

NORTH CENTRAL ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

P.O. Box 2396 • Batesville, AR 72501 • (870) 793-5233 • Fax (870) 793-4035

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WDB Policy #: 3.6

Effective Date: 3/14/2024

SUBJECT: Business Services Policy and Procedures

REFERENCES:

United States Department of Labor, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Final Rule, 20 CRF 678.435

Arkansas Workforce Delivery System Vision

North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area Regional and Local Plan

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategic vision of business service provision in the North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area. The policy presents required actions of WIOA partners to expand the capacity to provide business services, and capture data on business services provided to consumers.

BACKGROUND

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 created a comprehensive workforce development system that places emphasis on the role of business as a primary customer in the One-Stop Delivery System. WIOA mandates that LWDBs develop strategies to establish and sustain lasting partnerships for the delivery of business services beyond changes in One-Stop Operators or career service providers. Local areas must establish and develop relationships and networks with employers and their intermediaries; convene or implement industry sector partnerships; and may provide additional services that meet area workforce development needs in accordance with partner programs' statutory requirements. These strategies are reflected in the North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area Regional and Local Plan.

Full integration of business services is critical to achieving a high performing workforce development system. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), workforce centers and their partners ensure that business and job seekers have access to information and services that lead to positive employment outcomes. To support area employers and industry sectors most effectively, the Business Services Team delivers quality services that assist in overcoming the challenges of recruiting, training, and developing talent for the regional economy.

POLICY/PROCEDURES

A. Role of WIOA Title I Administrator

The WIOA Title I Program Administrator supports the strategic planning and implementation of revitalized business engagement activities within the state. Promoting interagency collaboration, forming partnerships, and leveraging resources is a vital aspect in meeting the workforce needs of businesses. The WIOA Title I Administrator's role is to provide guidance and support to the local workforce development area in ensuring implementation of this policy.

B. Role of Business Services Coordinator

The Business Services Coordinator will develop, implement, and sustain the activities for business services across the North Central Arkansas Workforce Development Area. This position will focus on the delivery of business services through an integrated, solution-oriented approach by a cross functional team. The incorporation of an integrated and aligned business services strategy among partners presents a unified voice for the workforce center in its communication with employers and shall lead to improved skills, credentials, and employment attainment in areas driven by business demand. The Business Services Coordinator will develop new sector partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships to address local workforce needs and develop and maintain relationships with local businesses, industry representatives, and training agencies that will lead to participant career placements and stronger business relations.

C. Role of the North Central LWDB and One-Stop Centers in Providing Business Services

The North Central LWDB will be responsible for ensuring the coordination of business service delivery to businesses in the local area according to their local plan and the combined state plan. Coordinated efforts should be focused on creating a streamlined business process and preventing duplicative services and contacts to businesses. The North Central LWDB is expected to execute their role through the convening of a business team and the orderly coordination of the following activities:

- Building relationships with businesses and business-focused organizations
- Integrating and streamlining business services
- Providing additional resources to businesses
- Assisting businesses with recruiting, hiring, upskilling, and training needs
- Providing customized services to businesses

D. Requirements for North Central LWDB Business Services Teams

Business Services Teams are cross-agency, cross-programmatic groups comprised of representatives of each of the core partner agencies, economic development, and other partners as appropriate. These teams are designed to ensure a comprehensive array of services are provided to businesses.

The composition of the North Central Arkansas Business Services Team shall include representation from:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA Title I)
- Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (Title III)

- Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (Title IV)
- Arkansas Division of Services for the Blind (Title IV)
- Arkansas Department of Career Education (Title II)
- In-demand industry sectors as appropriate

Each partner agency has statutory requirements for creating relationships with businesses and assisting clients through their funding in finding employment opportunities. The single point of contact is not intended to be the one individual responsible for all relationships in the workforce development area through which all businesses must go through to access workforce services. All members of the Business Services Team are expected to create and strengthen business relations in the community in a coordinated and targeted manner.

The North Central Arkansas Business Services Team will be responsible for the following activities:

- Evaluating, identifying, and establishing appropriate solutions to assist in the effective delivery of business services
- Assuring all workforce agencies are fully participating in the Business Services Team
- Standardizing business services outreach materials for local area adoption
- Analyzing and addressing barriers to collaboration between state, regional, and local business services teams
- Evaluating business customer satisfaction
- Mapping business solutions and providing training to LWDB staff and stakeholders on how to mobilize resources

The North Central Business Services Team will facilitate solutions to ensure these standards are implemented:

- Standardized timeframes to respond to business inquiries in order to deliver specialized and collaborative solutions to meet business needs; alternative options must be provided if the LWDB cannot provide an affirmative response to the initial request for services
- A business satisfaction tool will be implemented to assist with demonstrating continuous improvement
- Document progression towards goals

E. Business Services Reporting

The North Central LWDB is required to track and report the number, type, size, and services provided to businesses. Using a report template, the Business Services Coordinator will collect data from each WIOA core partner for quarterly reporting.

F. Evaluation

The North Central Business Services Coordinator will provide oversight and reporting for the following metrics:

- A unified approach and message that is focused on the workforce system holistically as opposed to a program-specific approach

- An outreach plan based on sector strategies identified in the local plan
- The role of each partner in performing outreach activities
- A method for determining the effectiveness of local outreach efforts
- The website must include a standard point of contact with updated contact information for the businesses and provide a list of available business services within the local workforce area

Approved by the NCAWDB on

3/13/2024

NCAWDB Chairperson:

Gayle Cooper