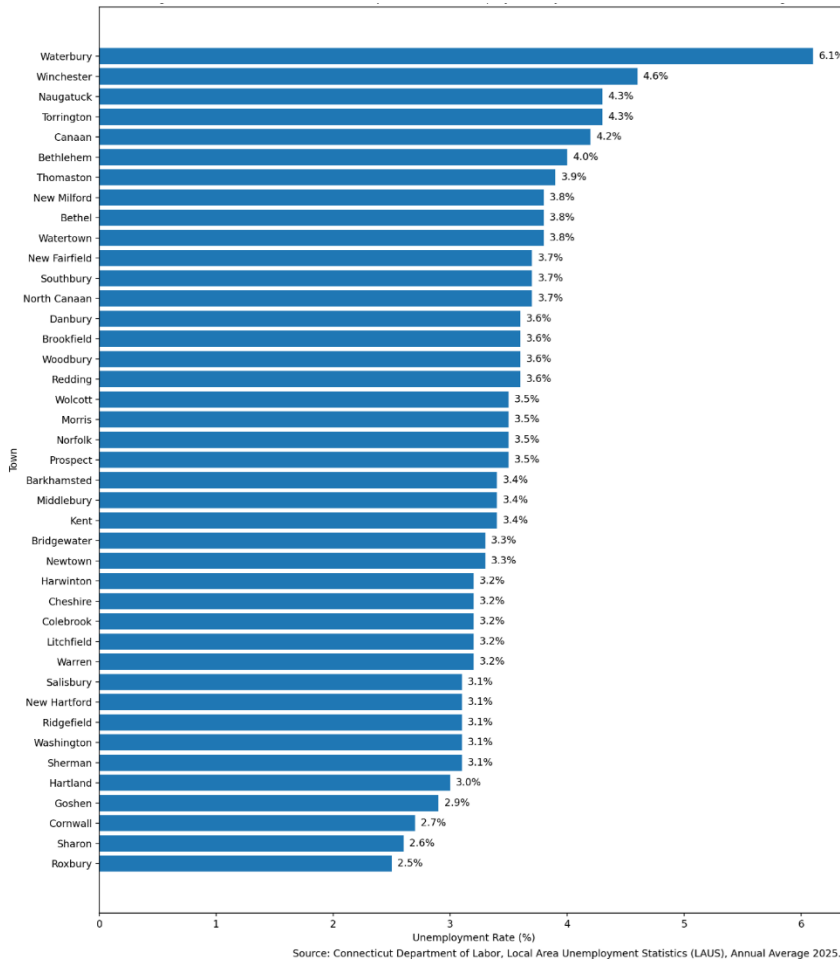


Figure 2 provides a 2025 town-level snapshot of unemployment across the 41 municipalities in the Northwest Workforce Development Area. This helps identify where unemployment is more concentrated and where targeted outreach, training, job placement, supportive services, and employer engagement may be most needed.

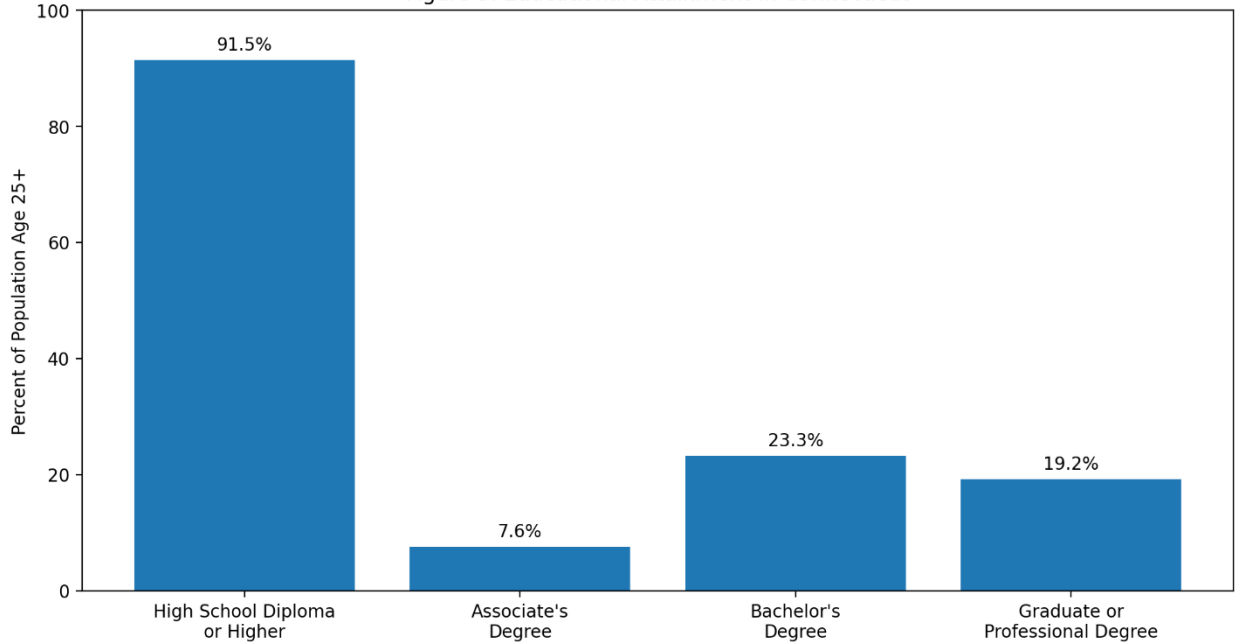
The 2025 town-level data shows meaningful variation across the region. Waterbury had the highest unemployment rate at 6.1%, followed by Winchester at 4.6%, Naugatuck and Torrington at 4.3%, and Canaan at 4.2%. Several towns, including Cornwall, Sharon, Roxbury, Goshen, Hartland, Sherman, Washington, Ridgefield, New Hartford, and Salisbury, reported unemployment rates near or below approximately 3.1%.

FIGURE 3. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN CONNECTICUT

Educational attainment is an important indicator of regional workforce readiness because it influences access to employment, training needs, career pathway entry points, and the ability of residents to compete for in-demand occupations. Figure 3 provides a statewide baseline by showing educational attainment levels for Connecticut residents age 25 and older.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s ACS 2020–2024 5-Year Estimates, Connecticut had approximately 2.55 million residents age 25 and older. Of that population, approximately 2.34 million, or 91.5%, had a high school diploma or higher. Approximately 195,081 residents held an associate’s degree, 595,631 held a bachelor’s degree, and 489,432 held a graduate or professional degree. Combined, approximately 1.09 million Connecticut residents, or 42.5%, held a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Figure 3. Educational Attainment in Connecticut



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020–2024 5-Year Estimates, Subject Table S1501.

While Figure 3 provides a statewide baseline, the Northwest Workforce Development Area is not educationally uniform. The region includes 41 municipalities with very different population sizes, economic conditions, commuting patterns, and levels of educational attainment. A town-level review is therefore necessary to understand where the region has strong concentrations of postsecondary talent and where additional workforce development supports may be needed.

Figure 4 examines educational attainment by municipality, including high school completion, associate’s degree attainment, bachelor’s degree attainment, graduate or professional degree attainment, and bachelor’s degree-or-higher attainment. This deeper local view helps identify communities with strong educational assets, communities near the regional average, and communities where lower postsecondary attainment may create barriers to higher-wage employment and advancement.

FIGURE 4. Educational Attainment Northwest Workforce Development Area

Town	High School Diploma or Higher (%)	Associate's Degree (%)	Bachelor's Degree (%)	Graduate or Professional Degree (%)	Bachelor's Degree or Higher (%)
Barkhamsted	97	7.4	34.3	20	54.3
Bethel	90.1	7.4	24	21.7	45.7
Bethlehem	99.1	10.3	22.9	16.4	39.2
Bridgewater	98.7	4.5	31.5	27.8	59.3
Brookfield	97.3	7.7	34.8	23.5	58.3
Canaan	96.1	6.3	27.8	22	49.8
Cheshire	93.9	5	32.6	28.1	60.7
Colebrook	94.9	8.1	18.1	18.5	36.6



Cornwall	98.4	8.3	28.9	30.3	59.1
Danbury	83.4	6.3	19.5	14.5	34
Goshen	99.5	4.1	27	29.7	56.7
Hartland	98.7	8	27.3	12.7	39.9
Harwinton	97.7	13.1	21.1	19.2	40.3
Kent	93.7	6.1	26.8	28.7	55.5
Litchfield	95.7	10.8	26.5	18.3	44.8
Middlebury	94.4	11.6	29.9	23.3	53.3
Morris	95.7	7.8	23.8	17.7	41.5
Naugatuck	91	8.9	16.5	15.6	32.2
New Fairfield	92.6	7.3	25.9	22.4	48.3
New Hartford	97	10	26.5	16.8	43.3
New Milford	94.3	7.7	25.7	15.5	41.2
Newtown	95.9	6.9	32.7	26	58.6
Norfolk	98.1	18	20.5	28.1	48.6
North Canaan	95.2	12.5	16.3	7.1	23.4
Prospect	95.3	12.2	19.5	20.9	40.3
Redding	99.1	3.5	39.1	33	72.1
Ridgefield	97.8	4.1	39.8	32.8	72.6
Roxbury	98.9	5.7	32.9	32.3	65.2
Salisbury	98.3	4.9	30.2	28.6	58.8
Sharon	95.7	4.4	32.5	24.2	56.8
Sherman	96.5	6.1	34.1	25.5	59.7
Southbury	94.8	9.4	27.5	24.4	51.8
Thomaston	96.3	7.5	23.4	10.6	34
Torrington	89.1	9.3	15.7	9.1	24.8
Warren	97.3	10.5	29.9	25.1	55.1
Washington	96.7	6.9	30	23.7	53.7
Waterbury	80.8	8.7	10.3	7	17.3
Watertown	94.3	9.2	21.1	17.5	38.6
Winchester	92.7	9.9	14.5	13.3	27.8
Wolcott	94.8	10.7	23.1	14	37
Woodbury	99.2	8.9	26.7	23.6	50.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020-2024 5-Year Estimates, Subject Table S1501, Educational Attainment, population age 25+.

The town-level data shows that educational attainment varies significantly across the Northwest Workforce Development Area, reflecting the region’s diverse mix of urban centers, suburban



communities, and smaller rural towns. Overall, the region demonstrates strong high school completion, with the average town showing approximately 95.3% of residents age 25 and older holding a high school diploma or higher, compared to 91.5% statewide. However, several larger communities fall below the regional average, including Waterbury (80.8%), Danbury (83.4%), Torrington (89.1%), and Naugatuck (91.0%). These areas represent important opportunities for adult education referrals, high school completion pathways, English language learning, career navigation, basic skills development, and supportive services.

Associate degree attainment also varies across municipalities and is important for workforce planning because many middle-skill occupations require education or training beyond high school but less than a four-year degree. Communities with lower associate degree attainment may benefit from stronger connections to community college programs, short-term occupational training, stackable credentials, apprenticeships, and career pathways tied to in-demand sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, construction, transportation, and business services.

Bachelor's degree-or-higher attainment shows the widest variation across the region. The average town in the Northwest Workforce Development Area has approximately 47.3% of residents age 25 and older holding a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 42.5% statewide. Several communities demonstrate very strong postsecondary attainment, including Ridgefield (72.6%), Redding (72.1%), Roxbury (65.2%), Cheshire (60.7%), and Sherman (59.7%). These communities represent important talent assets for professional, technical, healthcare, education, management, and advanced industry occupations.

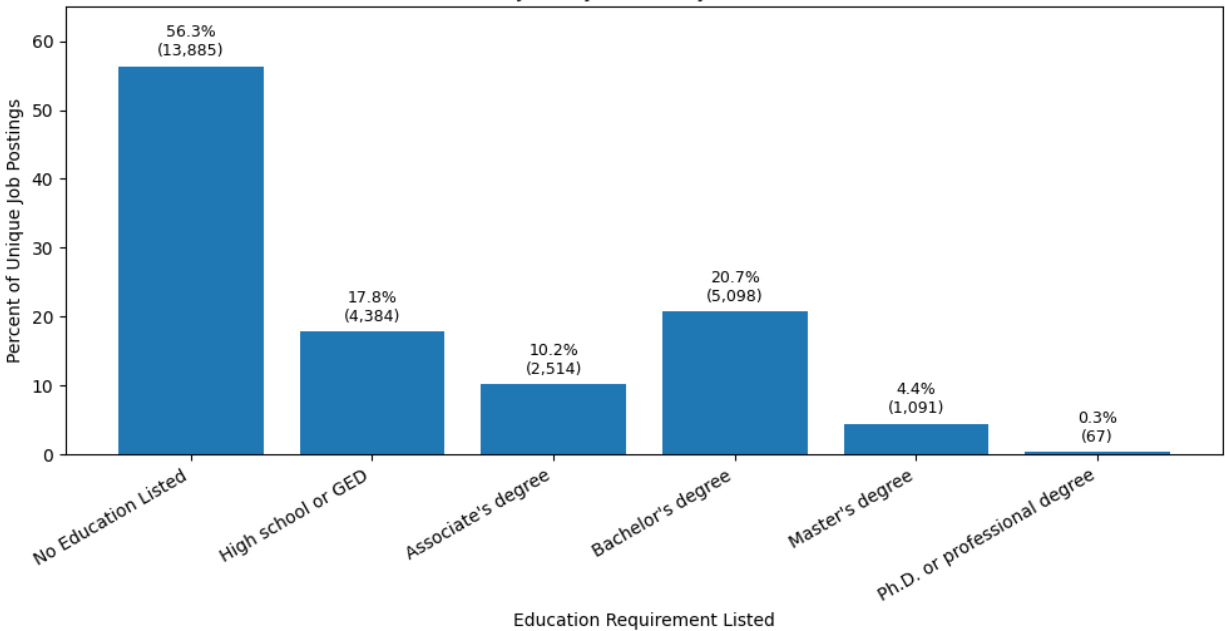
At the same time, several communities fall well below the regional and statewide bachelor's degree-or-higher rates, including Waterbury (17.3%), North Canaan (23.4%), Torrington (24.8%), Winchester (27.8%), Naugatuck (32.2%), and Danbury (34.0%). These communities should be viewed as priority opportunity areas for workforce services, including occupational training, industry-recognized credentials, work-based learning, job placement, supportive services, and direct connections to employers hiring for in-demand occupations.

Overall, the data reinforces the need for a workforce strategy that reflects the full diversity of the Northwest Workforce Development Area. The region must leverage highly educated communities as a strength while expanding access to education, training, and employment services in communities where residents may face greater barriers to postsecondary attainment and higher-wage career pathways.

FIGURE 5. EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR IN-DEMAND SECTORS & OCCUPATIONS AS LISTED IN JOB POSTINGS

Figure 5 shows the minimum education requirements listed in regional job postings from January 2025 through May 2026. More than half of postings (56.3%) did not list a specific education requirement, while 20.7% listed a bachelor's degree, 17.8% listed a high school diploma or GED, and 10.2% listed an associate degree. This suggests that many regional job postings may be accessible to jobseekers without a four-year degree, but also reinforces the importance of short-term training, industry-recognized credentials, work experience, and career pathways that help WIOA-eligible participants advance into higher-wage occupations.

Figure 5. Education Requirements Listed in Regional Job Postings,
January 2025–May 2026



Source: Lightcast January 2025–May 2026 Job Posting Analytics Report for Northwest Connecticut.

Employer needs in the Northwest Workforce Development Area are shaped by growth in key sectors, high replacement demand in large occupations, and real-time hiring pressure reflected in job postings. The Q2-2026 data, CTDOLE 2022–2032 projections, and the January 2025–May 2026 Job Posting Analytics report show that employers need a workforce system capable of producing trained, work-ready candidates for both high-growth sectors and high-volume occupations.

The strongest employment need is in Healthcare and Social Assistance, the region's largest industry sector and the clearest area of alignment across all data sources. Employers need Registered Nurses, Home Health and Personal Care Aides, CNAs, LPNs, direct support professionals, medical assistants, and other patient-care workers. Strong real-time demand for Registered Nurses and home-care roles reinforces the need for healthcare career pathways, clinical training partnerships, short-term credentials, and incumbent worker advancement opportunities.

Employers also need workers in retail, logistics, hospitality, food service, transportation, education, construction, manufacturing, and administrative/customer-facing roles. Some of these occupations are growing, while others are stable or declining but still generate significant openings due to turnover, retirements, and worker movement. This distinction is important because employer demand is not limited to net-new job growth; large sectors such as Retail Trade, Manufacturing, Government, and Office and Administrative Support continue to require workers because of their employment size and recurring replacement needs.

From a workforce system perspective, employers need:

- **Access to trained candidates** who can enter employment quickly in healthcare, logistics, food service, retail, construction, manufacturing, and administrative roles.



- **Short-term occupational training** aligned with high-demand jobs, including healthcare credentials, manufacturing skills, construction safety, logistics/material handling, customer service, and food safety.
- **Curriculum development and training customization** that responds to employer-identified skill gaps, especially through regional sector partnerships and direct business engagement.
- **Work-based learning opportunities**, including on-the-job training, internships, clinical experiences, apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and transitional job models.
- **Incumbent worker training** to help employers upskill current staff, improve retention, respond to technology changes, and create advancement pathways.
- **Soft skills and work-readiness preparation**, including reliability, communication, professionalism, teamwork, problem-solving, digital literacy, customer service, and adaptability.
- **Supportive services for WIOA-eligible participants**, including transportation, childcare, tools, uniforms, testing fees, licensing costs, and case management supports that help jobseekers complete training and retain employment.

Manufacturing requires a nuanced workforce response. Although it does not dominate the Top 15 detailed occupations or real-time job posting report in the same way as healthcare, it remains one of the region's largest, highest-wage, and most specialized industries. Because manufacturing employment is spread across many roles — including production, machining, assembly, welding, inspection, maintenance, supervision, logistics, engineering, and administration — employer needs should be addressed through sector partnership feedback, customized training, incumbent worker training, credentials, and replacement-demand strategies.

Retail, food service, administrative support, and customer-facing occupations should also be understood as high-volume entry points for many WIOA-eligible jobseekers. Employers in these areas need reliable, work-ready candidates with customer service, communication, basic math, digital skills, scheduling flexibility, and professionalism. These jobs can provide immediate employment while creating pathways into higher-wage sectors such as healthcare, business services, logistics, manufacturing, and management.

Overall, employer needs point to a workforce system that can respond to immediate hiring demand while also building long-term career pathways. NRWIB's business services, chamber partnerships, regional sector partnerships, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, and grant-funded training programs are critical tools for filling current openings and preparing residents for family-sustaining careers in priority sectors.

E. Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and employment needs of employers in the region.

To support the development of the two-year modification to the Local Plan, NRWIB engaged workforce system partners, employers, Board members, and staff in a review of regional workforce development activities, labor market conditions, employer needs, and service delivery strategies. Input from stakeholders, combined with labor market data, program performance outcomes, Regional Sector Partnership activity, and operational experience,



helped identify both the strengths of the regional workforce system and areas requiring continued improvement. The analysis below reflects the region's current capacity to deliver workforce, education, training, and supportive services that address the skill needs of jobseekers and the workforce needs of employers.

Customer Flow

- Referral and Initial Engagement – Individuals may access workforce services through self-referral, partner referral, employer referral, community-based organizations, educational institutions, or direct outreach conducted by NRWIB and its workforce partners. Customers may initiate services online, by phone, email, or through an in-person visit at an American Job Center location.
- Information Session and Workforce Orientation – Customers interested in WIOA-funded employment and training services participate in an information session offered virtually or in person. During the session, staff provide an overview of available workforce services, eligibility requirements, career pathways, training opportunities, supportive services, and labor market information. Customers receive guidance on registering in CTHires, completing the WIOA pre-application, uploading eligibility documentation, and accessing the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).
- Intake and Eligibility Determination – Following orientation, customers are scheduled for an intake appointment with a Career Navigator. During this process, staff review eligibility documentation, assess employment and training needs, identify barriers to employment, and determine eligibility for WIOA services in accordance with program requirements. Most-in-need criteria for Dislocated Workers is completed prior to eligibility determination when applicable.
- Assessment and Career Planning – Customers participate in assessments designed to evaluate academic skills, work readiness, occupational interests, and career goals. Assessment results, labor market information, prior work experience, education history, and customer interests are used to develop an Individual Employment Plan and identify appropriate career pathways, training opportunities, supportive services, and employment goals.
- Training and Employment Services – Based on assessment outcomes and career planning activities, customers may access individualized career services, occupational skills training, work-based learning opportunities, On-the-Job Training, apprenticeships, supportive services, and other workforce development activities aligned with regional labor market demand and employer needs.
- Follow-Up and Retention Services – Following training completion or employment placement, customers may receive follow-up services to support employment retention, credential attainment, career advancement, and continued connection to workforce system resources.

Job Training

The Northwest Workforce Development Area maintains several job training programs that directly support the education and skill needs of jobseekers and the employment needs of employers in the region. These programs provide occupational training, industry-recognized credentials, work-based learning, case management, supportive services, and job placement assistance for WIOA-eligible participants and other priority populations.



During the period of this plan, in June of 2026, several major durational grants significantly expanded the region's job training capacity, including the Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative, CareerConneCT, Good Jobs Challenge, and Project Longevity. These programs supported training in manufacturing, healthcare, construction, transportation, and other in-demand sectors. Although these grants have ended, they provided important lessons for future job training strategies, including the value of short-term credential training, employer-informed curriculum, sector partnerships, supportive services, and direct connections to hiring employers.

Active job training programs and related workforce activities include, but are not limited to:

- **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act — Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth:** WIOA remains the primary foundation for job training services in the region. It provides eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth with access to career services, occupational training, supportive services, work-based learning, and job placement assistance. WIOA helps connect participants to training aligned with employer demand while supporting employers that need trained candidates.
- **Jobs First Employment Services:** JFES remains active as a mandated Temporary Family Assistance employment program. NRWIB provides career navigation, case management, education, training opportunities, subsidized employment, and job placement support to help participants gain the skills and experience needed to secure and maintain employment.
- **Brownfield Remediation Job Training Program:** This program remains an important specialized training asset in the region. It prepares participants for employment in environmental remediation, lead and asbestos abatement, hazardous materials work, and related fields. Training may include OSHA/EPA laws and regulations, HAZWOPER, confined space entry, safety awareness, personal protective equipment and respirator use, lead and asbestos abatement, and lead renovation, repair, and painting.
- **Job Funnel / Northwest Construction Careers Initiative:** Job Funnel continues to support access to construction and building trades careers. Training may include OSHA-10, OSHA-30, HAZWOPER, construction safety, hand and power tools, construction math, materials handling, construction drawings, rigging, employability skills, and introductions to HVAC, plumbing, and electrical work. This program supports regional demand for construction, skilled trades, and AEC-related career pathways.
- **Re-Entry Services:** NRWIB has received new funding for re-entry services beginning in FY2027. This funding will expand job training, career navigation, work readiness, supportive services, credential attainment, and placement support for returning citizens.
- **Social Security Ticket-to-Work:** Ticket-to-Work supports individuals receiving SSI or SSDI who are seeking to return to employment and move toward greater economic independence. NRWIB assists participants with employment planning, job search, placement, and connection to appropriate training and workforce services.
- **Summer Youth Employment Program:** SYEP connects youth ages 14–24 with paid work experience, career exploration, work-readiness development, and exposure to career pathways. While not an occupational training program in the traditional sense, SYEP is an important early workforce development strategy that helps youth build employability skills and understand employer expectations.
- **Transitional Employment:** Transitional employment funded through WIOA provides short-term work experience for individuals with limited work history, including returning



citizens and others who need structured employment opportunities. These placements help participants build resumes, workplace habits, coping skills, and practical work experience.

- **On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training:** OJT and incumbent worker training are key tools for addressing employer skill needs. OJT helps employers hire and train new workers while offsetting some of the cost of onboarding. Incumbent worker training helps employers upskill existing staff, respond to new technologies, improve retention, and create advancement opportunities that may open entry-level positions for new workers. A major job training challenge for 2026–2030 is the loss of capacity following the conclusion of ACI, CareerConneCT, Good Jobs Challenge, Project Longevity, and other durational grants. These grants expanded short-term training, sector-based programming, supportive services, and employer-responsive training. Replacing this capacity will require continued pursuit of federal, state, philanthropic, and employer-supported funding.

The region must also continue responding to layoffs, closures, and business disruptions in partnership with CTDOL by connecting affected workers to career services, retraining, supportive services, and hiring employers.

Overall, the region has meaningful job training capacity through WIOA, JFES, Brownfield, Job Funnel, Peer Recovery, Ticket-to-Work, SYEP, transitional employment, re-entry services, OJT, and incumbent worker training. Its primary strength is connecting training to employer demand through sector partnerships, business services, chamber partnerships, and direct employer engagement. Its primary weakness is reduced flexible training capacity after the end of major durational grants. For 2026–2030, NRWIB should focus on preserving core programs, securing new funding, expanding OJT and incumbent worker training, and aligning training with high-demand sectors.

Alignment with Integrated Service Delivery and Opportunity Center Strategies

NRWIB supports a workforce system that integrates employment, education, training, and supportive services to help individuals achieve long-term economic mobility and self-sufficiency. Consistent with state efforts to strengthen coordination among workforce, human services, education, housing, and community-based organizations, the Northwest American Job Center serves as a central access point for individuals seeking employment, training, and supportive services.

The American Job Center's service delivery model emphasizes collaboration among partner agencies to reduce barriers and improve customer outcomes. Through co-location and coordinated partnerships, customers can access workforce development services alongside other critical supports, including public assistance programs, vocational rehabilitation services, housing resources, and other community-based assistance. This integrated approach helps individuals address employment goals while also navigating challenges related to transportation, housing stability, childcare, disability, and other barriers to workforce participation.

NRWIB continues to strengthen partnerships with the Department of Social Services, Connecticut Department of Labor, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Housing,



Adult Education providers, community-based organizations, and other workforce system partners. The Board also utilizes strategies such as coordinated referrals, co-enrollment, case management collaboration, and the Integrated Resource Team model to ensure participants receive comprehensive and coordinated support.

By aligning workforce services with broader support systems, NRWIB helps individuals access the resources necessary to enter training, obtain employment, advance in their careers, and achieve greater economic stability. This collaborative approach supports both participant success and the workforce needs of regional employers.

Business Services, Employer Engagement, and Workforce Partnerships:

The NRWIB serves as a regional convener for employers, workforce partners, education providers, training providers, Chambers of Commerce, American Job Center partners, and community organizations across the Northwest Workforce Development Area. Business services efforts are aligned with the region's priority sectors, including Manufacturing, Healthcare/Human Services, Architecture/Engineering/Construction, Information Technology, Transportation/Logistics, and other high-demand sectors identified through labor market data and employer engagement.

NRWIB's business services strategy focuses on helping employers access qualified candidates, identify skill gaps, develop talent pipelines, respond to layoffs and business disruptions, and connect with workforce resources. A major strength of the region is NRWIB's role as convener of the Northwest Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Architecture/Engineering/Construction Regional Sector Partnerships, which provide direct insight into employer needs, training priorities, hiring challenges, and opportunities for work-based learning.

Business services activities include:

- Direct employer outreach and recruitment assistance;
- Job posting support, hiring events, and job matching;
- Labor market information and identification of hiring trends;
- Connection to WIOA, JFES, Ticket-to-Work, Youth, Brownfield, Job Funnel, re-entry, and other workforce programs;
- Support for on-the-job training and incumbent worker training;
- Coordination with Chambers of Commerce and other business intermediaries;
- Support for sector partnership priorities in manufacturing, healthcare, and AEC;
- Layoff and rapid response coordination with CTDOL, employers, and municipalities;
- Identification of new durational funding opportunities to replace expired grant-funded training capacity.

For the 2026–2030 period, NRWIB will place increased emphasis on incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, and employer-informed training design. These strategies help employers upskill existing workers, respond to new technologies, improve retention, fill skill gaps, and create advancement pathways that may open entry-level opportunities for new workers.



Population Services

NRWIB continues to serve individuals who face barriers to employment, including veterans, individuals with disabilities, returning citizens, public assistance recipients, individuals in recovery, youth, dislocated workers, and adults who need training or supportive services to enter or advance in employment.

- **Veterans:** NRWIB and American Job Center partners support veterans through career services, job search assistance, training referrals, employer connections, and coordination with CTDOL and partner programs.
- **Persons with Disabilities:** NRWIB works with the Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services and other partners to connect individuals with disabilities to career services, training, work-based learning, and employment opportunities. Work-based learning experiences remain especially important for youth with disabilities.
- **Social Security Ticket-to-Work:** NRWIB remains an Employment Network through the Social Security Administration's Ticket-to-Work program, supporting SSI and SSDI recipients who want to pursue employment and move toward greater economic independence.
- **Returning Citizens:** NRWIB supports returning citizens through workforce services, transitional employment, job readiness, training referrals, and employer connections. Participation in re-entry collaborative efforts in Waterbury, Danbury, and Torrington helps coordinate services and identify gaps. New re-entry funding beginning in FY2027 will strengthen career navigation, occupational training, supportive services, credential attainment, and placement support.
- **Individuals in Recovery and Behavioral Health Partners:** NRWIB supports individuals impacted by substance use, behavioral health challenges, or the opioid crisis through the Peer Recovery Navigator Program and related partnerships. Relationships with providers such as McCall Behavioral Health Network, Nuvance Health, and other regional organizations help connect participants to supportive services, recovery-informed employment pathways, and employers willing to engage in recovery-friendly workplace practices.

Agency, Community, Adult Education, and Education Partnerships

The NRWIB's **Integrated Resource Team** serves as an important bridge between client services, partner agencies, education providers, healthcare employers, behavioral health providers, and community-based resources. Through this coordinated referral structure, American Job Center Northwest staff can connect participants with the services and supports needed to address barriers, enter training, complete credentials, and move into employment. The team brings together partner agencies to review participant needs, coordinate referrals, and align available resources around the individual.

Partnerships between agencies, education providers, healthcare employers, and community organizations remain a major strength of the regional workforce system. NRWIB convenes and participates in regular partner meetings with American Job Center partners, CTDOL, DSS, Adult Education, the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, case management providers, the VETS unit,



business services staff, behavioral health providers, healthcare partners, youth-serving organizations, and other workforce system partners.

A major focus for 2026–2030 will be strengthening youth-focused and healthcare-focused partnerships that connect participants to career exploration, work-based learning, internships, training, credentials, and employment pathways. These partnerships are especially important in healthcare, where regional labor market data and employer feedback show strong demand for nurses, home health aides, direct care workers, medical assistants, CNAs, LPNs, patient care technicians, and other healthcare support roles.

The Northwest CT HealthConnECT Regional Sector Partnership internship model is an important example of employer-connected workforce development in the healthcare sector. Through partnerships with regional hospitals and healthcare providers such as Waterbury Hospital, Saint Mary's Hospital, Charlotte Hungerford Hospital, and other healthcare employers in the region, participants gain exposure to healthcare careers, workplace expectations, patient-care environments, and potential career pathways. This model helps connect classroom learning, career exploration, and employer demand.

Adult education providers are essential partners in preparing participants for training and employment. NRWIB works with adult education programs across the region to support individuals who need:

- Basic skills remediation;
- GED preparation;
- English language instruction;
- Digital literacy;
- Career readiness;
- Transition support into occupational training, internships, or employment.

NRWIB works closely with community colleges, technical education partners, K–12 education leaders, youth-serving organizations, and training providers to strengthen career pathways. These partnerships support:

- Youth career exploration and paid work experience;
- Healthcare internships and work-based learning;
- Referrals between education, workforce, and supportive service programs;
- Curriculum development aligned with employer demand;
- Industry-recognized credentials;
- Dual enrollment and postsecondary transition opportunities;
- Exposure to healthcare, manufacturing, construction, logistics, human services, and other in-demand sectors;
- Development of communication, professionalism, teamwork, problem-solving, and other workplace skills.

NRWIB maintains important relationships with community organizations that provide supportive services, referrals, and participant supports. Partnerships with organizations such as the United



Way of Greater Waterbury, behavioral health providers, recovery organizations, and other community-based providers help connect workforce participants to resources that address basic needs, housing-related supports, transportation referrals, childcare resources, financial stability services, mental health supports, and other barriers to employment.

Together, these partnerships strengthen the region's ability to serve youth, adults, dislocated workers, individuals with disabilities, veterans, returning citizens, individuals in recovery, and other participants who need coordinated support to succeed in training and employment.

F. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area

Adult and dislocated worker employment and training services are available throughout the Northwest Workforce Development Area through the American Job Center system and a network of workforce, education, training, and community partners. Services include career counseling, assessments, labor market information, occupational skills training, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), On-the-Job Training (OJT), work-based learning opportunities, supportive services, job placement assistance, and follow-up services designed to support long-term employment and career advancement.

The region benefits from strong referral relationships among workforce partners, employers, community-based organizations, Adult Education providers, and state agencies. Rapid response activities and coordination with employers experiencing layoffs allow workforce services to be deployed quickly to assist affected workers. Orientation and intake processes provide customers with information on career pathways, training opportunities, labor market trends, and workforce resources available through the American Job Center system.

Stakeholder feedback, customer experience data, and operational reviews have identified several opportunities for continued improvement. These include simplifying customer navigation of workforce services, improving awareness of American Job Center resources, strengthening access to training information, reducing barriers to enrollment, and enhancing coordination among partner programs. Customers continue to benefit from increased use of technology, virtual service options, digital literacy supports, and more individualized career planning approaches.

To address these opportunities, NRWIB has continued implementing a customer-centered case management model focused on individualized career planning, barrier reduction, and connection to employment opportunities aligned with regional labor market demand. Career Navigators work closely with participants to identify career goals, explore training and credential options, access supportive services, and develop career pathways leading to sustainable employment.

The workforce system also continues to expand employer-driven training strategies, including On-the-Job Training, incumbent worker training, apprenticeships, work-based learning opportunities, and sector-based initiatives aligned with regional workforce needs. Through these efforts, NRWIB seeks to strengthen workforce participation, improve employment outcomes, and ensure that adult and dislocated worker services remain responsive to both jobseeker and employer needs.

G. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with



disabilities. The descriptions and assessment must include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce activities

The Northwest Workforce Development Area offers a variety of workforce investment activities designed to help youth explore careers, develop workplace skills, obtain credentials, and successfully transition into postsecondary education, training, and employment. NRWIB works closely with educational institutions, employers, community-based organizations, and state agency partners to provide services for both in-school and out-of-school youth, including youth with disabilities and other barriers to employment.

NRWIB maintains strong partnerships with CT State Community College campuses, local school districts, employers, youth-serving organizations, and the Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services to support career pathways, work-based learning, mentoring, career exploration, and credential attainment.

Successful youth workforce models in the region include:

- **CT State Community College Programs:** NRWIB partners with CT State Community College campuses to support programs serving out-of-school youth and young adults. These programs provide academic support, career coaching, workforce readiness training, credential attainment opportunities, and connections to postsecondary education and employment. Participants benefit from individualized support designed to help them persist in education and successfully enter the workforce.
- **Team Success Program:** Through its partnership with CT State Community College Northwestern, NRWIB supports the Team Success Program, which provides mentoring, academic support, scholarships, and career guidance to youth and young adults facing barriers to education and employment. The program has demonstrated success in helping participants build confidence, complete educational goals, and develop the skills necessary for career advancement.
- **Work-Based Learning and Career Exposure:** NRWIB continues to expand youth access to internships, paid work experiences, career fairs, employer panels, industry tours, summer employment opportunities, and sector-based career exploration activities. These experiences help youth develop workplace skills while increasing awareness of careers in healthcare, manufacturing, architecture, engineering, construction, skilled trades, logistics, and other high-demand industries.
- **Services for Youth with Disabilities:** NRWIB works closely with the Department of Aging and Disability Services and other disability-serving partners to provide work-based learning opportunities, career counseling, accommodations, and supportive services for youth with disabilities. These partnerships help ensure that youth have equitable access to workforce opportunities and are prepared for successful participation in education, training, and employment.

The region's youth workforce system is strengthened by its collaborative approach, strong educational partnerships, and growing emphasis on career pathways, work-based learning, and employer engagement. NRWIB will continue expanding opportunities that connect youth to education, training, credentials, and employment aligned with regional labor market needs.



H. Identify gaps in service based on the above analyses

Based on Q2-2026 labor market data, Connecticut Department of Labor 2022–2032 projections, Lightcast Job Posting Analytics, employer feedback, stakeholder engagement, and Regional Sector Partnership activity, several workforce development gaps and opportunities have been identified for the 2026–2030 planning period.

Economic and Demographic Changes

The region continues to experience demographic and labor market shifts that will influence workforce demand and service delivery. Healthcare and Social Assistance remains the region's strongest growth sector and is projected to continue expanding through 2030, driven by an aging population and increasing demand for healthcare, home care, and supportive services. At the same time, Manufacturing remains one of the region's largest and most specialized industries, with 21,632 jobs, average earnings exceeding \$121,000 annually, and a location quotient of 1.28, making it a critical component of the regional economy despite modest projected employment declines.

In addition to growth occupations, large sectors such as retail trade, government, administrative support, food service, transportation, and logistics continue to generate substantial workforce demand through turnover, retirements, replacement hiring, and worker movement. Workforce strategies must therefore address both emerging growth opportunities and ongoing replacement needs across the regional economy.

Workforce Mobility and Transportation

Transportation remains a significant barrier for participants accessing training, interviews, clinical placements, work-based learning opportunities, and employment throughout the region. These challenges are particularly acute in rural communities and for individuals without reliable transportation.

Returning citizens may be placed in transitional housing, halfway houses, or recovery programs outside of their home communities while maintaining family, employment, or service connections elsewhere in the region. These mobility challenges can create gaps in case management continuity, follow-up services, supportive service coordination, and long-term employment retention.

Occupational and Skill Gaps

Healthcare represents the most significant occupational gap in the region. Home Health and Personal Care Aides remain the largest detailed occupation, with 6,983 jobs, 21.7% recent growth, 1,281 annual openings, and strong projected growth through 2030. Registered Nurses continue to demonstrate the strongest real-time hiring demand, with more than 9,300 unique job postings during the reporting period.

Employers also continue to report demand for workers in manufacturing, construction, transportation, logistics, skilled trades, education, human services, and customer-facing occupations. While Office and Administrative Support remains the region's largest occupational group, continued changes in workplace technology, automation, digital systems, and customer service delivery models are increasing the need for digital literacy, administrative technology, communication, and transferable workplace skills.



Workforce Development Capacity

The region benefits from a diverse portfolio of workforce development activities, including WIOA, Jobs First Employment Services, Brownfield Remediation, Job Funnel, Ticket-to-Work, Summer Youth Employment, re-entry services, transitional employment, On-the-Job Training, incumbent worker training, apprenticeships, rapid response, and sector partnership initiatives.

A significant challenge for the 2026–2030 period is the reduction in flexible training capacity following the conclusion of several major grant-funded initiatives, including the Apprenticeship Connecticut Initiative, CareerConneCT, Good Jobs Challenge, Project Longevity, and other time-limited funding sources. While these initiatives expanded access to training, supportive services, work-based learning, and employer-responsive programming, sustaining this capacity will require continued pursuit of federal, state, philanthropic, and employer-supported funding opportunities.

Collaboration and System Coordination

Regional collaboration remains a significant strength of the workforce system. Strong partnerships exist among American Job Center partners, Adult Education providers, community colleges, employers, community-based organizations, economic development entities, healthcare providers, behavioral health organizations, Chambers of Commerce, and state agencies.

Continued emphasis is needed on coordinated service delivery, co-enrollment strategies, employer engagement, apprenticeship expansion, career pathway development, and Integrated Resource Team activities to ensure participants with multiple barriers receive comprehensive support and access to available resources.

Priority Areas

Based on this analysis, NRWIB will focus on:

- Replacing lost grant-funded training capacity and securing new funding to support training, supportive services, and employer-responsive workforce initiatives.
- Expanding healthcare, home care, manufacturing, construction, logistics, and youth career pathways aligned with regional labor market demand.
- Strengthening apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training, incumbent worker training, rapid response activities, and other work-based learning strategies.
- Expanding supportive services and partnership strategies that address transportation, housing stability, re-entry coordination, adult education connections, and other barriers to employment.
- Enhancing employer engagement and Regional Sector Partnership activities to ensure workforce investments remain responsive to industry needs and emerging economic trends.
- Strengthening collaboration among workforce, education, economic development, and community partners to improve participant outcomes and support regional economic competitiveness..

III. LWDB VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

- A. Identify the vision, goals and strategies adopted by the LWDB that align with the Connecticut WIOA Unified State Plan for PY's 2024-2027, and how these will affect the preparation of an educated and skilled workforce.



This modified plan aligns with both Connecticut’s “Drive Growth–Build Skills–Expand Access” framework and the national “America’s Talent Strategy.” Emphasize that your board’s goals support industry-led talent pipelines, expanded worker participation, streamlined service delivery, rigorous accountability and innovation through AI and apprenticeship expansion.

Vision: The vision of the NRWIB is to drive regional economic development by delivering high-quality employment and training services to employers, job seekers, and youth. Our efforts align with the State’s overarching goals, providing a framework for the ongoing development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system.

Goal 1: Goal 1: Strengthen access to workforce services for jobseekers, workers, and priority populations.

Strategies:

1. Continue providing WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services, JFES, Ticket-to-Work, Peer Recovery, re-entry, transitional employment, and other programs that support individuals with barriers to employment.
2. Expand outreach and referral partnerships with community providers, adult education, behavioral health providers, re-entry collaboratives, veterans’ services, disability service partners, and organizations such as United Way of Greater Waterbury.
3. Improve awareness of American Job Center services through digital outreach, social media, email campaigns, community resource sessions, partner referrals, and success stories.
4. Use technology, virtual service options, digital literacy initiatives, and AI-supported tools where appropriate to improve communication, service navigation, job matching, appointment reminders, career exploration, and access to workforce information

Goal 2: Build employer-driven talent pipelines in priority industry sectors.

Strategies:

1. Continue serving as convener of the Northwest Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Architecture/Engineering/Construction Regional Sector Partnerships.
2. Use labor market data, CTDOL projections, Lightcast job posting analytics, and employer feedback to align training with demand in healthcare, manufacturing, construction, logistics, education, professional services, hospitality, and other priority sectors.
3. Expand employer-informed training models, including short-term credentials, customized training, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, internships, apprenticeships, and work-based learning.
4. Support employers responding to retirements, skill shortages, technology adoption, AI-enabled automation, infrastructure investments, supply chain needs, domestic manufacturing growth, layoffs, restructuring, and replacement hiring needs.
5. Expand access to Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities as a primary workforce strategy for developing talent pipelines in manufacturing, healthcare, construction, transportation, information technology, and other high-demand sectors.



Goal 3: *Strengthen youth career pathways from secondary education to postsecondary training and employment.*

Strategies:

1. Expand partnerships with K–12, adult education, colleges, training providers, youth-serving organizations, and employers to increase youth access to career exploration, paid work experience, internships, mentoring, and exposure to healthcare, manufacturing, construction/AEC, logistics, skilled trades, and business services.
2. Create more youth pathway opportunities beyond SYEP through school-based career fairs, employer panels, site visits, AJC service connections, HealthConneCT internships, manufacturing pathways, construction/AEC exposure, and other employer-connected work-based learning.
3. Include digital literacy, AI literacy, workplace technology, financial literacy, professional communication, and career readiness skills that prepare youth for emerging occupations and evolving workplace requirements.

Goal 4: *Reduce barriers to education, training, employment, and advancement.*

Strategies:

1. Provide individualized career counseling, case management, supportive services, and referrals to help participants enter and complete training and obtain employment. Support access to transportation, childcare assistance, work clothing, tools, testing fees, licensing costs, digital access, and other services needed for training and employment.
2. Strengthen referrals to adult education providers for GED preparation, English language instruction, basic skills remediation, digital literacy, and transition support into occupational training.
3. Use the Integrated Resource Team as a bridge between client services, partner agencies, behavioral health providers, adult education, community organizations, and employer-connected opportunities.
4. Improve service continuity for participants with mobility challenges, including returning citizens whose housing, family supports, or long-term service needs may be located outside the community where they are initially placed.
5. Expand awareness of apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and work-based learning opportunities for individuals facing barriers to employment, including youth, returning citizens, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and dislocated workers.

Goal 5: *Use data, technology, and continuous improvement to guide workforce strategy.*

Strategies:

1. Use CTHires, CTDOL labor market information, Lightcast data, job posting analytics, employer feedback, and Regional Sector Partnership input to guide planning, training investments, and program design in sectors with high growth or significant replacement demand, including healthcare, manufacturing, construction, logistics, administrative support, retail, and food service.
2. Provide ongoing staff training on data entry, case notes, performance tracking, reporting, and effective use of workforce technology systems.



3. Explore and implement responsible use of AI-supported tools to improve labor market analysis, employer outreach, participant communication, resume development, job matching, training research, case management efficiency, and program evaluation.
4. Continue coordinating with state partners to improve data quality, system integration, performance reporting, and the ability to track participant outcomes across programs.
5. Promote AI literacy among staff, jobseekers, youth participants, employers, and workforce partners to ensure the regional workforce is prepared for technology-driven workplace changes.

Goal 6: Rebuild and expand capacity following the conclusion of major durational grants.

Strategies:

1. Pursue new federal, state, philanthropic, employer-supported, apprenticeship, and sector partnership-driven funding opportunities that support healthcare, manufacturing, construction, logistics, information technology, environmental remediation, re-entry, youth employment, workforce innovation, and AI-enabled workforce initiatives.
 2. Expand incumbent worker training and on-the-job training to help employers address skill gaps, retain workers, and create advancement pathways.
 3. Use lessons learned from prior grant-funded programs to continue short-term credential training, employer-informed curriculum, supportive services, and work-based learning models.
 4. Align new funding strategies with the region's labor market findings, employer needs, and participant barriers identified in the Local Plan.
- B. Describe the process used to develop the LWDB's vision and goals, including a description of the participants in the process.

The LWDB's vision and goals were developed through a review of labor market data, employer feedback, partner input, program experience, and service gaps identified during the prior plan period. The process was designed to align with the Connecticut WIOA Unified State Plan while reflecting the needs of the Northwest Workforce Development Area.

Input was gathered from NRWIB leadership and staff, Board members, employers, workforce partners, education and training providers, and community organizations. The Board also considered Regional Sector Partnership feedback, job posting trends, CTDOLE projections, and Lightcast labor market data.

This process helped identify the region's priority sectors, training needs, participant barriers, and employer hiring challenges. The resulting goals focus on expanding access to services, strengthening employer-driven training, building youth career pathways, reducing barriers to employment, using data and technology more effectively, and rebuilding training capacity.

- C. Describe the local area's strategy to work with entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals established by the local board. In addition, describe how the LWDB may be coordinating, streamlining, and aligning processes across regions.



To achieve the strategic vision and goals outlined in Section III.A, NRWIB will align workforce resources through coordinated partnerships with core program providers, state agencies, employers, education and training institutions, and community-based organizations. The Board will serve as a regional convener and workforce broker, while the One-Stop Operator will support coordination among American Job Center partners.

NRWIB will use partner meetings, American Job Center coordination, shared referrals, business services, Regional Sector Partnerships, and the Integrated Resource Team to connect participants with career services, adult education, occupational training, supportive services, veteran services, disability-related supports, re-entry services, and employment opportunities. The Integrated Resource Team will remain especially important for participants with multiple barriers who need coordinated referrals before entering training or employment.

Employer engagement will continue to guide resource alignment. Through business services, Chambers of Commerce, and the Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Architecture/Engineering/Construction Regional Sector Partnerships, NRWIB will identify hiring needs, skill gaps, curriculum priorities, and work-based learning opportunities. Lessons from prior initiatives, including the METAL curriculum project, will inform future employer-driven training design in manufacturing, healthcare, AEC, logistics, and other priority sectors.

NRWIB will also coordinate with the Connecticut Office of Workforce Strategy and CTDOL on labor market information, rapid response, funding opportunities, performance requirements, statewide initiatives, and system improvement efforts. The strategy will focus on reducing duplication, improving referrals, aligning training with labor market demand, expanding employer-informed programming, and rebuilding training capacity following the conclusion of major durational grants.

D. Describe the service strategies the LWDB has in place or will develop that will improve meeting the needs of customers with disabilities as well as other population groups.

TNRWIB currently provides services for customers with disabilities and other priority populations through coordinated referrals, individualized case management, accessible services, and partner collaboration. These services are supported through AJC partners, BRS, CTDOL, DSS, adult education, behavioral health providers, re-entry partners, veterans' services, and community organizations.

Key service strategies include:

- Continue using the Integrated Resource Team to coordinate services for individuals with multiple barriers.
- Strengthen and expand Ticket-to-Work services for SSI and SSDI recipients. This remains an important opportunity for growth.
- Expand access to work-based learning, transitional employment, OJT, and supportive services.
- Improve referrals for adult education, digital literacy, transportation, childcare, behavioral health, disability supports, re-entry services, and veterans' services.
- Continue improving accessibility, participant-centered service delivery, and connections to employer demand.



While these strategies are already in place, NRWIB recognizes the need to expand capacity, improve coordination, and increase awareness of available services. Ticket-to-Work is a particular opportunity to better serve individuals with disabilities who want to enter or return to employment.

E. Describe how the LWDB's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures to support economic growth and self-sufficiency.

Each goal established by NRWIB is designed to support federal WIOA performance accountability measures while advancing regional economic growth and participant self-sufficiency. The goals focus on employment, retention, earnings, credential attainment, measurable skill gains, and effectiveness in serving employers.

By aligning training and services with regional demand in healthcare, manufacturing, construction/AEC, logistics, business services, and other priority sectors, NRWIB supports stronger employment outcomes and helps employers address workforce shortages. Strategies such as sector partnerships, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, work-based learning, and employer-informed curriculum are intended to improve job placement, retention, and earnings.

NRWIB's focus on career pathways, short-term credentials, adult education partnerships, youth services, and supportive services also supports credential attainment and measurable skill gains. These strategies are especially important for participants who need basic skills, digital literacy, work readiness, transportation, childcare, or other supports to complete training and succeed in employment.

The Board also recognizes that employment alone does not always equal economic stability. Many households earn above the Federal Poverty Level but remain below a basic cost-of-living threshold. For this reason, NRWIB's goals emphasize not only job placement, but also advancement, wage growth, credential attainment, and pathways into family-sustaining careers.

F. Indicate anticipated local levels of performance for the federal measures.

The NRWIB will continue to manage performance levels, based on the statistical regression model, that reflect the economic conditions of the region and allow for successful attainment of the negotiated performance levels. Ongoing discussions with both State and Federal DOL must consider the population's educational attainment gap in the Northwest Region, the middle skills gap in filling job openings and the impact of legislation under consideration by the Connecticut General Assembly on the business climate in the state. Current Performance levels are attached.

G. Describe indicators used by the LWDB to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), contracted service providers, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area.

The NRWIB uses a comprehensive program monitoring tool to measure the effectiveness of the American Job Center delivery system. Each partner's ability to contribute to the system in a manner that increases the likelihood of a positive outcome for every participant is vital to the overall success of the system. Assuring the programs and services meet the needs of each participant, each contracted service provider (not ITA vendors) is reviewed annually to measure the program content, delivery of the content and satisfaction of enrollees. A similar fiscal tool is used to assure that all dollars allocated within the workforce delivery system are managed with prudence and provide the most efficient and effective delivery of



services. For contracted service providers, NRWIB utilizes the FutureWorks tracker (in real time) to measure completion rates, credential/ certificate attainment rate, entered employment rates and earnings. This unique tool allows for a timelier view of participant performance allowing for adjustments in strategies to achieve the negotiated performance levels if needed and provides for continuous improvement of program delivery and performance.

IV. COORDINATION OF SERVICES

A. Coordination with Partner Programs and Services: Describe how individualized career services will be coordinated across programs/partners in the one-stop centers, including Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Literacy activities and TANF. Specify how the local area will coordinate with these programs to avoid duplication and foster integrated services to improve service delivery for shared customers.

NRWIB has an established and effective tradition of cooperation among workforce, business, and economic development partners. The regional Business Services Team has worked with CTDOL, the American Job Center, Chambers of Commerce, Adult Education, BRS, JFES, community partners, and other stakeholders to support employers through a coordinated service approach. These services include job posting assistance through CTHires, recruitment support, hiring events, job matching, On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, transitional jobs, subsidized work experiences, rapid response, and connection to available workforce funding.

For the 2026–2030 period, NRWIB will build on this structure by expanding coordination with regional economic development partners, including:

- **Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments**
- **Northwest Hills Council of Governments**
- **Western Connecticut Council of Governments**
- **Greater Waterbury Chamber of Commerce**
- **Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce**
- **Northwest Connecticut Chamber of Commerce**
- Local economic development officials across the region's **41 municipalities**

A major strategy for this plan period will be a town-by-town engagement effort with mayors, first selectmen, town managers, and local economic development staff. As part of this effort, NRWIB will review local data on employment, industry concentration, business growth, business decline, commuting patterns, layoffs, hiring demand, and priority sectors. This will help ensure that workforce strategies are informed by both regional labor market trends and the specific economic conditions of each municipality.

This work will involve NRWIB's C-Suite, management team, and director-level staff in varying roles and capacities. Executive leadership will support relationship building with municipal leaders, COGs, Chambers, employers, and state partners. Management and director-level staff will help translate those relationships into program activity, employer services, participant referrals, training opportunities, data review, and information dissemination. This structure ensures that coordination with economic development partners is connected to both strategic planning and actual program delivery.

NRWIB will also work with towns and cities to make workforce information more visible in places residents already use, such as libraries, town halls, town clerk offices, tax offices, social service offices,



community centers, and other local access points. Information may include training opportunities, American Job Center services, youth employment programs, adult education referrals, re-entry supports, and resources for jobseekers.

On the employer side, NRWIB will use local offices, Chambers of Commerce, COGs, and municipal economic development channels to promote employer services at both the regional and hyperlocal level. This includes information about On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, recruitment assistance, job matching, hiring events, rapid response, and other business services.

This approach will better align workforce investment activities with business retention, business growth, layoff response, new employer recruitment, and local economic development planning. By combining labor market data with direct municipal engagement, NRWIB will be better positioned to connect residents to training and employment while helping employers access the talent needed to grow and remain competitive.

B. Coordination with Economic Development Activities: Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with economic development activities.

NRWIB will coordinate education and workforce development activities by aligning employer demand, WIOA-funded training, secondary and postsecondary education, adult education, apprenticeship pathways, and sector partnership priorities into a more connected regional career pathway system. The goal is to ensure that jobseekers can access short-term training, industry-recognized credentials, work-based learning, and longer-term education pathways without unnecessary duplication or delays.

A major focus will be stronger coordination with the CT State Community College system following its consolidation. NRWIB will work with CT State campuses and leadership to ensure that short-term credential programs, non-credit training, credit-bearing pathways, and occupational training options are available across the Northwest region and aligned with WIOA participant needs. This includes addressing barriers that can delay training cohorts, such as funding timelines, contracting issues, scheduling, curriculum approval, and program availability across service areas.

NRWIB will continue to use the Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Regional Sector Partnerships to guide education and training alignment. These employer-led partnerships provide direct feedback on hiring needs, skill gaps, curriculum priorities, internships, work-based learning, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and credential requirements. Their input will help ensure that education providers and workforce programs prepare participants for jobs that are available in the regional labor market.

While labor exchange and immediate job placement remain important, employers continue to emphasize the need for long-term skill development along career pathways. NRWIB will work with secondary and postsecondary education partners, adult education providers, apprenticeship partners, and employers in targeted sectors to map occupational progressions and identify education, training, and credential requirements for advancement. Regional education and training assets will be reviewed to address gaps, mismatches, and duplication.

Key coordination strategies include:

- **Align WIOA-funded training with CT State and other education providers** so short-term credentials connect to longer-term career pathways, certificates, associate degrees, apprenticeships, and advancement opportunities.



- **Expand short-term occupational training cohorts** in healthcare, manufacturing, construction/AEC, logistics, environmental remediation, business services, and other sectors.
- **Develop modular training models** that use work as the context for learning and allow participants to build skills in stages.
- **Integrate adult education bridge supports** into technical training, including GED preparation, English language instruction, basic skills remediation, digital literacy, and transition support.
- **Promote stackable credentials** that help participants increase their marketability.
- **Provide supportive services at key transition points** between education, training, work-based learning, and employment.
- **Use employer feedback to inform curriculum** so training reflects current workplace technology, equipment, safety standards, credentials, and work-readiness expectations.
- **Avoid duplication of services** by improving referrals, clarifying partner roles, and connecting participants to the provider or program best suited to their needs.

Work-based learning will remain a major bridge between education and employment. NRWIB will continue investing in employer-driven models for youth and adults, including work experience, internships, OJT, incumbent worker training, customized training, pre-apprenticeships, Registered Apprenticeships, and employer-hosted career exposure. AJC staff will continue to support this longer-term career development approach by helping participants and employers understand training options, career pathways, and advancement opportunities.

Pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship models will be especially important in manufacturing and AEC. In manufacturing, these models can support pathways into CNC, machining, production, quality, maintenance, and advanced manufacturing roles. In AEC and construction, they can support exposure to skilled trades, construction safety, site readiness, blueprint basics, tools, materials handling, and apprenticeship entry. Collaboration with employers, training providers, and labor partners will be important to expand training sites, mentors, and work-based learning capacity

Healthcare will also remain a major area of coordination. Through the Northwest CT HealthConneCT Regional Sector Partnership and its regional hospital and healthcare partners, NRWIB will support internships, career exposure, and training pathways for roles such as CNA, LPN, RN, medical assistant, patient care technician, phlebotomy, EMT, and other healthcare support occupations.

NRWIB will continue strengthening youth pathways through partnerships with local high schools, community colleges, employers, and training partners. Prior efforts such as the Future Bankers pre-apprenticeship model and industry speaker activities have shown the value of exposing students to career options directly from employers. These models can be expanded across healthcare, manufacturing, construction/AEC, financial services, logistics, and other sectors when employers are willing to provide training sites, mentors, speakers, and work-based learning opportunities.

NRWIB's strategy is to make education and workforce development more connected, faster to deploy, and more responsive to employer demand. NRWIB will focus on aligning WIOA training with CT State pathways, expanding short-term credentials, strengthening adult education bridges, growing pre-



apprenticeship and apprenticeship options, improving youth career pathways, and using Regional Sector Partnerships to ensure that education and training investments lead to employment and advancement.

C. Coordination of Education and Workforce Development Activities: Describe how the LWDB will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

NRWIB coordinates workforce development, education, training, and employer engagement activities through partnerships with K–12 school districts, Adult Education providers, CT State Community College campuses, apprenticeship sponsors, training providers, employers, labor organizations, and community-based organizations. These partnerships help align workforce investments with labor market demand, strengthen career pathways, expand access to industry-recognized credentials, and reduce duplication of services.

Regional Sector Partnerships in Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Architecture/Engineering/Construction serve as primary mechanisms for identifying workforce needs and aligning education and training strategies with employer demand. Through these partnerships, NRWIB works with educators, employers, workforce professionals, and training providers to develop career pathways that support entry into high-demand occupations and advancement opportunities for incumbent workers.

NRWIB supports career pathway models that incorporate Adult Education, postsecondary education, apprenticeships, work-based learning, short-term credential programs, and stackable credentials. These approaches help participants gain skills incrementally while providing multiple entry and exit points that support long-term career advancement.

Employer engagement remains central to workforce and education alignment efforts. NRWIB will continue expanding work-based learning opportunities, including internships, paid work experience, On-the-Job Training, incumbent worker training, pre-apprenticeships, and Registered Apprenticeships. Particular emphasis will be placed on expanding apprenticeship opportunities in manufacturing, healthcare, construction, transportation, information technology, and other priority sectors.

NRWIB will also continue strengthening youth career pathways through partnerships with local school districts, colleges, employers, and industry leaders. Career awareness initiatives, employer speakers, industry tours, internships, and work-based learning opportunities help students explore careers, understand workforce expectations, and connect classroom learning to employment opportunities. As technology continues to transform the workplace, NRWIB will support digital literacy, AI literacy, and workplace technology skills that prepare participants for emerging occupations and changing employer requirements.

D. Coordination of Transportation and Other Supportive Services: Describe how the LWDB will coordinate workforce investment activities, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

Transportation, childcare, housing instability, digital access, and other supportive service needs continue to be significant barriers to workforce participation throughout the Northwest Workforce Development Area. These challenges are particularly pronounced in rural communities where public transportation options are limited and access to employment, education, and training opportunities may require travel across multiple municipalities.



NRWIB coordinates supportive services through the American Job Center system and a network of workforce, education, human services, housing, behavioral health, and community-based partners. Supportive services are provided based on individual participant needs and may include transportation assistance, childcare supports, work clothing, tools, licensing and testing fees, technology access, housing referrals, utility assistance, behavioral health referrals, and other services that support successful participation in training and employment.

Transportation assistance may include bus passes, gas cards, rideshare services, mileage reimbursement, or other transportation supports when available and appropriate. NRWIB will continue exploring innovative transportation solutions and partnerships to address mobility challenges that impact access to training, interviews, work-based learning opportunities, apprenticeships, and employment.

Through coordinated referrals, Integrated Resource Team activities, and partner collaboration, NRWIB seeks to reduce barriers to participation, improve service continuity, and ensure that participants have access to the resources necessary to complete training, obtain employment, and advance along career pathways.

E. Coordination of Wagner-Peyser Services: Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the local area through the one-stop delivery system to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

NRWIB and Connecticut Department of Labor Wagner-Peyser staff work collaboratively through the American Job Center system to provide coordinated workforce services that maximize customer access, improve service delivery, and reduce duplication of effort. The partnership supports integrated service delivery for jobseekers, workers, and employers through shared planning, coordinated referrals, joint outreach activities, and ongoing communication.

American Job Center partners participate in regular partner meetings, coordinated service planning, cross-training activities, and collaborative problem solving to ensure customers receive seamless access to workforce, employment, training, and supportive services. Wagner-Peyser staff play a critical role in labor exchange activities, business engagement, labor market information, rapid response services, job matching, and workforce system coordination.

NRWIB and CTDOL will continue strengthening alignment through coordinated employer engagement, shared business services strategies, integrated customer flow processes, workforce technology systems, and data-informed decision making. This collaborative approach improves customer outcomes, maximizes available resources, and supports an efficient one-stop delivery system responsive to both participant and employer needs.

F. Coordination of Adult Education and Literacy: Describe how the LWDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy services under Title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (a) and (B)(i) of section 107 (d)(11) section 232, the review of local applications submitted under Title II.

NRWIB has strong existing partnerships with adult education and literacy providers across the Northwest Workforce Development Area. These partners are already important to the workforce system because many WIOA-eligible participants need adult education services, and many adult education students could benefit from WIOA career services, training, supportive services, and employer connections. The major opportunity is to strengthen the referral pipeline between Adult Education and the American Job Center



system so that students and jobseekers move more easily between basic skills development, occupational training, and employment.

1. Strengthen Adult Education and AJC Referral Pipelines:

NRWIB will work with adult education providers to improve two-way referrals between Adult Education and the American Job Center. This will include:

- a) Referring WIOA and other workforce participants to Adult Education for GED preparation, English language instruction, basic skills remediation, digital literacy, and tutoring.
- b) Referring adult education students to the AJC for career services, occupational training, supportive services, job search assistance, and employer connections.
- c) Using shared tracking tools, such as the existing SharePoint referral spreadsheet, to monitor referrals, skill gains, credential attainment, and employment outcomes.

2. Bring Career Navigation Directly to Adult Education Students:

NRWIB will expand direct engagement with adult education students by bringing workforce information to the places where students are already enrolled and participating. This may include:

- a) Career Navigators attending adult education enrollment sessions.
- b) Presentations during classes, tutoring sessions, and student events.
- c) Information sessions on WIOA training, supportive services, job search assistance, and career pathways.
- d) On-site or virtual appointments for students interested in occupational training or employment.

3. Coordinate Remediation, Tutoring, and Training Readiness:

Adult Education will remain a key partner in helping participants prepare for occupational training and credential completion. This is especially important for WIOA participants and participants in durational grant-funded programs who may need academic support before entering or completing training. Coordination may include:

- a) On-site or referred tutoring for math, reading, digital literacy, and English language needs.
- b) Remediation support tied to training entrance requirements.
- c) Bridge programming that prepares participants for healthcare, manufacturing, construction, logistics, customer service, and other in-demand pathways.
- d) Continued coordination between Career Navigators, adult education staff, and training providers.

4. Connect Adult Education Students to Employers and Career Pathways:

NRWIB will work with adult education partners to connect students more directly to employer demand and regional career pathways. This may include:

- a) Employer hiring events and career fairs for adult education students.
- b) Career pathway presentations tied to healthcare, manufacturing, construction/AEC, logistics, and business services.



- c) Referrals to short-term credential training and work-based learning.
- d) Opportunities for adult education providers to participate in employer-informed curriculum discussions through business services and Regional Sector Partnerships.

5. Review Title II Applications for Alignment with the Local Plan:

Consistent with WIOA requirements, NRWIB will review local applications submitted under Title II for adult education and literacy activities. The review will assess whether proposed services align with the Local Plan, support regional workforce goals, connect participants to career pathways, avoid duplication, and meet the education and skill needs of jobseekers and employers. NRWIB will provide recommendations where appropriate to strengthen alignment between Title II activities, WIOA services, American Job Center operations, adult education programming, and regional labor market priorities.

G. Coordination with other Local Areas or Bordering States: Describe any partnerships between one or more LWDBs and/or partnerships with entities in bordering states that address the workforce needs of the region(s).

NRWIB works closely with Connecticut's other workforce development boards, the Connecticut Office of Workforce Strategy, CTDOL, and statewide partners to address workforce needs that extend beyond local workforce area boundaries. These relationships are already part of the Board's ongoing work and will continue to be strengthened as the region responds to changing employer needs, training gaps, and funding opportunities.

Statewide Workforce Board Coordination

NRWIB collaborates with the other Connecticut workforce development boards and state partners on cross-regional workforce priorities, including:

- **Manufacturing**
- **Healthcare**
- **Information Technology**
- **Transportation/CDL**
- **Construction and AEC**
- **Energy and infrastructure-related occupations**
- **Youth employment and work-based learning**
- **Incumbent worker training and on-the-job training**

This coordination helps align employer services, training capacity, rapid response, sector strategies, and statewide workforce priorities.

Regular Collaborative Meetings

NRWIB engages in regular meetings with other workforce boards, OWS, CTDOL, and partner agencies to discuss strategy, policy, performance, funding, labor market trends, and shared challenges. These meetings help the boards stay informed about statewide initiatives, new funding opportunities, sector priorities, and system improvement efforts.



Through these forums, workforce boards can reduce duplication, share lessons learned, coordinate programming, and strengthen alignment across regions.

Sector-Based and Cross-Regional Collaboration

Many employer needs are regional or statewide rather than confined to one local workforce area. NRWIB works with partners to address cross-regional needs in healthcare, manufacturing, construction, logistics, energy, and other priority sectors. This includes sharing information on employer demand, training providers, curriculum models, incumbent worker training, apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities, and work-based learning strategies. These efforts help expand access to high-demand credentials and sustain effective training models developed through prior initiatives.

National and Cross-Regional Partnerships

NRWIB also maintains relationships with national and cross-regional workforce organizations. The Board has a strong relationship with the National Association of Workforce Boards, regularly attends the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and has recently joined Midwest Urban Strategies to explore best practices, federal opportunities, and cross-regional workforce strategies.

These relationships help NRWIB learn from workforce systems outside Connecticut and bring back models that may strengthen services in the Northwest Workforce Development Area. They also support broader collaboration on urban workforce development, sector partnerships, employer engagement, youth employment, re-entry, incumbent worker training, and federal workforce policy.

H. Cooperative Agreements: Provide a description of the replicated cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA section 107(d)(11)) between the local board or other local entities described in section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29U.S.C 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated state agency or designated state unit administering programs carried out under Title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross-training staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts of cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

See Section III. Question 3.

V. LOCAL ONE-STOP SYSTEM

A. General System Description: Describe the one-stop delivery system in your local area including the roles and resource contributions of one-stop partners.

1. *Is each one of the required WIOA partners included in your one-stop delivery system? Describe how they contribute to your planning and implementation efforts. If any required partner is not involved, explain the reason.*

Each required WIOA partner is included in our one-stop delivery system. For a description of contributions, see Appendix F: Memorandums of Understanding and Infrastructure Agreements.

2. *Identify and non-required partners included in the local one-stop delivery system.*



Manufacturing Alliance Service Corp.

3. The LWDB, with the agreement of the chief elected official, shall develop and enter into a memorandum of understanding between the local board and one-stop partners. Please provide a copy of any executed MOUs.

See Appendix F.

B. Customer Access: Describe actions taken by the LWDB to promote maximum integration of service delivery for both business customers and individual customers.

1. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and one-stop partners, will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act regarding physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing needs of individuals with disabilities.
2. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system are utilizing principles of universal design in their operation.
3. Describe how the LWDB facilitates access to services provided through the local delivery system, including remote areas through the use of technology and through other means.

NRWIB promotes customer access by working with the One-Stop Operator, American Job Center partners, CTDOL, ADS/BRS, adult education providers, community partners, and business services staff to deliver workforce services through a coordinated and accessible system. The goal is to make services available to both individual customers and business customers in a way that is integrated, understandable, accessible, and responsive to local needs.

Customer access includes physical access to American Job Center facilities, programmatic access to services, technology-supported access, referrals through partner agencies, outreach to remote communities, and coordinated services for employers.

Integrated Service Delivery for Individual and Business Customers

NRWIB supports integrated service delivery through:

- Coordinated American Job Center operations and partner referrals;
- The One-Stop Operator's role in partner coordination;
- The Integrated Resource Team for participants with multiple barriers;
- Business services coordination with CTDOL, Chambers of Commerce, employers, and economic development partners;
- Referrals among WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, BRS/Vocational Rehabilitation, JFES, Ticket-to-Work, veterans' services, re-entry services, youth programs, and other partner programs;
- Shared outreach to employers regarding recruitment, job matching, OJT, incumbent worker training, rapid response, hiring events, and workforce funding.



This structure helps individual customers access the right mix of career services, training, supportive services, and referrals. It also helps business customers access coordinated recruitment, training, and workforce solutions without having to navigate multiple disconnected programs.

ADA Compliance and Accessibility

Entities within the one-stop delivery system comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and WIOA Section 188 by supporting physical, programmatic, communication, and technology access for individuals with disabilities. The AJCs provide accessible facilities and services and coordinate with disability partners to ensure customers can participate in workforce programs.

Accessibility efforts include:

- Accessible entrances, parking, restrooms, service areas, and computer stations;
- Reasonable accommodations and modifications when needed;
- Assistive technology such as screen reading, magnification, speech recognition, scanning, and adaptive input tools;
- Sign language and oral interpreter services upon request;
- Referrals to ADS/BRS, the Job Accommodation Network, benefits counseling, and other disability-related resources;
- Confidential handling of disability-related information;
- Complaint procedures and Equal Opportunity Officer support;
- Staff training on disability etiquette, universal design, assistive technology, mental health, autism, accessibility, and reasonable accommodations.

NRWIB maintains a strong relationship with the Department of Aging and Disability Services and BRS/Vocational Rehabilitation. ADS/VR is co-located in Waterbury, and the regional ADS Director participates in the workforce system. NRWIB also operates Ticket-to-Work services and recognizes this as an area with opportunity for expanded outreach and improved service delivery during the 2026–2030 period.

Universal Design in One-Stop Operations

NRWIB and its partners use universal design principles to make services easier to access for all customers, not only those who request accommodations. This includes simplifying service navigation, using clear information, offering multiple ways to access services, and designing processes that work for people with different needs, schedules, learning styles, and technology access.

Universal design practices include:

- Clear signage and customer flow within AJCs;
- Staff assistance for customers who need help navigating services;
- Multiple service entry points through AJCs, partner referrals, phone, email, virtual meetings, and community outreach;
- Accessible workshops and materials;



- Plain-language communication where possible;
- Use of assistive technology and accessible workstations;
- Referrals to adult education, digital literacy, and tutoring when customers need additional preparation;
- Coordination through the Integrated Resource Team for customers with more complex needs.

These practices help improve access for individuals with disabilities, English language learners, veterans, returning citizens, youth, older workers, public assistance recipients, individuals in recovery, and customers with limited digital access or transportation barriers.

Access for Remote Areas and Technology-Supported Services

The Northwest Workforce Development Area includes 41 municipalities across urban, suburban, and rural communities. Because customers may live far from an AJC or face transportation barriers, NRWIB will continue using technology and community partnerships to expand access.

Strategies include:

- Offering phone, email, and virtual service options where appropriate;
- Promoting AJC services through partner agencies, adult education providers, libraries, town halls, community centers, and municipal offices;
- Expanding town-by-town outreach with mayors, first selectmen, town managers, and local economic development staff;
- Placing information about training, OJT, incumbent worker training, youth programs, re-entry services, and AJC services in local offices and places residents already use;
- Using digital outreach, social media, email campaigns, and online information to reach jobseekers and employers;
- Coordinating with COGs, Chambers of Commerce, municipalities, and community organizations to reach rural and remote communities.

For business customers, NRWIB will also use regional and hyperlocal channels to promote employer services. This includes outreach through Chambers, COGs, municipal economic development offices, sector partnerships, and direct employer contact. Employer-facing services include recruitment support, job postings, hiring events, labor market information, OJT, incumbent worker training, rapid response, and layoff aversion support.

System Improvement: Describe the steps the LWDB will take to ensure continuous improvement of the area's one-stop system.

To support continuous improvement of the local one-stop system, NRWIB has identified ten priority areas for system change during the 2026–2030 planning period. These priorities are based on the region's labor market analysis, employer feedback, Regional Sector Partnership activity, partner input, participant service needs, and lessons learned from prior workforce initiatives.



The goals below focus on improving coordination, customer access, training alignment, employer engagement, youth pathways, services for priority populations, data use, technology adoption, and economic development alignment. Each goal includes specific actions NRWIB will take to strengthen service delivery, reduce duplication, improve outcomes, and ensure the workforce system remains responsive to both jobseekers and employers.

1. Strengthen Partner Coordination and Referral Systems

1. Strengthening regular partner meetings and shared communication.
2. Using the **Integrated Resource Team** to coordinate services for clients with multiple barriers.
3. Improving referral processes between Adult Education, WIOA, JFES, Ticket-to-Work, re-entry, youth programs, and supportive service partners.
4. Improving follow-up when participants move between programs or providers.

2. Improve Customer Access and Service Navigation

1. Expand community-based outreach through libraries, town halls, town clerk offices, tax offices, social service offices, community centers, and other local access points across the region's 41 municipalities.
2. Use multiple access methods including phone, email, virtual meetings, digital outreach, social media, and partner referrals to reach customers who cannot easily access an American Job Center.
3. Improve awareness and accessibility of services including AJC programs, training opportunities, OJT, incumbent worker training, Ticket-to-Work, youth services, employer resources, ADA accessibility, universal design, assistive technology, and reasonable accommodations.

3. Align Training with Labor Market Demand

1. Use data and employer feedback to guide training priorities, including CTHires, CTDOL labor market information, Lightcast data, job posting analytics, Regional Sector Partnership input, and municipal-level data on employment, industry growth or decline, commuting patterns, layoffs, and hiring demand.
2. Align training and reskilling with both growth and replacement-demand occupations, including healthcare, home care, manufacturing, construction/AEC, logistics, environmental remediation, business services, retail, food service, administrative support, customer-facing roles, and occupations affected by technology, automation, or changing employer needs.

4. Rebuild Training Capacity After Expired Grants

1. Pursuing new federal, state, philanthropic, employer-supported, and sector partnership-driven funding opportunities.
2. Preserving successful models from prior grants, including short-term credentials, employer-informed curriculum, work-based learning, and supportive services.



3. Building funding strategies around healthcare, manufacturing, construction, logistics, environmental remediation, re-entry, and youth employment.

5. Expand Work-Based Learning and Employer-Driven Training

1. Expand employer-driven training models, including On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, customized training, internships, work experience, transitional employment, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and employer-hosted career exposure.
2. Use Regional Sector Partnerships to identify employer needs, including skill gaps, training priorities, curriculum updates, credential needs, and work-based learning opportunities.
3. Strengthen sector-specific pathways in manufacturing, AEC, and healthcare through models connected to CNC, machining, production, quality, maintenance, construction safety, skilled trades, apprenticeship entry, and the Northwest CT HealthConneCT Regional Sector Partnership.

6. Strengthen Education and Adult Education Alignment

1. Strengthen coordination with CT State Community College and other training providers to launch short-term credential cohorts more efficiently, reduce delays related to contracting, scheduling, curriculum approval, funding timing, or program availability, and ensure training options align with WIOA participant needs and employer demand.
2. Expand Adult Education and AJC referral pipelines by connecting students to Career Navigators during enrollment sessions, classes, tutoring sessions, and student events, while using GED preparation, English language instruction, digital literacy, basic skills remediation, and tutoring as bridges into WIOA services, occupational training, hiring events, and employer pathways.

7. Improve Youth Career Pathways

1. Expand youth access to career exploration and work-based learning through paid work experience, internships, mentoring, industry speakers, financial literacy, work-readiness training, employer panels, site visits, and school-based career fairs.
2. Create more youth pathway opportunities beyond SYEP by connecting students and families to AJC services and expanding sector-focused exposure in healthcare, manufacturing, construction/AEC, logistics, skilled trades, financial services, and business services.

8. Improve Services for Priority Populations

1. Expand awareness and use of Ticket-to-Work, which remains a significant opportunity to better serve SSI and SSDI recipients seeking employment and greater economic independence.
2. Strengthen re-entry services and service continuity for returning citizens, especially individuals placed in one community who may return to another community for housing, family support, or employment.
3. Improve coordinated supports for participants with barriers by expanding referrals to behavioral health, recovery services, transportation, childcare, adult education, disability-related supports, transitional employment, OJT, supportive services, and case management.



9. Strengthen Business Services and Economic Development Coordination

1. Strengthen coordination with regional economic development partners, including NVCOG, NHCOG, WESTCOG, the Greater Waterbury Chamber, Greater Danbury Chamber, Northwest Connecticut Chamber, and local economic development officials.
2. Engage all 41 municipalities through a town-by-town strategy involving mayors, first selectmen, town managers, and economic development staff, supported by NRWIB C-Suite, management, and director-level staff.
3. Use local data and hyperlocal outreach to align services with employer needs, including employment trends, industry concentration, business growth or decline, commuting patterns, layoffs, hiring needs, OJT, Incumbent Worker Training, recruitment assistance, job matching, hiring events, and rapid response information sharing, and program implementation.

10. Use Data, Technology, and AI Responsibly

1. Strengthen staff capacity around data quality and performance management through training on accurate data entry, case notes, performance tracking, reporting, and outcome monitoring.
2. Use data to guide planning and continuous improvement, including CTHires, CTDOL data, Lightcast data, job postings, employer feedback, participant outcomes, and statewide performance information from OWS and CTDOL.
3. Explore responsible use of technology and AI-supported tools for labor market analysis, outreach, resume support, job matching, training research, participant communication, program evaluation, and digital communication with jobseekers, employers, partners, and municipalities.

NRWIB's system improvement strategy will focus on making the one-stop system more coordinated, more accessible, more data-informed, and more responsive to employer and participant needs. The Board will strengthen partner referrals, expand adult education connections, rebuild training capacity, improve youth pathways, grow OJT and incumbent worker training, support priority populations, coordinate with economic development partners, and use technology and AI to improve service delivery. These steps will help ensure that the one-stop system continues to improve while preparing residents for employment and helping employers access the skilled workforce needed for regional economic growth.

D. Competitive Selection of One-Stop Operator: Describe the steps taken or to be taken to ensure a competitive process that avoids potential conflict of interest for selection of the one-stop operator(s).

On January 18, 2021, the NRWIB released a Request for Quotation to procure a One-Stop Operator for the region. Legal advertisements were published in the Danbury News Times, the Torrington Register Citizen, the Waterbury Republican American, and the Hartford Courant on January 18, 2021. The procurement was open for 30 days. The NRWIB received two proposals in total, and the second proposal was deemed non-responsive by the committee. Upon review and discussion, the One-Stop Committee selected the Northwest Connecticut Chamber of Commerce for recommendation to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors met on June 10, 2021, and voted to move forward with the selection.



E. System Improvement: Describe the steps the LWDB will take to ensure continuous improvement of the area's one-stop system.

Customers – Integrated Service Delivery: The NRWIB is committed to delivering services in a way that seamlessly integrates the resources and services of workforce partners to address the training and employment needs of both jobseekers and businesses. Key components of Integrated Service Delivery include customer co-enrollment, organizing staff around functions and customer needs, functional leadership, continuous quality improvement based on customer feedback, and a customer-first approach.

For staff, this means prioritizing the needs of jobseekers and employers, ensuring every customer is seen as everyone's customer, supporting staff development and training to transition to new roles under functional teams, meeting customers where they are in their career development, and serving as navigators to ensure access to necessary services.

Under Integrated Service Delivery, customers experience "value-added" interactions during each visit and seamless transitions between staff, programs, and services.

Business Services: The NRWIB serves as a partner to industry representatives from all targeted sectors: Manufacturing, Healthcare, Information Technology, Construction, Human Services, Retail Trade, Transportation & Warehousing, and Accommodation & Food Services. The business service unit comprises business intermediaries (Chambers of Commerce) and AJC partners (Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education). These representatives understand industry needs and emerging skill requirements, helping to prepare workers for their jobs. Continuous collaboration among workforce partners and business intermediaries ensures ongoing improvement and strategic planning when working with businesses..

Regional Sector Partnerships: In addition to providing data on regional employment needs, the NRWIB acts as a convener for industry-driven Regional Sector Partnerships in Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Architecture/Engineering/Construction. Key focus areas identified by these industries include:

Northwest CT Manufacturing Regional Sector Partnership:

- Break the Manufacturing Stereotype: Modern manufacturing environments are high-tech, clean, and desirable to work in, contrary to outdated perceptions.
- Showcase Connecticut's Manufacturing: Connecticut manufacturers produce a wide range of products, from jet engines to cell tower accessories.
- Highlight Top Manufacturing Sectors: Aerospace, pharmaceuticals, navigational instruments, machinery, electronics, motor vehicles, medical equipment, and beverages.

Northwest HealthConnect Regional Sector Partnership:

- Attract and Prepare Local Youth: Implement targeted outreach programs, develop relevant curricula and training programs, provide internships and apprenticeships, and offer mentorship and career guidance.
- Recruit, Develop, and Retain Adults: Create robust recruitment strategies, offer continuous professional development, and implement retention initiatives like competitive compensation and career advancement opportunities.

Architecture, Engineering, and Construction Regional Sector Partnership:

- Career Awareness Building: Focus on building interest among middle and high school students, career-changing adults, and influencers like parents, counselors, and educators.



- Talent Recruitment and Development: Increase the flow of talent into the sector, focusing on adults with transferable skills and improving current student preparation.
- B-to-B Collaboration: Pursue collaboration opportunities that benefit the architecture, engineering, and construction sectors broadly.

By focusing on these key areas, the NRWIB aims to meet the workforce needs of the region effectively, ensuring comprehensive support and continuous improvement in service delivery.

Staff Training: To ensure continuous improvement, NRWIB provides ongoing training for peer-to-peer collaboration and networking between agencies. This helps build relationships and improve referral processes. Staff must be knowledgeable about partner agency services and their availability to clients, ensuring efficient navigation and co-enrollment. Understanding timelines for each process is critical for setting reasonable customer expectations.

NRWIB prides itself on delivering a customer-centric case management approach to WIOA programs. Career Navigators (formerly Case Managers) use strengths-based assessments and motivational techniques to help customers overcome barriers. This approach has led to:

- Career Navigators developing customer-centered service plans in partnership with clients.
- Clients accessing more coordinated and integrated services.
- Clients making progress toward self-sufficiency through employment/income, housing, childcare, and life skills.
- WIOA Career Navigators receive training in customer-centric case management practices. Core trainings and multiple coaching sessions are provided for staff and supervisors.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM SERVICES

A. System Description: Describe the local workforce development system. Identify the programs that are included in the system and how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment in provision of services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C.2301et seq.), that support the strategy identified in the State Plan under WIOA section 102(b)(1)€. WIOA 108(b)(2).

Career Resources, Inc. (CRI) delivers WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker program activities through the AJC system via three comprehensive and affiliate centers. Career services are provided to a wide range of job seekers, with specialized programs for returning veterans and individuals with disabilities. Our services include career coaching, job search guidance, skill and interest assessments, peer group support, individual employment planning, and job development and placement. Occupational training is facilitated through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Business Services Teams engage employers, offering recruitment and hiring assistance, as well as access to various training resources for incumbent workers and new hires. Post-pandemic efforts have expanded our reach, providing virtual access to services through Career Edge and CTHires.

Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL) services and CRI's services are co-located in all three AJCs, with Waterbury serving as the primary comprehensive AJC and Danbury and Torrington serving as affiliate one-stops. The AJCs act as hubs, referring job seekers to sector-focused programs in targeted industries such as Manufacturing, Healthcare, Information Technology, Human Services, Construction, Transportation & Warehousing, Retail Trade, and Food & Accommodation Services.



Job Developers from organizations like the Department of Aging and Disability Services and Adult Education providers participate in Regional Business Service team meetings in each region. AJC staff are well-versed in these targeted sector initiatives and programs, ensuring informed referrals. In some cases, targeted sector programs may be co-located at an AJC. Additionally, accessible printed information about these programs will be available to job seekers.

Adult basic education services in the regional workforce system also integrate funding from the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. Through the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Bureau of Adult Education, the NRWIB receives funding to support infrastructure costs within the AJCs, further enhancing our ability to provide comprehensive education and training services.

B. Sub Grants and Contracts: Provide a description of the competitive process to be used that avoids potential conflict of interest to award subgrants and contracts in the local area for WIOA-funded activities and the services to be made available.

Most services will be provided by Career Resources, Inc. (CRI). Training services not included on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) will be competitively procured following the NRWIB Fiscal Policy and Procedures. Detailed information regarding this process can be found in Appendix G.

C. Expanding Access to Employment: Describe how the local board, working with entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, including how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credential.

To expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services, NRWIB will work with core program partners and other regional partners to provide clear pathways into training, credentials, employment, retention, and advancement. The focus will remain on eligible individuals with barriers to employment and on connecting services to the needs of regional employers.

1. Diversified Career Services and Training

NRWIB will provide career coaching, job search assistance, skill assessments, individualized employment planning, training referrals, and job placement support. These services will help participants understand their options and move toward employment or training that fits their goals and the needs of the labor market.

2. Expansion of Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Models

NRWIB will continue to expand apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship models because they provide structured hands-on training and a direct connection to employment. These models will be explored in manufacturing, healthcare, construction/AEC, information technology, logistics, and other priority sectors.

3. On-the-Job Training



NRWIB will continue to use On-the-Job Training to help jobseekers gain paid work experience while helping employers meet staffing needs. OJT supports the transition into permanent employment by allowing participants to learn job-specific skills in a real workplace.

4. Transitional Jobs and Work Experience

NRWIB will use transitional jobs and work experience for individuals with limited work history or significant barriers to employment. These opportunities help participants build resumes, develop work habits, strengthen soft skills, and move toward unsubsidized employment.

5. Customized & Incumbent Worker Training and Employer-Driven Solutions

NRWIB will work with employers to design training that responds to specific business and industry needs. This will include customized training for new hires and Incumbent Worker Training for existing employees who need to upgrade skills, adapt to new technology, earn credentials, or advance within the company. Incumbent Worker Training will be a key strategy for helping employers improve retention, address skill gaps, and promote from within. Regional Sector Partnerships will help identify common training needs, credential priorities, curriculum gaps, and work-based learning opportunities across priority sectors.

6. Career Pathways and Co-Enrollment

NRWIB will support career pathways that help participants move from basic skills development to occupational training, credentials, employment, and advancement. Co-enrollment will be used when appropriate so participants can receive services from multiple programs at the same time.

7. Adult Education and Basic Skills Bridges

Adult Education will remain a key partner for participants who need GED preparation, English language instruction, digital literacy, tutoring, or basic skills remediation. NRWIB will strengthen two-way referrals so Adult Education students can access workforce services and WIOA participants can receive the academic support needed to complete training.

8. Improved Access to Postsecondary Credentials

NRWIB will work with CT State Community College and other training providers to improve access to short-term credentials, stackable credentials, certificates, apprenticeships, and longer-term education pathways. A major goal for 2026–2030 is to reduce delays in launching short-term training cohorts and better align WIOA-funded training with employer demand.

9. Rebuilding Training Capacity

NRWIB will pursue new funding to replace capacity previously supported by ACI, CareerConneCT, Good Jobs Challenge, Project Longevity, and other durational grants. This will help preserve and expand short-term credentials, supportive services, employer-informed training, OJT, incumbent worker training, apprenticeships, and work-based learning.

By implementing these strategies, NRWIB will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services. These efforts will help eligible individuals earn credentials, secure employment, increase earnings, and move toward long-term self-sufficiency.



D. Key Industry Sectors: Identify how the LWDB plans to better align its resources to support and meet the training and employment needs of key industry sectors in the local area. Describe policies adopted or planned for aligning training initiatives and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to sector strategies and demand occupations.

NRWIB will align resources to support the key industry sectors identified through labor market analysis, CTDOL projections, job posting analytics, employer feedback, and Regional Sector Partnership activity. The focus will remain on sectors with strong growth, high employment volume, high wages, replacement demand, or clear employer need.

Addressing Workforce Needs through Industry Partnerships

NRWIB will continue to use the Regional Sector Partnerships to guide sector strategy and training alignment. These partnerships will help NRWIB:

- Identify employer skill gaps, hiring needs, and credential priorities.
- Address soft skills, work readiness, retention, and turnover challenges.
- Expand youth career exploration and earlier on-ramps into priority sectors.
- Map career pathways in healthcare, manufacturing, AEC, construction, logistics, environmental remediation, and business services.
- Expand work-based learning, OJT, incumbent worker training, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and customized training.
- Better connect AJC services, business services, and training investments to employer demand.

New Priorities

Based on the updated analysis, NRWIB will place increased emphasis on healthcare and home care pathways, manufacturing, construction/AEC, logistics, environmental remediation, business services, and high-volume replacement-demand sectors such as retail, food service, administrative support, and customer-facing roles. The Board will also focus on reskilling and upskilling workers affected by technology, automation, or changing employer needs.

Individual Training Accounts and Training Initiatives

NRWIB will continue to align Individual Training Accounts with demand occupations and sector strategies. ITA-supported training should lead to recognized credentials, employment opportunities, wage growth, or advancement in priority sectors. NRWIB will also review training costs, credential requirements, and participant needs to determine whether ITA limits or funding strategies should be adjusted when appropriate.

Policies for Aligning Training to Sector Strategies

NRWIB's ITA policy and training approval practices will continue to support programs connected to labor market demand, employer need, credential value, and participant outcomes. For 2026–2030, sector partnership feedback, job posting trends, training outcomes, and employer input will help guide training investments and ensure resources are aligned with regional workforce needs.

E. Industry Partnerships: Describe how the LWDB will identify and work with key industry partnerships (Regional Sector Partnerships) where they exist within the local area and coordinate and invest in partnership infrastructure where they are not yet developed.



NRWIB will continue to identify and work with key industry partnerships through its established Regional Sector Partnerships. These partnerships have been outlined throughout this plan as central tools for aligning workforce development, education, training, and employer engagement with real industry demand. NRWIB will utilize the RSPs to:

- Identify employer skill gaps, hiring needs, credential priorities, and curriculum needs.
- Support career awareness, talent recruitment, and work-based learning.
- Guide investments in short-term training, ITAs, OJT, incumbent worker training, customized training, and supportive services.
- Expand employer participation in internships, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and other hands-on training models.
- Connect sector priorities to adult education, CT State pathways, K–12 partners, training providers, and American Job Center services.

The **Manufacturing RSP** will remain a key vehicle for advancing training in CNC, machining, production, quality, maintenance, logistics, and related technical roles. The METAL curriculum project demonstrated the value of employer-informed training design, and NRWIB will continue using this model to support manufacturing career pathways, pre-apprenticeship opportunities, apprenticeship entry, and incumbent worker advancement.

The **Northwest CT HealthConnECT RSP** will continue supporting healthcare career pathways, internships, employer engagement, and training alignment with hospitals and healthcare providers. This partnership will help guide training for roles such as CNA, LPN, RN, medical assistant, patient care technician, phlebotomy, EMT, home care, and other healthcare support occupations.

The **AEC RSP** will continue focusing on career awareness, talent recruitment, and sector-wide collaboration in architecture, engineering, construction, infrastructure, and skilled trades. NRWIB will use this partnership to expand exposure for youth and career changers, strengthen construction and AEC training pathways, and support pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship connections with employers, training providers, and labor partners.

Where sector partnerships are not yet fully developed, NRWIB will use labor market data, employer feedback, Chambers of Commerce, COGs, municipalities, CTDOL, OWS, and business services activity to identify emerging industry needs. The Board will invest in partnership infrastructure by convening employers, supporting action teams, developing shared priorities, connecting partners to funding opportunities, and building training responses around confirmed employer demand.

NRWIB's strategy is to strengthen existing RSPs while using the same employer-led model to explore new or expanded partnerships in areas such as logistics, environmental remediation, clean energy, business services, and other sectors identified through data and employer engagement. This approach will help ensure that workforce investments remain aligned with regional industry needs and lead to training, credentials, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities for jobseekers.

By leveraging and formalizing relationships through industry partnerships, NRWIB aims to create sustained, impactful collaborations that address workforce needs effectively. This approach will enhance the alignment of workforce, economic development, and education strategies region-wide, ensuring that the Northwest region's workforce is well-prepared for the demands of key industry sectors.



F. In-Demand Training: Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate.

NRWIB uses the following process to ensure training is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area where a participant is willing to relocate:

- 1. Review labor market and workforce data.**
NRWIB reviews provider availability, Lightcast Quarterly Employment Data, CTDOLE 2022–2032 projections, job posting analytics, CTHires, Census/ACS data, State LAUS data, and municipal-level trends to identify occupations with growth, replacement demand, strong wages, regional concentration, or documented hiring need.
- 2. Validate demand with employers.**
NRWIB compares labor market findings with employer feedback from Business Services, hiring activity, Chambers of Commerce, and the Manufacturing, Northwest CT HealthConneCT, and Architecture/Engineering/Construction Regional Sector Partnerships. This confirms real hiring demand, skill gaps, credential needs, and curriculum gaps.
- 3. Review training providers and credential availability.**
NRWIB examines what regional training providers offer to identify short-term credentials for entry-level employment, advancement, and workforce retraining. When gaps exist, NRWIB works with providers to explore new programs or cohorts that respond to documented employer need.
- 4. Connect providers to the State Eligible Training Provider process.**
Because WIOA-funded training providers must be listed on the State of Connecticut’s Eligible Training Provider List, NRWIB helps identify new or existing providers that may be appropriate for WIOA participants and connects them to the State process when needed.
- 5. Match participants to approved training and career pathways.**
Training options are reviewed to determine whether they lead to recognized credentials, measurable skill gains, employment, wage growth, or advancement. NRWIB aligns training through ITAs, Adult Education bridges, CT State pathways, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, OJT, IWT, customized training, internships, and work experience.
- 6. Use cross-region referrals when local options do not exist.**
If an in-demand training pathway is not available regionally, NRWIB may work with other workforce boards to make cross-region referrals when eligible and appropriate. This helps participants access training tied to demand in another region where they are willing to commute or relocate.
- 7. Update priorities over time.**
NRWIB will continue reviewing labor market changes, employer feedback, Census/ACS and LAUS trends, provider availability, training outcomes, credential attainment, placements, wages, and retention to keep training investments aligned with workforce and employer needs.

G. Priority for Services: Describe the local policy and procedures that have been established to give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in the provision of individualized career services and training services in the Adult programs.

Priority of Service	
Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veteran and eligible spouses • Low income adults (i.e. TANF/WtW- Below 70% of poverty guidelines) • Customers that are employed and below the 100% LLSIL (Lower Living Standard Income Levels) with at least one barrier to employment. • Training based on DOL Labor Market Occupations in Demand
Dislocated Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans and Eligible Spouses • Most In Need Criteria • Training based on DOL Labor Market Occupations in Demand
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Below 70% of poverty guidelines • Youth in need of GED or High School diploma • Parenting youth • Youth who are basic skills deficient • Youth with educational attainment that is one or more grade level below the grade level appropriate to the age of the youth • Youth with disabilities including learning disabilities • Youth who are homeless or runaway youth • Youth who are offenders <p><small>*As allowed under Section 129 (c)5(H) the board chooses to identify a youth participant who resides in a single parent family as an additional barrier in the eligibility criteria.</small></p>

H. Training Services: Describe how training services will be provided and monitored, including, if contracts for training services are to be used, how such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs.

Adult: An adult is defined as an individual 18 years of age or older. Unemployed customers unable to obtain employment through Career Services and employed customers who need assistance to retain or upgrade employment, must be determined eligible and registered before receiving Training Services.

Dislocated Worker: Dislocated workers must be certified by CTDOL prior to individualized career services. Dislocated workers unable to obtain employment through career center services and under-employed dislocated workers who need assistance to retain or upgrade employment must be determined eligible and registered before receiving WIOA Services.

I. Customer Choice: Describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

A customer may select any WIOA-approved education and training program in the state, as listed on the current ETPL, if the participant meets all other criteria relating to initial and subsequent eligibility for such educational and/or training services. Individuals seeking WIOA funded assistance have the freedom of “customer choice” in selecting the educational and training program that best fits their personal and career needs.



J. Individual Training Accounts: Describe the process and criteria for issuing Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).

a) *Describe any ITA limitations established by the board.*

The NRWIB has limited funding for ITAs and with this declaration, will prioritize the issuance of ITAs to region residents first, while following its Priority of Service as outlined in the Client Flow and Registration Policy. The following factors are to be considered by the Career Navigator when developing an Individual Employment Plan with participants: Communication with Career Navigator in timely manner; Appropriateness of requested training as it relates to current industry sector/labor market demand; labor market demand status of previous training (if any); Attendance records from previous training (if any) and; Career Navigator recommendation.

b) *Describe any exceptions to the use of ITA.*

Funding for ITAs will not exceed \$4,000 per customer. However, programs identified as meeting annually defined “Priority Labor Market Demands” as determined by the Board will receive consideration for additional funding. Such consideration must be approved by the President & CEO and the Board of Directors. Customers receiving an ITA shall not be eligible for further ITA funds until 24 months after the date of exit from the prior training. Requests for additional training vouchers will be reviewed and awarded on a case-by-case basis.

K. Enhancing Apprenticeships: Describe how the LWDB will enhance the use of apprenticeships to support their local economy and individuals’ career advancement. Describe how job seekers are made aware of apprenticeship opportunities in the area’s career centers.

NRWIB will continue to enhance the use of pre-apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships as key strategies for supporting the local economy, meeting employer demand, and helping individuals advance into family-sustaining careers. Apprenticeship models are especially important because they combine paid work, structured training, employer involvement, and clear career progression.

The region already has a strong foundation through the Northwest Construction Career Initiative / Job Funnel, which connects participants to pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship pathways in construction and the building trades. For 2026–2030, NRWIB will build on this foundation and expand apprenticeship strategies across priority sectors identified in this plan, including manufacturing, construction/AEC, healthcare, logistics, information technology, and other in-demand fields.

NRWIB will utilize its Regional Sector Partnerships to identify where apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship models can address employer needs. These partnerships will help determine where employers need structured training pipelines, related instruction, work-based learning, mentors, and entry-level talent. Manufacturing and AEC are especially strong opportunities for apprenticeship expansion because they require hands-on skills, technical training, safety knowledge, and employer-based learning.

Specific apprenticeship strategies include:

- Working with employers, labor partners, training providers, CT State, and the Office of Apprenticeship to identify and develop apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities.
- Expanding pre-apprenticeship pathways in construction/AEC, manufacturing, skilled trades, and related technical fields.
- Connecting apprenticeship models to WIOA training, ITAs where appropriate, OJT, supportive services, and work-based learning.



- Using Regional Sector Partnerships to identify skill gaps, credential requirements, curriculum needs, and employer readiness for apprenticeship models.
- Supporting youth and adult career exploration through job shadowing, industry speakers, site visits, internships, and employer-hosted career exposure.
- Seeking federal, state, philanthropic, employer-supported, and sector partnership-driven funding to support related instruction, supportive services, tools, uniforms, transportation, testing fees, and other participation costs.

Jobseekers will be made aware of apprenticeship opportunities through the American Job Center system and partner outreach. Apprenticeship information will be included in orientation, career counseling, individual employment planning, workshops, hiring events, youth programming, adult education referrals, and employer presentations. Career Navigators and Business Services staff will discuss apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship as career pathway options when they align with a participant's interests, skills, and employment goals.

NRWIB will also promote apprenticeship opportunities through schools, adult education providers, community organizations, municipal partners, libraries, Chambers of Commerce, Regional Sector Partnerships, social media, digital outreach, and local employer engagement. This broader outreach will help ensure that both jobseekers and employers understand apprenticeship as a practical strategy for training, hiring, retention, and advancement.

NRWIB's goal is to make apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship a more visible and accessible part of the regional workforce system. By connecting apprenticeships to sector partnerships, employer demand, supportive services, and career pathways, NRWIB will help build a stronger talent pipeline while giving individuals a clear route into skilled employment.

L. Other Program Initiatives: Describe the services to be provided that may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies career pathway initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other initiatives in support of the board's visions and strategic goals described in Section III.

NRWIB will continue to implement program initiatives that support the Board's vision and strategic goals by aligning workforce services with employer demand, participant needs, and regional labor market priorities. These services will be provided through WIOA where applicable and where participants and activities are eligible, and will be supported by other available federal, state, local, philanthropic, employer-supported, and sector-based grant funds to provide a more complete workforce service system.

1. Employer-Driven Training and Work-Based Learning

NRWIB will continue to use On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, customized training, internships, transitional employment, work experience, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships to help jobseekers gain experience and help employers meet workforce needs. IWT will be especially important for helping employers upskill existing workers, improve retention, respond to technology changes, and create advancement opportunities.

2. Industry and Sector Strategies



NRWIB will continue using the Manufacturing, Northwest CT HealthConneCT, and Architecture/Engineering/Construction Regional Sector Partnerships to guide workforce investments. These partnerships help identify hiring needs, skill gaps, credential priorities, curriculum needs, and work-based learning opportunities in priority sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, construction/AEC, logistics, environmental remediation, and business services.

3. Career Pathways and Training Access

NRWIB will support career pathway initiatives that help participants move from basic skills development to occupational training, credentials, employment, and advancement. This includes short-term credentials, stackable credentials, Adult Education bridges, CT State pathways, ITAs, apprenticeships, OJT, and other training options aligned with employer demand and participant eligibility.

4. Business Intermediaries, Supportive Services, and Funding Development

NRWIB will continue working with Chambers of Commerce, COGs, municipalities, economic development partners, employers, and community organizations to expand outreach and connect businesses and jobseekers to available resources. Supportive services may include transportation, childcare assistance, tools, uniforms, testing fees, licensing costs, digital access, adult education referrals, and case management. NRWIB will also pursue new funding to rebuild training capacity after the conclusion of major durational grants and to sustain a full ecosystem of workforce services.

M. Service Provider Continuous Improvement: Describe the LWDB's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted service providers and providers on the Eligible Training Providers List, through the system and ensure that such providers meet the needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

NRWIB will continue to follow CTDOL guidance to support continuous improvement of contracted service providers and training providers on the State of Connecticut's Eligible Training Provider List. The goal is to ensure that providers offer quality services, align with employer demand, and meet the needs of workers, jobseekers, and WIOA-eligible participants.

NRWIB has designated staff to support ETPL-related activity, monitor provider availability, and help connect potential training vendors to the State's eligible provider process when appropriate. For 2026–2030, NRWIB will focus on expanding provider options in high-demand sectors, identifying gaps in short-term credential training, and reviewing provider relevance based on labor market demand, outcomes, participant needs, and employer feedback.

NRWIB will also continue using resource fairs, provider information sessions, career navigator guidance, and clear program information to help customers make informed training choices. These efforts will strengthen the quality, availability, and labor market relevance of training options across the region.

N. Youth Program Design: Describe the design framework for youth programs in the local area, and how the 14 program elements required of the proposed WIOA regulations are to be made available within that framework.



All prospective bidders for out-of-school youth programs must address all fourteen youth elements in their proposals and whether these elements are provided within the context of their design or provided through referrals as deemed appropriate. This includes:

- 1) Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction, leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies;
- 2) Alternative secondary school services;
- 3) Occupational skill training with a focus on a recognized post-secondary credential and in- demand occupations;
- 4) Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing; summer employment opportunities that are directly linked to academic, occupational skills training;
- 5) Integrated education and training for a specific occupation or cluster;
- 6) Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer- centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors during non- school hours;
- 7) Supportive services;
- 8) Ault mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
- 9) Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation;
- 10) Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral;
- 11) Financial literacy education;
- 12) Entrepreneurial skills training;
- 13) Services that provide labor market information about in demand industry sectors and occupations; and
- 14) Post-secondary preparation and transition activities.

- 1- *Definition of the term “a youth who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society.” Describe how the local board defines whether a youth is unable to demonstrate these skills well enough to function on the job, in their family, or in society and what assessment instruments are used to make this determination. 20 C.F.R. §681.290.*

The NRWIB utilizes the CASAS reading and math testing to determine a youth’s levels and ability to compute, read, write, and speak English. For youth with special needs, special accommodations are made for testing. Based on a youth’s raw/scale scores, any youth needing to reach the next educational functioning level are provided with basic skills remediation by the respective vendor or may be referred to the local Adult Education.

- 2- *Definition of “requires additional assistance.” Describe how the local board defines the term “requires additional assistance” used in determining eligibility for WIOA-funded youth programs.*

The NRWIB has defined transportation as required additional assistance and at intake this determination is made, and each youth will complete a self-attestation. Each contracted vendor may utilize funding under support services for gas vouchers, bus passes and the like; while other vendors will leverage other funding streams to provide this support service.

O. Rapid Response: Provide a description of how the LWDB will coordinate workforce development activities in the local area with rapid response activities.



The NRWIB has adopted Connecticut’s Rapid Response policy issued under AP-16-1 to wit: The policy outlines the total process from the time the Rapid Response Unit (RRU) learns of a layoff until all workers, when possible, have received Early Intervention services. It also includes general guidelines for Rapid Response. The full Policy appears in Appendix H.

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