

WIOA LWDB Two-Year Plan Modification Form

Overview

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Final Rule at 20 CFR §679.580 requires that, at the end of the first two years of the four-year local plan, the Board and appropriate chief elected officials (CEOs) must review the plan and prepare and submit modifications related to changes in labor market and economic conditions and other factors affecting the plan's implementation. Factors that could affect implementation may include changes to the financing available to support WIOA Title I services and partner-provided WIOA services, or a need to revise strategies to meet local performance goals.

Instructions

Boards will respond to each of the following prompts and make corresponding changes to their plans. Boards must use Track Changes when modifying the plan for easy identification by the Texas Workforce Commission during review. If no modification is required, Boards must explain briefly but in detail how the Board and CEO made that determination. For each response, **include all the plan's corresponding page numbers.**

1a. Describe any changes in labor market and economic conditions in the Board's local workforce development area, including changes to the employment needs of employers and changes to existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The decline in oil prices that began in late-2014 resulted in a near continuous decline in Gulf Coast employment until late-2016. From peak to trough the region lost between 75,000 and 85,000 jobs. Since that bottom, the region's prospects have improved significantly. Job growth, as reported by the Texas Workforce Commission, reached a new all-time high of 128,000 jobs added over the year in September 2018. Traditional upstream oil and gas continues to experience an uneven recovery while related sectors like Manufacturing and Professional and Business Services are now seeing higher growth than observed prior to the most recent downturn. Hurricane Harvey resulted in a relatively temporary disruption to the job market followed by a short-lived boom in the Construction sector. Momentum in that sector is also being driven by the recovery in oil prices as manifested by a wave of new pipeline construction projects. These economic improvements have in turn shaped the trends observed in the Long-term Employment Projections prompting some of the changes to the Board's targeted industries and occupations noted in the section below. **Pages 7, 36-48.**

1b. Describe any changes made to the Board's Target Occupations and In-Demand Industries lists since the four-year local plan was approved in July 2017 and include the updated template (WD Letter 19-18, Attachment 3, WIOA Target Occupations and In-Demand Industries Template). If no changes were made, submit the current list with the current date. Describe the review process that the Board used to determine whether the Target Occupations and In-Demand Industries lists required modification. Cite the sources.

Every two years, upon the release of the Long-term Employment Projections by the Texas Workforce Commission, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board reviews the projection data and re-develops its lists of targeted industries and occupations. Overall, the Board seeks out industries and occupations that are above average with respect to size, growth, and wages, and in the case of occupations, those that require postsecondary education or on-the-job training or both. Given that new projections almost always differ from the previous set in terms of the industries and occupations reported and their respective growth rates, openings, wages, etc. it is necessary to reevaluate the composition of the targeted lists to ensure they are aligned with the most recent economic trends. By and large the fundamental structure of the economy remains stable over time and as a result the compositions typically experience only incremental change. Under the current set of projections covering 2016-2026, the Board has elected to expand the lists of targeted industries and occupations to better identify employers who need qualified candidates and create additional opportunities for the residents of the region. **Pages 36-48.**

The updated lists are included as Attachment 3.

2. Describe any changes in the financing that is available to support WIOA Title I services and partner-provided WIOA services that have affected implementation of the local plan. For partner-provided services, Boards should consider the roles and resource contributions of the Workforce Solutions Offices, changes in partner infrastructure contributions, and whether any financing changes require the Board to revise a strategy that was described in the original plan. If, for example, reductions in federal funding or changes in the Board's funding strategies require the Board to consider closing one or more Workforce Solutions Offices, or a shift in how services are delivered changes the amount available for operating costs, Boards should include this as part of the two-year modification.

With an increase in its 2019 budget, The Gulf Coast Workforce Board and its operating affiliate, Workforce Solutions will open five additional career offices in communities where a need for workforce support was identified. The offices are in the Acres Home, Clear Lake, Pearland, Palm Center, and Missouri City areas.

Also, the Board has successfully co-located seven Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) offices and Workforce Solutions offices with an additional eight VR co-locations planned for 2019. **Pages 80 & 81.**

3. Describe any changes made to the strategies used to meet local performance goals.

To help provide better service to employers and customers, the Board added a new employer service contractor and a new career office contractor. We expect that the outside experience and energy that these two contractors bring to the Gulf Coast region will positively impact our system performance. **Page 80.**

4. Describe any other factors affecting the implementation of the plan.

There are no foreseeable factors affecting implementation of the plan.