



**CENTRAL REGION  
WORKFORCE BOARD**

# WIOA 4 Year Plan

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Phase II: Fiscal Years 2022-2025

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*July, 2021*

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## I. Introduction

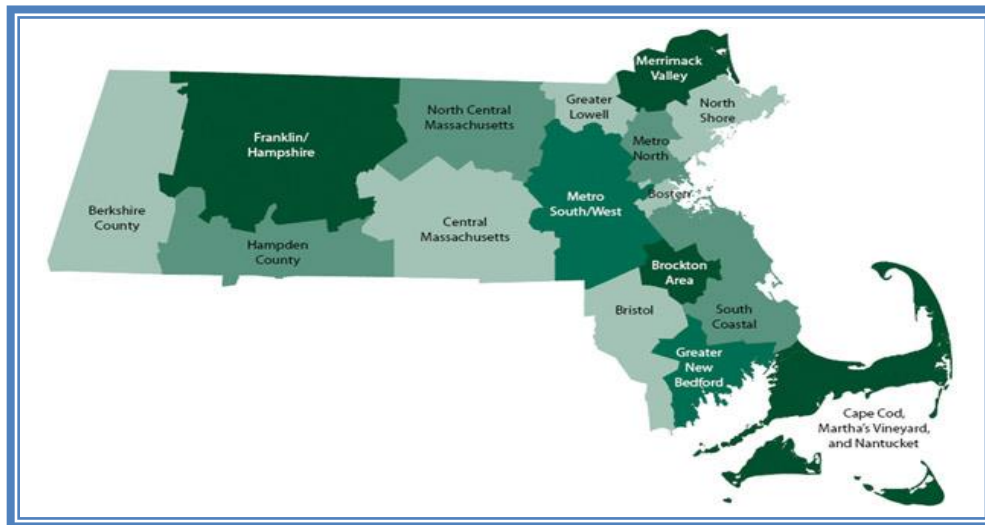
This plan has been developed to help the MassHire Central Region Workforce Board (MCRWB) set strategic priorities and guide our efforts to strengthen the Central MA region's workforce. A fluid and living document, this plan is one of the many tools we use to make decisions.

The plan has developed through an inclusive and collaborative process with feedback from our partners, informed by data and labor market information. It helps us navigate the dynamic workforce development ecosystem, offering flexibility while pointing us in a determined direction.

## II. Who We Are

The MCRWB is a public/private partnership serving needs of employers and employees. The board collaboratively develops and implements strategies for job readiness and skills advancement, leveraging and cost effectively applying community resources to promote economic wellness in the region's 38 cities and towns.

The MCRWB's primary role is convening civic and business leadership and utilizing their insights to strategically invest public funds to build the skills of the workforce in our area. The MCRWB also oversees the region's One Stop Career Centers (MassHire Career Centers) in Worcester and Southbridge (henceforth referred to as our region's career centers).



***The MCRWB serves the following 38 cities and towns in Central Massachusetts: Worcester, Auburn, Oxford, Webster, West Boylston, Boylston, Shrewsbury Grafton, Millbury, Sutton, Douglas, Uxbridge, Northbridge, Upton, Northborough, Westborough, Milford, Hopedale, Mendon, Millville, Blackstone, Southbridge, Charlton, Sturbridge, Leicester, Spencer, Paxton, Holden, Rutland, Dudley, Oakham, New Braintree, Hardwick, North Brookfield, East Brookfield, Brookfield, West Brookfield, and Warren.***

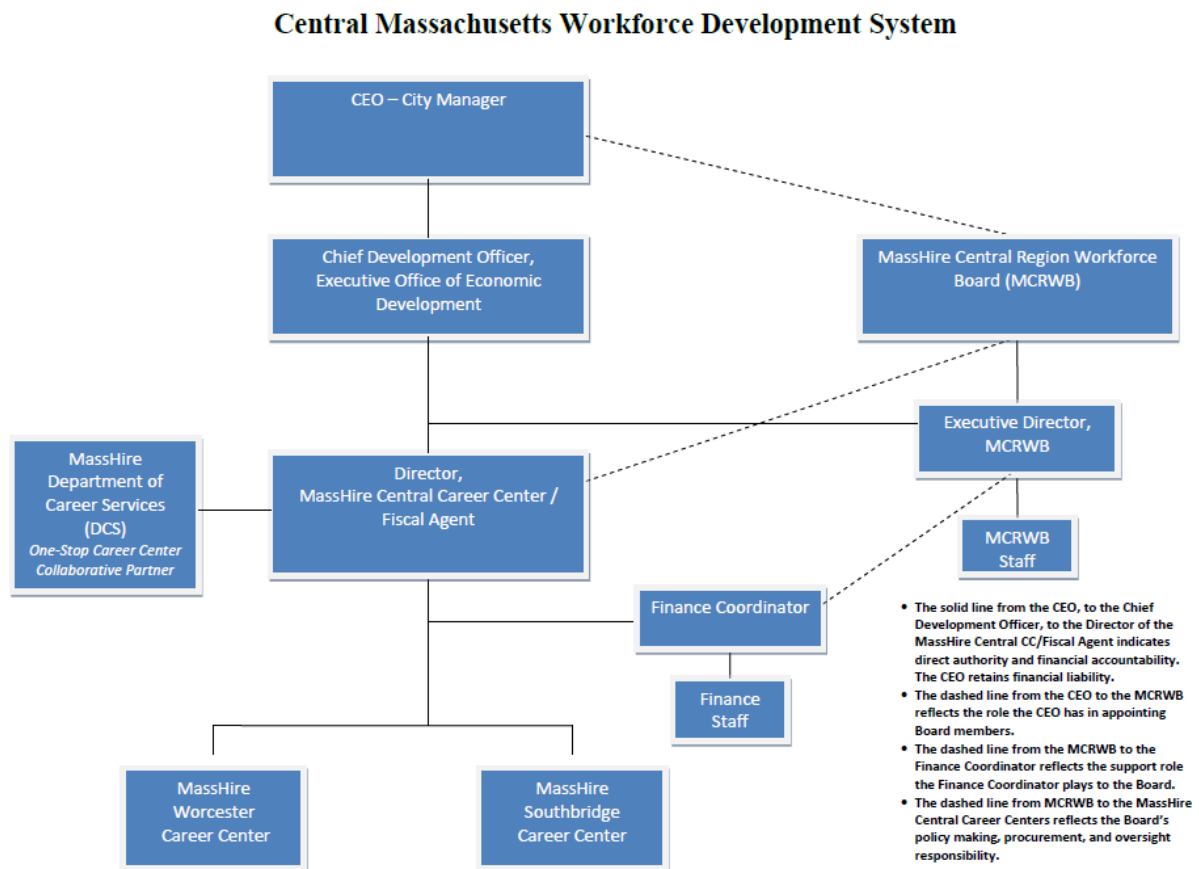
### III. How We Operate

Illustrating the Workforce Development ecosystem within which MCRWB operates, the graphic below depicts the relationships between the entities that comprise the Region's Massachusetts Workforce Development System.

You will notice that our system is led by a Chief Elected Official (CEO). In our region, this position is held by the Worcester City Manager. The CEO holds primary fiduciary responsibility for the entire system and appoints members to the MCRWB.

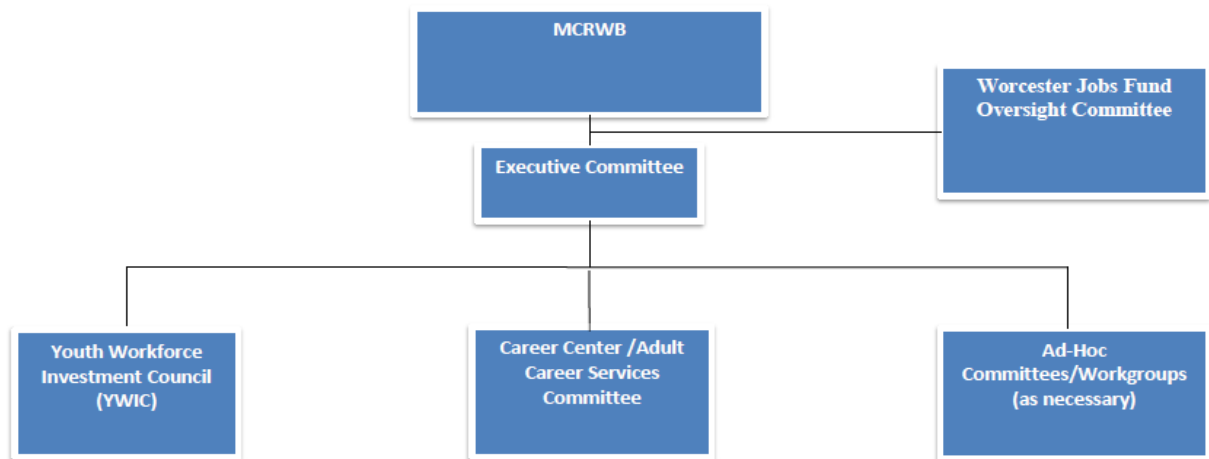
The MCRWB and the region's career centers operate as separate divisions within the City of Worcester's Executive Office of Economic Development. Both the Career Centers and the MCRWB receive administrative support from the Finance Coordinator and staff.

The MCRWB oversees the policies and performance of the region's two career centers, youth programs, and other initiatives. The Career Center Director manages the operations of the two career centers, located in Worcester and Southbridge, including oversight of the day-to-day efforts of City of Worcester and the State Division of Career Services staff.



Within the Workforce Development system, the MCRWB is structured to have a full board which serves as the overarching and directing body, and committees which focus on priority areas. The MCRWB relies heavily on its committees to help carry out our mission. See below for a brief outline of the MCRWB's committees, their roles, and information about when they meet.

### **MassHire Central Region Workforce Board Committee Chart**



- The MCRWB Executive Committee is chaired by the MCRWB Chairperson and is comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, the two standing committee chairs, the Fiscal Agent, and two at-large members appointed by the MCRWB Chair.
- Ad-Hoc Committees/Workgroups established by the Chair with approval from the board.
- The Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee is housed within the MCRWB fiscally, but the Board does not oversee its work.

**Executive Committee:** Chaired by the MCRWB Chairperson, the Executive Committee is comprised of the chairs of all standing sub-committees, the Central Massachusetts Workforce Development Area WIOA Administrator, and at least four members appointed by the MCRWB Chairperson. The Executive Committee has all the powers of the full MCRWB except those which by law or MCRWB by-laws may not be delegated to it. The Executive Committee meets monthly, except for months the full board meets (January, April, July, and October).

**Youth Workforce Investment Council (YWIC):** YWIC duties include developing the portions of the Local Workforce Plan relating to eligible youth and recommending eligible providers of youth activities to be awarded grants or contracts on a competitive basis by the MCRWB. The YWIC oversees and ensures delivery of youth services in a culturally sensitive manner and develops related initiatives as appropriate/necessary. Meetings are generally bi-monthly.

**Career Center/Adult Career Pathways Committee:** Comprised of a Chairperson (appointed

annually by the MCRWB Chairperson) and additional members as appointed by the chair, the Career Center/Adult Career Pathways Committee makes recommendations to the MCRWB regarding career services offered to adults within the Central Massachusetts Workforce Development Area, including overseeing the region's career centers, designating priority industries and occupations, and ensuring the delivery of all services in a culturally sensitive manner. Meetings are generally bi-monthly.

### **Operating Principles**

The following operating principles guide how MCRWB staff and members work toward the goals and activities identified in the strategic plan:

- **Integrity:** The MCRWB will follow all local, state, and federal rules and regulations and conduct our business with honesty and integrity.
- **Timeliness:** The MCRWB will respond to inquiries from partners and the public in a timely manner and will meet deadlines for reporting and programming.
- **Transparency:** The MCRWB will conduct its business and make decisions in a transparent manner and communicate these actions to members and the public to ensure that the MCRWB is viewed as an honest broker in the community.
- **Inclusivity:** When making policy and funding decisions regarding regional workforce development issues, the MCRWB will seek input from a representative sample of the communities we serve and will seek to convene and connect numerous diverse stakeholders.
- **Impact:** The MCRWB will seek to utilize its limited resources to maximize positive outcomes for those whom we serve. We will track and monitor our work to measure our impact.
- **Innovation:** The MCRWB will seek new and creative approaches to meet workforce development challenges and will work aggressively to gather the resources required to implement these new approaches.
- **Technological Savvy:** The MCRWB will seek to deploy new technologies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our services.
- **Relevant:** The MCRWB will address publicly issues relating to workforce development and endeavor to be viewed by the community as a trusted, authoritative voice in these matters.

## **IV. Strategic Planning Process**

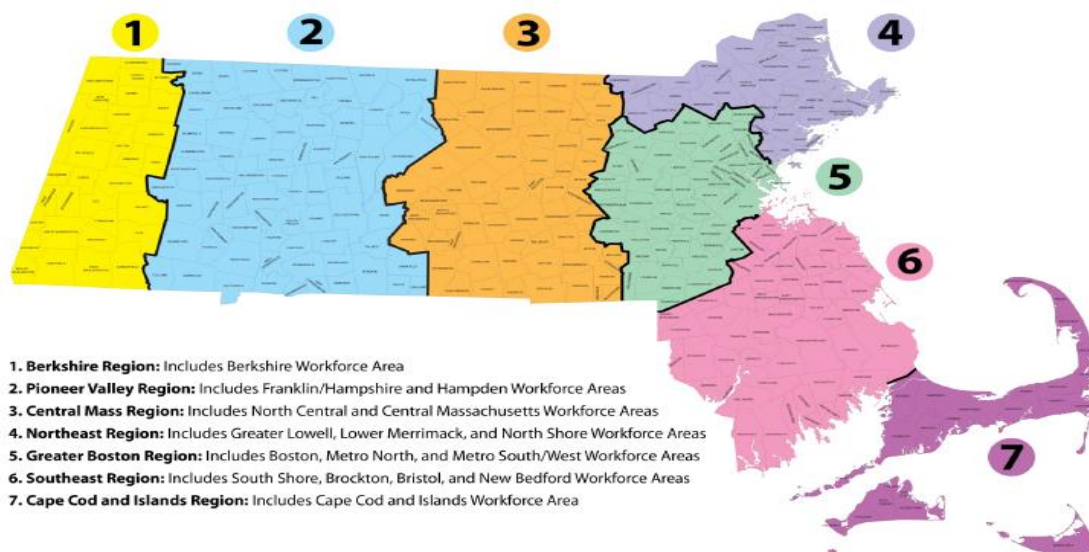
To complete our local Workforce Development Area's strategic plan, which has informed this four year plan, we first completed a long term regional workforce blueprint in partnership with

our colleagues from the MassHire North Central Workforce Board (see attachment 1). This plan draws much information and guidance from that blueprint. The blueprint itself was developed because the Governor of each State is required under WIOA to submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the U.S. Secretary of Labor that outlines a four-year workforce development strategy for the State's workforce development system.

As detailed in the Commonwealth's WIOA State Plan, the Baker Administration has launched several initiatives to better coordinate the broadly defined workforce system with the needs of business as well as expand the impact on job outcomes for individuals with barriers to employment. One of these initiatives is the Workforce Skills Cabinet, which was created to align the resources of the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Executive Office of Education, and the Executive Office of Housing and Development – agencies that administer the major federal and state programs for job seekers and employers.

Through the Workforce Skills Cabinet, the Commonwealth established a regional planning process to align each region's priorities with those of the Workforce Skills Cabinet's three secretariats. The Commonwealth drew upon the WIOA Regional Planning process to create a new, integrated regional planning process across the economic, education and workforce Secretariats. The regional planning process under the Workforce Skills Cabinet and WIOA seeks

### **Regional Structure – Workforce Skills Cabinet Planning Regions**



to adapt the same regional boundaries between economic development, workforce, education, and key partners. This process aspires to scale up regional workforce development models that provide workers with the skills employers demand.

The goal is to ensure that regional employers, educators, and workforce training officials are coordinated in a way that creates strong talent pipelines for both middle-skilled and highly skilled jobs in priority industries.

With that goal in mind, each region was asked to identify business demand for skills, create regional strategies, and align existing resources to this process. The regional planning process supports development of cross-secretariat partnerships formed to enhance sector initiatives/career pathway initiatives including education and training, credential attainment, work-based learning (OJTs or apprenticeships), etc.

Local Workforce Development Boards (working as multi-region partners) were tasked with convening regional leaders in partnership with education and economic development partners to coordinate strategic workforce priorities, activities, and performance metrics. The Workforce Skills Cabinet combined the Commonwealth's 16 workforce development regions into seven Workforce Skills Cabinet Planning regions. The Central Massachusetts region includes the Central MA and North Central MA Workforce Development Areas.

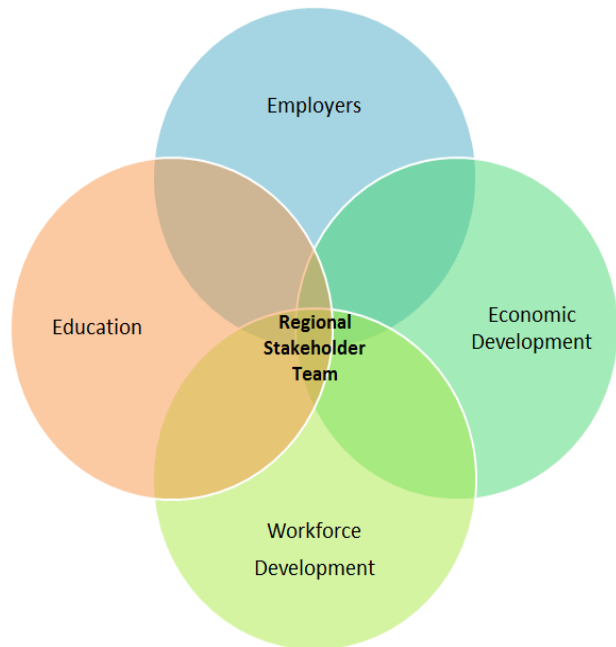
Specifically, the goals of each region were to:

- Identify the growing industries and occupations to be prioritized by system partners that will assist in the economic growth of the region.
- Develop a joint set of action steps to address skills gaps within these industries/occupations.
- Align and drive programming and service delivery across the three secretariats to meet the needs of the priority industries/occupations.
- Help more residents gain the credentials, education and job skills needed for successful careers within high-demand career pipelines.

#### **Description of the Regional Planning process:**

The two local workforce development boards (MCRWB and the MassHire North Central Workforce Board) fully embraced the concept of collaborative regional workforce planning and assembled a strong and diverse team of stakeholder representatives from private industry, education, workforce development, and economic development. The team held several planning sessions, conducted employer feedback surveys, reviewed regional population demographics, labor market information, and identified additional relevant data to confirm industry priorities and supply gaps in our region.

The planning team also established a Regional Planning Core Team, consisting of representatives of the two workforce development boards, education (Mount Wachusett Community College), and economic development (City of Worcester). This core team met several times over the same period to help the full team refine the population and labor market data used to decide priority industry sectors, priority occupations within those sectors, educational opportunities, and economic development issues.



The core team developed and presented the draft blueprint to a statewide group of workforce peers and the three Secretariats, and, following further refinement, submitted the final plan to State officials in early 2018.

The Regional blueprint was revised in spring 2020 just as the COVID-19 was emerging; an updated version was submitted later that year which included local responses to the pandemic.

## V. WIOA Local 4-Year Plan

*This portion of our plan was created using the template supplied by the MA Department of Career Services (MA DCS) in Workforce Issuance 100 DCS 04.109.*

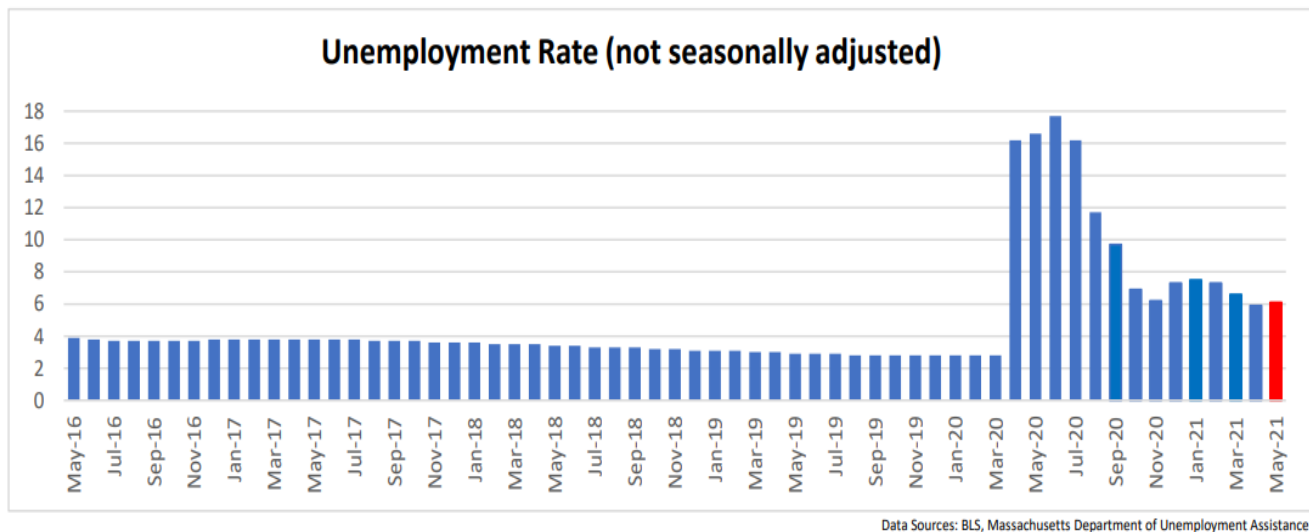
(a) Strategic Planning elements, including:

(1) A regional (local) analysis of:

- (i) Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
- (ii) Employment needs of businesses in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
- (iii) As appropriate, your local area may use an existing analysis, which is a timely current description of the regional economy, to meet the requirements of paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section;



A review of labor market data for Massachusetts:

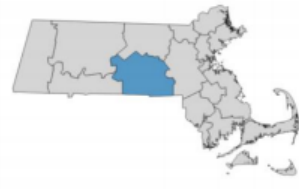


With the onset of COVID-19 in April 2020 and the closures associated with our public health response, unemployment rose dramatically. Unemployment has steadily declined following implementation of the Commonwealth's reopening plan this spring. The region's unemployment changes largely mirror the other regions in the State, showing significant improvement year-over-year.

#### Claimants by Workforce Development Area

WDA	May-21	Apr-21	M/M chng.	May-20	Y/Y chng.	Mar-21	Feb-21
Statewide	71,371	85,098	↓ (13,727)	547,332	↓ (475,961)	116,753	142,693
Berkshire County WDA	1,366	1,874	↓ (508)	8,599	↓ (7,233)	2,666	3,172
Boston WDA	7,755	8,497	↓ (742)	57,774	↓ (50,019)	10,818	13,408
Bristol County WDA	4,157	5,077	↓ (920)	33,515	↓ (29,358)	7,315	8,787
Brockton WDA	3,323	3,848	↓ (525)	25,710	↓ (22,387)	5,025	6,032
Cape & Islands WDA	2,548	4,089	↓ (1,541)	22,165	↓ (19,617)	7,068	8,727
<b>Central MA WDA</b>	<b>6,644</b>	<b>7,771</b>	<b>↓ (1,127)</b>	<b>44,883</b>	<b>↓ (38,239)</b>	<b>10,491</b>	<b>12,435</b>
Franklin/Hampshire WDA	1,935	2,474	↓ (539)	15,108	↓ (13,173)	3,696	4,639
Greater Lowell WDA	3,026	3,658	↓ (632)	23,209	↓ (20,183)	4,830	5,846
Greater New Bedford WDA	2,874	3,541	↓ (667)	22,563	↓ (19,689)	5,115	6,088
Hampden County WDA	6,321	7,199	↓ (878)	35,157	↓ (28,836)	9,298	11,275
Lower Merrimack Valley WDA	4,516	5,232	↓ (716)	30,485	↓ (25,969)	6,888	8,177
Metro North WDA	7,393	8,511	↓ (1,118)	63,754	↓ (56,361)	11,330	14,277
Metro South/West WDA	6,234	7,606	↓ (1,372)	53,635	↓ (47,401)	10,844	13,652
North Central WDA	2,706	3,309	↓ (603)	19,523	↓ (16,817)	4,639	5,615
North Shore WDA	4,726	5,542	↓ (816)	38,774	↓ (34,048)	7,431	9,118
South Shore WDA	5,847	6,870	↓ (1,023)	52,478	↓ (46,631)	9,299	11,445

## Central MA WDA



### Claimants by Occupation

Occupation	May-21	Apr-21	M/M chg.	%	May-20	Y/Y chng.	Mar-21
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,644</b>	<b>7,771</b>	<b>↓</b> <b>(1,127)</b>	<b>-15%</b>	<b>44,883</b>	<b>↓</b> <b>(38,239)</b>	<b>10,491</b>
Management	681	806	↓ (125)	-16%	3,748	↓ (3,067)	1,237
Business and Financial Operations	202	224	↓ (22)	-10%	986	↓ (784)	302
Computer and Mathematics	113	131	↓ (18)	-14%	499	↓ (386)	168
Architecture and Engineering	87	103	↓ (16)	-16%	434	↓ (347)	136
Life, Physical, and Social Science	44	57	- (13)	-23%	203	↓ (159)	54
Community and Social Service	128	142	↓ (14)	-10%	551	↓ (423)	160
Legal Occupations	15	13	↑ 2	15%	120	↓ (105)	21
Education, Training, and Library	167	157	↑ 10	6%	1,473	↓ (1,306)	178
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	75	89	↓ (14)	-16%	710	↓ (635)	116
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	598	615	↓ (17)	-3%	2,311	↓ (1,713)	617
Healthcare Support	269	283	↓ (14)	-5%	1,722	↓ (1,453)	313
Protective Service	62	81	↓ (19)	-23%	367	↓ (305)	116
Food Preparation and Serving	500	587	↓ (87)	-15%	6,704	↓ (6,204)	863
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	257	400	↓ (143)	-36%	1,155	↓ (898)	877
Personal Care and Service	389	439	↓ (50)	-11%	3,081	↓ (2,692)	521
Sales and Related	543	603	↓ (60)	-10%	4,736	↓ (4,193)	739
Office and Administrative Support	751	802	↓ (51)	-6%	5,296	↓ (4,545)	945
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	9	16	↓ (7)	-44%	66	↓ (57)	37
Construction and Extraction	522	766	↓ (244)	-32%	2,891	↓ (2,369)	1,286
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	195	228	↓ (33)	-14%	1,569	↓ (1,374)	317
Production Occupations	428	427	↑ 1	0%	2,333	↓ (1,905)	499
Transportation and Material Moving	574	753	↓ (179)	-24%	3,687	↓ (3,113)	918
Military	5	9	↓ (4)	-44%	12	↓ (7)	9
INA - SOC Code Unknown	30	40	↓ (10)	-25%	229	↓ (199)	62

Data Sources: Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance

A detailed look at the year-over-year unemployment statistics shows that the number of claimants has fallen for all occupational sectors in our region from May 2020 to May 2021.

### Regional Workforce Blueprint

As stated previously, a detailed regional analysis of economic conditions was conducted as part of our regional workforce blueprint revision last spring when we confronted the COVID-19 pandemic. This review included existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, as well as analyzing employment needs of businesses in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Through this process, we identified as our priority industries Healthcare & Social Assistance, Manufacturing, and Transportation, Warehousing, and Logistics, followed by the critical industries of Professional and Technical Services, Construction, Retail/Hospitality, and Education.

Top occupations/occupational groups in which the Central MA region faces the most significant employee shortages:

- Occupational Group 1: Health Occupations (Certified Nursing Assistant; LPN; RN, Pharmacy Tech and Direct Care Worker)
- Occupational Group 2: Manufacturing Occupations (CNC Machinist; Quality Control Technician; Production Worker)
- Occupational Group 3: Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services Occupations (Software/Web Developer; Cyber Security; Bio-manufacturing Technicians)
- Occupational Group 4: Transportation, Warehousing and Logistics Occupations (Commercial Drivers; Diesel Technicians; auto technician)
- Occupational Group 5: Construction Occupations (HVAC Mechanics; Apprenticeship Trade Occupations; welding)

Furthermore, the pandemic created short-term impacts to which we are responding:

- While the manufacturing sector largely stayed the same as many companies kept up or switched production to needed supplies/equipment, the pandemic and increased benefits exacerbated staffing shortages that pre-dated COVID-19.
- The transportation/logistics/warehousing sector has also remained active as an industry during the pandemic, continuing to hire logistics professionals, warehouse staff, and licensed commercial drivers.
- The need for frontline allied health staff (certified nurses, phlebotomy techs, home health aides) has worsened the staff shortage; further constricting the pipeline is the fact that many training programs ceased operations during the outbreak.
- Food Preparation and Serving Related (including hospitality workers), Construction, Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance, Management – general office and Office & Administrative Support.
- MassHire Career Centers are offering access to online career preparation classes through organizations like Goodwill (LearnFree courses), as well as discounted educational courses through EdEx, Coursera, Worcester Night Life, Quinsigamond Community College (QCC), Mount Wachusett Community College, Fitchburg State, and Worcester State.
- MassHire Career Centers are also offering career technical training courses related to our priority occupations (e.g., healthcare, manufacturing, and CDL).

The blueprint identifies the most significant labor supply challenges and opportunities we anticipate will face the region over the next five years based on our current regional workforce (also reflecting challenges faced by emerging industries):

### **Aging Workforce**

Based on our employer survey, the most significant challenge facing our businesses prior to COVID was finding and retaining talent. Employers report that the loss of older workers as

they retire has created larger supply gaps in our priority industries; this is bolstered by data showing that 25.5% of our region's workforce is aged 55 or older. An added challenge is bridging the so-called "Knowledge Gap": When older, more experienced workers retire, it is difficult to replace them with workers who have similar knowledge and skills.

#### **Lack of Employment Readiness & Social/Emotional Skills**

Employers also reported they often see job candidates and new hires who lack the necessary "soft skills" required to perform individually and on teams in the workplace. These skills include time management, communication, social-emotional awareness, and teamwork. The fact these skills are both difficult to measure and to teach in a classroom setting compounds this challenge.

#### **Increase in the share of workforce needing English skills**

Regional demographic trends indicate that the region's population growth has been fueled by net inflow of New Americans (immigrants, refugees). Over the past decade, the share of foreign born residents has grown 8%, and the percent of residents in the region of Hispanic ethnicity has grown 14%. This influx of New Americans includes a significant portion with limited English communication skills (regionally, it is reported that 8% of residents have limited English proficiency).

Overcoming this substantial barrier to employment typically requires remedial services in English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and/or Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes. Depending on their past work experience, they may also need occupational training prior to being hired. A small percentage of our immigrant/refugee population may arrive highly skilled but without credentials issued in the United States. They may therefore also require certifications/credentials before being hired. The current wait list for enrollment into ESOL classes exceeds 1,000 and funding for additional classes is limited.

#### **Limited Transportation**

The Central MA area contains a few cities, numerous towns, and also rural communities. While this geographic spread lets residents experience the rich diversity of various communities, it makes transportation a challenge for people without a dependable vehicle.

Public transportation is available throughout much of the region on fixed bus routes from the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority which serves 21 communities in the northern part of our region and the Worcester Regional Transit Authority which serves 35 communities. Connection to MBTA commuter rail service is offered in Fitchburg, Leominster, and Worcester, and paratransit service is available in most of the region.

However, given the limited amount of fixed route service outside of Worcester and Fitchburg, utilizing public transportation to access employment outside these cities is often not a viable option for job seekers/employees.

### **Tangential Trends**

- Rapid expansion of automated services delivery in industries such as retail, manufacturing, and distribution.
- Communication and service delivery through smart phones continues to advance and has largely become the norm even for those with limited economic resources.

Based on the region's existing workforce, our top three broad labor supply opportunities over the next five years are:

- 1) Integrating New Americans into the workforce;
- 2) Incumbent staff development; and
- 3) Expanding the labor pool to non-traditional workers.

### **Integration of New Americans into the Workforce**

As noted previously, the influx of people born outside the United States who settle in our region (i.e., immigrants, refugees, and other foreign-born residents legally able to work in the U.S.) has fueled growth of our region's workforce.

### **Incumbent Staff Development**

Increasing the skills of current staff to meet company demand requires employer commitment to employee mentoring, training and development. This may be easier (and is certainly more cost-effective) than trying to lure workers from outside the region, especially for entry and middle-level jobs that typically do not pay enough to entice people to move. It also imposes additional costs on employers who seek to have a meaningful presence away from location(s) in which they are hiring.

Ways businesses could develop incumbent staff might include:

- Skills training, either in-house or through outside training centers
- Opportunities for promotion and/or career development
- Coaching and mentoring
- Offering tuition reimbursement
- Encouraging pursuit of continuing education
- Developing a formal Registered Apprenticeship Program to promote a set career advancement pathway for staff

Employers and incumbent staff benefit when the former invest in developing the skills of the latter: Employees report feeling valued when they see that the company is investing in them. Professional growth and development helps employees expand their knowledge, skills, and abilities and apply new-found competencies. This translates into positive gains for the organization by enhanced organizational effectiveness, improved work quality, increased staff loyalty, and makes business more able to attract and retain top talent.

### **Expanding the Traditional Labor Pool**

A third opportunity exists in expanding the existing labor pool through skill preparation, training, and work support for non-traditional workers in various industries. This includes hiring people with a disability, expanded career opportunities for returning citizens, engaging veterans, and recruiting older workers seeking a second career.

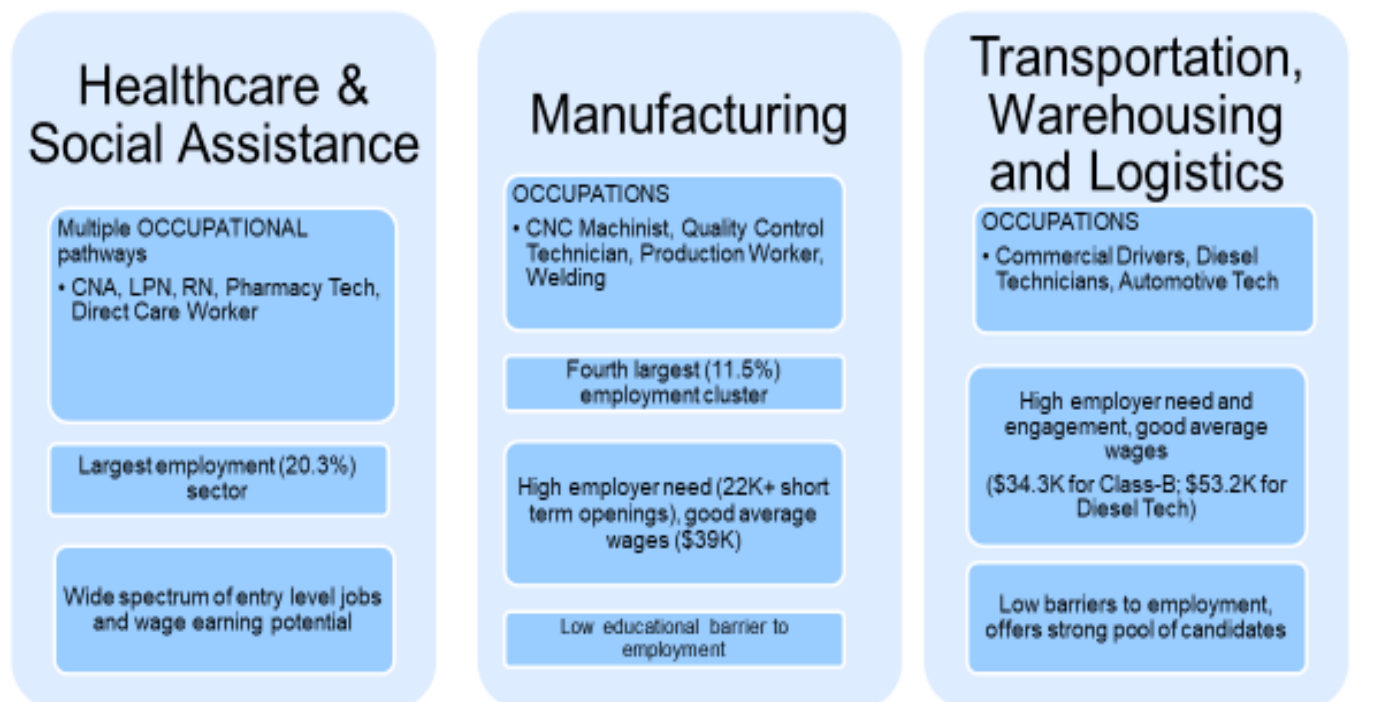
In addition to the original blueprint's regional context, we're also placing renewed emphasis on areas that negatively affect the available labor force in our region:

- People working in low-wage – low advancement jobs: Help people working in “dead-end jobs” develop the tools and skills necessary to move up and out of the cycle of poverty
- People hesitant to move off of public supports due to the “cliff effect”: Support people as they give up public assistance to enter/re-enter the workforce.
- People from families that lack college education: While there are numerous opportunities to exit poverty through jobs requiring middle skills (less than a four-year degree), the need for an Associate's Degree or higher often serves as a significant barrier to earning a living wage. The challenge of helping more people attain college degrees is increased by other factors, not the least of which is that the notion of attending college seems beyond their reach. Helping them see themselves as a successful college graduate is part of the needed solution.

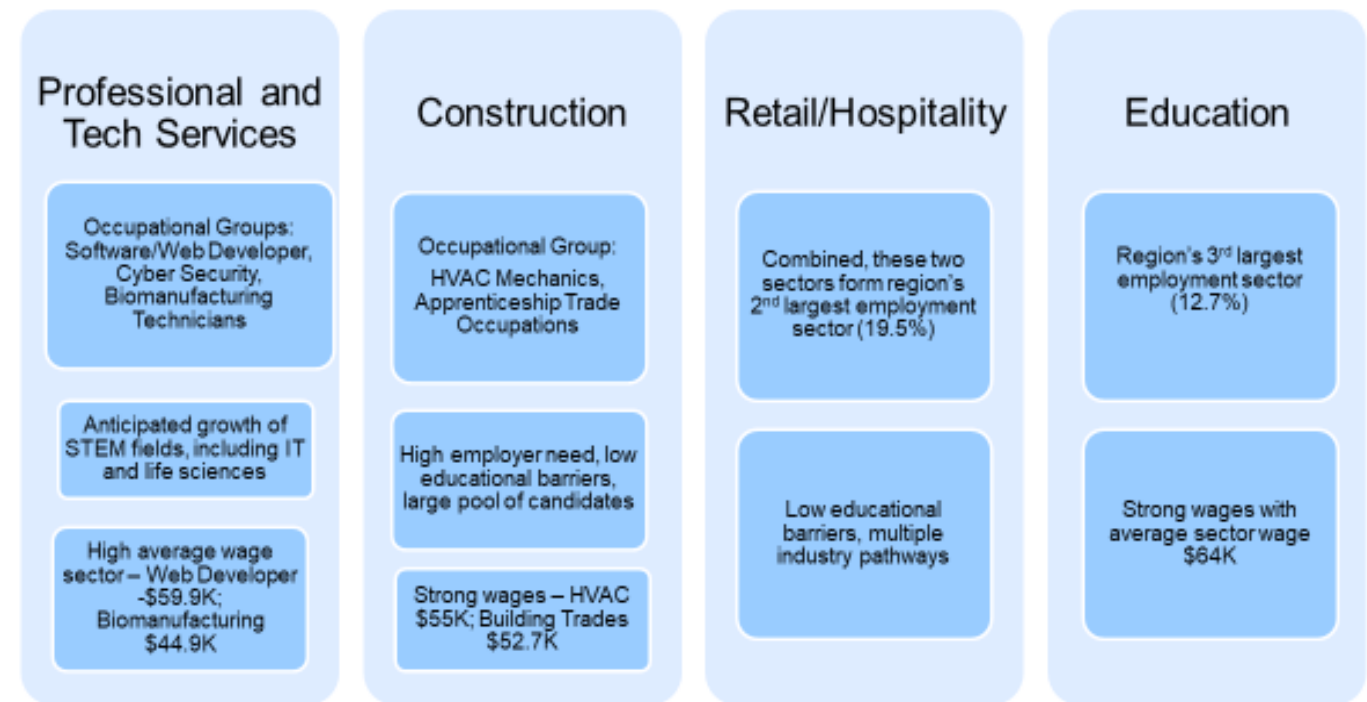
(2) Describe the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the businesses in your region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Employers in our region cite the need for “soft-skills” or “foundational readiness skills” such as time management, the ability to take direction, work as part of a team, self-regulation and emotional control, and communicate effectively. In terms of career technical skills, our regional blueprint identified the following areas in need of technical skill development:

## Priority Industries & Occupations

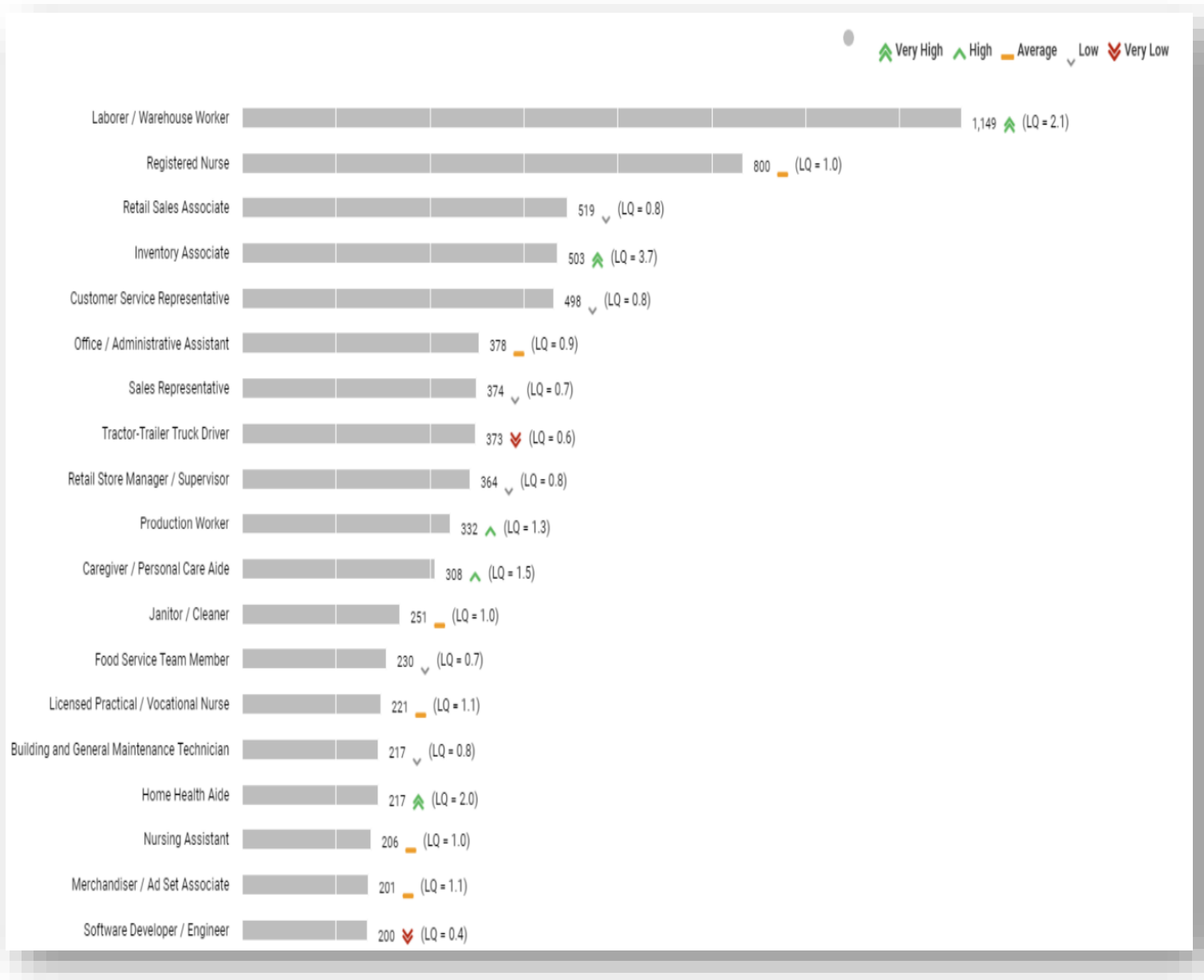


## Additional Critical Industries



## Worcester MSA Job Posting Analysis by Occupation

A review of the Labor Insight (Burning Glass Technologies) Regional Analysis of job postings in the past 90 days for the Worcester Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) indicates that there is a very high demand existing for warehouse laborer/workers (1,149 job postings over the past 90 days), skilled nurses (800 job postings over the past 90 days), as well as retail sales (519) and a host of other positions, such as commercial drivers, production workers, and nursing assistants. These openings largely match those previously identified in our regional blueprint process and align well with our blueprint implementation efforts.

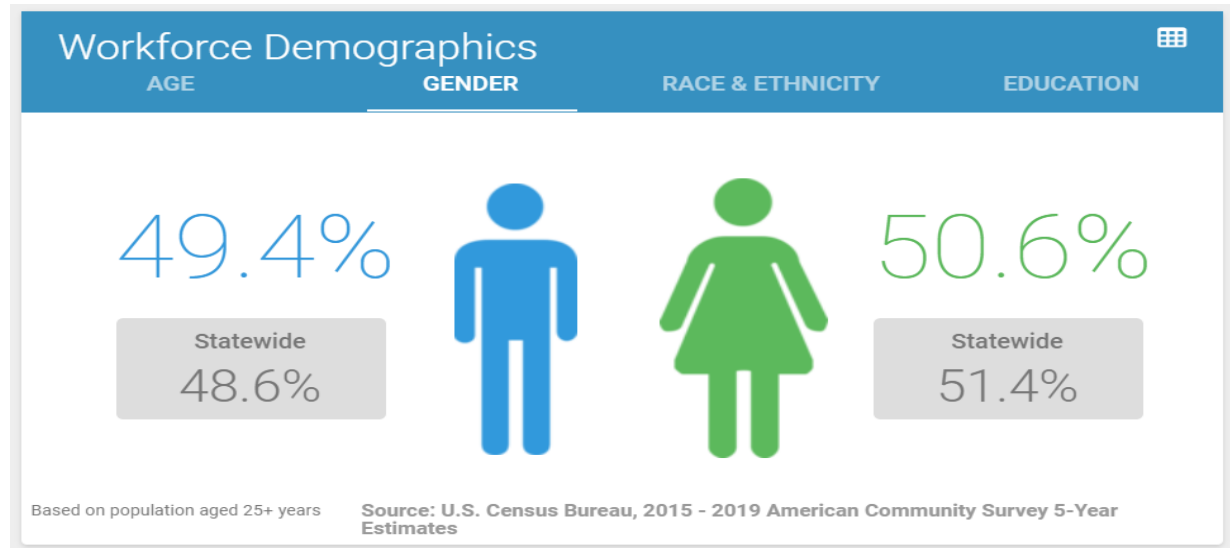




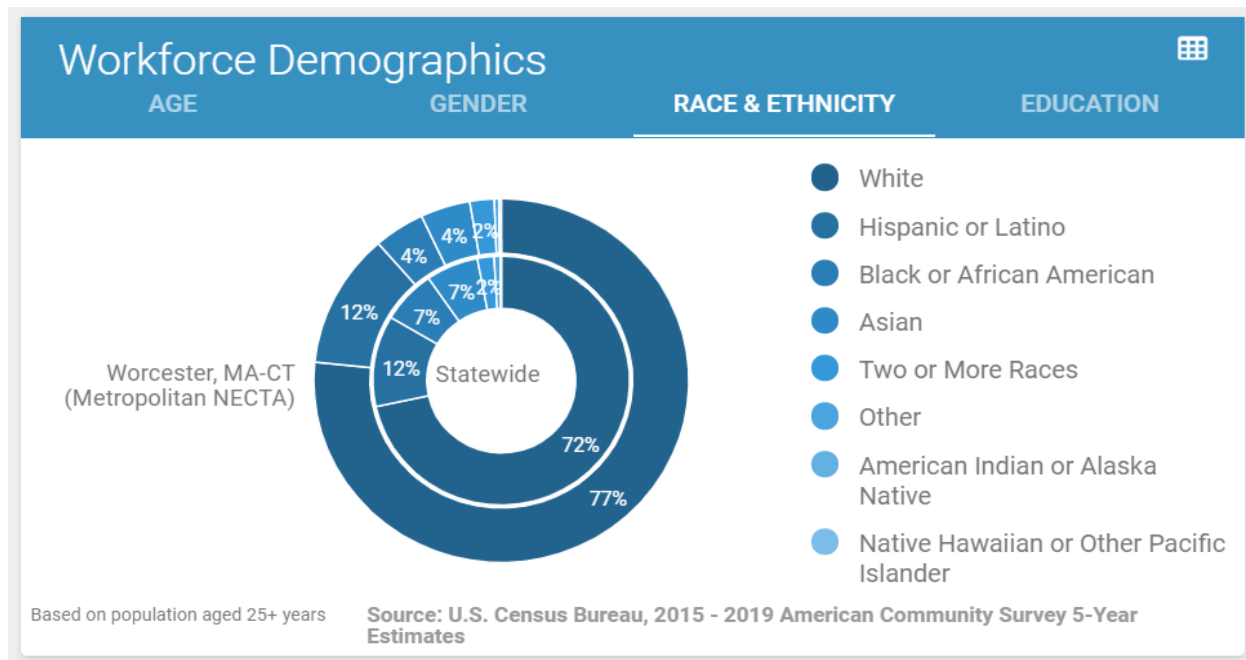
(3) Please provide an analysis of your regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Below is a review of the workforce demographic data for the Worcester MSA from:

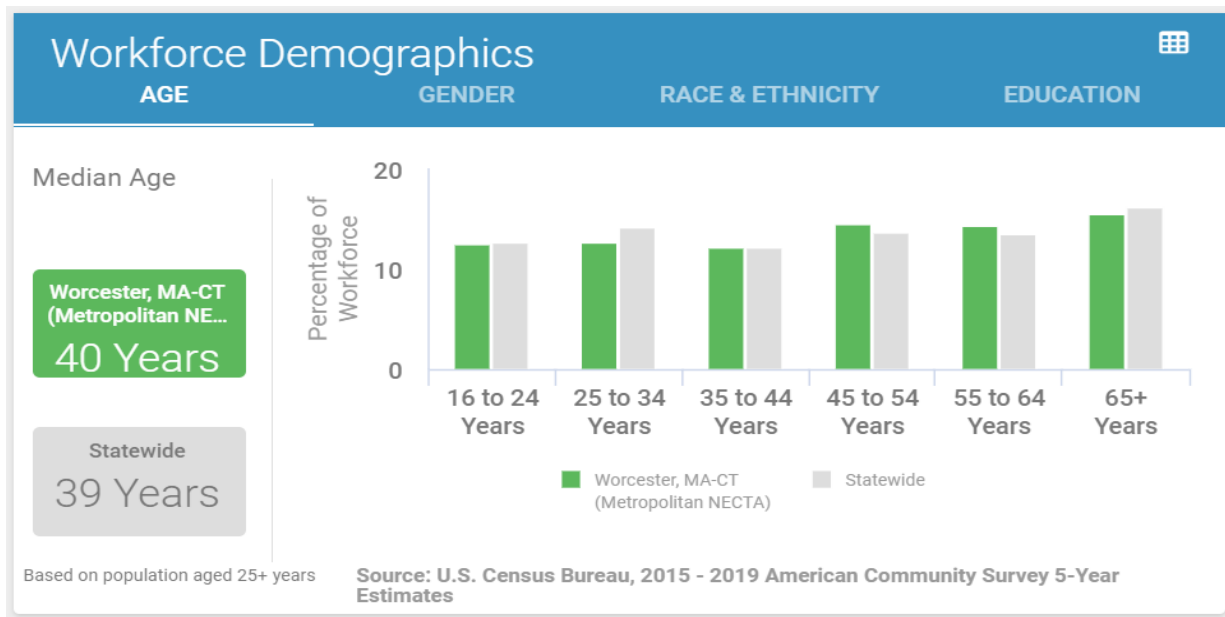
<https://laborinsight.burning-glass.com/us#dashboards/workforce>



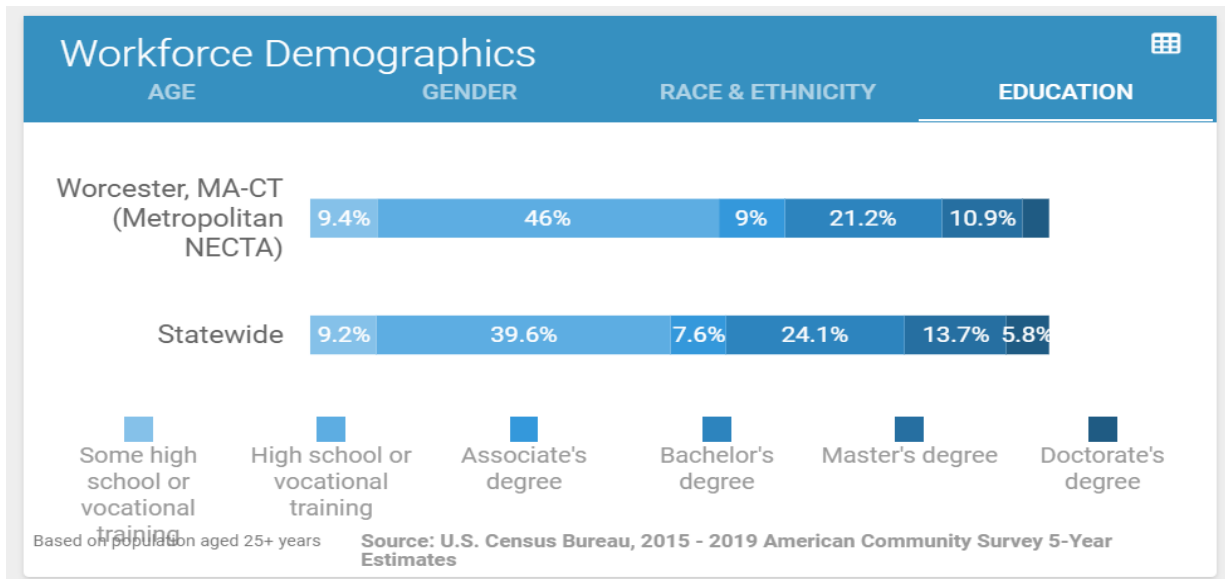
Our area is more evenly split among the two primary genders than the statewide average.



Our area is a bit less diverse than the statewide average by race and ethnicity – with 77% categorized as white.



Our area mostly mirrors the state in terms of average age, however, we tend to have a larger percentage of older working-age residents.



Our area tends to hold less advanced educational degrees than the statewide average and has a higher percentage (55.4%) that only have a up to a high school diploma or vocational training.

(4) Please provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the local area. This analysis must:

- a) include strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities.

- b) address the capacity to provide the workforce development activities around:
  - i. education and skill needs of the workforce;
  - ii. individuals with barriers to employment;
  - iii. employment needs of businesses.

Please refer to our regional blueprint (pages 26-32) for a detailed description of regional education and training providers and programs. This description shows there is a wide variety of training capacity within the region offered by numerous community-based non-profit organizations, for-profit schools and organizations, public and private K-12 institutions (and vocational high schools), two-year and community colleges, and four-year and advanced degree colleges and universities. These include:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Anna Maria College                                    | • Salter College-West Boylston                                  |
| • Assabet Valley Regional Technical School              | • Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational School District |
| • Assumption College                                    | • Spa Tech Institute-Westboro                                   |
| • Bay Path University                                   | • Tufts University  |
| • Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District | • University of Massachusetts Medical School Worcester          |
| • Clark University                                      | • University of Phoenix-Massachusetts                           |
| • College of the Holy Cross                             | • Worcester Polytechnic Institute                               |
| • Fitchburg State University                            | • Worcester State University                                    |
| • MCPHS University                                      | • Worcester Tech HS - Night Life                                |
| • Mount Wachusett Community College                     | • Assabet After Dark  |
| • Nichols College                                       | • Monty Tech evening  |
| • Quinsigamond Community College                        | • MassMEP   |
| • Rob Roy Academy-Worcester                             | • Worcester Jobs Fund   |

While the large number of providers is certainly a strength, there remain some regional weaknesses; namely, some institutions have traditionally not worked with each other to establish an easy to navigate education and training ladder or network. Additionally, some schools/providers have limited capacity to provide instruction in areas such as ESOL, “soft-skills”/career readiness skills, or career planning and placement. These deficiencies affect individuals with barriers to employment even more than those without barriers as the former frequently have access to fewer resources (personal and professional) including those that would help them get educational services and/or credentials to advance their careers.

As part of the blueprint implementation, we have developed regional workforce consortia for our three priority industry sectors to support growth of these programs and thereby help meet the needs of our region’s employers. As part of this effort, a detailed mapping exercise is being conducted to assist us in identifying gaps and areas of needed expansion efforts by consortia members, as well as support for increased linkages or articulation agreements between institutions. Please see attachment 2.

(5) Please describe the MassHire Board’s strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. Include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in § 677.155(a)(1). The primary indicators of performance include:

- a. The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- b. The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
- c. Median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- d. The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program.

The MCRWB’s strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency combines a demand-focused approach to career center services with ongoing (often customized) support for job seekers with barriers to employment. This support includes a robust package of career center services such as counseling, work-readiness and job search assistance, access to training information and funding (as available for eligible career center customers), and placement assistance. These are linked to our blueprint implementation and WIOA Partner efforts through our regional system of committee and working groups that help align and coordinate our resources to those in need. The region’s FY 2021 WIOA goals are:

WIOA PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 2021 Goals
<b><u>WIOA Adult Measures</u></b>	
Employment Q2	86.5%
Employment Q4	78.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$5,800
Credential Rate	73.0%
Measurable Skill Gain	40.0%
<b><u>WIOA Dislocated Worker Measures</u></b>	
Employment Q2	86.0%
Employment Q4	85.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$8,300
Credential Rate	65.0%
Measurable Skill Gain	40.0%
<b><u>WIOA Youth Measures</u></b>	

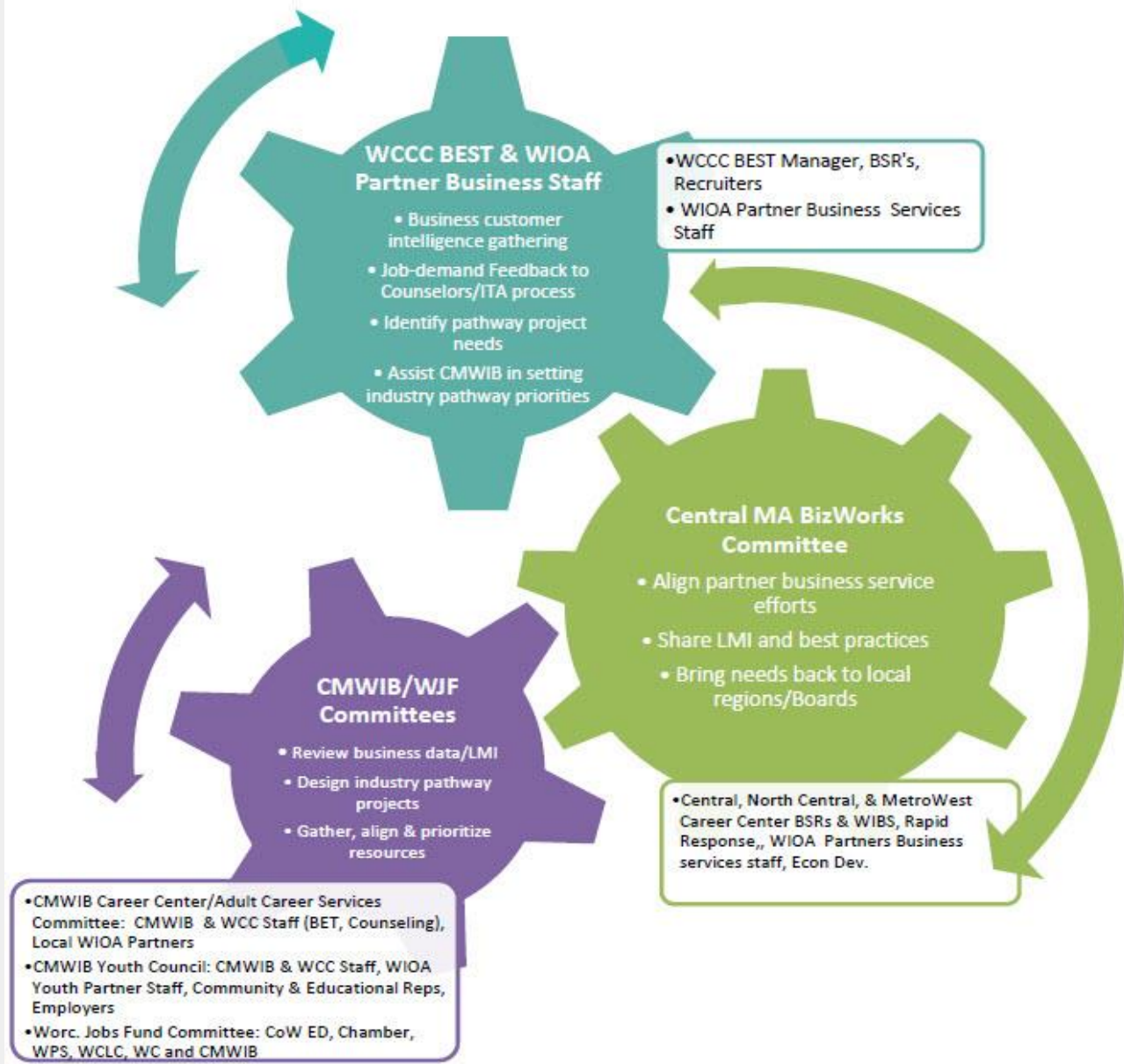
<b>Employment/Education Q2</b>	81.0%
<b>Employment/Education Q4</b>	74.0%
<b>Median Earnings Q2</b>	\$3,500
<b>Credential Rate</b>	70.5%
<b>Measurable Skill Gain</b>	50.0%

(6) Taking into account analyses described in 1 through 4 above, please describe your strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and workforce system partners to align available resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in paragraph (a)(5) of this section.

We are working to establish a regional workforce development system that supports a real-time, employer responsive network capable of identifying and collaborating to develop and connect workforce talent with employers who need such talent to grow and thrive (see chart below). As illustrated below, this undertaking incorporates a large and diverse ecosystem of existing structures, committees, coalitions, and workgroups to foster increased communication and streamlined, coordinated procedures:

- The MCRWB and committees (Adult Career Pathways Committee and Youth Workforce Investment Council)
- Regional workforce consortia to connect and align employers and area education and training providers to ensure an effective and efficient use of training resources
- Regional WIOA partners (connected via our regional WIOA Partner leadership team, joint case-management group, professional development group, and referral process)
- MassHire BizWorks regional team (meets bi-monthly to discuss industry trends, available resources, and new programming to serve businesses)
- Regional business network peer to peer group (online community in which MassHire BizWorks partners share info and coordinate projects in real-time)
- Area school industry advisory committees (including K-12 voc-tech program committees, community college advisory committees, and the Grafton Job Corps Industry Council)
- Regional industry employer groups (including Chamber of Commerce roundtables, the MA Restaurant Association, and MassMEP)

## Central MA Demand-Driven Program Development Network



(b) Under WIOA, the plan must include a description of the following requirements (WIOA secs. 108(b)(2)–(21)):

- (1) Identify the following elements of the workforce development system in your local area:
  - a. Programs that are included in your local workforce system (please list programs).

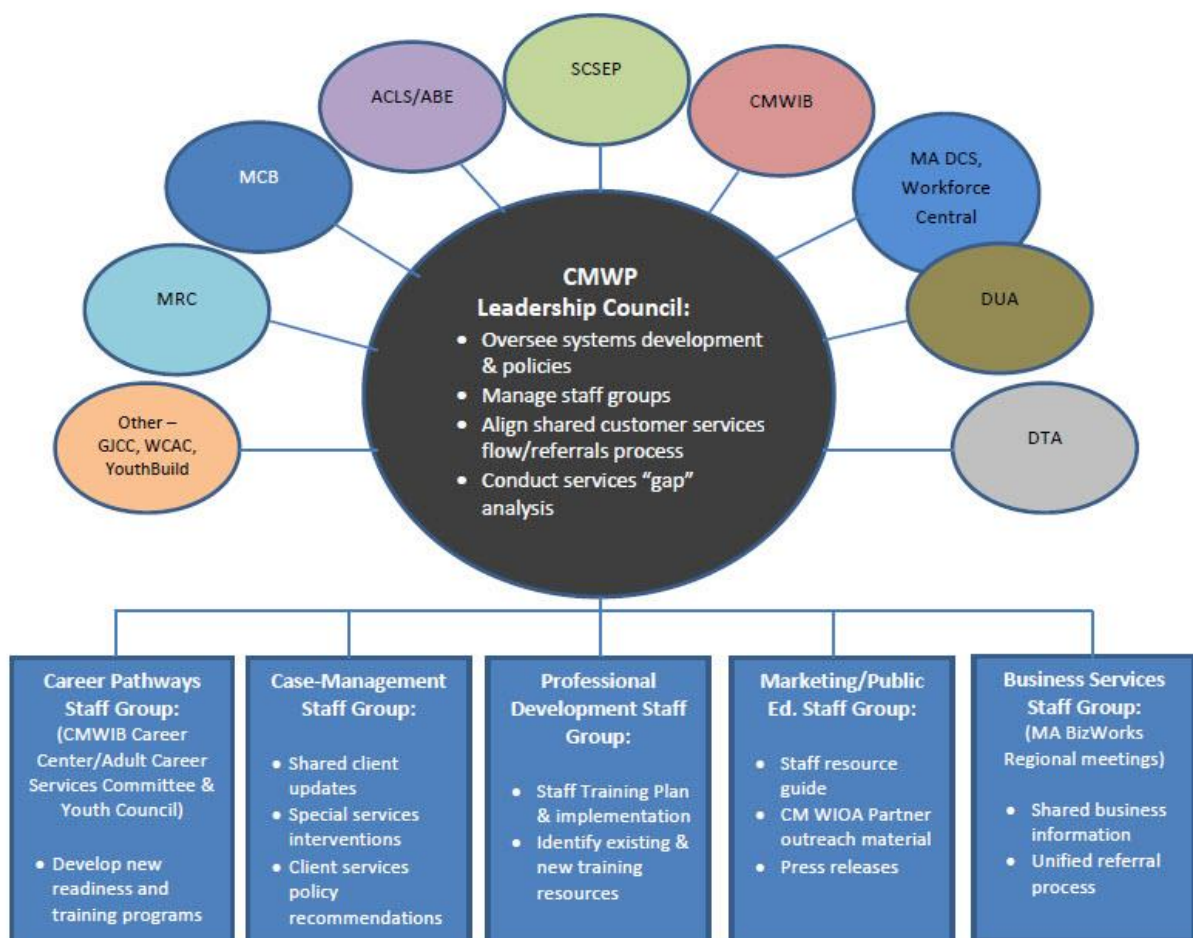
Our regional workforce system includes the following WIOA Partners:

- The Adult Program (Title I), as part of the Department of Career Services (DCS), Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD);
- The Dislocated Worker Program (Title I), as part of DCS/EOLWD;
- The Youth Program (Title I), as part of DCS/EOLWD;
- The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program (Title II), as part of Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Executive Office of Education (EOE); represented by the Worcester Public Schools, the Webster Public Schools, Training Resources of America, and Ascentria Community Services, Inc., Quinsigamond Community College, Sheriff's Department of Worcester, and Catholic Charities.
- The Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III), as part of DCS, EOLWD; represented through the region's OSCC operator, WCCC;
- The Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV), as part of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS);
- Federal-state unemployment compensation program, as part of the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA), EOLWD;
- Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.)), as part of DCS, EOLWD;
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.) as part of DCS, EOLWD;
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) as part of Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), EOHHS;
- Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)), as part of DTA, EOHHS;
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) (Programs authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.)); represented by Catholic Charities and Operation A.B.L.E. of Greater Boston.
- The Worcester Community Action Council, the federally-designated anti-poverty agency for Worcester and 45 neighboring communities [non-WIOA Partner];
- Job Corps; operated in the Central MA region at the Grafton Job Corps Center by Adams and Associates, Inc.;
- YouthBuild; operated in the Central MA region by Training Resources of America, Inc.

b. How your Board will support the strategies identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment.



The WIOA partnership activities are coordinated through a partner leadership council and committees aligned with the MCRWB and its committees. Partners align programs and services according to our region's Memorandum of Understanding (Attachment 3) including our shared referral processes, joint professional development, etc.)

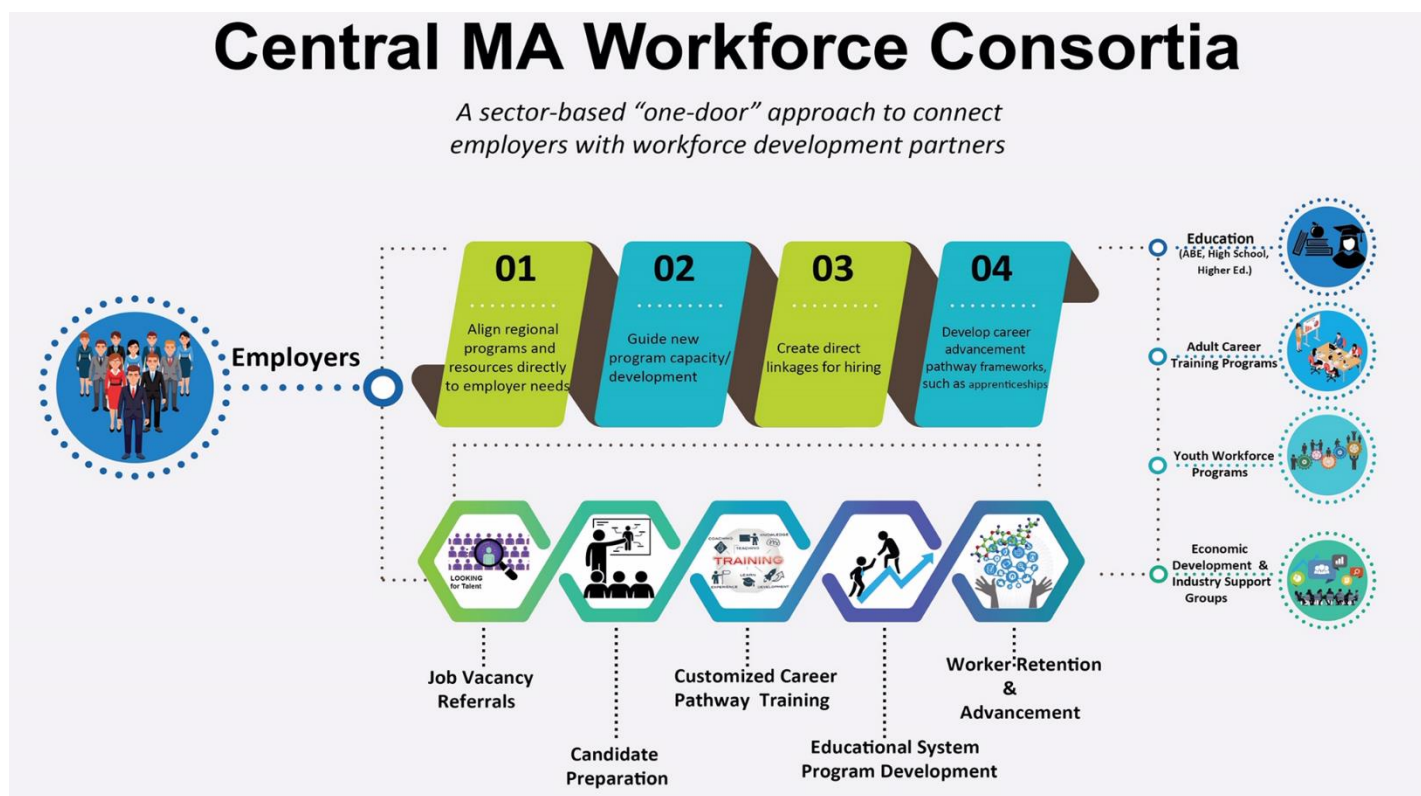


Additionally, our local workforce system includes industry groups such as area Chambers of Commerce, the MassMEP, and the MA Restaurant Association to ensure all programs and services can be delivered in a coordinated fashion.

- (2) Please describe how your Board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:
  - a. Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.
  - b. Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and
  - c. Improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).



As noted above, our regional Partners coordinate service delivery through our regional Partner Leadership Council, the MCRWB and committees, and other regional committees and workgroups. We have also established regional workforce consortia for our top priority industries to better connect employers with training providers and educators and other industry support entities. These consortia help us ensure employer workforce needs can be met while also expanding access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, and facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs. This helps us improve access to training that leads to recognized postsecondary credentials (including credentials that are an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).



- (3) Please describe the strategies and services that will be used in your local area:
- a. To facilitate engagement of businesses in workforce development programs, including small businesses and businesses in high- demand industry sectors and occupations.
  - b. To serve agricultural businesses including plans to improve those services.
  - c. To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses.
  - d. To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.

- e. To strengthen linkages between reemployment assistance and unemployment insurance programs.
- f. Describe how your Board coordinates workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide Rapid Response activities.
- g. Please describe procedures to offer MassHire Career Center Business Services and MassHire BizWorks programs to local businesses.
- h. Describe implementation of any initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional businesses. These initiatives must support the strategy described in paragraph (b)(3) of this section.

The MCRWB uses the following three core strategies to meet the needs of our region's businesses (including small businesses), to coordinate with our regional education and economic development partners, and to strengthen our career center delivery system and unemployment insurance program:

- 1. Engage employers through our MCRWB and committees;
- 2. Develop an employer demand driven system at our region's career centers;
- 3. Coordinate regional business services and with regional workforce, education, and economic development partners.

#### **Engage Employers through our MCRWB and Committees**

The MCRWB attempts to ensure our Board and committee membership represents the demographics of regional employers. To this end we engage with numerous employers from various industry sectors, including healthcare, education, retail, manufacturing and construction (to name a few). We also emphasize participation from small businesses, as well as women and minority owned businesses. We recognize that many business leaders are simply unable to take the requisite time away from their duties to engage actively as a Board or committee member and therefore routinely seek to include industry group representatives to help ensure their industry's voice is heard. This includes the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, the MA Restaurant Association, the Mass Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and the Central MA Regional Planning Commission.

#### **Develop an Employer Demand Driven System at our Region's Career Centers**

As noted, the MCRWB has moved to a demand-facing model that places more emphasis on business services and the utilization of a direct referral process. As part of this large undertaking, the MCRWB worked with the Career Center leadership on staff reorganization (and redesigned job duties), new customer flow processes, and to create new standard operating procedures, staff training design and implementation, and develop new reporting metrics.

A byproduct of this new local Business Service model was a review (initiated by career center

staff) of the current Job Match function at our two regional One-Stop Career Centers. An internal development team subsequently established a new, more effective and efficient job matching program to better generate job leads for our career center customers. The program takes advantage of new technology based staff tools, including “computer to text” messaging by staff to job seekers. Regional staff developed enhanced reporting metrics that have been shared with State officials; during the pandemic, career center staff took a leading role offering job search connections via virtual job fairs and innovative new tools like JobGet and SkillsBase.

Regarding item (ii) above (“serve agricultural businesses and how you intend to improve those services”), our regional WIOA partnership Leadership Council now includes representation from the New England Farm Workers’ Council, and the MCRWB has had representatives of the Massachusetts Migrant Farm Worker program meet with our WIOA Partner Leadership Council. We continue to coordinate with local organizations such as the Central MA Regional Planning Commission and the Regional Environmental Council to support urban farming programs. Finally, we have pledged support for a new agricultural vocational program with one of our high school districts located in a more rural part of our region.

#### **Coordinate Regional Business Services with Regional Workforce, Education, & Economic Development Partners**

The MCRWB intentionally connected many regional programs and staff involved in workforce development with our education and economic development partners; this includes State Rapid Response and staff from the career centers, WIOA partners, economic development officials (state and local), educational and career technical training institutions (including K-12, higher education, and career technical training providers), community-based organizations, and others. To coordinate and sustain these efforts, and to identify and develop new career pathway programs, the MCRWB has created synergistic and symbiotic relationships between our Career Center/Adult Career Pathways Committee and Youth Workforce Investment Council, the WIOA Partner Leadership Council and its committees, and the regional MassHire BizWorks group led by the MA Rapid Response unit. This has been done using cross-representation and cross-pollination amongst groups and standing meeting agenda items to ensure the flow of relevant information.

In addition, the Board works with employers and training providers to establish regional workforce consortia in the priority industry sectors identified in our regional blueprint.

(4) Please provide a description of how your Board:

- a. Coordinates local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities.
- b. Promotes entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

As cited in previous sections, our efforts to align and coordinate services through a regional demand-driven approach and by utilizing various existing boards, committees, and

workgroups allows us to work closely with regional economic development officials in unique, productive, and cost-effective ways.

The MCRWB is also part of the Central MA Regional Planning Commission's Southern Worcester County Economic Development Organization leadership committee: This organization gathers representatives from area economic development municipal offices, chambers of commerce, community and business leaders, and educational institutions to oversee implementation of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) submitted to federal officials.

The MCRWB is an active member of the MA Expanding Business Engagement Initiative (MassHire BizWorks): The MCRWB and MassHire Central Career Centers have been invited to participate with state Rapid Response, Division of Career Services, and MA Office of Business Development officials to improve coordination and alignment of business services statewide. Locally, a Central MA work group has been established as a part of this effort. New partners are encouraged to get involved.

Our region's career centers have invested significantly in partnering with organizations offering entrepreneurial support through the Worcester Business Resource Alliance (WBRA). As part of this linkage, officials from the City of Worcester's Office of Economic Development often conduct workshops on how to start your own business at the region's career centers. Participants wanting further assistance with this topic are then referred to the WBRA's network of partners depending upon their need. Additionally, the Small Business Development Center is represented on the MCRWB to help better connect our workforce system with resources available to small businesses.

- (5) Please describe the MassHire Career Center system in your area, including:
- a. How the Board ensures the continuous improvement of eligible providers and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local businesses, workers and job seekers.

Our region's two career centers continuously coordinate with the MCRWB to improve all services, including delivering training through eligible providers. We have a joint staff team that meets bi-monthly to review progress on key goals and measures; our Career Center/Adult Career Pathways Committee uses a regional scorecard (see attachment 4) to help the committee review performance, including WIOA adult and dislocated workers going through training. Career center leadership directly oversee the performance of contracted Individual Training Account (ITA) educational providers to ensure positive outcomes.

According to regional standard operating procedures, only WIOA ITA applications that appear on the Statewide List of Eligible Training Service Providers/Courses will be considered by the MCRWB for initial approval locally, and the MCRWB has set our local performance measurement criteria in accordance with the MA DCS's criteria:

- (a) Quality programs related to in-demand industries and occupations as

determined by the Local Board.

(b) Training programs that lead to industry recognized credentials and certificates.

(c) Documented performance meeting state minimums: Completion Rate: 70%; Entered Employment Rate: 60%; and Placement Wage: State minimum wage.

Additionally, the MCRWB has determined that in many industries ITA students who participate in training programs providing hands-on, work based training (internships/externships) have better opportunities for quality employment, including higher wages, more diverse employment opportunities, and higher retention rates, and furthermore, that training programs offered in-person (at least in part) lead to better training outcomes.

The MCRWB therefore prioritizes training programs that provide work-based learning opportunities to ITA eligible customers appropriate for the job opportunities within the training related industry, as well as programs that offer in-person training. The MCRWB will also require the Training Plan development process to include Career Center staff informing customers that programs featuring externships in the field of training generally have higher job placement rates and therefore the availability of this component should be seriously considered during the selection process.

b. How the Board facilitates access to services provided through the MassHire Career Center(s), including in remote areas, through the use of virtual services, technology and other means.

Our region traditionally tries to identify and use technology where we can on the local level; these efforts increased during the pandemic. Technology tools we use to help facilitate access to services include:

- Utilizing online Career Center Seminars and job readiness workshops, accessible through job seeker computers, smart phones, or tablets.

- Career Readiness 101/WorkKeys online assessment and preparation platform. The region's career centers and several local WIOA Partners have established CRI/WorkKeys accounts to help our customers assess and improve their reading, math, and locating information skills. After a training workshop and member account set up, members may access this platform through the internet remotely.



- Many career technical trainings were made available online as we transitioned services to a largely digital model due to COVID-19. This includes the introduction of an online version of the Bounce work-readiness program, a virtual shift for the YouthWorks Year Round and Summer programs for youth, as well as other trainings such as pharmacy technician.

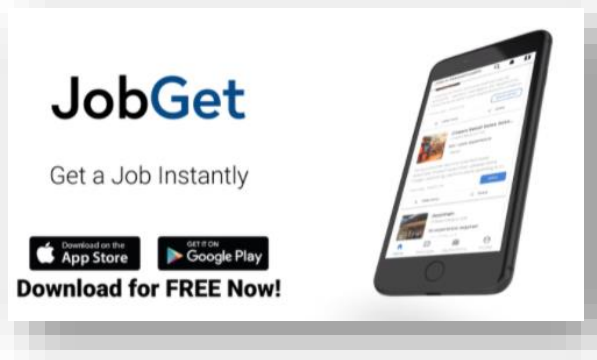
- Adaptive tools; our career centers and WIOA Partners offer customers adaptive tools (physical and digital) to help ensure individuals with disabilities have equal access to career center services (e.g., Height Adjustable Tables, ZoomText technology, Assistive Listening Devices, Scanners, Trackball Mouse, CapTel Phone, Large Print Keyboards and Large Print Hardcopy Workshop sheets.

- Virtual job fairs offered on the Premier online platform to connect employers and job seekers.



- Online resume builder for career center customers to create, save and share their work history in an appropriate resume format online through the career center website.

- Introducing the free JobGet smartphone based job matching and connection app to better link job seekers and employers in real time.



- Job Matching and Computer to Text Communications; as a byproduct of establishing our regional Referral Services Initiative, the career center initiated a review of the current Job Match function at our two regional career centers and has helped lead a development team in establishing a new, more effective and efficient job matching program to better generate job leads for our career center customers which also takes advantage of new technology based staff tools, including the use of “computer to text” messaging by staff to communicate with job seekers via their smart phones.

- The career center and MCRWB also offered links to COVID-19 and reopening

resources to connect customers with available programs and services.

MassHire Southbridge and Worcester Career Centers are closed to the public, but services are being provided remotely.

[COVID-19 Career Continuity Resources \(Real-Time Updates\)](#)

- c. How entities within the MassHire Career Center system, including Career Center Operators and Partners, ensure compliance with WIOA sec. 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

As noted above, our career centers and WIOA Partners offer customers a variety of adaptive tools to help ensure individuals with disabilities have equal access to career services (e.g., Height Adjustable Tables, ZoomText technology, Assistive Listening Devices, Scanners, Trackball Mouse, CapTel Phone, Large Print Keyboards and Large Print Hardcopy Workshop sheets). The availability of these are monitored through the MCRWB's annual review which includes an inspection of the building to ensure adherence to ADA policies and assessment using the Subrecipient and Equal Opportunity Monitoring WIOA Section 188 Review Checklist.

- d. The roles and resource contributions of your Partners – please describe how these relationships are sustained and kept productive.

Maintaining productive and positive relationships with partners is always a potential challenge, especially in times of decreasing resources or in unanticipated crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges include real-world issues that may dampen enthusiasm for collaboration; staff turnover, competing agendas, and perceived threats to authority or “turf” – to name a few.

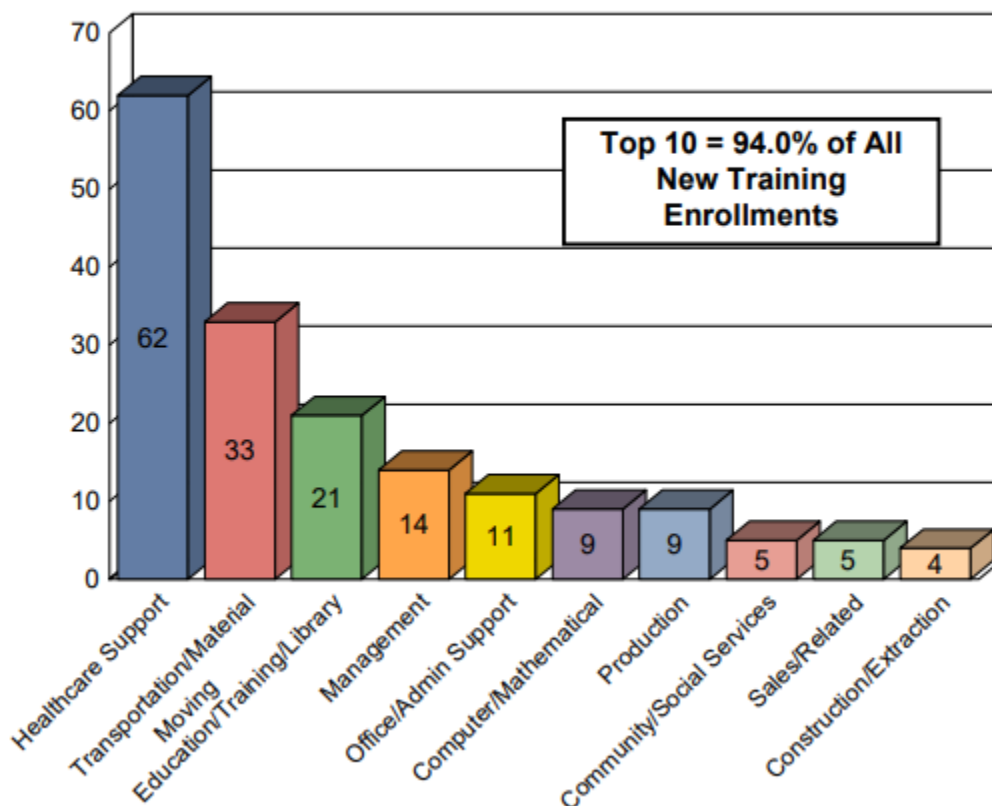
We maintain our partnerships through transparency, ongoing and open communications, and robust relationships that facilitate such communications. Specifically, we hold quarterly WIOA Partner Leadership Council meetings, bi-monthly MCRWB committee meetings and regional MassHire BizWorks meetings, and quarterly MCRWB full board meetings. We use written agreements (MOU/MOA), data tools, and email to keep communications strong and clear. Resource contributions have largely been negotiated on the state level but local level discussions and planning have complemented these efforts and helped to institutionalize a shared understanding of the value each partner brings to our regional workforce development system.

(6) Please provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in your local area.

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker customers at the region's career centers may take advantage of many potential trainings; a review of the training providers listed on the MA JobQuest for our region totals 1,363, including numerous locally-based training providers such as Quinsigamond Community College, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, MassMEP, the Fieldstone School, and others.

A review of training enrollments for FY21 through May 31, 2021 shows that healthcare, transportation/material moving, education/training/library, management, office/admin support, and computer/mathematical trainings are the most popular enrollments.

**New Training Enrollments: Top 10 Occupational Categories**  
**July 01, 2020 to May 31, 2021**



(7) Please provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in your area including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. Please include an identification of successful models of such activities.

a. Please also provide a description of youth workforce investment activity



coordination with the Department of Transitional Assistance, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind.

The following programs were approved by the Youth Workforce Investment Council and the MassHire Central Region Workforce Board for FY22. These WIOA Youth programs prioritize an integrated service delivery system that supports qualitative academic and career pathway certificate training programs with attainment of a state recognized credential and positive outcome. The programs approved were the Fieldstone School, LLC; Youth Opportunities Upheld, Inc.; and the Worcester Community Action Council. All vendors offer services to youth with disabilities and integrate them according to relevant regulations and share best practices with each other through the MCRWB YWIC and regional monthly youth vendor meetings.

The WIOA YWIC has representation from the disability community including the Worcester Public Schools Transitions Program, the MA Commission for the Blind, and partner programs that serve youth with disabilities are invited to participate in Youth Workforce Investment Council meetings and activities. Professional development activities related to serving individuals with disabilities include but are not limited to training on mental health first aid, integration of people with disabilities into youth development programs, and an introduction to services available from the MA Rehabilitation Commission.

(8) Please explain how the Board coordinates relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

As noted previously, our region utilizes several groups, committees, and workgroups to coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities. These include the MCRWB full board, the regional blueprint industry consortia, the Career Center/Adult Career Pathways Committee, the Youth Workforce Investment Council, the WIOA Partner Leadership Council, and the MassHire BizWorks regional team. These groups seek to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid service duplication.

(9) How does the Board coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area? Please include a description of how other programs and services in your local area are leveraged to compliment workforce investment activities.

Our region's career centers coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area utilizing resources set aside for support services (including transportation support) for eligible participants identified and served through the career centers. Additionally, customers being served jointly with other WIOA Partners may be referred to transportation and other appropriate support services available through our Partners by initiating a request through our

WIOA Partner joint case-management group. The MCRWB has also lent support to transportation planning efforts through the Central MA Regional Planning Commission, and has helped expand pilot “no-fare” efforts through the Worcester Regional Transit Authority.

(10) What plans, assurances, and strategies do you have in place for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services and other services provided through the Career Center delivery system?

As noted previously, the MCRWB has a detailed MOU with our WIOA partners to maximize coordination, improve service delivery, and avoid duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the Career Center delivery system in our region. We will also use a new WIOA Operator this coming fiscal year to better coordinate and streamline service delivery among WIOA partners.

(11) How are career and training services, required under WIOA, provided to Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs) through the MassHire Career Center(s)?

Career center staff and our regional partners have met with representatives of the Massachusetts Migrant Farm Worker program to discuss resources available to existing or potential agricultural workers and their families. Career center staff have also been instructed on how to process job positions from farms seeking harvest workers to conduct the duties required for harvesting and maintaining fruit and vegetable crops (H-2A job orders) posted by the Department of Career Services Central office in Boston. Career center staff know that upon receiving an application from the employer, they refer qualified individuals to these positions in a timely manner. We recently added representation to our WIOA partners leadership Council from the New England Farm Workers Council.

(12) Please describe how the Board coordinates WIOA title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA title II. This description must include how the Board carries out the review of local applications submitted under title II consistent with WIOA secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232:

Each eligible provider desiring a grant or contract from an eligible agency shall submit an application to the eligible agency containing such information and assurances as the eligible agency may require, including a description of –

- i. how funds awarded under this title will be spent consistent with the requirements of this title;
- ii. any cooperative arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities;
- iii. how the eligible provider will provide services in alignment with the local plan under section 108, including how such provider will promote concurrent enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate;
- iv. how the eligible provider will meet the State adjusted levels of performance

described in section 116(b)(3), including how such provider will collect data to report on such performance indicators; 6

- v. how the eligible provider will fulfill Career Center partner responsibilities as described in section 121(b)(1)(A), as appropriate;
- vi. how the eligible provider will provide services in a manner that meets the needs of eligible individuals; and
- vii. information that addresses the considerations described under section 231(e), as applicable.

The MCRWB coordinates with our WIOA Title I Adult Basic Education and Literacy providers through our regional WIOA Partner Leadership Council. A representative of these providers is out-stationed at our career center in Worcester to provide increased access to information about program offerings and opportunities (this was temporarily suspended during the pandemic but will resume in FY22). A MCRWB representative is also part of the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) integrated education and training workforce pathways request for proposal review team and coordinates youth programming regionally with the MCRWB's Youth Workforce Investment Council and Adult Career Pathways committee.

- (13) Please provide the name and contact information of your Fiscal Agent.

Ms. Janice Ryan Weekes  
MassHire Worcester Career Center  
340 Main Street; Suite 400  
Worcester, MA 01608  
(508) 373-7628  
WeekesJ@masshirecentralcc.com

- (14) Please describe the competitive process that is used to award the sub grants and contracts for WIOA title I activities.

The MCRWB and our region's career centers are administrative units of the City of Worcester and follow M.G.L. c. 30B (Chapter 30B) for purchases and awarding of sub-grants and contracts for WIOA title I activities.

- (15) Please provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of your local area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the performance of your local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the Career Center system in the local area.

Local Boards may insert or provide a link to local performance goals. Link must be accessible to ACLS bidders.

Our local FY 2021 performance goals are:

<b>WIOA PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>	<b>FY 2021 Goals</b>
<b><u>WIOA Adult Measures</u></b>	
Employment Q2	86.5%
Employment Q4	78.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$5,800
Credential Rate	73.0%
Measurable Skill Gain	40.0%
<b><u>WIOA Dislocated Worker Measures</u></b>	
Employment Q2	86.0%
Employment Q4	85.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$8,300
Credential Rate	65.0%
Measurable Skill Gain	40.0%
<b><u>WIOA Youth Measures</u></b>	
Employment/Education Q2	81.0%
Employment/Education Q4	74.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$3,500
Credential Rate	70.5%
Measurable Skill Gain	50.0%

- (16) What are the actions and activities that support the MassHire Board's continued status as a high-performance workforce board?
- What trainings are applicable to Board members?
  - How do business Board members contribute to workforce development in your region?
  - How does your Board support the business services in the career centers?
  - To what extent does inter-/intra-Board collaboration result in positive outcomes for job-seekers and businesses?

The MCRWB uses many methods and activities to support and sustain our status as a high performing workforce board. These include orientation for new board members conducted one on one (or in small groups) to ensure they understand their role and the basics of the

workforce system, annual training on state conflict of interest regulations. Members also receive quarterly updates on MCRWB programming.

MCRWB business members participate in full board and committee meetings, as well as regional planning efforts, to help provide feedback on the needs of local businesses and business trends relevant to the workforce system. They also often participate as partners in career training projects and assists with project design and curriculum development. An example includes recent MCRWB efforts to expand training in information technology. To foster this, an MCRWB member representing an IT employer helped arrange guest speakers to address students at a local high school STEM event, and this employer also assisted the MCRWB staff in identifying key industry trends and hiring needs to spur potential new training in this field locally.

As noted previously, our region's career centers, in partnership with the MCRWB, have implemented an expanded business services candidate referral process to better serve our region's businesses. This process includes a redesign of career center staffing to broaden support for the expanded candidate referral process. This redesign was spearheaded by a local private foundation grant received by the board and overseen by a special joint committee, which has now become a continuous improvement group.

The MCRWB is extensively involved with inter-board collaborations. The MCRWB worked closely with colleagues at the MassHire North Central Workforce Board to develop and implement our regional blueprint and is also working closely with these neighbors on the aforementioned MassHire BizWorks regional business support group. We collaborate on several career pathway programs such as a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training, a manufacturing training grant, and a healthcare training project, as well as regional STEM initiatives, to name a few. In addition, the MCRWB works closely with our board colleagues through the MA Workforce Association to share information on best practices in program administration and delivery, joint project and policy development, and to support shared outreach efforts.

(17) How are the training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 provided through the use of individual training accounts? If contracts for training services are or will be used, how is/will the use of such contracts coordinated with the use of individual training accounts?

a. How does the Board ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are provided?

The MCRWB works closely with our region's career centers to ensure the effective utilization of WIOA resources, including the allocation of training funds through our Individual Training Account (ITA) funding. To this end, the career center has established a process that ensures customer choice while also guiding our members through activities designed to make them informed consumers. This process includes a Training Information Meeting Session (TIMS) to education potential ITA customers on program eligibility as well as the steps that are needed to make an informed and effective choice of training program and vendor. Members then

meet with a WIOA staff member to review the eligibility documentation and to guide the labor market research and training program research that must be completed in order to apply for ITA funding support. The member is then guided by their WIOA counselor to complete the necessary training application and enrollment forms and is supported through their enrollment period and post-graduation placement phase to help them maximize their career success. The MCRWB has not yet utilized group/cohort training contracts with vendors but is exploring how to use funds for this purpose when a significant portion of the training may be covered by employer partners in accordance with WIOA regulations.

(18) Please describe the local area strategy and service plans for utilization of the following work-based training models:

- a. On-the-Job Training, including use of the Commonwealth's waiver to provide up to 90% employee wage reimbursement to businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

Our region's career centers promote On-the-Job training as a strategy to support employment for priority populations with the businesses they serve. The region's Business Services Representatives (BSR's) know about this opportunity through their MassHire BizWorks training and share this info with employers during their routine discussions. The career centers have trained a staff person to serve as regional On-the-Job Training expert, helping to support the development of these arrangements for employers and their hires.

- b. Apprenticeship.

The MCRWB has identified apprenticeship as a useful approach to advancing the skills of our region's workforce. To this end we have introduced Registered Apprenticeship to many local employers and have helped establish three new Registered Apprenticeship programs in our region: Two (2) in healthcare (Center for Health Impact, CVS), and diesel technician (Tri State Truck). We have worked with area Registered Apprenticeship sponsors to help establish registered pre-apprentice trainings in community health worker, pharmacy technician, diesel technician, and construction. We are also part of a US Department of Labor H1B grant (led by Clark University) TechQuest ("TQA Clark"), which seeks to expand apprenticeships in tech-related occupations. Finally, we have been a member of the State's apprenticeship advisory committee and a supporting partner on the federally-funded MA Apprenticeship Initiative.

- c. Incumbent Worker Training.

The MCRWB and our career centers seek to support incumbent worker training as a means to supporting business growth and worker advancement. The MCRWB has promoted the State's Workforce Training Fund Program and provides feedback on project applications from within our region to State program officials. Career center staff regularly promote the Workforce Training Fund Program to area employers when discussing worker retention and skills development. The MCRWB and our career centers support incumbent worker training projects in our regional industry-sector training projects, including training in manufacturing

and healthcare.

d. Work Experiences (paid or unpaid).

The MCRWB recognizes that hands-on learning and work experience is an excellent way to learn and practice new skills. We seek to advance work experience through our youth programming, including our School-to-Career Connecting Activities program that brokers student internships (both paid and unpaid), and our YouthWorks projects in the summer and throughout the school year. More than 390 youth took part in such opportunities in our region this past year. In addition to youth, we work closely with officials from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to support high school teacher externships to assist in their learning from experiences at area companies that they can then take back to incorporate into their classroom lessons. Our region's WIOA Youth programs also utilize a minimum of 20% of their allocation toward comprehensive work experience.

In addition to youth, we support hands-on learning for adults and routinely encouraged local ITA providers to include hands-on experience as much as possible to better prepare job seekers for the workplace.

e. Transitional jobs (§ 680.190 – one that provides a time-limited work experience, that is wage-paid and subsidized, and is in the public, private, or non-profit sectors for those individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have inconsistent work history, as determined by the Local Board. These jobs are designed to enable an individual to establish a work history, demonstrate work success in an employee-employer relationship, and develop the skills that lead to unsubsidized employment).

The MCRWB and our career centers have included the use of subsidized time-limited work experience in some of the career pathways projects we operate where funding has allowed, including the Access To Recovery program serving people in drug addiction recovery. We are also examining how to adapt this approach to other programs for adult job seekers. We have partnered with Operation ABLE to ensure the Senior Community Service Employment Program they manage in our region is available to older job seekers who may need the program and experience it offers. Thee MCRWB hosts SCSEP participants to great effect.

f. Online remediation tools for OJT/apprenticeship screening in support of cultivating and demonstrating workplace competencies.

The MCRWB and our career centers have invested in online remediation tools including the Career Readiness Initiative/WorkKeys which is offered through our career centers as well as a variety of our WIOA Partners which can be utilized for OJT/apprenticeship screening in support of cultivating and demonstrating workplace competencies. Our career centers have also made online remediation available through the adoption of the SkillsBase platform linked to from the career centers' website.

(19) Please describe the process the Board uses, consistent with WIOA sec. 108(d), to provide up to a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of your local plan particularly for representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations.

This plan has been developed utilizing information and data gathered through our board and committees and our strategic planning process, as well as our regional blueprint development process. To provide up to a 30-day public comment period before submitting the plan, we will encourage input from the public, including representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations.

To that end, we will post this plan on our website; we will tap organic digital media resources (social media, e-newsletter) to share it electronically; and we will inform our membership via email (including representatives on the board from business, education, and labor),

(20) Describe progress made implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake, referral, and case management information system for WIOA Partner Shared Customers.

The MCRWB, with our career center leadership, has been studying the best method(s) to transition to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system and has been significantly involved in a State-led work group dedicated to the design and implementation of this effort. We are awaiting further guidance from State officials to finalize implementation. Until this is implemented, we are attempting to create a local system that utilizes the limited technology and funding available; this includes researching the creation of an online network via the Aunt Bertha platform. We have also sought to use the State's PACE online learning platform to offer joint WIOA Partner staff training on topics relevant to shared case management, but access has not been forthcoming to individuals/organizations outside of specific State agencies.

(21) Please describe how the Board will implement the Virtual Career Pathway tool locally both for customers who can be wholly served by the Virtual Tool and those who will need to request personalized assistance.

a. How will the Virtual Tool be used once total public access is restored?

Upon resumption of full in-person services to our career centers we will maintain the option for job seekers to complete steps along their customer flow using the Virtual Career Pathway tools we have developed locally, such as the online CCS, career readiness workshops, and resume builder, as well as those that have been/will soon be introduced by MA DCS/EOLWD for our use, including the revamped MA JobQuest website and job-matching tools. We will continue to make available online resources through our partnership with JobGet, Goodwill Learn Free, and SkillsBase.

b. How will staff be assigned/deployed?

We will work with career center leadership and our WIOA Operator to deploy staff in the



most appropriate manner to achieve the elements of this plan. We anticipate that staffing dedicated to business support through the Business Engagement Solutions Team will remain in place, as will staff assigned the role of supporting organizational IT needs.

- c. How will MassHire Board and Career Center leadership ensure that all staff are crossed trained to be part of process and ensure seamless customer service?

The MCRWB and career center leadership work closely to cross-train career center staff to support customer seamlessly; this includes cross-training RESEA and WIOA staff, as well as staff employed through the City of Worcester and through the Commonwealth of MA. Staff training plans have been developed and will continue to be monitored and adjusted to ensure staff are aware of and knowledgeable to serve our customers.

(22) Please describe the local policy and process that ensures priority for adult career and training services is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), § 680.600 and 100 DCS 18.101.1.

- Veterans and eligible spouses
- Recipients of public assistance
- Other low-income individuals
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient

The Local Board may establish a process that also gives priority to other individuals eligible to receive such services outside the groups given priority under WIOA, provided that it is consistent with the priority of service for Veterans. Please note the local policy and process must be consistent with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and § 680.600.

POS for Veterans: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/priority-of-service-for-veterans>

State Plan: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/fy2020-workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act-wioa-massachusetts-combined-state-plan/download>

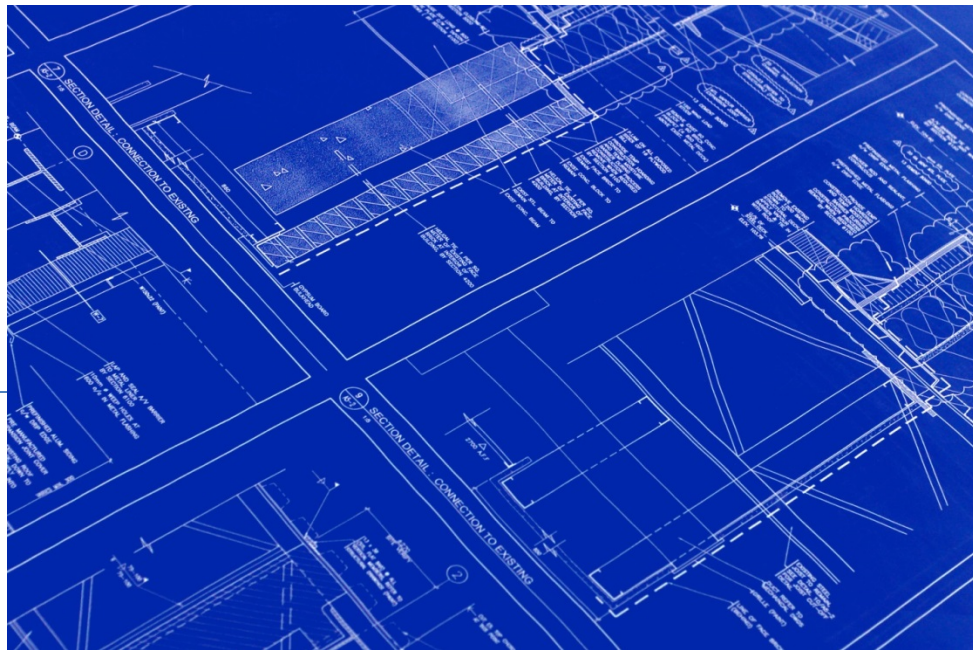
The MCRWB and our region's career centers follow guidance set forth by the Commonwealth related to Priority of Service for adult career and training services for our nation's Veterans and recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient (see attachment 5: SOP for priority of service). The MCRWB and career center staff determine eligibility for their respective programs and services following this policy when identifying access and enrollment.

# Attachment 1

## The Central MA Regional Workforce Blueprint

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2018-2022



March, 2018



## Introduction

The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law on July 22, 2014, and is the first legislative reform of the public workforce system in fifteen years. WIOA supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and retains and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and establishes the publicly-funded national network of Federal, State, regional, and local agencies and organizations that provide a range of employment, education, training, and related services and supports to help all jobseekers secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

Among other requirements, WIOA calls for local regions to develop strategies and shared service models among the federally-funded partners, including;

- **The Adult Program (Title I of WIOA)**, as part of the Department of Career Services (DCS), Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD);
- **The Dislocated Worker Program (Title I)**, as part of the Department of Career Services (DCS), EOLWD;
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs** (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.)), as part of DCS, EOLWD;
- **Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program** (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et seq.) as part of DCS, EOLWD;
- **The Wagner—Peyser Act Program** (Wagner—Peyser Act, as amended by Title III), as part of DCS, EOLWD; and
- **The Youth Program (Title I)**, as part of the Department of Career Services (DCS), EOLWD;
- **The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program** (Title II), as part of Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Executive Office of Education (EOE);
- **The Vocational Rehabilitation Program** (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV), as part of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS).
- **Federal—state unemployment compensation program**, as part of the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA), EOLWD;
- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program** (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) as part of Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), EOHHS;
- **Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**, (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C.2015(d)(4))), as part of DTA, EOHHS and

- **Senior Community Service Employment Program** (Programs authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.)), as part of the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA).

To accomplish this, local Workforce Development Boards have convened their local partner representatives to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) detailing service referrals and delivery, data sharing procedures, Career-Center operations, and career pathway supports.

As part of WIOA, the Governor of each State is required to submit a Unified or Combined State Plan to the U.S. Secretary of Labor that outlines a four-year workforce development strategy for the State's workforce development system. As detailed in the Commonwealth's WIOA State Plan, the Baker Administration has launched several initiatives to better coordinate the broadly defined workforce system with the needs of business as well as focus on expanding the impact on job outcomes for individuals with barriers to employment. One of these initiatives is the Workforce Skills Cabinet, which was created to align the resources of the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, the Executive Office of Education and the Executive Office of Housing and Development – the State agencies that administer the major federal and state programs for job seekers and employers.

Through the Workforce Skills Cabinet, the Commonwealth has established a regional planning process to align the priorities of each region for the agencies within the Workforce Skills Cabinet's three secretariats. In this way, the Commonwealth is utilizing the required WIOA Regional Planning process to create this new, integrated regional planning process across the economic, education and workforce Secretariats.

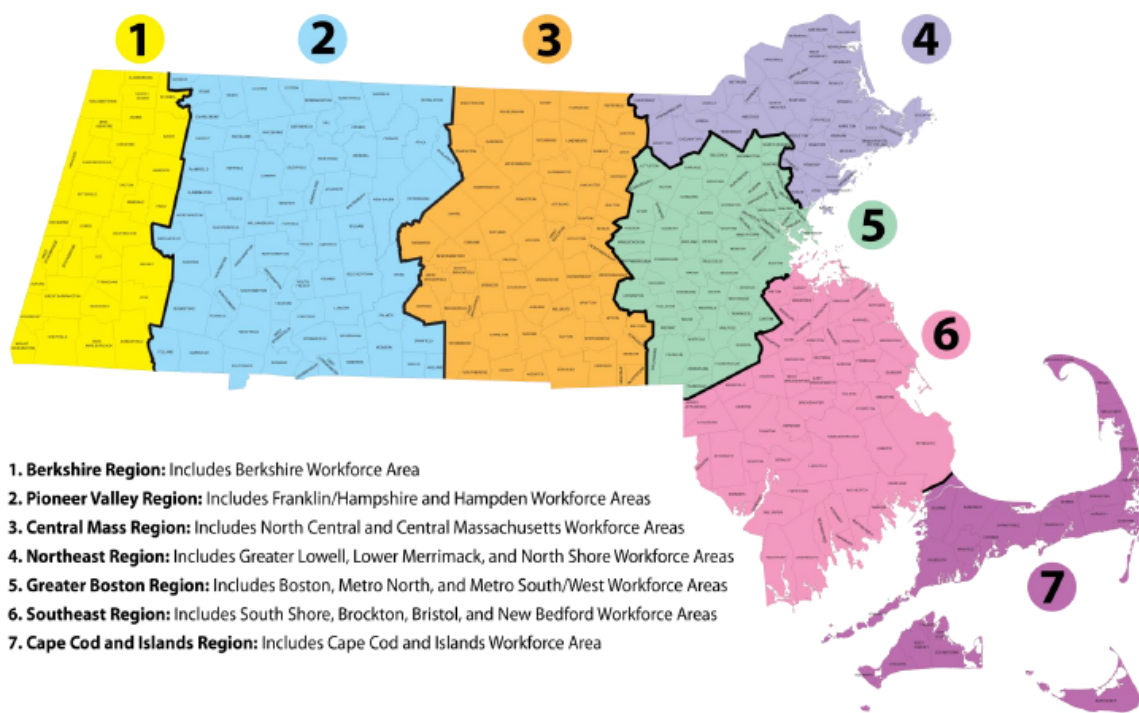
On a regional basis, this process seeks to scale up regional workforce development models that provide workers with the skills employers demand. The process is designed to ensure that regional employers, educators, and workforce training officials are coordinated in a way that creates strong talent pipelines for in-demand jobs.

The purpose of the regional planning under the Workforce Skills Cabinet and WIOA is to use the same regional boundaries between economic development, workforce, education and key partners. Each region has therefore been asked to identify business demand for skills, create regional strategies, and align existing resources to this process. The goal is to ensure that regional employers, educators, and workforce training officials are coordinated in a way that creates strong talent pipelines, for both middle-skilled and highly skilled jobs. The regional planning will support the development of cross-secretariat partnerships formed to support sector initiatives/career pathway initiatives that includes education and training, credential attainment, work-based learning (OJTs or apprenticeships), etc.

Local Workforce Development Boards (working as multi-region partners) were tasked with convening regional leaders in partnership with education and economic development partners to coordinate strategic workforce priorities, activities, and performance metrics (see attachment 1: Regional Planning Context Diagram).

The Workforce Skills Cabinet combined the Commonwealth's 16 workforce development regions into seven Workforce Skills Cabinet Planning regions:

### Regional Structure – Workforce Skills Cabinet Planning Regions



Specifically, the goals of each region were to:

- Identify the growing industries and occupations to be prioritized by system partners that will assist in the economic growth of the region.
- Develop a joint set of action steps to address skills gaps within these industries/occupations.
- Align and drive programming and service delivery across the three secretariats to meet the needs of the priority industries/occupations.
- Help more residents gain the credentials, education and job skills needed for successful careers within high-demand career pipelines.

The following individuals were invited to be a part of the regional planning process<sup>1</sup>:

<b>Individual Name</b>	<b>Individual Title</b>	<b>Organization Name</b>
<b>Joshua Froimson</b>	Manager, Business Excellence	AbbVie
<b>Janet Pierce</b>	Executive Director	Central MA Regional Planning Commission
<b>Lauren Morano</b>	Program Manager	Central MA Workforce Investment Board
<b>Jeffrey Turgeon</b>	Executive Director	Central MA Workforce Investment Board
<b>Jeannie Hebert</b>	President and CEO	Central Regional EDA Partnership
<b>Mary Jo Bohart</b>	Director, Economic Development	City of Fitchburg
<b>Maribel Cruz</b>	Economic Development Coordinator	City of Gardner
<b>Lisa Marrone</b>	Economic Development Coordinator	City of Leominster
<b>Sue Mailman</b>	President	Coghlin Electrical Contractors
<b>Ashley Armstrong</b>	Contract Manager, Employment Services Program	Department of Transitional Assistance
<b>Joyce Clemence</b>	Director, Southbridge Office	Department of Transitional Assistance
<b>Andre Ravenelle</b>	Superintendent	Fitchburg Public Schools
<b>Peter Milano</b>	Senior Director, Business Development	Mass. Office of Business Development
<b>Glenn Eaton</b>	Executive Director	Montachusett Regional Planning Commission

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<sup>1</sup> Participation among invited members varied throughout the planning process

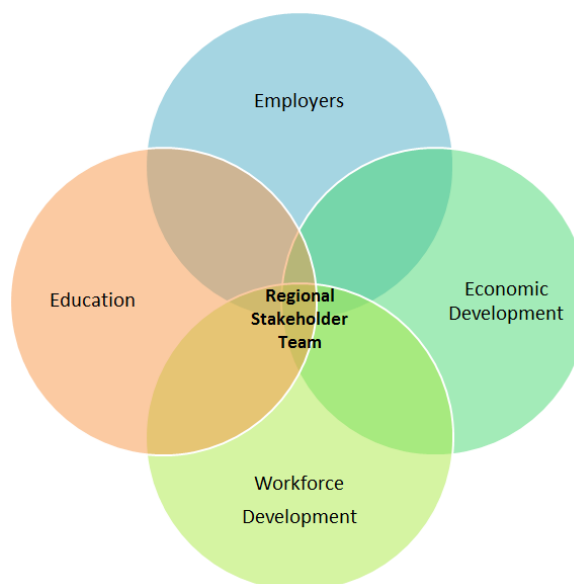
<b>Sheila Harrity</b>	Superintendent	Montachusett Regional Vocational School
<b>Rachel Frick Cardelle</b>	Interim Vice President, Lifelong Learning and Workforce Development	Mount Wachusett Community College
<b>Joseph Stiso</b>	Vice President for Planning, Development and Institutional Research	Mount Wachusett Community College
<b>Veronica Guay</b>	Assistant Dean	Mount Wachusett Community College
<b>Roy Nascimento</b>	President and CEO	North Central MA Chamber of Commerce
<b>Penny Doolittle</b>	Deputy Director	North Central MA Workforce Investment Board
<b>Tim Sappington</b>	Executive Director	North Central MA Workforce Investment Board
<b>Paul Morano</b>	Assistant Chief Development Officer – Business and Community Development	City of Worcester, Executive Office of Economic Development
<b>Gail Carberry*</b>	President	Quinsigamond Community College
<b>Robin Hooper</b>	Community Life Senior Manager	The Community Builders, Inc.
<b>Jil Wonoski</b>	Marketing Consultant	Tri-State Truck Center
<b>Tim Murray</b>	President and CEO	Worcester Chamber of Commerce
<b>Kelsey Lamoureux</b>	Director	Worcester Jobs Fund
<b>Karen Pelletier</b>	Director of Higher Ed-Business Partnership	Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce

<b>Russ Pottle</b>	Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences	Worcester State University
<b>Linda Larrivee</b>	Dean, School of Education, Health and Natural Sciences	Worcester State University
<b>Kyle Brenner</b>	Principal	Worcester Technical High School
<b>Carlene Campanale</b>	Deputy Director	Workforce Central Career Center

*\*President Carberry retired from Quinsigamond Community College during the planning process*

### **Description of the Regional Planning process:**

As noted previously, the Central MA region consists of the Central MA and North Central MA Workforce Development Areas. The two local workforce development boards, the Central MA Workforce Investment Board (CMWIB) and the North Central MA Workforce Investment Board (NCMWIB), have fully embraced the concept of collaborative regional workforce planning and have assembled a strong and diverse team of stakeholder representatives from private industry, education, workforce development, and economic development. The region has conducted three full team planning sessions since the start of the planning process (April, July, October) and during these sessions the stakeholders have reviewed regional population demographics, labor market information, and the additional data necessary to confirm industry priorities and supply gaps in our region, including the results of a survey conducted specifically for use in the planning process (see attachment 2: Business Survey). This survey was sent to over 550 of the region's businesses by the two Workforce Development Boards and on their behalf by the regions' three One-Stop Career Center and local Chamber of Commerce partners. Seventy-three businesses responded to the survey, yielding detailed information regarding their priorities, challenges, and needs. These results were analyzed and discussed at the third regional planning session.



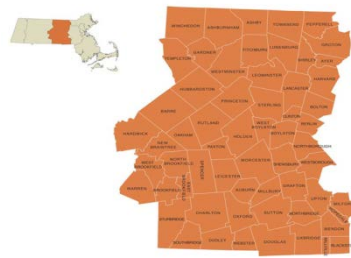


The planning team also established a Regional Planning Core Team, consisting of representatives of the two workforce development boards, education (Mount Wachusett Community College), and economic development (City of Worcester). This core team has met several times over the same period to assist the full team with refining the population and labor market data used to make final decisions about priority industry sectors, priority occupations within those sectors, educational opportunities and economic development issues. During this time we have also completed the administrative tasks associated with the planning process, including development of the project budget and scope of work, as well as our core team Memorandum of Understanding outlining our project staffing and work plan.

The core team developed a mid-point presentation indicating preliminary planning outcomes and initial outlines of strategies and goals. This presentation was delivered publicly on October 25<sup>th</sup>, allowing regional stakeholders and interested members of the public an opportunity to view and share their feedback with the core team. Following this, the core team also developed a summary planning presentation that was shared with a statewide group of workforce peers and staff from the three Secretariats in mid-November and, following further refinement, the presentation was shared with the three Secretariats themselves and selected staff on December 11, 2017. Feedback from all of these sessions has been used to guide the development and refinement of this document.

### **Description of the current state of our region:**

The Central MA region consists of 61 communities, anchored by New England's second largest city, Worcester, as well the twin cities of Fitchburg and Leominster. The region borders three other regional labor markets: Pioneer Valley, Northeast, and Metro



South/West. The total population of the two regions is 821,808<sup>2</sup> with a labor force of 440,133. The region boasts of natural attractions such as Mount Wachusett, Lake Quinsigamond, and Purgatory Chasm, as well as historic sites dating back to the local Native American tribes and prominent locations from the French and Indian War, the American Revolution, and later, the Industrial Revolution.

Ashburnham	Gardner	Millville	Sterling
Ashby	Grafton	New Braintree	Sturbridge
Auburn	Groton	North Brookfield	Sutton
Ayer	Hardwick	Northborough	Templeton
Barre	Harvard	Northbridge	Townsend
Berlin	Holden	Oakham	Upton
Blackstone	Hopedale	Oxford	Uxbridge
Bolton	Hubbardston	Paxton	Warren
Boylston	Lancaster	Pepperell	Webster
Brookfield	Leicester	Princeton	West Boylston
Charlton	Leominster	Rutland	West Brookfield
Clinton	Lunenburg	Shirley	Westborough
Douglas	Mendon	Shrewsbury	Westminster
Dudley	Millford	Southbridge	Winchendon
East Brookfield	Millbury	Spencer	Worcester
Fitchburg			

*From: Labor Market Trends in the Central Mass Region 2012 [www.bostonfed.org/heppc](http://www.bostonfed.org/heppc)*

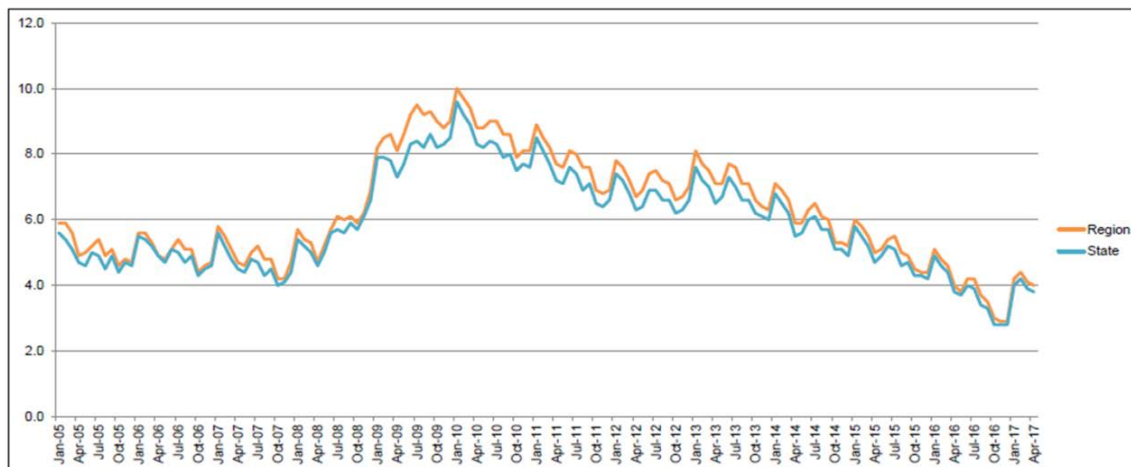
<sup>2</sup> 2010 US Census data

Our region also features prominently as a bellwether for the US economy, being built upon agriculture at the start of our nation and then moving during the industrial age to become a major force in development of machine-powered manufacturing through the start of the 20th century centered around the abundant water power of our rivers and streams. This rise of manufacturing, however, has given way to other industries over the past fifty years. Healthcare, retail, and human services have grown to take a larger role as manufacturing, especially traditional manufacturing, has faded. In the recent past, state and local officials have made a concerted effort to invest in the life-sciences industry and have had success in attracting bio-tech/bio-medical companies to the region and supporting the growth of new life-science firms.

In terms of employment rates, the Central MA region continues to mirror the state as a whole economically; our region's unemployment rate hovers around 4% -- a low rate by historical standards.

## State and Regional Unemployment Rate

Central Mass unemployment rates tend to exceed those of the Commonwealth by .1 - .4%.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005-2017 Seasonally Unadjusted Data

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This low rate, however, masks some of the challenges our region's workforce faces. First, this low rate indicates that many residents in the region actively seeking work are able to find it – making the labor market for these workers more competitive and therefore harder for employers to find candidates without raising wages. But there are additional challenges associated with this data that are less obvious. This includes the fact that the official unemployment rate as announced by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the “U-3” rate, only includes those who are in the labor force and actively looking for work within the previous four weeks. If a person is unemployed and was looking for work in the last year, but not in the past four weeks, the individual is considered a “discouraged worker” by the BLS, and not counted in the U-3 rate. If you were to broaden the U-3 measure to count these

discouraged workers (plus those working part time who wish full-time work) as the BLS does in its U-6 measure, the unemployment rate in Central MA climbs to 7.6%, fully double the statewide U-3 rate of 3.8%. Yet even this statistic, as broad as it is, only includes those who have looked for work in the past year. If you were to measure those who have given up looking for work for more than one year, the statistic no doubt climbs much higher still -- but it is difficult to measure since this population, being much harder to define from available data, is not tracked by the BLS and has thus been largely made invisible in official statistics. According to economists at ShadowStats.com, this rate nationally is far above the official 4.9% U-3 and 9.7% U-6 rates, standing in 2016 at an eye-popping 23%. It stands to reason that this tracks with our Central MA region as well since our aging workforce (discussed further in the following section) was hard hit in the great recession of 2008 – 2009 and many potentially productive members of our society have simply fallen off the radar of unemployment statistics altogether.

Put another way, the percentage of the civilian population that is working took a large hit following the great recession. Nationally, this ratio fell in 2008 from more than 63% before the crisis hit to below 59% -- indicating a massive exodus from the workforce. This ratio has yet to fully recover, slowly

climbing back up above 60% in 2017, but still lagging far below the previous level. Supporting employment for these long term discouraged workers will prove an ongoing challenge to the region, both in



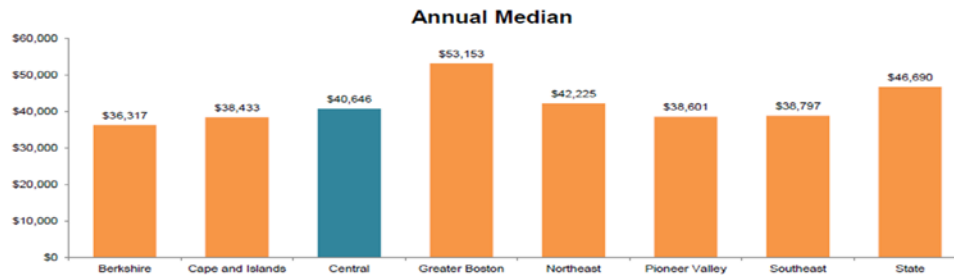
connecting with these people and in providing the higher level of services required to return them to employability, but it is also an opportunity to address worker shortages.

Another challenge in the current state of our region is the ongoing high unemployment rate among our region's youth, especially youth of color. The state unemployment rate for young people 16 to 24 stood at 6.7%, far exceeding the overall annual average rate for the State (3.3%). The unemployment rate for young men stood even worse, at 7.8% and youth of color was worse still.

In terms of our region's economy and quality of life, the Central MA region's median wage ranks third among the State's seven planning regions.

## Median Wage

Central Mass median wages are third to the Northeast and Greater Boston, and higher than its neighbor to the west (Pioneer Valley).



The Worcester Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) was ranked by *Area Development Magazine*, a publication covering corporate site selection and relocation, as 126<sup>th</sup> out of the 394 MSA's ranked nationally based on performance in four key categories: "Prime Workforce," "Economic Strength," "Year-Over-Year Growth," and "Five-Year Growth." This ranks it 9<sup>th</sup> among the 15 New England MSA's. However, when looking at the rank for the Prime Workforce factor alone (considered by economic development experts as a critical criteria for corporate site selection and business growth), the Worcester MSA falls to 14<sup>th</sup> out of 15 in new England, and 284<sup>th</sup> nationally. Prime workforce indicators include the number of workers aged 18–44, their education level, total inward migration of these high-value workers into the community, and wages (over one-, three-, and five-year periods). Of particular note is the fact that Worcester's rank is 378<sup>th</sup> for the three-year inward migration of workers 25-44 with a Bachelor's Degree or above, and the low rate of growth for this population over the past three years. More optimistically, the Worcester MSA rank zooms up to 59<sup>th</sup> nationally (and 7<sup>th</sup> in New England) for Economic Strength, with key factors for ranking MSA's in this category including per capita real gross metropolitan product (GMP), manufacturing/goods-producing employment, employment net growth, and local area unemployment rate changes over one-, three-, and five-year periods. These rankings, therefore, should be taken with a grain of salt; for instance, having high growth in the percent of the prime-workforce with a bachelor's degree is far more difficult to achieve when you begin with a relatively high level.

And Worcester County, which includes almost all of the planning region's communities, is ranked by the analysts at Niche.com for quality of life as 7<sup>th</sup> out of the Commonwealth's 13 counties (5<sup>th</sup> best for raising a family), and Worcester County is ranked 624<sup>th</sup> out of 2,774 counties nationally.

### **Critical trends in regional demographics that impact the workforce:**

The planning team has identified two demographic trends in our region that appear to have a large impact on our workforce as we move forward. The first is our aging population which is already having an impact in several industries, including manufacturing and other “traditional” trades. Many of the older, more experienced workers are retiring and this is leaving gaps that are proving difficult for employers to fill as younger workers are not choosing to enter these fields in numbers sufficient to the need. For example, there are a significant number of maintenance mechanics and machine operator positions that will be available as the current

workforce retires in the next 3-5 years. Without new candidates to replace these workers, the shortage will grow critical, jeopardizing the ability of these companies to meet customer demand, let alone growth opportunities they would need to forgo. Similarly, diesel technicians, construction workers, and other so-called “hard-trades” appear to be of less interest to many youth. Some have argued that youth are counseled from an early age that a college degree offers them a better career path, and thus look to go that route instead of a hands-on profession that is not aligned with the degree-track academic system. Beyond this, it would appear that many youth seek jobs that offer more social rewards, aka, a higher level of esteem, since society seems to devalue income derived from physical labor.

A corollary issue we are seeing with an aging workforce is that many older workers do not appear to be equipped with the appropriate skill set to work in a technology-rich workplace, such as advanced manufacturing. For instance, many older workers/job seekers are not familiar with Computer-Numeric Control (CNC) machining, which is becoming the norm within the manufacturing industry. CNC machining is an automated process and requires knowledge of software and programming. While we have already completed a large amount of CNC training in our region, we will need to do more in order to upskill our aging existing workers and prepare our younger workforce.

Changing demographics in the population will have far-reaching effects on the labor force, the economy, and employment over the 2016–26 decade. The overall labor force participation rate is projected to decline as older workers leave the labor force, constraining economic growth. The aging baby-boomer segment of the population will drive demand for healthcare services and related occupations.

*-- US BLS; Projections overview  
and highlights, 2016–26*

**It is well understood that in order to foster strong economic growth in the future, the Central MA region needs to align the education of its labor force to meet the demands of the region's employers. The higher education institutions in the region can play a key role in influencing the future supply of workers with post-secondary degrees. This supply will be critical to help meet the demographic challenges posed by the aging workforce and the increasing demand for educated workers.**

**-- Labor Market Trends in Massachusetts  
Regions: Central Mass;  
Boston Federal Reserve**

A further issue related to our aging population is the need it will bring for increased medical care and other social services as the population moves into the post-retirement stage of life. This demographic shift will significantly impact many of our region's larger industry sectors, such as healthcare and the level of staff necessary to care for our region's seniors.

The second critical trend we are seeing is growth of our immigrant and refugee populations. While these new Americans bring the potential to fill many supply gaps in our priority industries, they also often present with more potential barriers to employment. Some of the barriers we are already seeing include a lack of English language proficiency, limited education beyond high school (or credentials that do not transfer here from their

previous countries), and a lack of job-specific skills. It has been reported that the waiting list for our region for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes is greater than 1,000 candidates. These people's lives are largely on hold as their ability to work in living-wage jobs is significantly impaired by their lack of English fluency.

### **Past and current high-level industry trends impacting workforce needs:**

There are numerous high level industry trends occurring in our region that are impacting workforce needs, such as the rise of technology and automation, changes to business operations and management practices, issues involving the "pay squeeze" for some industries, and employer responses to public policy changes.

#### **Increase in technology and automation**

Increasing technology has been a major driving trend in our region, like others throughout the Commonwealth and beyond. Technology has always impacted workforce in a variety of ways and continues to do so today. In the past, new technology such as the harnessing of electricity provided power to factories and freed them from the need to be near the rivers which drove the machinery. Gas motors forever changed the way we transport goods and materials – and changing the mix of workers needed to build and maintain the new automobiles and trucks, and the roads they ride on. Today, we see the rise of automated manufacturing, self-checkout kiosks in markets and gas stations, and now the growth of the "gig economy" made possible by

the use of real-time online platforms. This rise in technology has reduced the need for employees doing lower-level, repetitive functions, and so, teen employment has dropped as a result. The gig-economy allows people the freedom to pick and choose when and how they wish to offer their services, but the work comes with little or no benefits, job security, or growth potential – an Uber driver is pretty unlikely to advance up the company ranks. In Information Technology, project-based gig work may be well paying, but comes with the stress of not knowing what work may be available in the future, and workers are more and more competing with talent based overseas since production can be shared seamlessly over the world-wide web.

Automation in the manufacturing sector is creating greater efficiencies for manufacturers and yielding ever-higher productivity as companies are able to produce more goods with less workers, leading to layoffs in this industry. Unfortunately for employers, they are in a race with a generational shift as older workers begin to retire in greater numbers, overwhelming their ability to replace these aging workers with machines. And the jobs that remain in advanced manufacturing require ever more comfort with the use of computers to interface with the new machines on the shop floor. Our vocational-technical high schools are already attempting to address this need by adding programs in engineering, advanced manufacturing and robotics, but not at a high enough scale to prepare the number of workers necessary to replace the existing workforce preparing to retire. Further, a significant number of the students attending these schools are going off to college after graduation, and not directly to our region's shop floors.

In the transportation industry there has been significant research on the development of autonomous (so called driver-less) vehicles and discussion in the workforce development world regarding the disruption this will have upon employment as drivers. Discussions with local distribution industry professionals indicate that this innovation is many years away from having an impact locally – while the technology may be rapidly advancing, the prohibitive cost of buying and maintaining an autonomous delivery truck will prevent wide scale implementation and any noticeable decline in local jobs driving. More imminent, these professionals suggest, is the greater utilization of automation in the sorting, handling, and preparation of products as they move through the distribution network. Beyond the short term, it is anticipated that delivery trucks, even autonomous ones, will still need a human presence on board for the foreseeable future to ensure the safe handling and delivery of goods and material.

### **Changes to business operations and management practices**

Another high level industry trend that is affecting workforce development is the changing management structures that businesses utilize, such as the rise of outsourcing for much non-core business administrative and support services like human resources, payroll processing, marketing, custodial/janitorial services, etc. Businesses have also turned to the use of third-



party temp firms to fill short term employment needs or for greater screening for identifying qualified candidates for “permanent” status as a company employee. Businesses have increasingly turned to these alternate organizational models in order to achieve greater efficiency, however, they have also had some unintended consequences, including a lowering of business reputations in the community-labor pool, and a decrease in the ability to promote from within as talented entry level support staff learn about the business and further advance their careers through company-sponsored education and professional development.

### **To Understand Rising Inequality, Consider the Janitors at Two Top Companies, Then and Now**

**By Neil Irwin**  
**[www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)**

ROCHESTER — Gail Evans and Marta Ramos have one thing in common: They have each cleaned offices for one of the most innovative, profitable and all-around successful companies in the United States.

For Ms. Evans, that meant being a janitor in Building 326 at Eastman Kodak’s campus in Rochester in the early 1980s. For Ms. Ramos, that means cleaning at Apple’s headquarters in Cupertino, Calif., in the present day.

In the 35 years between their jobs as janitors, corporations across America have flocked to a new management theory: Focus on core competence and outsource the rest. The approach has made companies more nimble and more productive, and delivered huge profits for shareholders. It has also fueled inequality and helps explain why many working-class Americans are struggling even in an ostensibly healthy economy.

The \$16.60 per hour Ms. Ramos earns as a janitor at Apple works out to about the same in inflation-adjusted terms as what Ms. Evans earned 35 years ago. But that’s where the similarities end.

Ms. Evans was a full-time employee of Kodak. She received more than four weeks of paid vacation per year, reimbursement of some tuition costs to go to college part time, and a bonus payment every March. When the facility she cleaned was shut down, the company found another job for her: cutting film.

Ms. Ramos is an employee of a contractor that Apple uses to keep its facilities clean. She hasn’t taken a vacation in years, because she can’t afford the lost wages. Going back to school is similarly out of reach. There are certainly no bonuses, nor even a remote possibility of being transferred to some other role at Apple.

Yet the biggest difference between their two experiences is in the opportunities they created. A manager learned that Ms. Evans was taking computer classes while she was working as a janitor and asked her to teach some other employees how to use spreadsheet software to track inventory. When she eventually finished her college degree in 1987, she was promoted to a professional-track job in information technology.

Less than a decade later, Ms. Evans was chief technology officer of the whole company, and she has had a long career since as a senior executive at other top companies. Ms. Ramos sees the only advancement possibility as becoming a team leader keeping tabs on a few other janitors, which pays an extra 50 cents an hour.

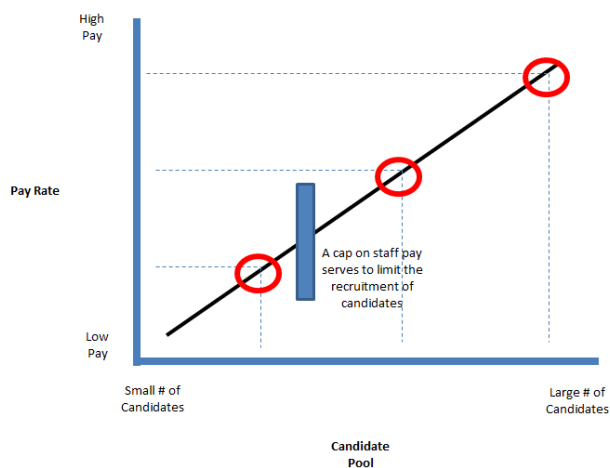
They both spent a lot of time cleaning floors. The difference is, for Ms. Ramos, that work is also a ceiling.



## Pay-Squeeze

Another trend in our region is the trend whereby employers have been caught in a “pay squeeze” affecting their ability to pay workers more in times of greater employer demand; unfortunately, we are seeing across some of our priority industries such as manufacturing, health care and social assistance that salaries are not increasing at a rate keeping up with the demand (for instance, manufacturing saw a 2.95% increase in total wages over the past 10 year period and health care an increase of 4.99% total wages, both below the regional average for all industries of 7.82% and far lower than the increased hiring demand would anticipate). One possible reason for this is that while the Commonwealth has increased minimum wage over the past three years, the ability of the employers to pay their workers a higher wage relative to the minimum wage is being capped by the funding available on the revenue side. In health care, this is largely a result of a public reimbursement system that caps the rate of funding and therefore leaves the revenue side flat while employers in other industries around them (including fast food and retail) have increased their pay due to the minimum wage mandate. This is also occurring in child development centers where staff pay rates are highly dependent on the public voucher supports available to the Centers for the moderate and low-income families they serve. Without a raise in the voucher rates, paying staff more is a very difficult proposition. Similarly, local manufacturers have faced pressure from their customers to meet the prices of their competitors, many of which are in countries with much lower pay rates, such as China. This pay-cap issue therefore alters the natural labor-market and the increase in pay expected in order to entice more people to seek employment in that field – especially if the work requires an investment in a potential candidate’s time and money for training in order to be qualified for the job(s) available. This, in and of itself, has large implications for the public workforce system, as it suggests increased training alone may not be sufficient to meet the demand.

**Pay Cap – Candidate Pool Model**



## Employer Responses to Public Policy

As noted previously, the Commonwealth’s increase in the minimum wage has fostered changes in the labor-market at the lower end of the pay scale. Employers in numerous sectors that pay

at or slightly above minimum wage have had to adjust their budgets to accommodate the rise in hourly staff pay. For some, this has not appeared to have been a major burden as slight increases in product prices has offset the additional labor costs.

Another operational trend we've identified is that costs to employers for health insurance continue to climb and this trend is not anticipated to change any time soon. At the Federal level, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) appears to be slowly being dismantled and the actual coverage for services is declining. Our smallest employers often cannot afford to offer health insurance to their employees. Massachusetts law allows employers of fewer than 50 full-time equivalent positions to choose whether or not to offer health insurance. Since our region has many small companies – in fact the average number of employees per company is just below 38 -- workers in our region often have to purchase health insurance through the Massachusetts Health Connector at their own cost. The rising cost of health care puts upward pressure on insurance premiums. In response, employers and health plans try to limit premium increases using strategies such as offering more high-deductible plans and increasing co-payments, co-insurance, and out-of-pocket maximums. These approaches represent a cost shift from insurers and employers to workers and further complicate the labor market as workers fear the loss of employer-sponsored health insurance and employers must decide how to meet the rising costs.

### **Critical trends in occupational employment history in the region:**

#### **Shifting of the region's Industry/Occupational Mix**

As noted previously, the industrial base of the Central MA region has shifted the past several decades from a largely manufacturing focused economy to one that is more balanced between industry sectors, including healthcare, education, professional services, and retail. While this shift has meant less dependency upon a single industry sector, it has also meant the loss of many family-supporting wage jobs for those with limited formal education.

There continues to be a rising need for health care workers at most levels of clinical services and at a variety of health care providers, including community health centers and patient triage clinics, long term care facilities, and hospitals. According to the US Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics – Quarterly Workforce Information Explorer platform, this equates to an increase over the past seven years of 13,500 employees in our region (60,266 to 73,576).

During this same timeframe, educational services (including teachers and teacher assistants) has grown nearly seven thousand employees (from 33,672 to 40,553), the food and accommodation sector has seen a growth of more than 2,100 employees (24,559 to 26,700), construction 2,300 employees (13,016 to 15,839), transportation and warehousing has grown

more than 1,600 positions (9,526 to 11,212), while professional, scientific and technical services has grown from 14,386 to 15,209. Manufacturing has been rather flat overall with an additional 900 employees (35,396 to 36,302) but is expecting a large number of retirements in the next several years due to the average age of its existing workforce, and retail has fallen slightly from 38,337 to 38,200, yet remains one of the largest employment sectors in our region, especially for those with limited formal education or credentials.

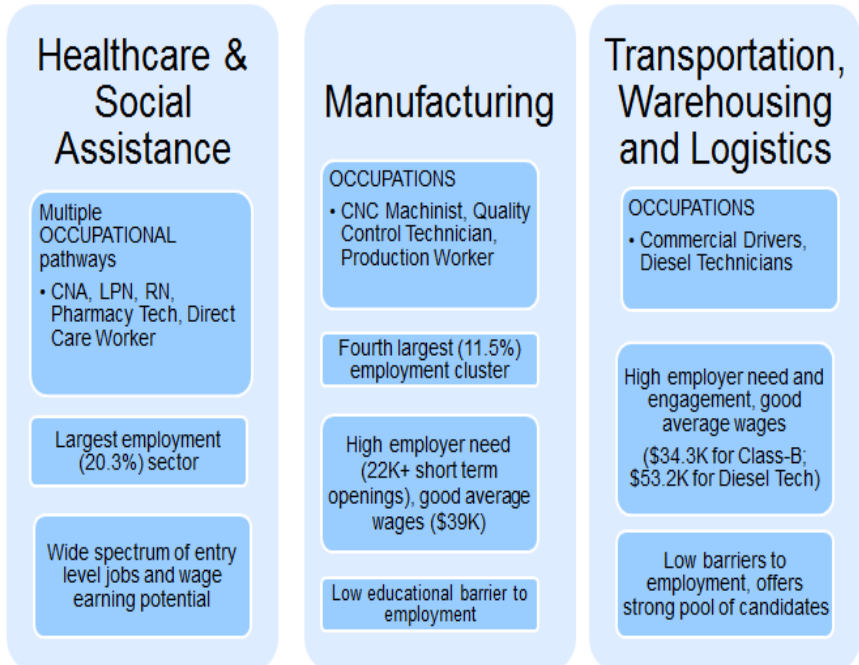
One sector we are seeing a significant rise in is the life sciences sector. Fortunately, with four public institutions of higher education in our region offering training/education to prepare people for careers at various levels of this growing sector, we are well positioned to take advantage of this opportunity.

**Top three challenges facing the region's businesses and industry over the next five years:**

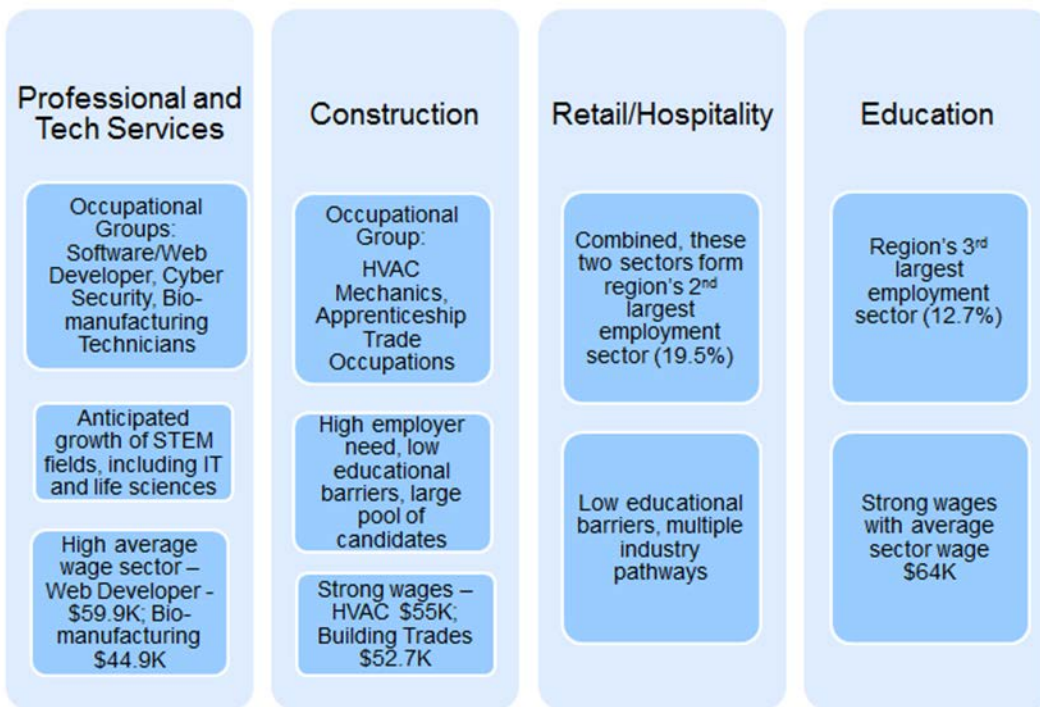
A survey of local businesses helped planners identify the top challenges facing employers regionally. Overwhelmingly, employers identified finding and retaining talent as their top challenge, followed by controlling costs, and expanding markets. Within the challenge of finding and retaining talent, the most significant factors involved included the aging of our workforce, lack of work-readiness/social-emotional skills, and barriers to employment such as English language competency, unreliable transportation, criminal background concerns, and substance abuse.

### **Top 3 regional workforce priority industries:**

Based upon the State criteria and regional criteria set by the planning team (see section III below) the following industries were deemed priority industries for the region:



Additionally, the following industries were identified as critical industries for our region:



### **Industries currently facing the most significant workforce development challenges:**

The planning team has identified Healthcare & Social Assistance, Manufacturing, and Transportation, Warehousing, and Logistics as facing the most significant workforce development challenges, followed by the critical industries identified above, Professional and Technical Services, Construction, Retail/Hospitality, and Education.

### **The top occupations or occupational groups in which the region is facing the most significant employee shortages:**

The top occupational groups in which the region is facing the most significant employee shortages are:

- Occupational Group 1: Health Occupations
  - Certified Nursing Assistant, LPN, RN, Pharmacy Tech and Direct Care Worker
    - › *High employer need (61,000+ short term openings) and engagement, low educational barrier for some career pathway entries, strong wages for higher level occupations (\$82,000 RN average)*

- › *Supply and demand ratio of qualified candidates to demand for these occupations also indicate high need (CNA has .63 qualified candidates for each opening, Pharmacy Technician .23, LPN .65, and RN just .05)*
- Occupational Group 2: Manufacturing Occupations
  - CNC Machinist, Quality Control Technician, Production Worker
    - › *High employer need (22,000+ short term openings) and engagement, good average wages - especially with experience (\$39,900 sector average), fairly low educational barrier*
    - › *The number of machinists is anticipated to grow by 7.76% in the Central MA Workforce Development Area and 9.13% in the North Central WDA by 2024, fueled by the anticipated need to replace existing workers due to retire*
- Occupational Group 3: Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services Occupations
  - Software/Web Developer, Cyber Security, Bio-manufacturing Technicians
    - › *High anticipated growth, strong wages (Web Developers earn a mean annual salary of \$108,401 according to job postings for the Worcester Metropolitan Statistical Area on Burning Glass; Bio-manufacturing technicians earn an average annual wage of \$44,900 according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics)The supply to demand ratio indicates a large gap in web developers as there are only .12 qualified candidates for each opening in this field*
    - › *Life sciences employment anticipated to grow by 5.68% by 2024 in the Central MA WDA*
- Occupation Group 4: Transportation, Warehousing and Logistics Occupations
  - Commercial Drivers; Diesel Technicians
    - › *High employer need and engagement, good wages (\$34,300 average for Class-B; \$53,200 for Diesel Tech), low educational barrier, strong pool of candidates*
    - › *The supply to demand ratio indicates there are only .29 qualified candidates for each heavy truck driver opening in this field (.37 for light truck drivers), and .51 candidates for each Diesel Technician position*
- Occupational Group 5: Construction Occupations
  - HVAC Mechanics, Apprenticeship Trade Occupations
    - › *High employer need, strong wages (HVAC - \$55,500; Building Trades - \$52,700), low educational barrier, large pool of candidates*
    - › *Apprenticeship trade occupations offer employees a nationally-recognized credential supported through paid hands-on work and related training instruction (RTI)*
    - › *The supply to demand ratio indicates there only .73 qualified candidates for each HVAC opening*

**Occupations offering a “career pathway” for workers to move to higher skills and wages, especially workers starting at entry-level:**

We are fortunate in our region that we have several occupations that offer a career pathway for workers that are supported by a strong network of career development and educational institutions. It is our goal to strengthen articulation agreements between regional partners to ensure students seeking to enter or advance in their careers will have access to education and training linked together to scaffold their success. As a regional strategy we are also supporting the development of a strong apprenticeship system to allow workers to advance their careers through paid hands-on work and formal education. Apprenticeships and associated pre-apprentice training has been established in the building trades, manufacturing, commercial drivers, diesel technicians, and pharmacy technicians.

We have created regional career pathway charts developed to assist students, parents, guidance counselors, job seekers, and others about the variety of jobs in a given industry and the education/work experience necessary to advance from one level of employment to the next. (See attachment 3: Regional Career Pathway Charts)

**The most significant broad labor supply challenges and opportunities facing the region over the next 5 years based on existing regional workforce:**

The most significant broad labor challenges facing the region over the next five years are:

- *Aging workforce*
- *Lack of employment readiness & social/emotional skills*
- *Increase in share of workforce needing English skills*
- *Limited transportation*

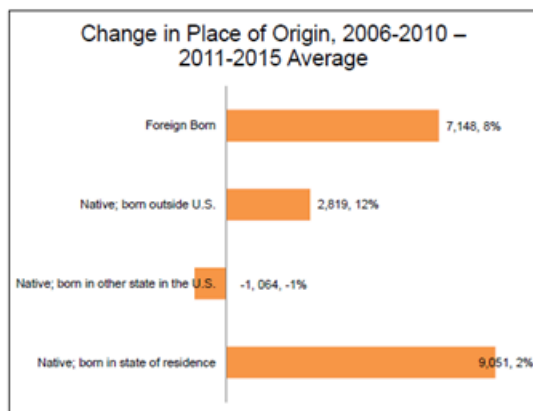
**Aging workforce**

Based on our recent employer survey, the most significant challenge facing our businesses is finding and retaining talent. Employers report the loss of older workers as they retire is creating larger supply gaps within our priority industries and this is bolstered by the data of our region’s workforce (25.5%) is aged 55 or older. The added challenge is that these workers are often the most experienced so when they retire, it is difficult to replace them with workers with the same level of knowledge and skill set.

## Lack of employment readiness & social/emotional skills

Employers also report that they often see job candidates and new hires that do not have the necessary “soft-skills” needed for performance in the workplace. These skills include time management, communication, social-emotional awareness, and teamwork. Complicating this challenge is the fact that these skills are hard to measure and also difficult to teach in a classroom setting.

## Increase in share of workforce needing English skills

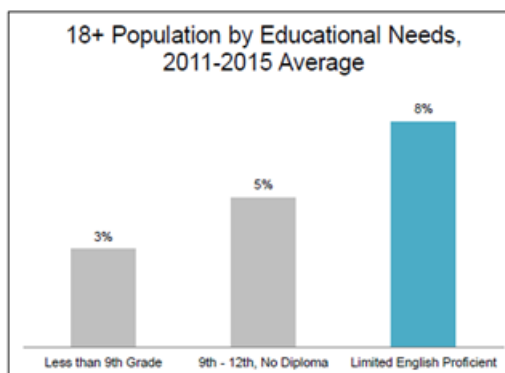


Lastly, the regional demographic trends indicate that the region’s population growth has been fueled by net inflow of New Americans (immigrants, refugees).

Over the past decade, the share of foreign born residents has grown by 8%, and the percent of residents in the region of Hispanic ethnicity has grown by 14%.

This inflow of New Americans includes a significant portion that have limited English communication

skills. Regionally, it is reported that 8% of residents have limited English proficiency. In order to overcome their barriers to employment, this population typically requires remedial services in English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and/or Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes. Depending upon their past work experience, may also need occupational training prior to being hired. A small percentage of our immigrant/refugee population may arrive highly skilled but non-credentialed here in U.S. They may also be faced with a language barrier and/or a need for an additional certification or credential before being hired.



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Unfortunately, the current wait list for enrollment into ESOL classes is more than 1,000 and funding for additional classes is limited. Further expanding this trend is the recent arrival of more than 600 evacuees from Puerto Rico now living in the Central MA region. At this time, many have not declared their intention to stay, but given their limited English proficiency, additional ESOL resources will be necessary.



## **Limited Transportation**

The Central MA area contains a few cities, numerous towns, and also rural communities. This variety affords residents opportunities to experience the rich diversity of these various communities; however, it makes transportation a challenge for those without a dependable vehicle. Public transportation is available throughout much of the region through fixed bus routes from the Montachusett Regional Transit Authority which serves 21 communities in the northern part of our region and the Worcester Regional Transit Authority which serves 35 communities. Connection to the MBTA commuter rail service is offered in Fitchburg, Leominster, and Worcester, and paratransit service is also available throughout most of the region. Unfortunately, given the limited amount of fixed route service outside of Worcester and Fitchburg, utilizing public transportation for employment outside these cities is often not a viable option for job seekers/employees.

## **The top 3 broad labor supply opportunities facing the region over the next 5 years based on the existing workforce in the region:**

The top broad labor supply opportunities facing the region over the next 5 years based on our existing workforce in the region includes integration of New Americans into the workforce, incumbent staff development, and expanding the labor pool to non-traditional workers.

### **Integration of New Americans into the workforce**

As noted previously, the growth of our region's workforce has been fueled by the influx of people born outside the United States settling in our region. This includes immigrants, refugees, and other foreign-born residents legally able to work in the US. The definition could also be expanded to include evacuees from Hurricane Maria arriving from Puerto Rico (who, while US citizens, still face many of the same barriers to employment as New Americans, including assimilation into a new culture, learning a new language, and overcoming the dispossession of property).

### **Incumbent staff development**

The second opportunity is increasing the skills of existing staff to meet company demand. This requires employer commitment to employee mentoring, training and development, but may be done more easily than attempting to lure workers from outside the region, especially for entry and middle-level jobs that typically do not pay enough to entice people to uproot their residence and requires additional costs to employers attempting to have a meaningful presence away from the location they're hiring in.

Some of the ways businesses might develop their employees could include:

- Skills training, either in-house or through outside training centers
- Opportunities for promotion and/or career development
- Coaching and mentoring
- Offering tuition reimbursement
- Encouraging pursuit of continuing education
- Development of a formal Registered Apprenticeship to promote a set career advancement pathway for staff

Employees report feeling valued when they see that the company is investing in them. This growth and development help employees expand their knowledge, skills and abilities and apply the competencies they have gained to new situations. This translates into positive gains for the organization by enhancing organizational effectiveness, improving work quality and helping business to attract and retain top talent.

### **Expansion of the traditional labor pool**

A third opportunity exists in expanding the existing labor pool through skill preparation, training, and work support for non-traditional workers in various industries. This includes increased hiring of people with a disability in manufacturing, expanded career opportunities for people with criminal backgrounds/ex-prisoners, and older workers seeking a second career.

### **UI Claimant population and the region's largest supply of unemployed workers by job type:**

A review of the UI Claimant reports for the month of December, 2017 indicates that there were 7,801 claimants for the region and the average weekly wage claim was \$974.99. Of these claimants, 5.8% were between ages 20-24, 23% ages 25-34, 21% were ages 35-44, 22.8% were ages 45-54, and 20.1% were ages 55-64.

In terms of occupational backgrounds:

- 1,059 had Management backgrounds
- 1,026 had Construction and Extraction backgrounds
- 914 had Office and Administrative Support backgrounds
- 704 had Building and Grounds Maintenance backgrounds
- 518 had Production backgrounds

### **Characteristics of unemployed and underemployed workers in the region:**

The four prominent characteristics of the unemployed and underemployed workers in our region that the regional planning team identified are:

- Older workers & long-term unemployed
- Lower formal education level
- Lack of English proficiency
- Geographic location/transportation

Many of our older workers continue to struggle with finding full-time employment and a significant portion of them are long-term unemployed. Their biggest challenge is that they come with years of experience and often at a fairly high salary. They find themselves trapped by employer stereotypes such as not sticking around long (flight risk) and costing too much in terms of salary, health insurance and retirement. Businesses often do not want to take a chance on these older workers. Another issue facing the long-term unemployed workers is discrimination based on the duration of their unemployment. They are often faced with an uphill battle when competing for employment with currently-working younger job applicants. We need to work with our business partners to more clearly understand that hiring should be based on one's ability to do the job, not his or her age or current employment status.

Education level is another characteristic of our unemployed and underemployed workers. Some workers only have a high school diploma or high school equivalency credential when employers require a college degree. Many are raising families and don't have the resources and/or time to step away from the work world and return to school. Working with our education partners, we need to continue to come up with alternative ways to help these workers get the education or training they need. Possibilities include tuition reimbursement from the employer, evening or weekend classes, and online education.

As noted previously, there exists a very high need in our region for ESOL classes. One of the biggest barriers to employment right now is the lack of English proficiency in our job seekers combined with the fact that our local, publicly-funded ESOL programs have extensive waiting lists. One way for us to address this issue is to educate our business partners and encourage them to apply for a Workforce Training grant to provide ESOL training for their workers.

## **Description of the region's existing pipelines of new workers (credentials) across public and private secondary and post-secondary institutions:**

There are a large number of educational institutions and training entities in Central MA and an extensive amount of career-related education and training that is already taking place or anticipated to begin over the course of the next two years. Educational institutions in the Central MA region include three public universities (the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, Fitchburg State University, and Worcester State University), two community colleges (Quinsigamond Community College and Mount Wachusett Community College), several private four-year colleges (Nichols, Holy Cross, Assumption, Anna Maria, Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University, Massachusetts

### **Maximizing Our Educational Resources**

Our region is fortunate to have three state universities. Of these, Worcester State University and Fitchburg State Universities were fairly recently awarded university status. Unfortunately, because of the statutory language set at the time, WSU and FSU can only grant doctoral degrees via collaboration with a doctoral granting institution. This creates a barrier to program development. For example, the WSU Occupational Therapy (OT) program is facing this challenge as the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) recently mandated that the entry-level degree for occupational therapists must transition from a master's-level to a clinical doctoral-level (OTD) by July 2027. Once the new ACOTE mandate takes effect in 2027, only programs accredited at the clinical doctoral level will be able to maintain or receive accreditation. This ACOTE mandate puts the OT program at WSU, one of only two such programs at public state universities in MA, in an untenable situation because it cannot confer clinical doctoral degrees. The inability to confer this degree would cause this program to close and leave the private institutions as the only option for OT education. In other words, if WSU's OT Program cannot transition to an entry-level clinical doctoral program, Central Massachusetts will have no options for affordable and accessible OT education.

College of Pharmacy, Becker, Clark, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute), as well the Grafton and Shriver Job Corps Centers, and five vocational schools, which offer both day and evening programs; Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School, Worcester Technical High School, Bay Path Regional Vocational High School, Blackstone Valley Vocational High School, and the Leominster High School Center For Technical Education Innovation (additionally, the Assabet Valley Vocational High School is located on the edge of our region, providing programming to day and evening students residing in our region). We also have numerous Career Technical Education (CTE) providers including the Worcester Community Action Council, the Fieldstone School, Youth Opportunities Upheld (YOU), Inc., Training Resources of America, the South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Worcester Public Schools Night Life and Adult Basic Education Center.

These regional education and training partners, and others not mentioned by name above, are doing much to align their efforts with the demands of our region's employers. Some of these efforts include:

- Worcester State University (WSU) is leading a multi-year effort to encourage interest among high school students in careers in K-12 education, with a particular focus on

encouraging students of color to consider this career path. It's grounded in their Education Department and led by WSU's Associate Dean of Education, Dr. Raynold Lewis, with special emphasis on identifying potential students from the Worcester Public Schools.

- WSU also has a long history in the area of teaching English to non-native speakers, and currently boast of three outlets in that regard: through the Latino Education Institute, WSU offers English language training and assistance to both students in the local school system and their parents; through their Intensive English Language Institute (and the WSU Graduate & Continuing Education division) that offers a collegiate-focused preparation program suitable for students and professionals; and a graduate level program for teachers of ESL.
- The Worcester Public Schools (WPS) is involved in numerous efforts as well to expand access to high quality CTE. These include:
  - Worcester Technical High School is expanding enrollment over the next two years to its maximum capacity of 1,500 students from the current enrollment of 1,400 students.
  - WPS is also expanding program offerings at their academic high schools. North High School will be offering Business Technology along with its existing Allied Health program. Burncoat High School will continue its Automotive program and Doherty its Engineering program. South High will continue its Diesel Technology and Automotive program and the new proposed facility will be designed for an expanded Diesel Technology program, Culinary program, and Early Childhood program.
  - Innovative Pathways proposal – WPS is designing four new CTE pathways: Allied Health, IT, Advanced Manufacturing, and Construction. These will be offered as two consecutive years of course work leading to an industry recognized credential in the pathway and include coursework that qualifies for dual enrollment credit. Included in these programs are college and career counseling and either a capstone project or summer internship. The programs are designed to run after our school day releases (proposed 2:30) for students at the comprehensive schools that would like Career and Technical Education. The courses will be part of the students high school day and it is projected that rather than it be an extension to their day it be part of their day and start later at their homeschool (i.e. start at 9:00 am rather than 7:00 am and end their day later at WTHS in their technical program). WPS is projecting approximately 120 students credentialed per year (15 students/pathway x 4 pathways x 2 cohorts/year), with expansion possible with additional funding availability.
  - Additionally, WPS is running an afterschool biotechnology program funded by The MA Life Sciences Center that provides training in the biotechnology field, including a summer intern experience, to 20 students annually from the district's four comprehensive high schools (Doherty, North, Burncoat, and South).

- WPS, in partnership with QCC is offering an evening certificate HVAC program for 15 students at WTHS. This program is currently a certificate program that QCC is looking to move to an Associates program in the near future, with possible Pell eligibility.
  - WPS is also looking to expand its Night Life (evening CTE program) to offer area residents access to additional in-demand, affordable, short-term CTE programs.
- QCC is working to offer new educational offerings and training modalities to meet anticipated vacancies in high priority industries (i.e. accelerated programs, “boot camp” fast track programming) and has existing programming that targets priority industries, such as Advanced Manufacturing Boot Camp and a Coding Boot Camp QCC is also working on the following:
  - Integrating employers into QCC’s Early College grant for Healthcare and Manufacturing career pathways.
  - QCC will develop and offer a new logistics certificate and develop a bridge program designed as a pathway from ESL to a career technical certificate and/or Associates Degree.
  - QCC will develop and pilot competency based programs in Manufacturing and IT that provide a pathway to high wage employment.
  - QCC will also leverage the Worcester Downtown Connect partnership model to secure funding and provide training and wrap around services to improve the readiness skills of the region’s labor force and serve as the foundation for providing the region with a training system that addresses their work force needs (the WDC is a partner organization that is committed to providing services in a collaborative, comprehensive model coordinated and delivered from a central hub with enhanced linkage to the core Downtown partners – Workforce Central, QCC, the Worcester Credit Union, Worcester Community Action Council, and Community Connections Coalition (WCCC)).
  - Additionally, QCC, in partnership with Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Associated Industries of MA, has received \$4 million investment from the Commonwealth to develop a state of the art photonics training center.
- Fitchburg State University offers a number of online only and evening program options at both the graduate and undergraduate level geared towards individuals who work full or part-time and need greater flexibility in their schedules. These programs are in areas such as business, nursing and education and align with regional workforce needs to prepare or advance students in their careers. FSU additionally offers several on-line undergraduate degree completion options including programs in business administration, RN-BS in Nursing and Interdisciplinary Studies to provide access to working adults who would like to finish their bachelor’s degree and apply their real-world experience to their education. The University also offers several other programs that align with the regional blueprint, these include:
  - Fitchburg State University’s Center for Professional Studies offers Department of Elementary and Secondary Education grant-funded professional development

courses for Para-educators. Courses are free for public-school Para-educators and also provide a small stipend upon successful completion of the course.

- Online and face-to-face Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure preparation workshops to aspiring teachers in our region, and has hosted a series of Cultural Competency courses for local educators and school administrators that helped them to improve their understanding of the depth and scope of various issues around race and culture, and how they impact public schools in the United States.
- The Nypro Learning Institute to offer online plastics technology courses to those who work in the manufacturing industry.
- An occupational/vocational education bachelors of science degree that is available to students at off-campus vocational technical school sites located across Massachusetts. The program offers up to 12 credits in recognition of the work experiences of the participating students through the University. Candidates may apply for the trade experience through the Life Experience Credit Assistance Program after completing 80 credits in the program. FSU also offers a 4 plus 1 Criminal Justice Program that allows students to earn a Bachelor's of Science in Criminal Justice and move on to Complete a Master's in Criminal Justice in one year. This program will lead to a certificate of completion from the Massachusetts Municipal Police Training Committee. These qualifications allow the student to apply for any Massachusetts municipal police department, or that of any other state with a reciprocal agreement. Students will complete a total of 30 credits: eight 3-credit courses that concentrate in criminal justice studies and a 6-credit practicum, with both skills and academic components.
- Additionally, Fitchburg State University and Mount Wachusett Community College are collaborating with Leominster High School, Fitchburg High School, Gardner High School and Sizer Charter School to expand on existing Early College pathways for students who are interested in health care, pre-engineering, information technology and other STEM careers. The initiative provides deep career exploration beginning in 9th grade, and students have the opportunity to gain 12 or more college credits, and even a credential, prior to high school graduation. All three regional chambers have agreed to support this initiative, which will help to ensure alignment with regional needs and priorities. Currently, 588 students are being served each semester via existing early college programming at MWCC; this collaborative will result in roughly 1,200 students/semester within 3 years
- Further programming available through MWCC includes:
  - Project Healthcare, which MWCC runs at Leominster High School and at Fitchburg High School, engages 161 students who are interested in the field of health care in intensive career exploration within the field of health care, and FHS students even have the opportunity to gain Certified Nursing Assistant Certification prior to graduation from MWCC's accredited program.

- MWCC partners with Montachusett Technical Vocational Regional High School to offer EMT courses and two biotechnology courses, preparing students for careers in these fields. EMT students may sit for the exam once they turn 18, and upon completion of the course.
- Career Services at MWCC has been aligned with the Brewer Center for Civic Learning & Community Engagement to ensure that volunteerism, service learning and internships are wrapped into the career preparation and resume/portfolio work for students. These experiences are noted on the official student transcript, including the total number of hours, and MWCC staff have worked with area employers to bring their attention to this important component that speaks to verified experience in our communities.
- Upward Bound Math and Science at MWCC provides intensive support for first-generation and low-income students interested in STEM in Athol Middle and High School, Gardner Middle and High School, Murdock Middle and High School, and Sizer Charter School. The program provides tutoring and mentoring during the school year, as well as field trips to colleges and other experiences that will support student exploration of different STEM careers. In addition, two intensive summer programs are run each year, one for Middle School students held at MWCC's Gardner Campus, and one for high school students held at Fitchburg State University. The summer high school program provides dual enrollment courses in addition to a deep exploration of STEM concepts and experiences in a residential setting over six weeks. Students in this federal program are supported all the way into their first year in college.
- MWCC has expanded its advanced manufacturing training capacity to encompass additional skill levels and certifications through funding from the U.S. Department of Labor. Short-term training is available through partnership with Middlesex, Northern Essex and North Shore Community Colleges and their associated WIBs in the areas of machine tool technology, electronics technology, automation and robotics, and quality systems. MWCC has developed and shared curriculum leading to American Society for Quality certification and Fanuc Robotics certification. These programs provide middle skills for employment and are aligned with college credit programs. Efforts are underway to establish registered apprenticeship opportunities at Devens and other area employers that encompass existing job skill requirements and identify related training necessary to advance.
- MWCC continues to explore partnerships and alignment with other educational institutions including Quinsigamond CC and Greenfield CC, as well as defining pathways to manufacturing engineering technology programs under development at UMass – Lowell and Northeastern University. Efforts to connect and align with area vocational, comprehensive, charter, and alternative schools are underway. The emphasis on this approach is identifying educational and career pathways that fit a range of student situations, ranging from "At-risk,



economically challenged” to “seeking pertinent and cost-effective higher education pathways.”

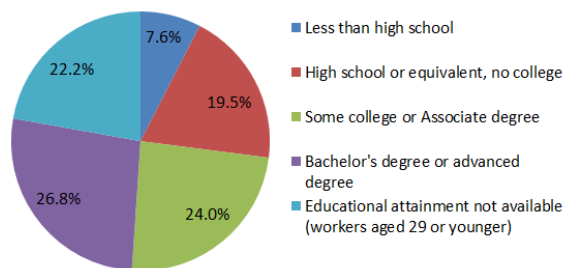
- MWCC is addressing the continuous educational needs of local Emergency Medical Staff by adding non college credit paramedic programs at their Devens Campus that meet state and national accreditation standards. EMS can now access training for Pre-hospital Trauma, Advanced Medical Life Support, Pediatric and Geriatric Advanced Life Support, EKG, Tactical Emergency Casualty Care and Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support.
- MWCC Devens is developing a non-credit Certified Nursing Aide program to speak to the high demand of CNA’s in the North Central Mass area, as well as not-for-credit training and education programs related to employment in cybersecurity and additional occupations where regional skills gaps exist.
- In addition to the Workforce Preparation efforts described above, MWCC is expanding to address needs related to professional development of existing employees. This will provide training opportunities for professionals in technical education, biopharmaceutical processing, facilities, sustainability, and other important local industries to maintain status, and to advance, within a chosen profession. This effort supports ongoing Workforce Training Fund efforts by providing additional technical resources for WTF projects.
- In addition, Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School has a fifty-year history of providing students in North Central Massachusetts with a high-quality vocational-technical education. In recent years, the school has made efforts to ensure programs are aligned to current industry standards and regional workforce needs, making decisions based on data provided by the local Workforce Investment Board and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. These resources, coupled with feedback from the school’s expansive Program Advisory Committee, confirm that the North Central region’s most viable industries are Healthcare and Manufacturing, and as a result, the school has made significant enhancements to both programs. These enhancements include:
  - Health Occupations program provides students in grades 9-12 with opportunities to earn a number of industry-recognized credentials, including Clinical Medical Assistant, Certified Nursing Assistant, CPR, and First Aid. In addition, during the students’ senior year, they are enrolled in a Dual Enrollment program, in collaboration with Mount Wachusett Community College. Students are able to take the Emergency Medical Technician Training program, earning 8 college credits at no charge, and are able to sit for the certification exam upon graduation.
  - Collaboration with manufacturers has resulted in revised curriculum, donated equipment and materials, and grant funding for updated certification programs. In March 2017 the school was awarded a \$435,000 Skills Capital Grant and was able to renovate the Machine Technology program. In addition to purchasing four new CNC machines, instructors and representatives from the L.S. Starratt

Company developed a plan to incorporate a Clean Room environment to the instructional setting, so students would graduate with the metrology and precision measurement skills necessary to be successful in this environment. Students in the school's Machine Technology program are now able to earn additional industry-recognized credentials, as the school is now the only high school in the nation to offer two levels of Starrett/NC3 certification and training in precision measurement.

- To ensure the school meets the needs of the community, our Continuing Education program has expanded to include a number of workforce readiness programs, with emphasis placed on healthcare and manufacturing. People that are unemployed, under employed, or those seeking new career pathways may enroll in any of the following programs offered during the evening at Monty Tech, developing skills and earning credentials needed to fill local workforce needs:

- EKG Technician
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Certified Nurse Aide
- Certified Home Health Aide
- Medical Assistant
- MACWIC Level I and Level II Certifications
- Welding I and II

**Central MA Region  
Workers by Educational Attainment**



Although our region boasts many education and training providers – for instance the Worcester metropolitan statistical area (MSA) graduated 2,232 college students in 2015 with degrees in business, management, finance, accounting, computer science, engineering, and legal services, the fact remains that far too many of our region's residents are not able to reach the first rung of the career ladder and are in need of additional education. This includes the development of

additional ABE and ESOL programming aligned with regional employer demand to help prepare our most vulnerable residents gain entry level employment and set the foundation for continued career training and academic coursework.

### **III. WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?**

#### **Criteria for Priority Industries and Occupations:**

The regional planning team adopted the State criteria for selection of priority industries and occupations:

- High Employer Demand
- High Demand and High Wage (4-5 Star Occupations)
- Talent Gaps
- Career Pathways

The regional planning team also developed additional criteria it felt were important to help us identify industries and occupations that might best fit with higher need job seekers to ensure they are not overlooked in this process:

- Strong Employer engagement (employers willing to become actively engaged in working with workforce system stakeholders)
- Low barriers to employment (employment opportunities that do not by their nature exclude residents with barriers to employment, such as those that exclusively seek bachelor's degrees or above)
- Alignment with high need job-seeker populations (employment opportunities that may be available to job seekers currently ready for employment or those with the ability to gain readiness with short term education, training and support)

#### **Priority industries by 2-digit NAICS code:**

The priority industries that the regional planning team selected are:

- Healthcare and Social Assistance (NAICS Code 62)
- Manufacturing (NAICS Codes 31-33)
- Transportation, Warehousing and Logistics (NAICS Code 48-49)

We selected these industries as priorities in our region primarily due to a high need for workers in these areas and the fact that they offer defined career pathways for residents in our region that face barriers to employment, such as the long-term unemployed, people lacking formal education credentials, criminal backgrounds, or limited English skills. It should be noted that Information Technology, while not selected as a priority industry, is selected as an occupational cluster due to the fact that jobs in this field span a variety of industries. Also, while these three

industries are named here as priorities, we recognize the need to balance our planning efforts with the need to be responsive to employer demand and the agility to take advantage of opportunities that emerge over the next four years which are not currently known.

The rationale for selecting the healthcare and social assistance as a priority industry in our region reflects the size of this sector and large volume of jobs, as well as the constant need employers within this industry state they have for trained workers. While the entry level jobs such as Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Personal Care Assistant (PCA), Home Health Aid (HHA) and direct care workers often suffer from lower pay due to low public reimbursement rates, with additional education and/or training, there are opportunities to move into higher-level positions. Our region is also desperate for the qualified human services staff necessary to fight the opioid crisis, such as Addiction Counselors, whose impact then helps others qualify to enter the workforce.

The largest education priority currently is for child development center teachers. Most centers now require at least 50% of their staff to have a minimum of an associate's degree. However, due to public voucher reimbursement rates, the starting salaries can be low. There is also a great need for Special Education Instructors and Applied Behavioral Analysis Specialists. These programs do require an advanced degree but starting salaries are generally between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per year. There are also numerous career pathways available for education jobs but most, if not all, will require further education.

For manufacturing, entry level jobs in demand include production workers such as assemblers and machine operators. Wages in manufacturing are slowly starting to rise but have been held down due to the increase in foreign competition. In manufacturing, there are plenty of career pathways available to entry-level workers. In order to move up the ladder, most of these positions will require some additional training such as a certificate or credential and a few may require an associate's degree. It is because of the opportunities to advance that manufacturing is a priority industry in our region. Similarly, we have selected transportation, warehousing and logistics due to large and steady employer demand for staff in these fields that typically have above average entry level pay (such as commercial drivers), low barriers for candidates, including many opportunities that are available to people with criminal backgrounds, and strong employer engagement.

#### **Regional priority occupations or occupational groups by SOC code:**

The priority occupation groups the regional planning team identified are:

- Healthcare Practitioners Occupations (SOC Code: 29-0000)
- Production Occupations (SOC Code 51-0000)

- Computer and Mathematical Occupations (SOC Code 15-0000)
- Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (SOC Code 53-0000)
- Construction Occupations Construction and Extraction Occupations (SOC Code 47-0000)

As noted previously regarding the selection of priority industries, choosing priority limited number of specific occupations poses the challenge of predicting an uncertain future and movements of multiple economic and social forces. While we offer strong rationale for the selected priority occupations, we recognize that being a demand-driven system means that other occupations may also need to become priorities for the region in the future.

The occupations we have chosen were identified based upon the State and regional criteria listed above. Healthcare practitioners form the largest employment sector in our region and CNA's, LPN's, RN's, as well as Pharmacy Technicians and Direct Care staff) are in extremely high demand as evidenced by the more than 8,000 separate jobs posted online (as tabulated by Burning Glass) last year in the Worcester MSA) Additionally, there are several high-quality training programs in our region that provide potential healthcare workers with the certification(s) required to enter or advance in this field. We have also learned from our DTA partners that many of their adult and Title 1 clients are interested in the healthcare field, so these opportunities are also a good fit for many of our region's more vulnerable job seekers.

Production occupations were selected due to the large employer demand our region faces as our existing manufacturing workforce enters retirement age. Among the specific jobs in this group, CNC machinists continue to be in demand throughout the manufacturing industry. As our manufacturers automate more and more of their production lines, they require trained operators to program and run the CNC machines. This is also a priority occupation where we are fortunate to have several strong training programs in our region that offer a certificate for CNC machining. There is a supply challenge due to many machinists who do not have training in the new technology thereby rendering much of their previous experience obsolete. Again, with the training support from our partners, we can re-train these workers to become CNC machinists, as well as increase the number of young people trained for entry into this field. The region has chosen Computer and Mathematic occupations due to the anticipated continued growth of employment in this occupational group which spans across a variety of industries, including healthcare, warehousing, retail, manufacturing, etc. Jobs in this occupational group include software developers which have a high demand -- there were more than 800 positions posted in the Worcester MSA last year as tabulated by Burning Glass, and this demand is anticipated to grow faster than average with strong wages (the mean advertised salary for software/web developers is more than \$108,000 annually).

Transportation and Material Moving occupations were identified in our region based upon the fact that there is strong demand, fairly low employment barriers (including opportunities for people with criminal records and or low formal education), and the opportunity to earn a living

wage. Among these are jobs as commercial drivers which offer in-demand employment opportunities with a strong salary. The starting salary for commercial drivers in the region is typically somewhere between \$19.00 and \$23.00 per hour, and there were more than 1,200 driver positions posted in the Worcester MSA last year as tabulated by Burning Glass. This high demand has been noted by local Commercial Driver License training providers who report their students often receive a job offer before he/she has even completed the training.

Our final occupational group selected is Construction and Extraction. Jobs in this group include the so-called “hard trades” such as electrical, carpentry, plumbing, roofing, and masonry. This group of occupations requires little formal education for entry and is often more flexible when reviewing candidates with past missteps, language barriers, or other challenges job seekers face. Workers in these trades are often affiliated with organized labor unions and employer-sponsored associations which offer apprenticeship opportunities leading to strong post-secondary education and long-term formal (and portable) industry credentialing, along with the chance to earn living wages.

#### **Credential Asset Mapping Tool:**

Please see attachment 4: Central MA Credential Asset Mapping Charts created to support the blueprint.

#### **Non-credential Asset and Gap Analysis:**

There are several existing assets in our region that we can use to meet employer demand for skilled workers. The number one complaint from businesses is that workers are lacking soft skills. We are fortunate that many education and training programs offer classes that address aspects of workplace readiness, including the *Bounce Program* offered at the Workforce Central Career Centers. Bounce is a week-long training workshop that helps job seekers gain confidence, learn how to utilize goal setting techniques and increase their employability skills. It also offers practical tools for combining seamless technical and literacy skills. Going forward, we are planning an expansion of the Bounce program to reach more job seekers. Another tool utilized within the region to help train soft skills is the Signal Success program from the Commonwealth Corporation. This comprehensive curriculum helps young people develop essential soft skills for future success. Additionally, we are looking at developing a standardized soft skills training program that could be made available to all regional partners, including high schools, post-secondary schools, and adult training programs.

The most essential assets in our region are our ESOL and ABE programs. With the influx of New Americans and workers who never finished high school, we are seeing an increased demand for

these services. Adult basic education classes help workers strengthen their academic skills and/or complete their high school equivalency. Even with the most basic of entry level jobs, it is nearly impossible to earn a decent wage without a high school diploma. The ABE program is a great way to get these job seekers the basic education they need to be successful. Because of the wait lists that currently exist in our region for ABE programs, we are also seeking to expand the use of the Career Readiness Initiative/ACT Work Keys resource to local training and community partners. This web-based assessment and learning management system can provide a scalable, cost-efficient tool for multiple venues across our region.

ESOL is our most in-demand program in the region. We have extensive waiting lists at all of our career centers and also at partner agencies who offer ESOL training. A large part of increasing demand for ESOL services is due to businesses telling us that it is difficult for them to hire workers who cannot understand or speak English. The language barrier creates additional concerns with giving direction, basic communication skills, supervision and safety. We are continually looking for ways to increase capacity for ESOL services in our region. This will allow us to help more job seekers enter the workplace and, in turn, increase economic development throughout our region.

### **Vision, Mission, Goals**

The regional planning team established the following vision statement for our efforts:

*The residents of Central MA have the skills needed to live prosperous, productive lives which support a strong regional economy.*

Mission Statement:

*Our mission as a collaboration of Central MA workforce stakeholders is to create a responsive and connected workforce system that prepares residents throughout their lives for living wage career opportunities by meeting the labor demand needs of our local businesses.*

*To support this mission, we as partners collectively agree to take ownership for actively engaging with our partners to integrate our services and develop programming that aligns with our region's workforce needs.*

The regional goals that the planning team has established are:

Goal 1: Align and coordinate regional Education, Workforce Development, and Economic Development systems.

- Convene Partnership leaders twice annually to review progress and regional labor market information, and to adjust programming and planning as necessary
- Interconnect existing workforce structures and membership between the partner systems to ensure real-time communication and programmatic alignment
  - Workforce Development Boards, Youth Councils, and Adult/Career Center subcommittees
  - Mass BizWorks regional team
  - Central and North Central WIOA Partner oversight groups
  - School industry advisory committees
- Collect business service performance and outcome data from all stakeholders to create a comprehensive regional “dashboard” report for public audience to highlight the value we collectively bring to businesses, including the development of qualified labor for the region’s employers

Goal 2: Provide industry with a training system responsive to workforce needs

- Create a real-time regional Mass BizWorks “response-team” to serve as the connection between businesses in need and system partners (see attachment 5 - Regional Demand-Driven Programming Development)
- Integrate business need feedback into regional Youth Council, Career Center, and partner program development processes
- Implement MA EOLWD Recruitment Solutions Initiative (RSI) referral process at all of the region’s MassHire Career Centers

Goal 3: Improve the foundational and work readiness/soft skills of our region’s labor force

- Increase exposure to soft skills in high schools, colleges, training programs and career centers through the creation and expanded access to career readiness training materials
- Increase career awareness activities in the region’s high schools
- Build stronger foundational computer skills for residents (both youth and adults)



#### Goal 4: Close the skills gap for priority industries and occupations

- Establish regional baseline measures for priority industries/ occupation goals and set target goals, including:
  - Decrease vacancy rate
  - Increase the number of CTE program placements
  - Improve the supply/demand ratio
  - Increase the business utilization percentage rate for MassBizWorks-affiliated partner services
  - Improve career center/WIOA Partner performance (number of businesses served, job orders, job referrals, and hiring)
- Expand Career Technical Education (CTE), both day and evening, for priority industries/occupations
- Increase exposure in secondary education to high priority industries
- Expand incumbent worker career advancement and Registered Apprenticeships for priority industries
- Increase contextualized ABE and ESOL programming that trains for high priority industries
- Expand articulation agreements between education and training institutions for priority industries/occupations

#### **Goal Achievement Timeline**

By 2018, we will:

- Formalize the regional blueprint Partnership Leadership group and begin holding bi-annual meetings
- Create and develop ESOL support and integration with needed training
- Develop a work-readiness framework for education and training programs
- Establish a regional Mass BizWorks team and a peer-to-peer platform
- Design, develop and implement a soft skills training program at our Career Centers
- Share blueprint with school districts and training providers within the region

- Plan for expanded CTE programming for priority industries/occupations
- Implement RSI operationally at all regional MassHire Career Centers
- Review baseline measures and establish target goals for key metrics, including:
  - The number of K-12 IT coding & cybersecurity programs
  - The number of students participating in career awareness activities in the region for priority industries/occupations
  - ABE, ESOL educational capacity
  - Secondary and post-secondary CTE educational capacity
  - Priority industry/occupational vacancy rates, supply-demand ratios, business utilizations rates (for MassBizWorks), and career center/WIOA Partner performance (number of businesses served, job orders, job referrals, and hiring)
  - Existing Registered Apprenticeship programs
  - The number (and dollar value) of incumbent worker trainings and participants in Workforce Training Fund projects

By 2020, we will:

- Expand IT coding and cybersecurity learning into a minimum of four new K-12 school districts
- Expand the number of students participating in career awareness activities in the region for priority industries/occupations by 10%
- Expand secondary and post-secondary CTE programming in priority industries and occupations, including training for incumbent workers, by 10%
- Expand ESOL educational opportunities, including ESOL contextualized for priority industries and occupations by a minimum of 10%
- Create a minimum of two new articulation agreements between education and training providers for all priority industries/occupations
- Create a regional business services dashboard

- Meet target goals established for business services for vacancy rates, supply-demand ratios, business utilizations rates (for MassBizWorks), and career center/WIOA Partner performance (number of businesses served, job orders, job referrals, and hiring)
- Establish at least one new Registered Apprentice program in the region's priority industries

By 2022, we will:

- Expand IT coding and cybersecurity learning into a minimum of eight new K-12 school districts
- Expand the number of students participating in career awareness activities in the region for priority industries/occupations by 20%
- Expand secondary and post-secondary CTE programming in priority industries and occupations, including training for incumbent workers, by 20%
- Expand ESOL educational opportunities, including ESOL contextualized for priority industries and occupations by a minimum of 20% and establish ESOL classes contextualized for all priority industries/occupations
- Establish a minimum of four new CTE programs that are Pell Grant eligible for all priority industries/occupations
- Create a minimum of three new articulation agreements between education and training providers for all priority industries/occupations
- Meet target goals established for business services for vacancy rates, supply-demand ratios, business utilizations rates (for MassBizWorks), and career center/WIOA Partner performance (number of businesses served, job orders, job referrals, and hiring)
- Establish at least two new Registered Apprentice programs within the region's priority industries

#### **IV. HOW DO WE GET THERE?**

The regional planning team has identified several strategies to achieve our goals. These include:

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible entity</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>Sharing accountability through a Regional Partner Leadership Team (RPLT)</b>	All (CMWIB to serve as convener)	June 30, 2018
<b>Development of baseline measures and key metrics and a public outcomes dashboard report to measure our progress</b>	RPLT	June 30, 2018
<b>Creation of articulation agreements between educational and training institutions</b>	K-12, higher-ed, other training partners	Two established by Jan. 1, 2020; four by Jan. 1, 2022
<b>Expanding contextualized ABE and ESOL programming for priority industries/occupations</b>	ABE and ESOL provider partners	Increase of 10% by Jan. 1, 2020; and 20% by Jan. 1, 2022
<b>Alignment of CTE programs with industry needs and expansion of off-hours programming at our Vocational Technical high schools and other training facilities</b>	CMWIB, K-12, higher-ed, other training partners	Increase of 10% by Jan. 1, 2020; and 20% by Jan. 1, 2022
<b>Creation of apprenticeships across priority industries</b>	CMWIB	Create 1 new RA by Jan. 1, 2020; and 2 new RA's by Jan. 1, 2022
<b>Expansion of a regional Mass BizWorks peer-to-peer team and real-time online platform to support their work</b>	MassBizWorks	June 30, 2018
<b>Utilizing and inter-weaving existing structures and frameworks to support our work</b>	RPLT	June 30, 2018

#### **Continuous Communication**

We plan to meet with our entire regional planning group twice per year. This will help us identify changes in industry trends and be able to make changes in our course direction, if needed. We will continue to have regular communication with our core team through quarterly meetings to assess progress and needs. We will also use our regional workforce development board meetings and the previously noted existing regional committees and workgroups (including WIOA partner groups, the Mass BizWorks regional team, and school industry advisory committees) to actively engage employers, share relevant information, and drive new programming.

### **Shared Measurement Systems**

In order to ensure that we, as a region, are consistently making progress toward a shared vision, we will utilize updated data from the State and from our partner sources. Some of the data that we will look at will include:

- Enrollment, graduation, and employment by education/training program
- Employer vacancy rate by industry
- Supply/demand ratio
- Increase the business utilization percentage rate
- Improve career center/WIOA Partner performance (number of businesses served, job orders, job referrals, and hiring)

### **Other Shared Strategies**

Our two workforce development areas have a strong history of partnership and shared service delivery. This includes our previous work on the implementation of a multi-million dollar federal grant to promote Science, technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) through our career centers and the creation of a virtual STEM Career Center (STEMPower). This project earned the Workforce Solutions Group Partnership of the Year Award in 2009. Other projects we currently collaborate on or share programs between our two regions that may be utilized in support of this blueprint include:

- STEM K-16 pipeline membership
- YouthWorks Summer and Year-Round employment
- WIOA Youth
- School to Career Connecting Activities
- National Emergency Grant and Trade Adjustment Act grants

### **Mutually Reinforcing Activities**

Our partners have pledged to offer significant support for accomplishing the goals of this regional blueprint. These include:

#### **Education:**

- Create/expand CTE programs for priority industries/occupations (high school, afterschool & evening, college); including Pell-eligible programs
  - It is anticipated that MWCC, QCC, WSU, and FSU alone will create 20+: new training programs in the priority industries/occupations between

now and 2022, including fast-track (boot camp) style programs and competency-based programs.

- MWCC has identified up to 14 new programs that may be launched aligned with priority industries/occupations.
  - QCC will also develop a bridge program designed as a pathway from ESL to a career technical certificate and/or Associates Degree.
  - WSU: has re-launched its Center for Industry and Enterprise to foster closer connectivity with priority industries/occupations.
  - FSU, in partnership with MWCC and area high schools will develop a STEM careers pathway program to increase the number of students going on to STEM-related college and employment.
- Workforce Development:
    - Utilize demand-driven approach at region's MassHire Career Centers – increase referrals to job openings and training in priority industries/occupations
    - Increase soft-skills training for career center customers
    - Prioritize the priority industries/occupation for WIOA Youth, YouthWorks subsidized youth employment placements, and other youth career development programs
    - Increase services to businesses in priority industries/occupations, including referrals to Workforce Training Fund and other resources
- Economic Development:
    - Increase the number of business referrals from ED to workforce in priority industries/occupations
    - Align business services/support data between ED and workforce systems – establish data sharing platform

## **Concluding Remarks**

“Workforce Boards are in the investment business; we invest in “human capital,” and the benefit is down the road. It is high risk, and there are many ways to do it wrong.”

-- Paul Harrington

“It's tough to make **predictions**, especially about the **future**.” – Yogi Berra

It is obviously difficult to predict future employer needs. Nonetheless, it is imperative that our systems align around a shared vision and set of priorities to work from. While taking a demand-driven approach is, by its nature reactive, planning is inherently proactive, and the balance between these two concepts is what this blueprint represents. We intend to create a framework between our three systems (education, workforce, and economic development) that is at once responsive and agile, while also walking firmly in a set direction.

In order to achieve that balance, and success there are a number of additional considerations. These include:

- State Support will be critical. Support from the Commonwealth will be necessary to gather the necessary data to measure our progress toward meeting our impact goals and for steering our systems forward.
- The importance of available funding cannot be overstated; goals are difficult to predict without a clear understanding of resource availability - achieving growth would not be realistic if potential budget cuts materialize. Therefore, given the unpredictability of public resources, we need to look for additional sources of support, including potential support from business partners.
- Major obstacles to job seeker success and workforce-related issues are beyond our direct control (such as transportation, immigration policy, governmental healthcare and employment/employer policies, and job seeker work preferences to name but a few). It is difficult to influence, predict, or address the many issues that affect workforce development success. Strong partnerships beyond our three systems may help play an important role.

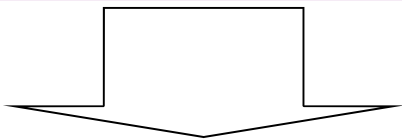
The CMWIB and NCMWIB wish to thank the many public and private partners involved in the creation of this blueprint. Their time and expertise helped drive the planning process forward and keep our efforts on track. We look forward to working closely with these partners and beyond as we implement the strategies outlines in this blueprint to achieve our collective goals.



# Workforce Skills Cabinet—Regional Workforce Blueprint Plan

## Goals

- 1. Build shared understanding of the planning region’s labor market supply and demand conditions
- 2. Build shared understanding of anticipated changes and challenges in the region’s ability to meet labor market needs
- 3. Build consensus around priority sectors and occupations, ensuring the process gives full consideration to wages and career pathways within priority sectors and occupations
- 4. Create shared understanding of the outcomes each region wants to achieve in relation to priority sectors and occupations
- 5. Identify existing assets and regional collaborations to be leveraged
- 6. Identify role and understand strengths/capacity of each regional planning group sector to achieve outcomes.
- 7. Develop consensus around a clear strategy and work plan to achieve agreed-upon regional outcomes



**Local Workforce Board Strategic Plan**

- Local workforce goals, aligned with multi-region plan
- Local strategies for addressing goals

**Local WIOA Partner MOU**

- MA DCS, MA DTA, MA DUA, MassRehab, ABE Providers, Job Corps
- Coordination of local partner service delivery & sharing of resources

**Educational Planning:**

K-12; Higher Ed; ESL; ABE

- Capital Skills Grants
- Chapt. 74 programs
- College & Career Pathway grants
- STEM Pipeline grants

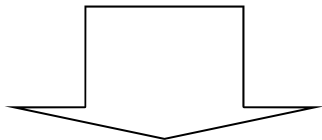
**Economic Development Planning:**

Regional CEDS; MOBD

- Urban Agenda grants
- Workforce Housing projects

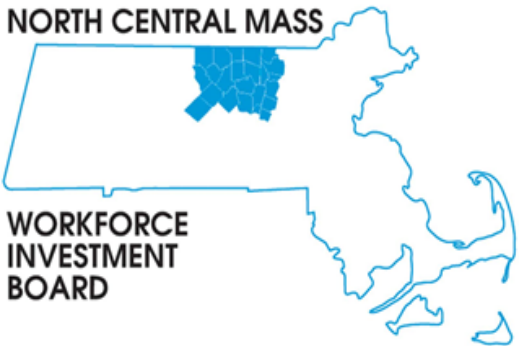
**State Workforce Planning:**

- WCTF
- WTFP
- New Pathway/Sector/Population projects



**Local Annual WIOA Plan**

- Specific uses of WIOA dollars
- Coordination with career Center, WIOA Youth activities, & Career Pathway Efforts



# Workforce Skills Cabinet Central MA Blueprint Business Survey Results

Central MA

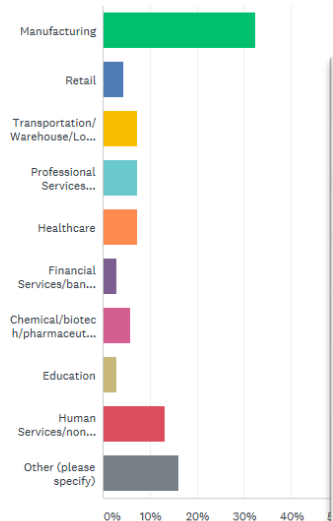
*Oct. 18, 2017*

# Survey Results

Electronic survey sent out via email to 400+ employers through the CMWIB, NCMWIB, and partners (including MassMEP and career center business customers), 70+ responses

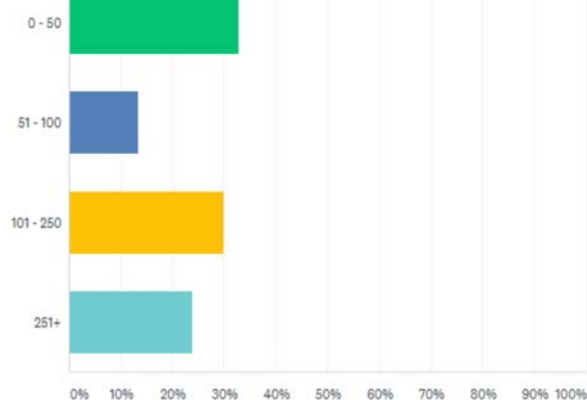
What Industry is your business/organization?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 0



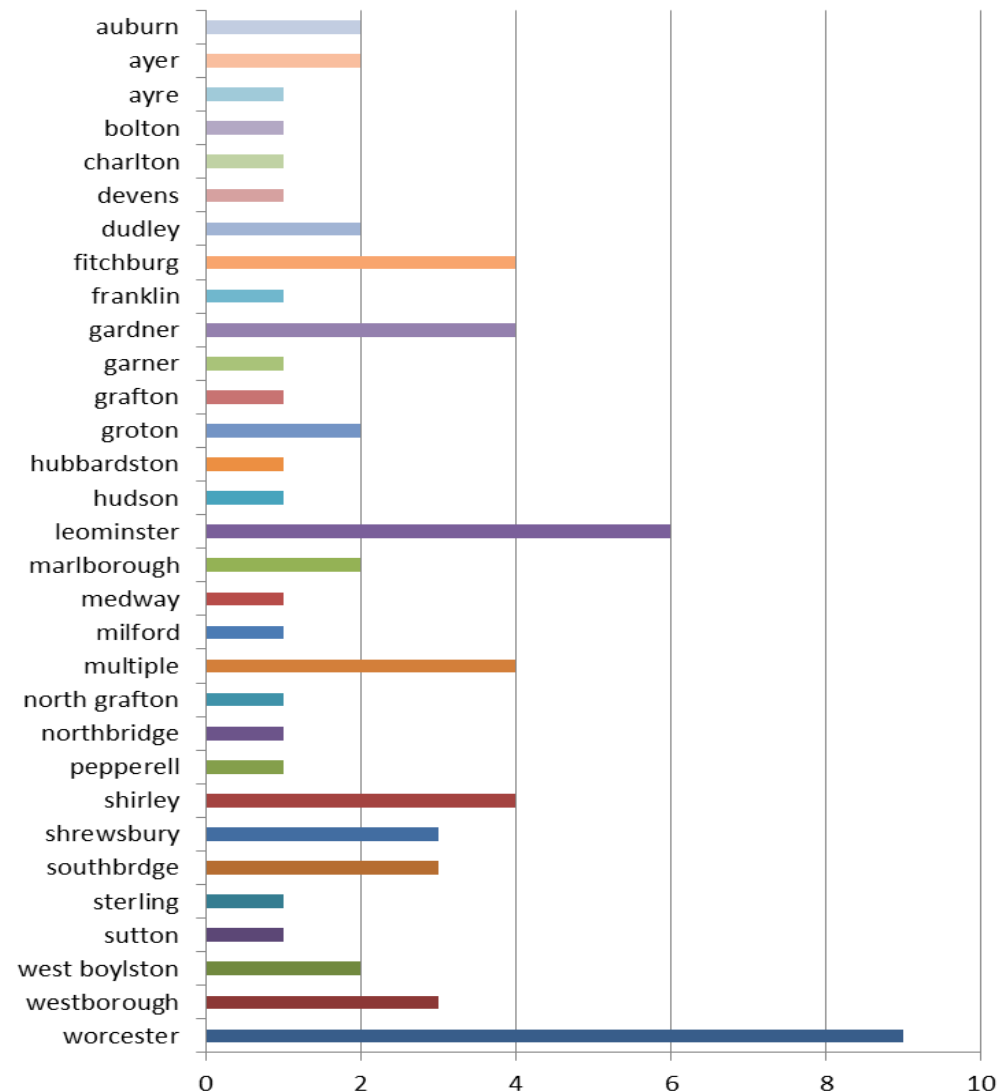
How many employees do you have?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 1

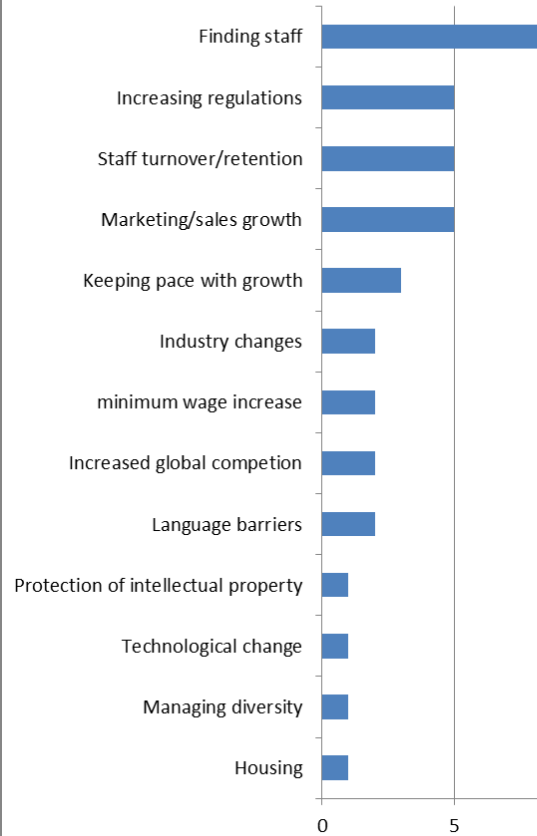


Other includes:  
construction, hospitality,  
fabrication, environmental,  
security, B2B services

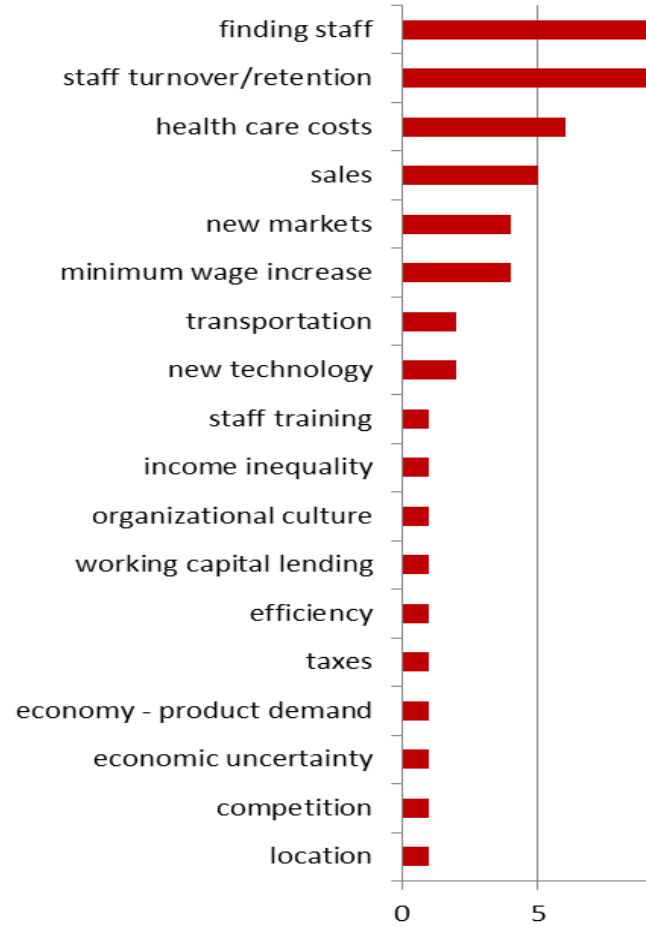
Respondents by Location



## Top Challenges



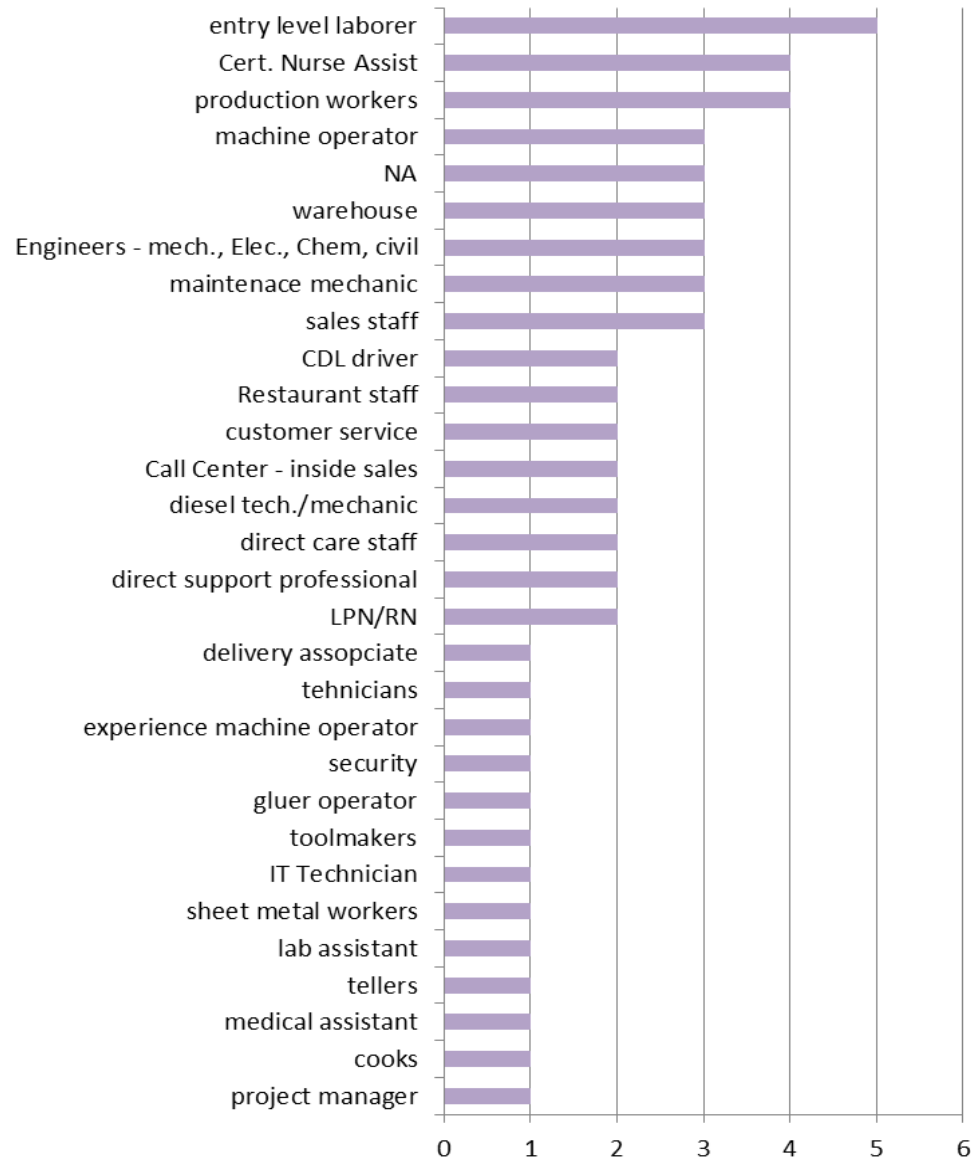
## Second Challenge



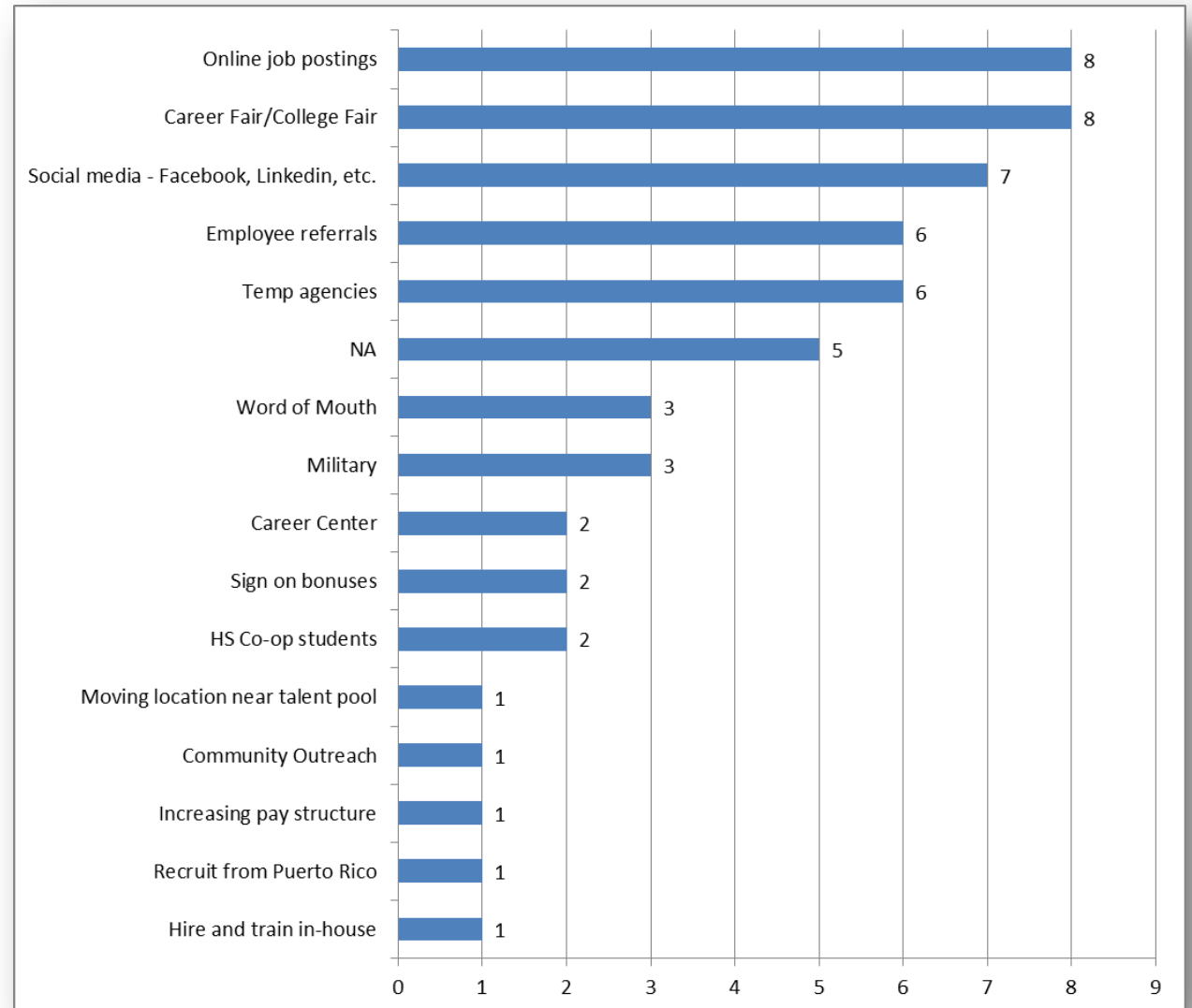
## Third Challenge



## Which of your occupations (if any) are facing significant employee/candidate shortages?



## If you have a challenge filling vacancies, what strategies have you successfully employed?

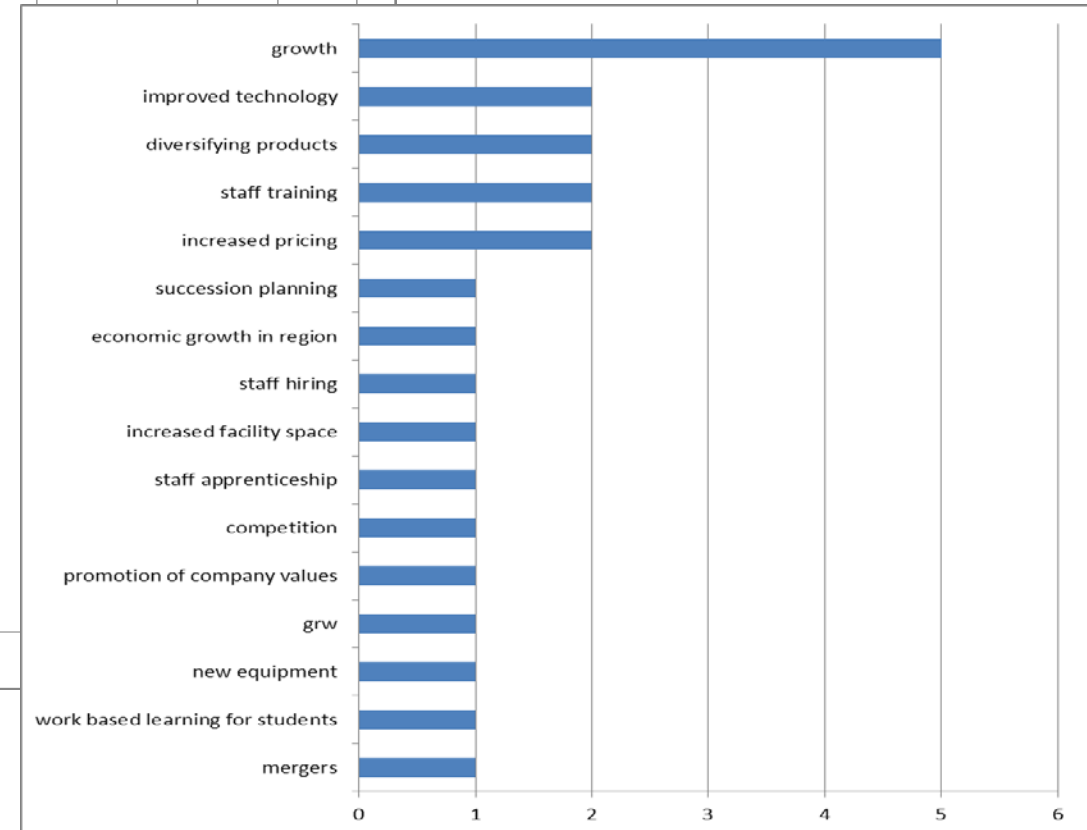
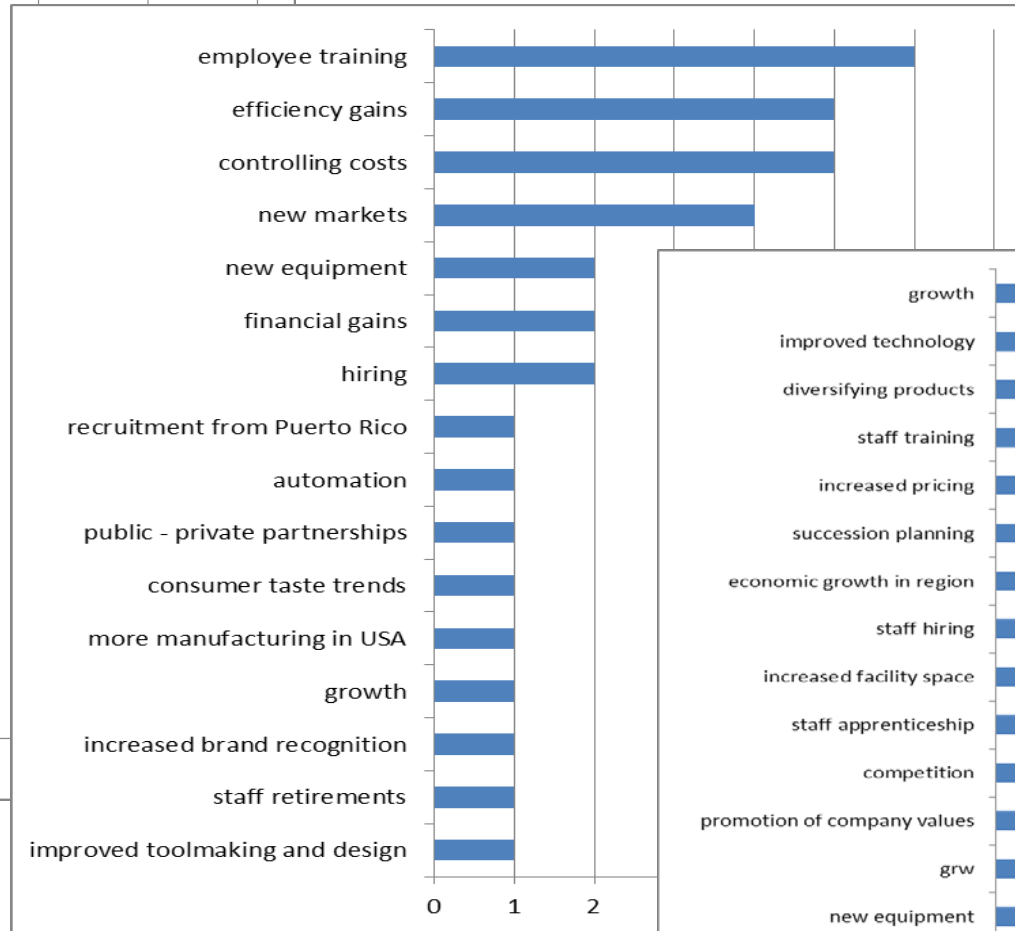
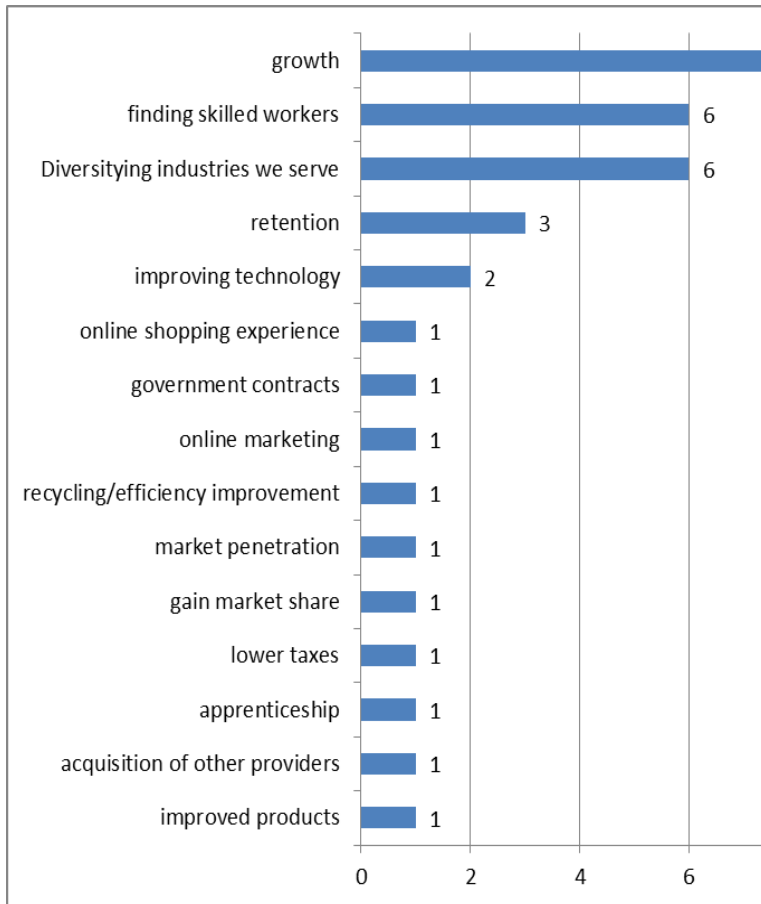


# What partnerships or strategies have you pursued that were not ultimately successful?

## Why?

- Job Boards and print ads - too many applicants without the required skills (several replies)
- Staffing firms - don't produce enough quality candidates
- WIB/Career Center job fair --The resumes collection were almost completely irrelevant to the positions we had.
- Recruiting via Veterans Inc. No resumes are generally submitted for our openings.
- Career Centers - at appears that clientele is entry level; not enough qualified candidates
- job fairs are a valiant effort but generally a waste of time. it's too broad of a selection not focused a cattle call.
- Agencies, Internet, Job Fairs - Lack of people that want to work
- Paper ads have not resulted in hires
- Tried state program to offer CDL to unemployed, participants did not want to do physical labor involved in waste collections
- There isn't a pipeline of skilled workers. Available labor does not have the skills and motivation to learn new skills.
- Mass MEP-graduates at lower level than our needs
- Sign on Bonus, employee referral bonus - no significant impact on recruitment
- longer probationary period - they still can't show up to work every day
- Working with some community organizations - may not have provided job coaching as promised or candidates were not qualified.
- hoping hire veterans or released prisoners
- Partnering with multiple staffing agencies - causes confusion for supervisors
- Ziprecruiter - low quality candidates

# What are the top three opportunities for your business/organization over the next 5 years?



# Challenges facing our businesses

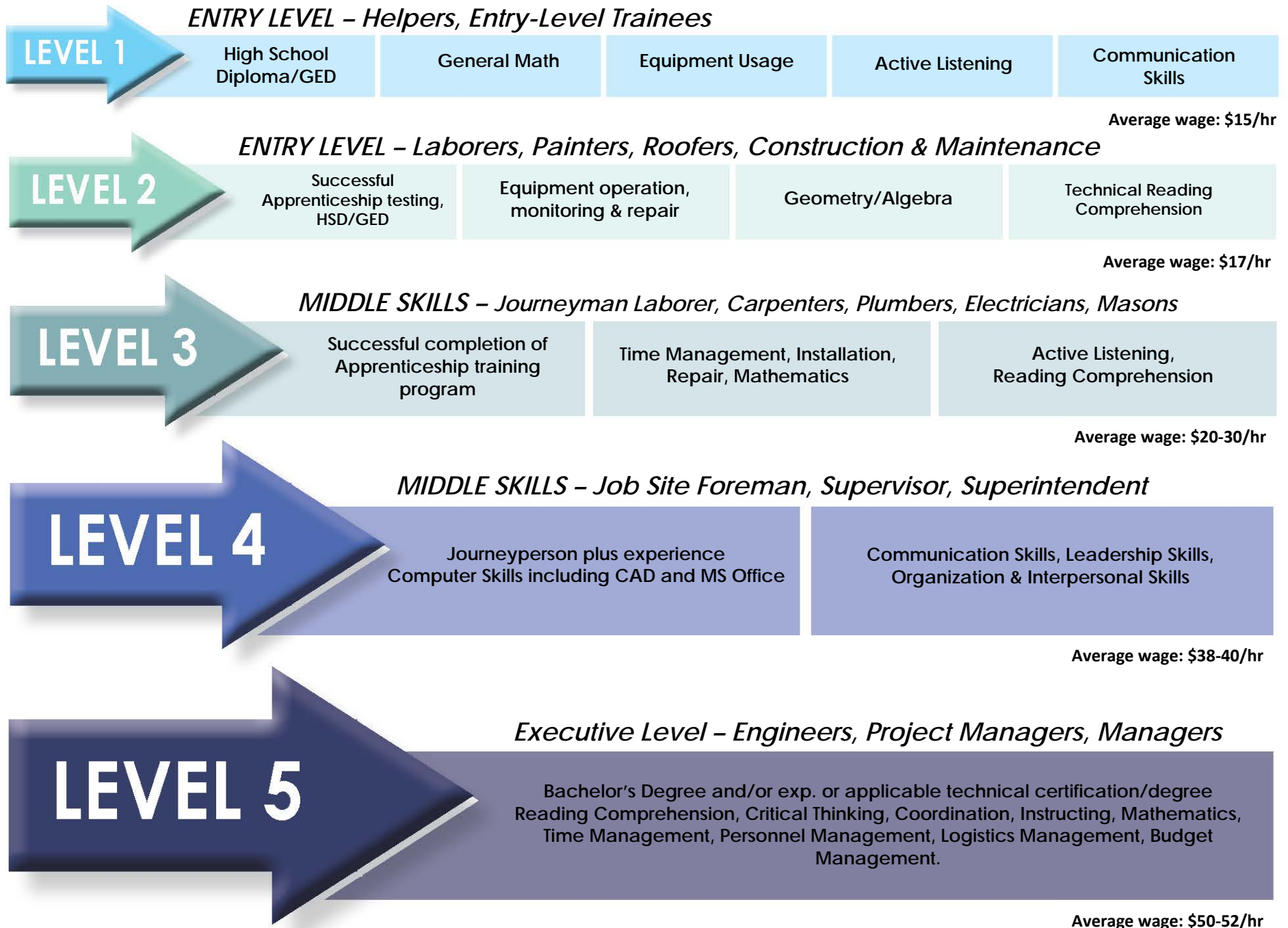
According to our data, research, and engagement with employers, we understand that the top 3 challenges facing regional businesses are...

- 1. Finding & retaining talent*
  - 2. Meeting regulations (including min. wage, healthcare)*
  - 3. Finding new customers/markets*
- Also: Increased competition, facility space, and changing technology*

*Talent concerns: finding skilled workers (mixed technical occupations, “soft skills,” and English language proficiency), wage/salary expectations, and transportation.*

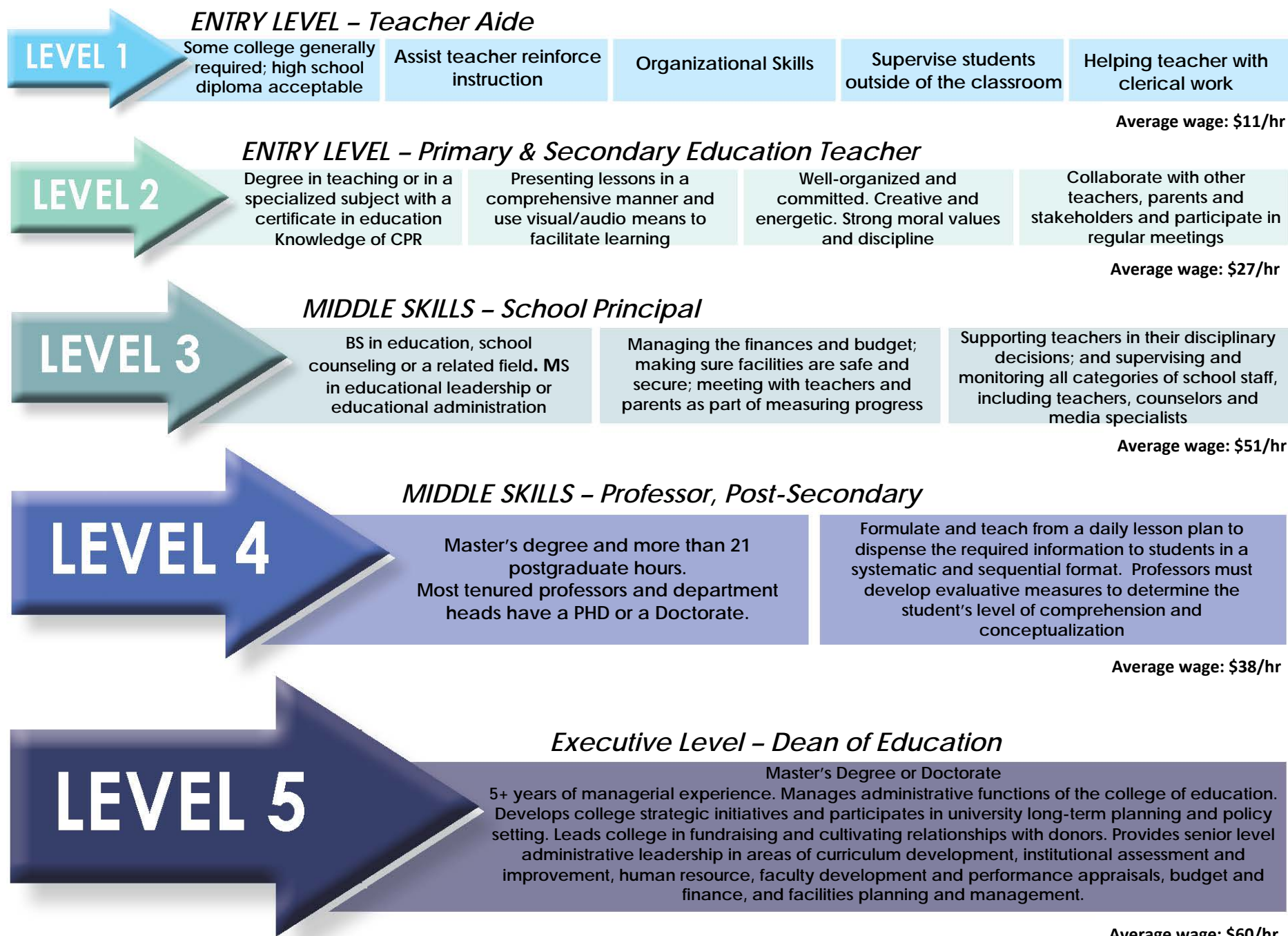


# Construction



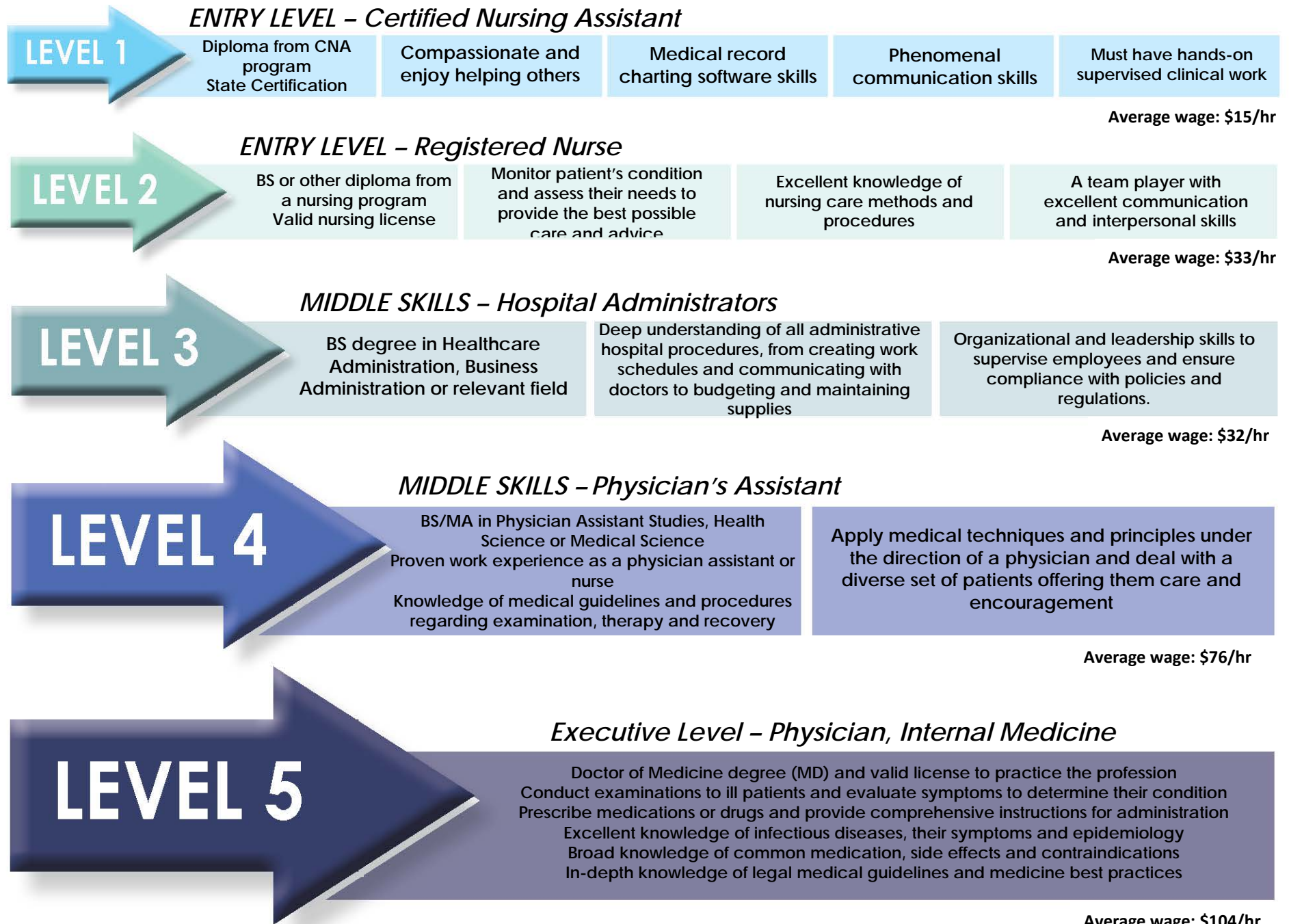
Note: All salary data taken from Salary.com for Worcester, MA area.

# Education



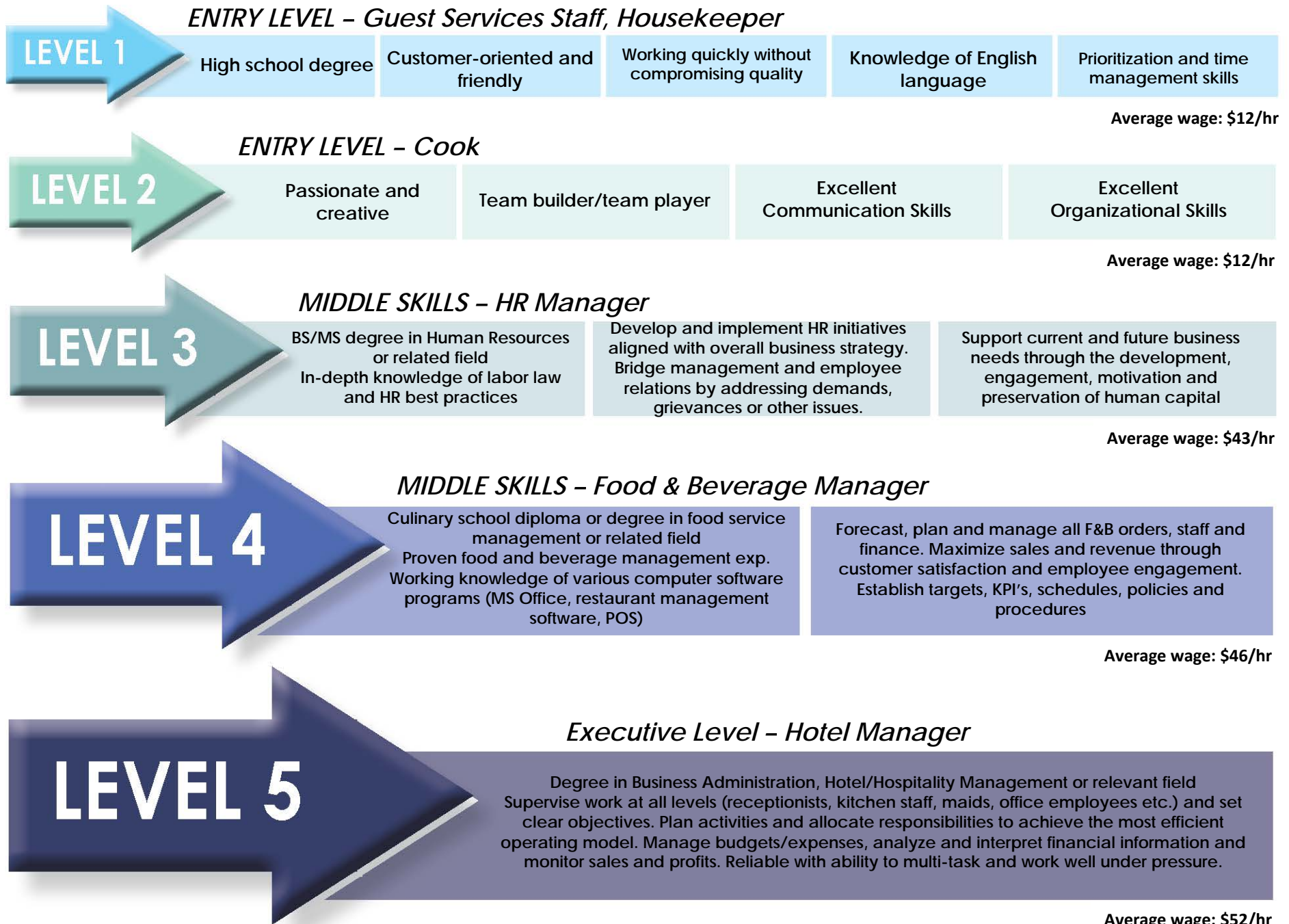
Note: All salary data taken from Salary.com for Worcester, MA area.

# Healthcare



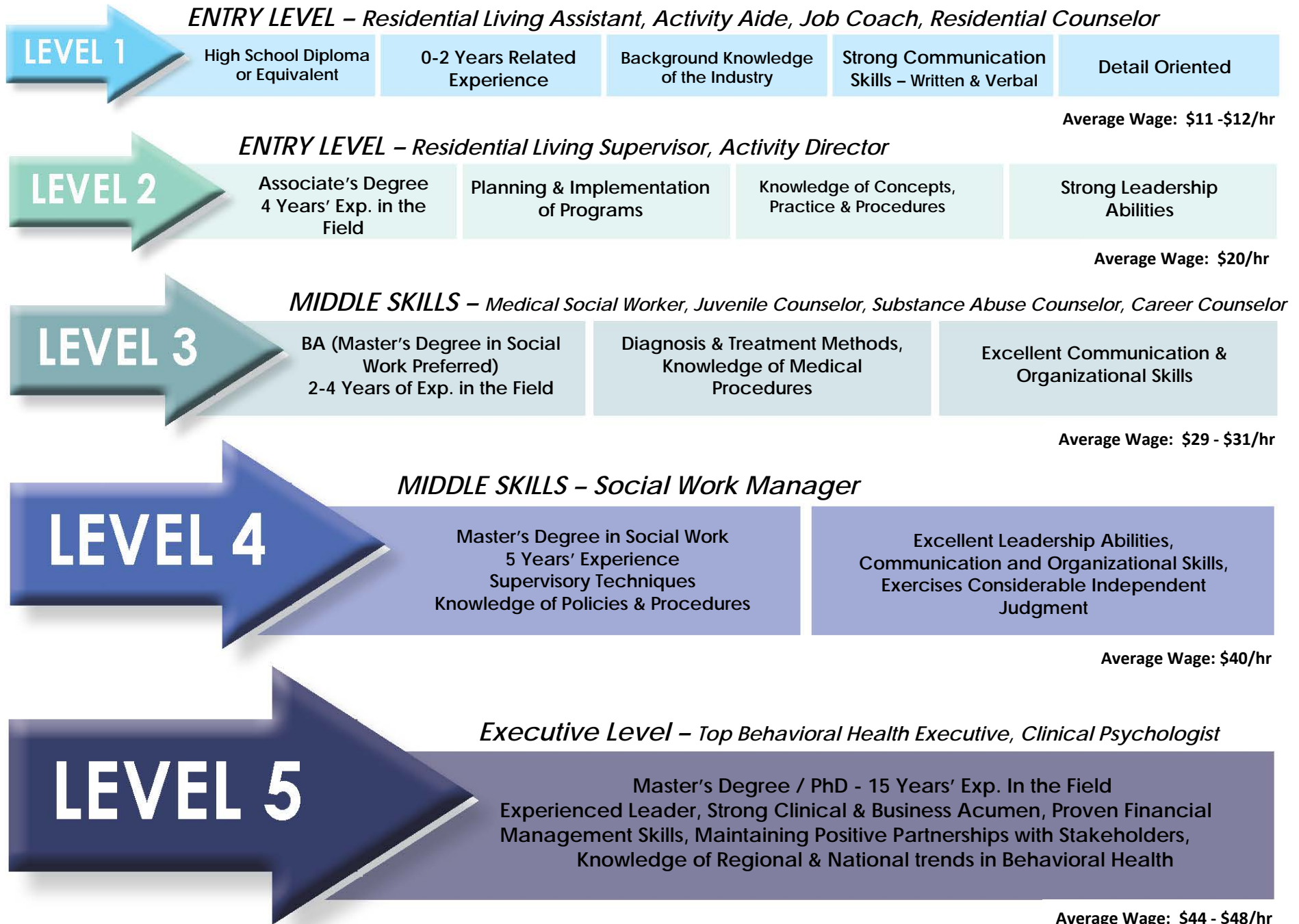
Note: All salary data taken from Salary.com for Worcester, MA area.

# Hospitality



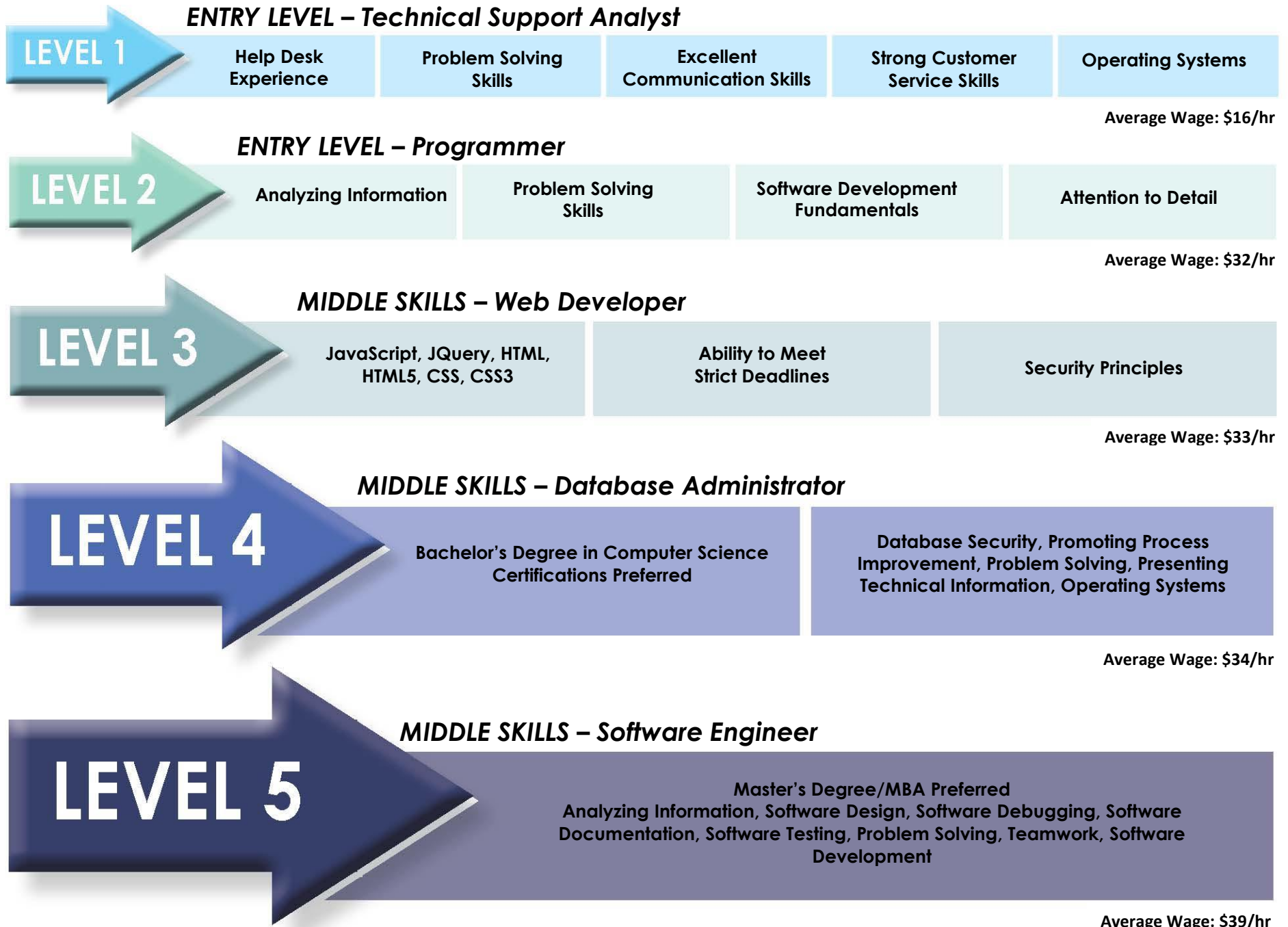
Note: All salary data taken from Salary.com for Worcester, MA area.

# Human Services



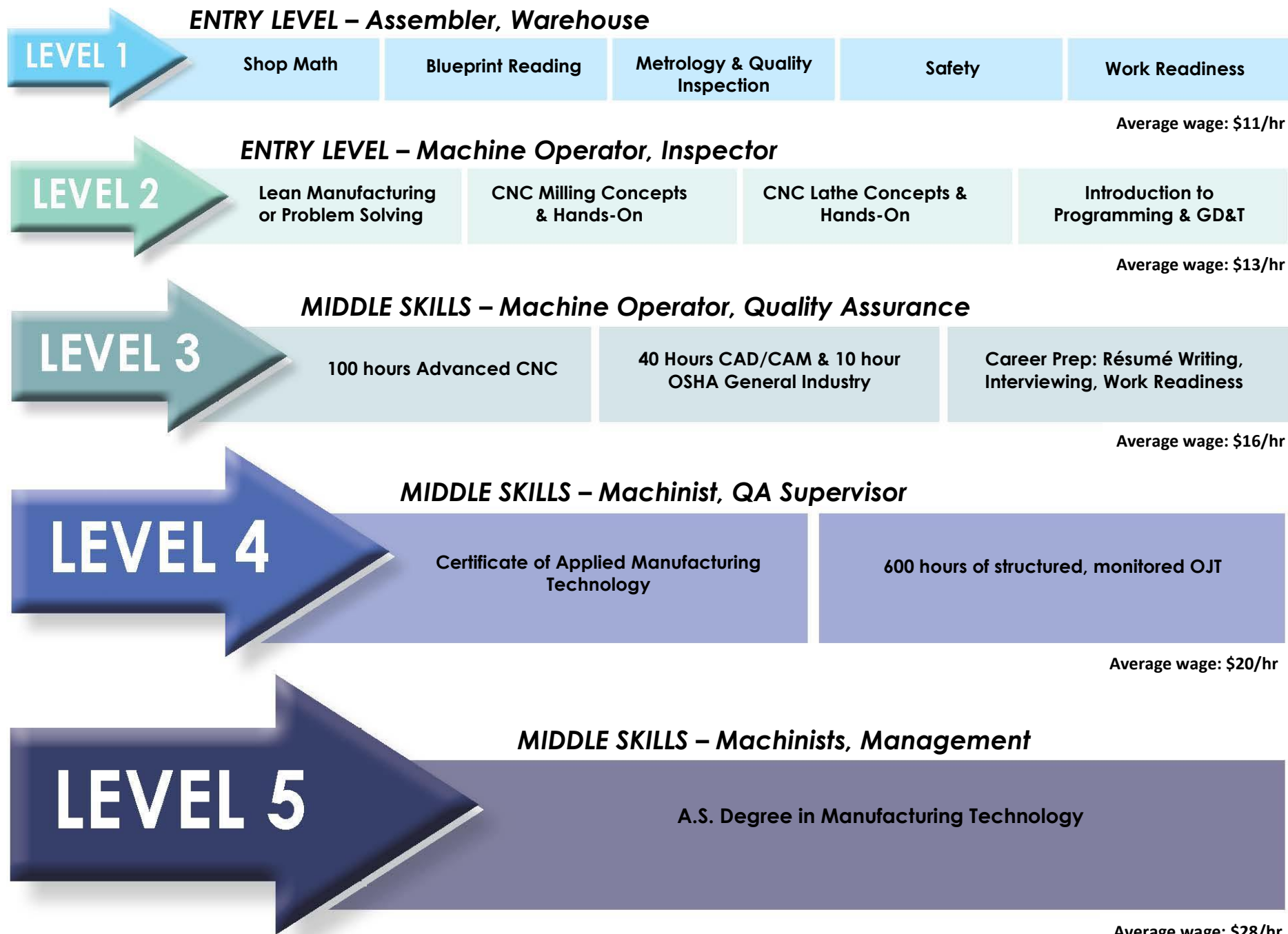


# Information Technology



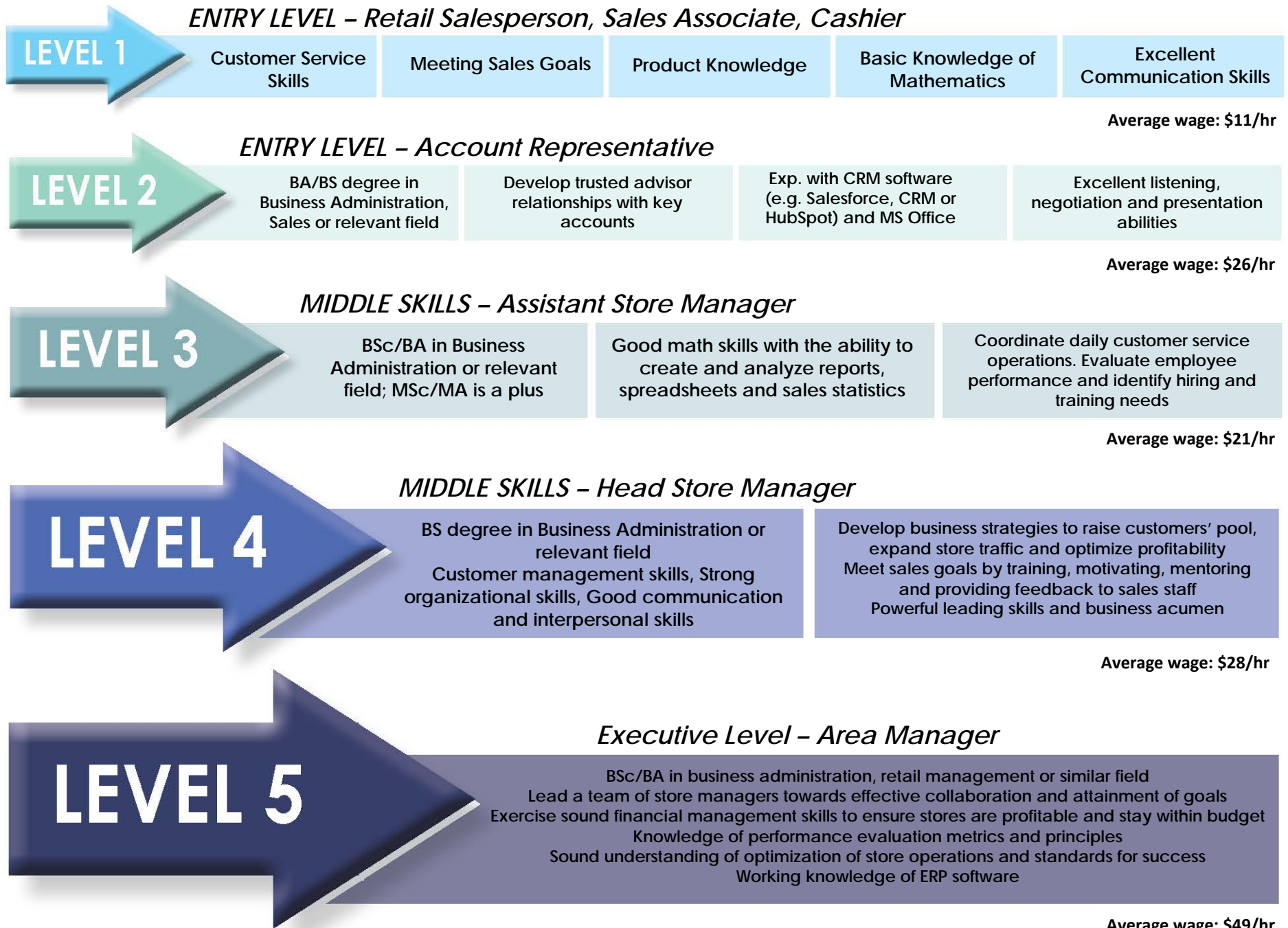
Note: All salary data taken from Salary.com for Worcester, MA area.

# Manufacturing (MACWIC\* Model)



Note: All salary data taken from Salary.com for Worcester, MA area. \*Information courtesy of the Manufacturing Advancement Center Workforce Innovation Collaborative

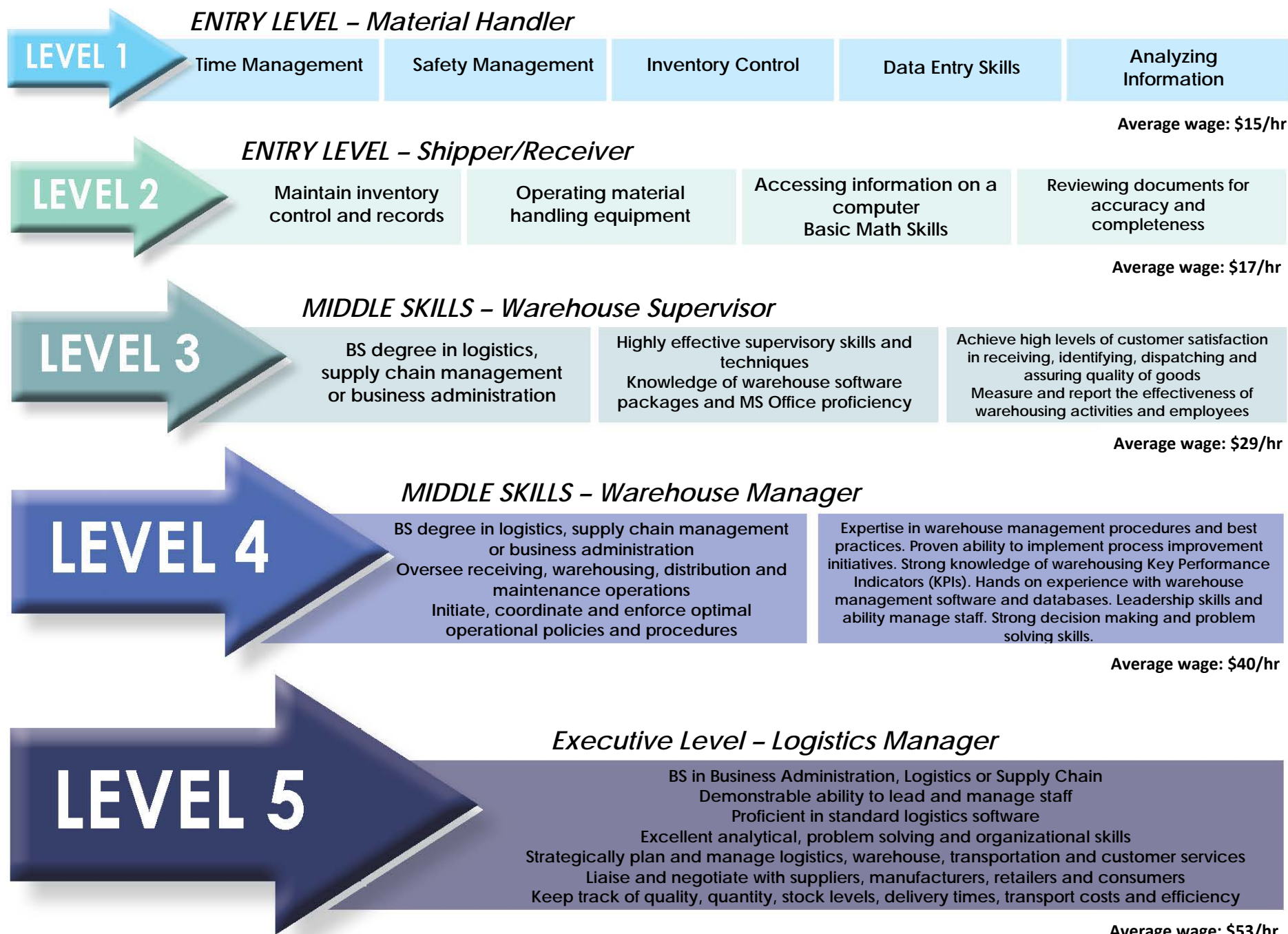
# Retail



Note: All salary data taken from Salary.com for Worcester, MA area.



# Transportation, Distribution & Logistics



Note: All salary data taken from Salary.com for Worcester, MA area.

## Attachment 4: Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Registered Nurse (RN), 29-1141
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	BA Degree Plus License (NCLEX) National Council Licensure Examination
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	Anna Maria College - 12 Fitchburg State University – 61 MCPHS University – 207 Mount Wachusett Community College – 79 Quinsigamond Community College – 107 University of Massachusetts Medical School Worcester – 44 Worcester State University – 43
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	Basic learners could matriculate by starting as an Certified Nurses Aid, or Home Health Aids then move on to a pathway to an LPN (License Practical Nurse)
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	Classroom and practical experience
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	Yes
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	State College tuition rates
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	Yes RN's are in high demand in our region and most medical institutions require RN's to have their Bachelor's degree
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	RN's are at the top of the stack
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	Yes RN's are recognized nationally
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	These are credit programs
<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	There is a current shortage and that shortage is projected to grow.

## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Pharmacy Technician, 31-9095
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	Award of less than 1 academic year, Degree, Certification
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	Anna Maria College – 0 Monty Tech evening – 15 Quinsigamond Community College – 9
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	Yes, students participate in an externship
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	This program may be completed 50% or more online through QCC
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	Degree programs are Pell eligible
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	QCC - \$400
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	Yes, credential is recognized by local employers
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	A Pharmacy Technician can go on to become a Lead Technician or Pharmacist
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	Once an individual is nationally certified, they can work in any state in the US
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	Credit
<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Working to better connect

## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Licensed Practical Nurse, 29-2061
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years; National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) and graduation from a board certified nursing program
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	Assabet Valley Regional Technical School – 34 Blackstone Valley Voc. Regional School – 23 Mount Wachusett Community College – 41 Southern Worcester County Reg. Voc. School District (Bay Path) – 21 Quinsigamond Community College – 56 Monty Tech Regional High School and Worcester Regional Vocational High School
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	LPN's are required to have work experience. Basic learners would matriculate through Certified Nurses Aid or Home Health Aid programs
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	Classroom instruction plus practical experience on site in a Healthcare facility
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	Degree programs are Pell eligible
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	Fee's vary; on average \$212 per credit hour at MWCC
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	Yes LPN is a nationally recognized credential
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	Yes LPN's can earn a Bachelor's Degree and become BSN's and RN's
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	Yes this is a nationally recognized credential
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	Credit

<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	LPN's are in demand and there are shortages, improved marketing strategies could have an impact.
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## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers - 53-3032.00
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Class A
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	Worcester Jobs Fund (WJF): 2 individuals
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how do basic learners matriculate?</i>	Yes
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	Training consist of classroom occupational training and hands-on over the road driving administered by a licensed and accredited training provider. Participants are prepared to take the written exam for the learners permit (required in order to get a license) and the CDL Class A road test through the MA Registry of Motor Vehicles. Participants must also pass vision test as a part of the learner's permit and a Department of Transportation physical for the road test. This permit is a pre-requisite to obtaining CDL Class A. Additional work-readiness training and placement services are provided.
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	No
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	\$30 for the permit test, \$35 for the road test and \$30 for the CDL endorsement, renewable every 5 years. A required background check will also cost \$86.50. An approximate training cost which includes all fees, books/supplies and classroom/road training is \$4,000 per participant. The Worcester Jobs Fund provides training and funding for the permit and road test free

		to eligible qualified applicants.
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	Through the RMV employers are able to validate and confirmed the permit and license credentials.
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	Yes. Individuals can obtain additional endorsements on their license such as air breaks, hazmat, pig (attached forklift), tankers and doubles/triples (pulling 2 or 3 trailers).
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	A CDL A is similar to other driver's licenses and allows the driver to operate in other states (21 years or older) as long as the license is valid.
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	Non-credit
<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Although formalized training is not required to obtain a permit and take the road test, the costs and required equipment (tractor-trailer) associated with testing mandate individuals invest in some form of training. Presently there are no CDL training providers permanently established in the Central MA region. The nearest schools are in Chicopee and Avon, MA (more than 55 miles away from Worcester). Since there is a clear skills gap between job seekers and employers in our region that will continue to grow if mechanisms are not put in place such as an established training center for CDL Class A.

## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity - 53-3021.00/ Bus Drivers, School or Special Client - 53-3022.00/Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers - 53-3033.00
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Class B
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	Worcester Jobs Fund (WJF): 15 individuals
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	Yes
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	Training consist of classroom occupational training and hands-on over the road driving administered by a licensed and accredited training provider. Participants are prepared to take the written exam for the learners permit (required in order to get a license) and the CDL Class B road test through the MA Registry of Motor Vehicles. Participants must also pass vision test as a part of the learner's permit and a Department of Transportation physical for the road test. This permit is a pre-requisite to obtaining CDL Class B. Additional work-readiness training and placement services are provided.
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	No
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	\$30 for the permit test, \$35 for the road test and \$30 for the CDL endorsement, renewable every 5 years. A required background check will also cost \$86.50. Approximate training costs which includes all fees and training is \$4,000 per participant. The Worcester Jobs Fund provides training and funding for the permit and road test free



		to eligible qualified applicants.
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	Through the RMV employers are able to validate and confirmed the permit and license credentials.
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	Yes. Individuals can obtain additional endorsements on their license such as passenger and school buses.
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	A CDL Class B is similar to other driver's licenses and allows the driver to operate in other states (21 years or older) as long as the license is valid.
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	Non-credit
<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Although formalized training is not required to obtain a permit and take the road test, the costs and required equipment (vehicle) associated with testing mandate individuals invest in some form of training. Presently there are no CDL training providers permanently established in the Central MA region. The nearest schools are in Chicopee and Avon, MA (more than 55 miles away from Worcester). Since there is a clear skills gap between job seekers and employers in our region that will continue to grow if mechanisms are not put in place such as an established training center for CDL Class B.

## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Computer Numerical Control Operator 51-410
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	No credentials required

<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	
<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Gaps exist as older workers leave the workforce and there are limited to no skilled workers to replace them.

## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Quality Control Technician - 19-4099.01
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<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	No credentials required
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	
<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Gaps exist as older workers leave the workforce and there are limited to no skilled workers to replace them.

## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Helpers--Production Workers - 51-9198.00
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<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	No credentials required
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	
<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Gaps exist as older workers leave the workforce and there are limited to no skilled workers to replace them.

## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists - 49-3031.00
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	No credentials required
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	
<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Gaps exist as older workers leave the workforce and there are limited to no skilled workers to replace them.

## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Software Developers, Systems Software - 15-1133.00
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	Bachelor's degree in Computer Science preferred.  Adobe Systems Adobe ActionScript Hot technology ; Apache Maven Hot technology ; Microsoft PowerShell Hot technology ; Verilog; C++ Hot technology ; jQuery Hot technology ; Microsoft ActiveX Hot technology ; Python and other programming languages as requested.
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	Quinsigamond Community College Mount Wachusett Community College
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	Yes
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	Classroom and work-based learning
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	Degree programs are Pell eligible
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	Fees vary; State College tuition rates
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	Yes, credential is recognized by local employers
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	Other programming languages
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	Yes
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	Credit

<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Gaps exist as older workers leave the workforce and there are limited to no skilled workers to replace them.
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## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Biological Technicians - 19-4021.00
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	No credentials required
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	

<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Gaps exist as older workers leave the workforce and there are limited to no skilled workers to replace them.
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## Credential Asset Mapping Tool

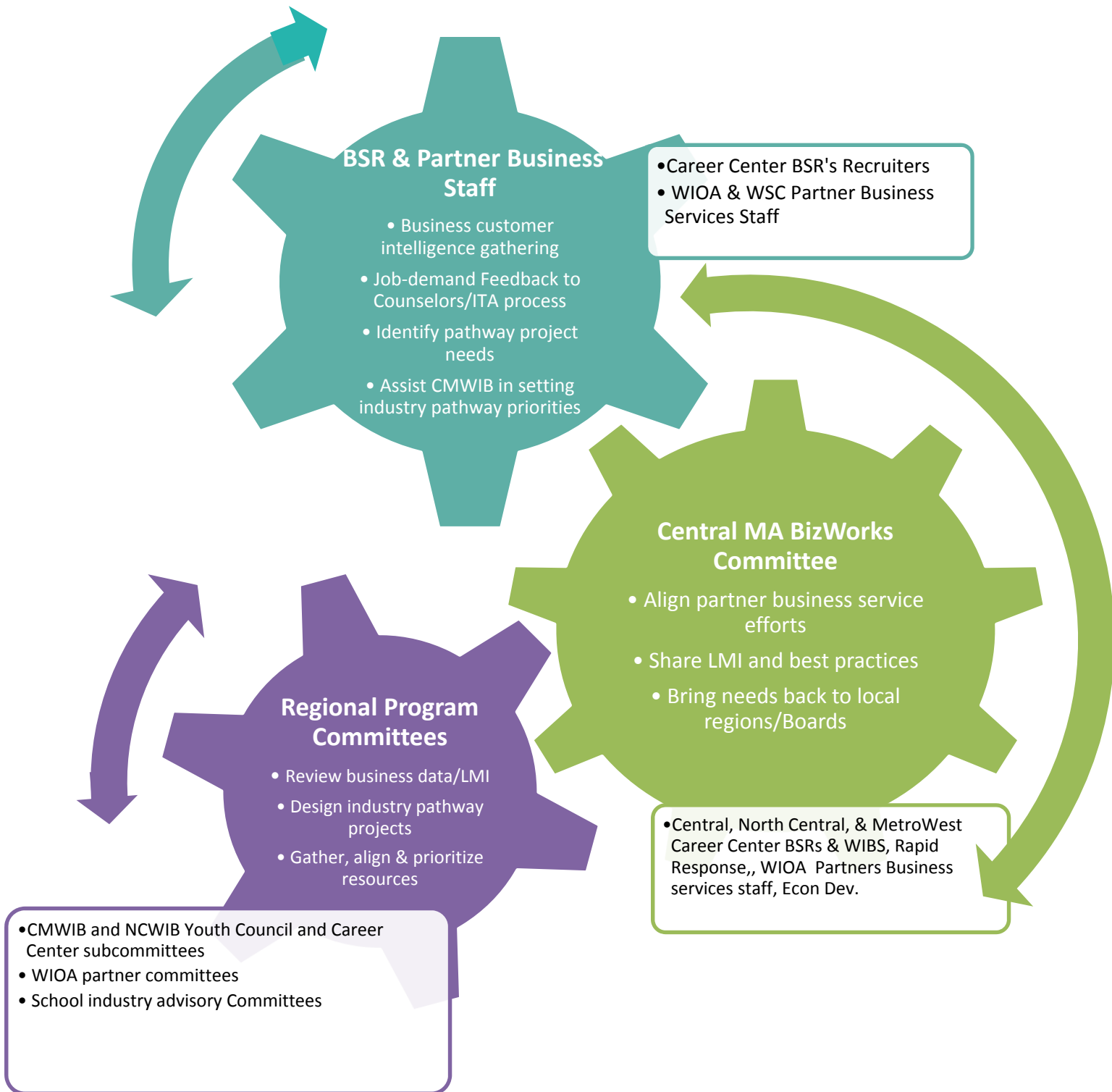
Complete one credential asset map for each priority occupation that requires a credential.

<b>Occupation</b>	<i>List the occupation the credential is for, including the SOC code.</i>	Information Security Analysts - 15-1122.00
<b>Type of Credential &amp; Title of Credential</b>	<i>List the type of credential (e.g. Certificate, Degree, Certification, License, or Apprenticeship Certification)</i>	Bachelor's degree in Computer Science preferred.  Nagios Hot technology ; Sniffer Investigator; Symantec Blue Coat Data Loss Prevention; Wireshark Hot technology ; Bash; Linux Hot technology ; Microsoft Hyper-V Server; Microsoft Windows ; AJAX Hot technology ; Django Hot technology ; JavaScript Object Notation JSON
<b>Credential Provider</b>	<i>List all training/ education providers that provide this credential in your region. For each provider, list the average number of individuals receiving the credential per year.</i>	Quinsigamond Community College
<b>Integrated/ Accelerated</b>	<i>Is the training integrated with work experience and/or accelerated for adult learners? If no, how to basic learners matriculate?</i>	Yes
<b>Online/ Classroom/ Work-based</b>	<i>Describe education environment and instructional methods.</i>	Classroom and work-based learning
<b>Pell-eligible?</b>	<i>Is the program Pell-eligible?</i>	Yes
<b>Fee?</b>	<i>What are the fees?</i>	Fees vary; State College tuition rates
<b>Employer-validated?</b>	<i>Do local employers validate the credential? If so, describe.</i>	Yes, credential is recognized by local employers
<b>Stackable?</b>	<i>Is the credential stackable with other certificates? If so, describe.</i>	Other programming languages



<b>Portable?</b>	<i>Are the credentials portable to other states/ industries? If so, describe.</i>	Yes
<b>Credit/ Non-Credit?</b>	<i>Are they credit or non-credit?</i>	Credit
<b>Gaps?</b>	<i>Are there gaps in the pipeline for this occupation that require new strategies in the blueprint?</i>	Gaps exist as older workers leave the workforce and there are limited to no skilled workers to replace them.

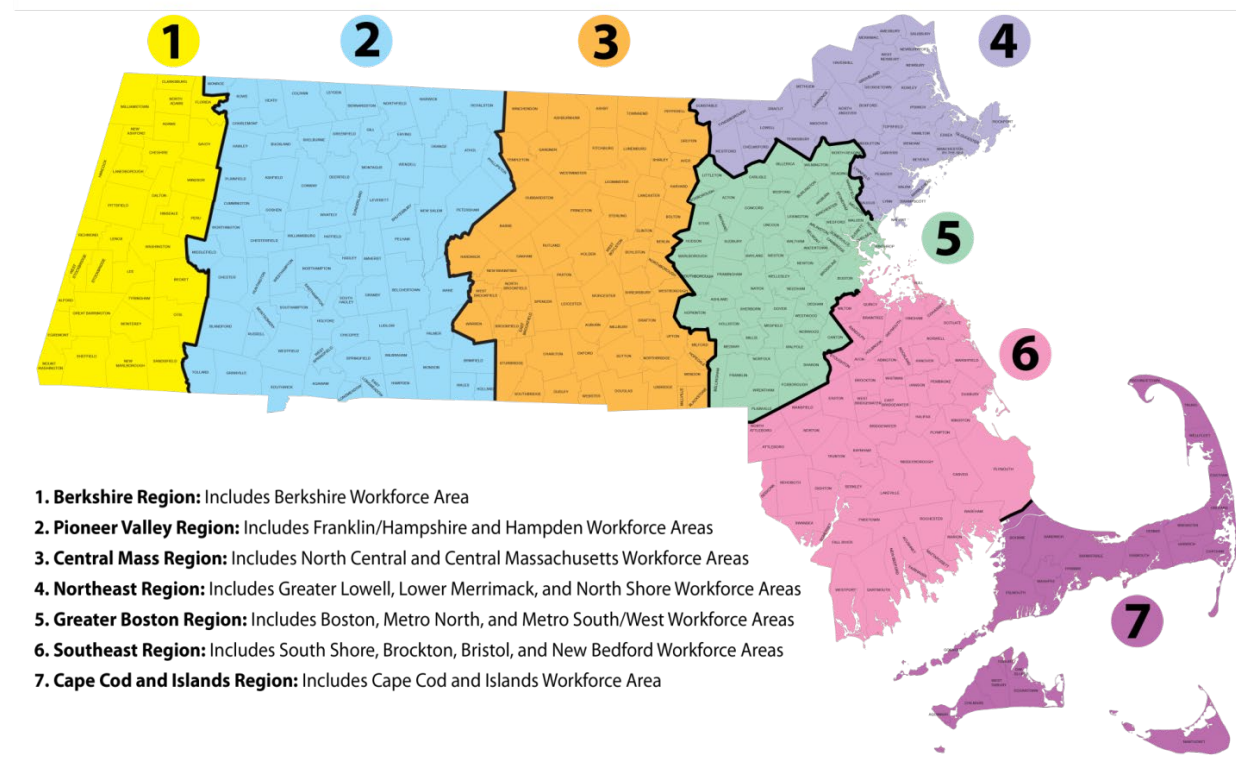
## Attachment 5: Central MA Demand-Driven Program Development



## INTRODUCTION

The Regional Workforce Skills Planning Initiative was launched in April 2017 with the aim of fostering strategic alignment between state and local programs, policies and resources to fuel job growth and address employer demand for talent across the Commonwealth.

The original Regional Labor Market Blueprints—developed through a comprehensive year-long planning process that involved local, regional, and state leadership from workforce development, education, and economic development, and input from business and community stakeholders—reflected a collective understanding of regional priorities and strategy for investments in seven regions across the Commonwealth: Berkshire, Pioneer Valley, Central, Southeast, Cape, Greater Boston, and Northeast.



In order to promote a better understanding of the current and projected needs of the workforce system, a second round of regional labor market data packages was released in 2019.

## PURPOSE

This document offers a **guiding template** for Regional Teams to provide an update to their Regional Labor Market Blueprint. Intended as a resource for external audiences, the update should illustrate how the Regional Team fosters strategic alignment and ensures that the workforce system is industry-relevant, responding to the changing economic conditions and workforce needs of the region.

<p><b>I. Where are we now?</b> Describe the current state of your region, including a summary of regional industry and occupational priorities, demographic shifts, and gaps between employer demand and employee supply.</p>	
<p><b><u>Criteria for Priority Industries/Occupations</u></b> The regional kick-off meetings with the WSC suggested a number of foundational criteria to prioritize industries and occupations, including existing job openings, jobs with low barriers to entry, jobs that lead to career pathways, and occupations with high demand (current openings, short/long term projections), and self-sustaining wages.</p>	
<p><b><u>STATE CRITERIA</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ High employer demand</li> <li>▪ High demand and wages (4+ star ranking)</li> <li>▪ Talent gaps (supply-demand ratio)</li> <li>▪ Career pathways</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>REGIONAL CRITERIA</u></b></p> <p>The regional planning team also developed additional criteria it felt were important to help us identify industries and occupations that might best fit with higher need job seekers to ensure they are not overlooked in this process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong Employer engagement (employers willing to become actively engaged in working with workforce system stakeholders)</li> <li>• Low barriers to employment (employment opportunities that do not by their nature exclude residents with barriers to employment, such as those that exclusively seek bachelor's degrees or above)</li> <li>• Alignment with high need job-seeker populations (employment opportunities that may be available to job seekers currently ready for employment or those with the ability to gain readiness with short term education, training and support)</li> </ul>

### **Priority Industries and Occupations**

Describe the collectively developed industry and occupational priorities for your region.

**List your 2-3 priority industries by 2-digit NAICS.** Where you have prioritized an industry that does not fit neatly into a 2-digit NAICS code (i.e. creative economy), note where it would best fit (i.e. Arts and Recreation) and describe the portion of the 2-digit industry sector that you prioritized.

The priority industries that the regional planning team selected are:

- Healthcare and Social Assistance (NAICS Code 62)
- Manufacturing (NAICS Codes 31-33)
- Transportation, Warehousing and Logistics (NAICS Code 48-49)

**List 3 to 5 priority occupations or occupational groups by SOC code (4-8 digit, as necessary).**

The priority occupation groups the regional planning team identified are:

- Healthcare Practitioners Occupations (SOC Code: 29-0000)
- Production Occupations (SOC Code 51-0000)
- Computer and Mathematical Occupations (SOC Code 15-0000)
- Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (SOC Code 53-0000)
- Construction Occupations Construction and Extraction Occupations (SOC Code 47-0000)

### **Regional Context**

Use the information provided through state data sets (i.e. data packages and dynamic data tools) and additional local analysis to explore the following questions and develop consensus for each section.

**Are there any new demographic, labor pool or talent pipeline considerations that will have an impact on labor supply in your region?** *Age, education, worker mobility, etc.*

In addition to the original blueprint's regional context, we've determined new emphasis should be placed upon the following areas that negatively affect the available labor force in our region;

- People working in low-wage – low advancement jobs (i.e., assisting people working in “dead end jobs” develop the tools and skills necessary to move up and out of the cycle of poverty)
- People hesitant to move off of public supports due to the “cliff effect” — supporting people as they give up public assistance to enter/re-enter the workforce.

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- People from families that lack college education; while there are numerous opportunities to exit poverty through jobs that only require middle skills (less than a four-year degree) the need for an Associate's Degree or higher often serves as a significant barrier to earning a living wage. The challenge of helping more people attain college degrees is made more difficult by a variety of factors, not the least of which is that the very *idea* of attending college seems beyond their reach. Helping them see themselves as a successful college graduate is therefore part of the needed solution.

**Have there been any developments related to business and industry that will have an impact on workforce demand in your region? *New employers, policies/regulations, etc.***

We have seen continued growth in automated services delivery in a variety of industries, including retail, manufacturing, and distribution. Additionally, communication and service delivery through the use of smart phones continues to advance.

Additionally, it would appear the COVID-19 pandemic will have a significant impact economically upon our region (see Appendix H).

**New Priority Industries and Occupations (Optional)**

If the team would like to propose any changes to the articulated list of priority industry sectors and occupations or occupational groups, please use this space to provide an updated list. Include a justification of any changes based on your regional context and mutually agreed upon regional criteria.

**List your 2-3 priority industries by 2-digit NAICS.** For any proposed changes, write a brief justification of your choice.

No changes are being requested to the region's priority industries; however, after reviewing labor market data and speaking with employers and training partners we are adding in additional trades within two of our three priority sectors and one of our critical sectors;

- Welding is added to our manufacturing – priority industry sector
- Automotive technician is added to our transportation/logistics/warehousing – priority industry sector
- Culinary is added to our retail/hospitality – critical industry sector.

**List 3 to 5 priority occupations or occupational groups by SOC code (4-8 digit, as necessary).**

No changes to our priority occupation groups are being requested.

## II. How are we doing?

Evaluate the strategies you have jointly employed to align the work of multiple systems around your shared vision, mission and goals.

### **Focusing Resources**

Summarize your efforts to align resources that support and meet training and employment needs of priority industry sectors and occupations in your region. (See Appendix D for additional detail.)

**Resource Acquisition.** Provide a summary of new resources secured to support priority industries and occupations (state, federal, private, etc.).

Regional blueprint partners have assisted with more than 70 new program applications to support priority industries and occupations, including:

- 10 Skills Capitol Grant Project Proposals
- 9 Innovation Pathways HS Programs
- 7 Chapter 74 Vocational Programs
- 8 Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, TRAIN, Learn to Earn Projects
- 20+ Post-secondary & community-based training programs –
  - Fitchburg Housing Authority-HUD economic assistance grant
  - Worcester Jobs Fund programming
  - Advanced Robotics for Manufacturing at WPI
  - Greater Worcester Community Health Foundation – allied health
- 29 Workforce Training Fund Project Proposals

**Resource Allocation.** Provide a summary of existing resources re-allocated to support priority industries and occupations.

The following existing resources have been aligned to support priority industries and occupations:

- YouthWorks (summer and year-round) – priority focus of placement of participants in worksites that are in alignment with priority industries/occupations.
- WIOA Youth Programming – support for program providers selected through competitive procurement that was aligned with the region’s blueprint.

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- Connecting Activities – greater emphasis placed upon career readiness activities for partner schools tied to blueprint goals and priorities.
- Career Center – ITA’s and business services: career center counselors and Business Services representatives have been familiarized with the blueprint and align customer services where possible, including targeted industry-based career fairs for priority industries.
- Workforce Training Funds – employer outreach and project application reviews incorporate awareness of the regional blueprint and alignment with proposed trainings.
- Existing board partner programs – the region’s two Workforce Development Boards has also educated area training partners, including secondary school vocational training providers, Quinsigamond and Mount Wachusett Community Colleges, community-based training organizations (including Training Resources of America, South Middlesex Opportunity Council, the Worcester Jobs Fund, The Polus Center, and Worcester Night Life)

### **Expanding Pipelines**

Identify your efforts to meet training and employment needs of priority industry sectors and occupations in your region. (See Appendix E for additional detail.)

**Pipeline Expansion.** Provide a summary of new seats added in programs related to priority industries and occupations.

We have added approximately 110 new trainee seats in the manufacturing field, and 88 new seats in healthcare, and 20 new training seats for transportation/logistics/warehousing.

**Pipeline Improvement.** Provide a summary of upgraded seats related to priority industries and occupations.

Through our support of Skills Capital grants, Innovation Pathways and Chapter 74 program applications we have helped upgrade the training in our priority industries, including the addition of new training equipment and facility improvements, and increased access to expanded career technical training (see Appendix D for additional detailed information).

### **Shared Strategies**

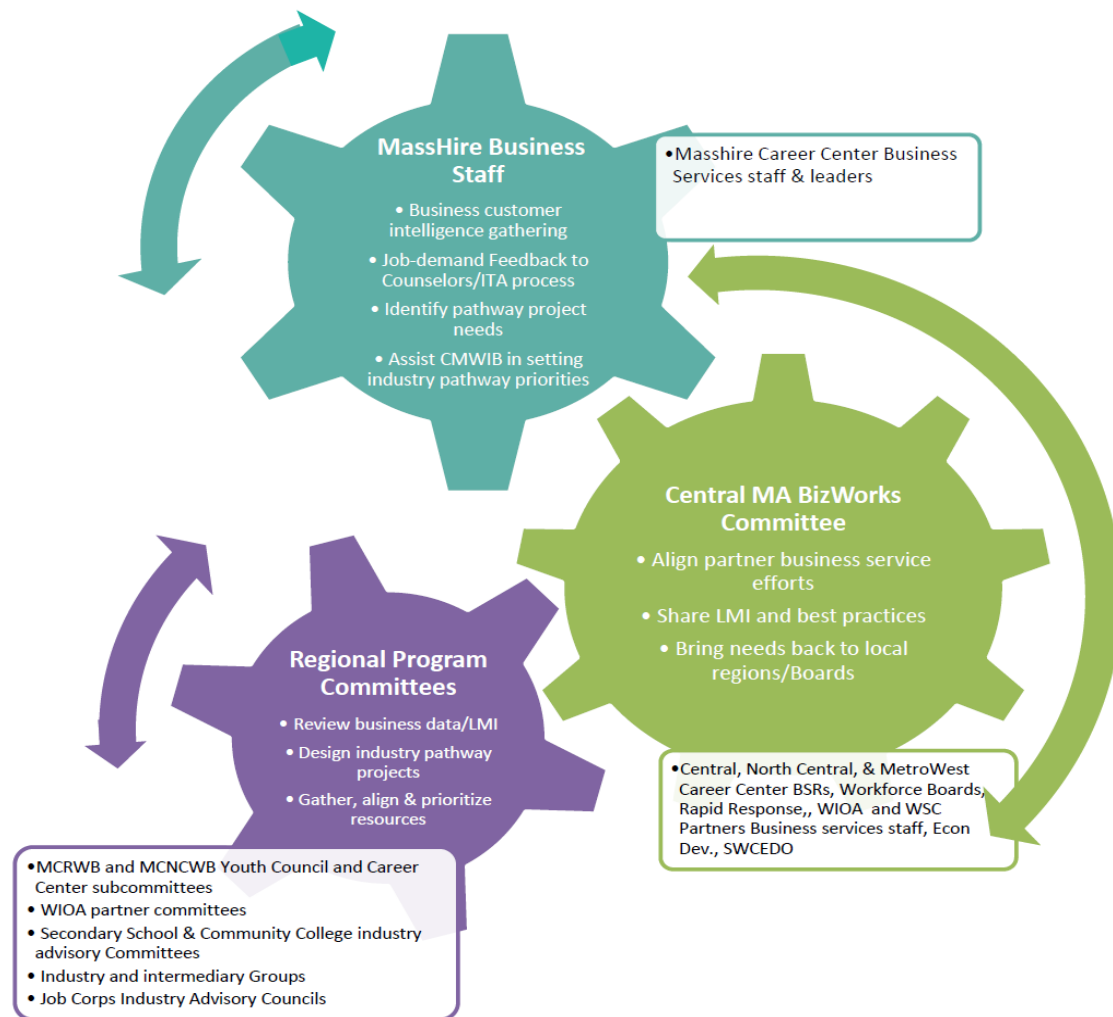
While each system may make changes in individual programming to align with the region’s priorities, all systems must commit to shared changes in the following areas, stated below. Describe how your region has worked collaboratively in the following two areas.



**Continuous Communication.** How often and in what way do you meet to review progress towards shared goals and make course corrections?

Our regional blueprint partners align our efforts through an overarching leadership team that meets twice yearly to review progress and trends. Additionally, we have established a regional workforce consortium for each of the three priority industry sectors (healthcare, Transportation/Logistics/Warehousing, and manufacturing) that meets bi-monthly to address issues specific to their respective fields and drive forward programming and blueprint goals. Lastly, the blueprint partners attempt to coordinate our collective efforts through the variety of existing groups, councils, and committees we participate in, including the workforce boards and our subcommittees, the regional MassBizWorks group, and education/program advisory committees.

### Central MA Demand-Driven Program Development



**Shared Measurement Systems.** What data and measurement systems do you use to support shared understanding of how well you are meeting your goals and making progress towards a shared vision?

We attempt to track the number of training programs/classes in each priority sectors, as well as the number of training slots. We also look at supply/demand ratio, and data from the Burning Glass labor market Insights tool, such as the number of job postings and the time required to fill postings to gauge relative demand. Attempts to track other measures, such as job vacancies by industry, and career center services by industry have been more difficult to access.

**Other Shared Strategies.** What other shared strategies do you employ to promote collaboration and strategic alignment among your region's core partners?

Our utilization of regional consortia for our priority sectors has proven helpful in gathering partners and employers together to identify and address needs for their respective industry sector. It has also served as a way to keep communication open between partners and increase relationships of leadership and staff. These consortia set their own meeting schedules and work plans to help us focus our work.

### III. Where do we want to go?

Summarize your upcoming plans to address the priority industries and occupations identified in the Blueprint.

**Priorities.** Describe your priorities for 2020. Note that the priorities listed here should be those that need participation of players from multiple entities and across two or three of the systems for accomplishment.

We will be continuing the work of the consortia to provide guidance and collaborative resources and open communication between workforce, education, economic development and employer partners. Special efforts for the future include addressing the needs of our newly identified priority populations (people working in low-wage – low advancement jobs, people hesitant to move off of public supports due to the “cliff effect,” and people from families that without college education), while also seeking to address the continued rise in automation and the use of smart phones and virtual services for service delivery.

We will also look to support an increase to the number of qualified, available instructors for career technical education/training programs; as we seek to expand the amount of training within our region (especially for high priority sectors/occupations) we will need to increase the number of instructors – the current supply of qualified teachers is inadequate and further growth will require efforts to recruit and train new instructors.

We will also seek to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (see Appendix H).

**Partnerships.** Describe your plans for developing additional strategic partnerships.

We hope to expand our collaboration with a variety of strategic partners to advance our region's blueprint goals. These include:

- Increasing industry group partnerships for connection to a larger pool of employers and better understanding of industry trends, especially those in the healthcare field working to address the staff reimbursement rate issue, and those in the facilities/engineering field that can assist with support for development of short term certificate facility repair technician training.
- Expanding training facilities available in the Central MA region through partnership with a municipality or community partner able to host a CDL training course.
- Partners in the Information technology field to help identify industry trends and certificate training programs in high demand.
- Partners that work closely with our priority populations to help with training project design, recruitment, and retention support/case management.

**Employer Engagement.** Describe your plans for maintaining or strengthening employer engagement.

As stated previously, we have established industry consortia for our priority industry sectors that includes employer representatives. We hope to expand these relationships to strengthen our connection to employers and awareness of industry trends and needs. We will also continue to work closely with our MassBizWorks partners and actively participate in the regional BizWorks committee. Finally, we will also continue to work very closely with our MassHire Career Center business services staff to align their efforts with our regional blueprint goals as closely as possible.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

**Conclusion.** Provide any closing remarks, next steps, or considerations.

We are obviously approaching this work at a challenging time with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the major shock it has delivered to all facets of our society, including our region's economy, as well as the uncertainty that comes with it. We are therefore seeking ways to adjust our strategies as appropriate to meet these new challenges as we continue to implement this blueprint including the implementation of virtual services/trainings that support the health and safety of our communities.

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## APPENDIX A. REGIONAL PLANNING TEAM ORGANIZATION

Regional Planning Team		
<b>Regional Planning Team.</b> Describe the different <b>partner organizations</b> brought together to be a part of the <b>Regional Planning Team</b> (K-12 District, Vocational Technical School, Community College, State University, Workforce Development Board, Massachusetts Office of Business Development, Regional Economic Development Organization, and more) and provide contact information.		
Individual Name	Organization Name	Individual Email
Ashley Armstrong	MA DTA	ashley.armstrong@state.ma.us
Barry Maloney	Worcester State University	bmaloney@worcester.edu'
Brenner, Kyle	Worcester Technical HS	Brenner, Kyle BrennerK@worc.k12.ma.us
Shiela Harrity	Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical HS	harrity@montytech.net'
Ethan Brown	City of Worcester Economic Development	brownea@worcesterma.gov
Jackie Belrose	Mount Wachusett Community College	'jbelrose@mwcc.mass.edu'
Jeannie Hebert	Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce	'jhebert@blackstonevalley.org'
Jil Wonoski	Advantage Truck group	'jil.wonoski@tristatetruckcenter.com'
Joshua Froimson	AbbVie	'joshua.froimson@abbvie.com'
Joyce Clemence	MA DTA	'joyce.clemence@state.ma.us'
Janet Pierce	Central MA Regional Planning Commission	'jpierce@cmrpc.org'
Jeff Roberge	MassHire North Central Workforce Board	jroberge@masshirenorthcentralwb.com

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## APPENDIX B. BEST PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION (1 OF 2)

*Note that compiled best practices will be shared across Regional Planning Teams.*

<b>Best Practice (BP) Documentation Tool</b>		
Using the following template, document two (2) proven processes or initiatives.		
<b><u>Best Practice Identification</u></b>		
Describe a best practice or achievement in support of your vision and strategic goals.		
<b>Title</b>	<i>Us of an Workforce Industry Consortium</i>	
<b>Strategic Alignment</b>	<i>Each priority industry sector (Healthcare, Manufacturing, Transportation/logistics/Warehousing)</i>	
<b>Description</b>	<i>Use existing blueprint partners affiliated with a given industry sector to develop an expanded target list of potential representatives from employers, training providers/educators, or economic development and workforce systems with expertise in the given industry; ask those with existing relationships to contact them – invite them to learn more about the consortium. Hold consortium meetings to review the blueprint and to gather additional information as needed to create a consortium work plan.</i>	
<b>Results</b>	<i>Stronger partnerships; Identification of new industry needs and root causes of challenges; refinement of blueprint goals and strategies; readiness for new project development</i>	
<b><u>Knowledge Management</u></b>		
Use the following fields as a guide to provide more information for other potential users.		
<b>Resources</b>	<i>Labor market data that can be parsed by industry/occupation, and geography to share with partners.</i>	
<b>Barriers</b>	<i>Time and resources necessary bring partners together multiple times to review material and brainstorm</i>	

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<b>Timeline</b>	<i>It took approximately 3 months to develop the initial consortium and implementing it is ongoing – but at least three meetings over 6 months to gain traction among partners</i>	
<b>Measurement</b>	<i>Impacts to programming are the most easily seen in the short-medium term, including programs established/offered, enrollments, and completions and placements</i>	
<b>Commentary</b>	<i>It can be difficult to blend a large group of stakeholders – all with a different vision, needs, and agendas; developing trust can go a long way toward achieving success</i>	

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## APPENDIX C. BEST PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION (2 OF 2)

*Note that compiled best practices will be shared across Regional Planning Teams.*

<b>Best Practice (BP) Documentation Tool</b>		
Using the following template, document two (2) proven processes or initiatives.		
<b><u>Best Practice Identification</u></b>		
Describe a best practice or achievement in support of your vision and strategic goals.		
<b>Title</b>	<i>Incorporate existing leadership structures</i>	
<b>Strategic Alignment</b>	<i>This works across all industries/occupations</i>	
<b>Description</b>	<i>Have blueprint leadership members identify the existing standing groups/committees/councils that may play a role in achieving blueprint goals and what role they may play. Then look to ensure there is a mechanism to communicate with blueprint partners about what information is shared during the support group meetings/events, this might include having time during blueprint meetings to report out for each group, or having a way to share notes through email or a leadership team platform (such as Slack). Try to use this information to avoid duplication and to gather additional resources and support for blueprint goals</i>	
<b>Results</b>	<i>Greater alignment between systems; increased access to resources and services; decrease in duplication of efforts and time commitments</i>	
<b><u>Knowledge Management</u></b>		
Use the following fields as a guide to provide more information for other potential users.		
<b>Resources</b>	<i>Knowledge of existing groups, committees, councils in the area that dovetail with blueprint efforts</i>	
<b>Barriers</b>	<i>One challenge is turn-over of representatives – if a liaison leaves his/her job, then there may develop a gap in representation. Another challenge is ensuring consistent flow of information and follow through on items by third-party groups/systems</i>	

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<b>Timeline</b>	<i>Approximately three months to identify the various potential groups and ongoing thereafter.</i>	
<b>Measurement</b>	<i>Participation among the groups, potential for additional leveraged resources to support blueprint goals</i>	
<b>Commentary</b>	<i>Given how busy everyone is, this is an opportunity to maximize the work we all do by connecting more dots!</i>	

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APPENDIX D. RESOURCE TRACKER

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RESOURCE	APPLYING ENTITY	OCCUPATION	INDUSTRY	APPLICATION STATUS
<i>Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Workforce Success Grants for Training &amp; Placement / Advancement Programs.</i>	<i>Mount Wachusett Community College</i>	<i>Warehousing Logistics</i>	<i>Warehousing and Logistics</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>U.S Department of Labor Job Corps Program</i>	<i>Shriver Job Corps</i>	<i>Skilled Labor</i>	<i>Trades</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>National Defense Education Program for STEM</i>	<i>MassMEP</i>	<i>Critical DOD Advanced Manufacturing Careers</i>	<i>Advanced Manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>Fy21 Rd 1 Capital Skills Grant</i>	<i>Minuteman Vocational Technical School</i>	<i>Logistics management, supply chain management, Logistics Engineering</i>	<i>Logistics automation Engineering</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>Fy21 Rd 1 Capital Skills Grants</i>	<i>Nashoba Valley Technical High School</i>	<i>Plumbing</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Applied</i>

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<i>Fy 21 Capital Skills Grants</i>	<i>Fitchburg High School</i>	<i>Production worker, CNC Operator, CNC Technician</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>Fy 21 Capital Skills Grants</i>	<i>Gardner High School</i>	<i>Production worker, CNC Operator, CNC Technician</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>Fy 21 Capital Skills Grants</i>	<i>Quabbin Regional High School</i>	<i>Production worker, CNC Operator, CNC Technician</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>State - Manufacturing Consortium</i>	<i>MNCWB/MCRWB</i>	<i>CNC Machinist, Quality Control Technician, Production Worker</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>MA - Learn To Earn</i>	<i>MCRWB</i>	<i>Pharmacy Tech</i>	<i>Healthcare</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>MA – Learn To Earn</i>	<i>Riverside Collaborative</i>	<i>Food Service/Production</i>	<i>Hospitality</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>MA DESE - Innovation Pathways</i>	<i>Worcester Public Schools</i>	<i>CNA, Machine operator/production worker, IT Customer Support, Civil Engineering/Construction</i>	<i>Healthcare, Manufacturing, IT, Construction</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA DESE -- Project Lead The Way</i>	<i>Milford HS</i>	<i>Biomedical, Engineering and Computer Science programs</i>	<i>STEM fields</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA DESE -- Project Lead The Way</i>	<i>Southbridge HS</i>	<i>STEM Foundations Program</i>	<i>STEM fields</i>	<i>Applied</i>

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<i>Manufacturing USA</i>	<i>Worcester Polytechnic Institute</i>	<i>Robotics/manufacturing</i>	<i>manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA DESE – Innovation pathways</i>	<i>Dudley-Charlton Regional School District</i>	<i>Engineering/STEM, Biomedical Science and Global Awareness</i>	<i>STEM fields</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA Skills Capital Grant program</i>	<i>Northbridge HS</i>	<i>Information Technology (with an emphasis on automation and engineering), Healthcare</i>	<i>IT, Manufacturing, Healthcare</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA DESE - Innovation Pathways</i>	<i>Uxbridge HS</i>	<i>Biomedical science</i>	<i>Healthcare, Manufacturing,</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA Skills Capital Grant program</i>	<i>Bay Path Regional Vocational HS</i>	<i>Advanced Manufacturing, IT</i>	<i>Manufacturing, IT</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA DESE – Chapter 74 HS Vocational program</i>	<i>Bay Path Regional Vocational HS/Minuteman Tech</i>	<i>Information Support Services &amp; Networking program/Animal Science</i>	<i>IT/health</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA Skills Capital Grant program</i>	<i>Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District</i>	<i>Engineering technologies</i>	<i>STEM fields</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>STEM Learning Ecosystem Community of Practice Grant</i>	<i>Central MA STEM Network</i>	<i>STEM fields/IT occupations</i>	<i>STEM fields/IT</i>	<i>Received</i>

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<i>MA EOLWD - Apprenticeship Expansion-Innovation Challenge Grant</i>	<i>MCRWB</i>	<i>Child Development teachers</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>MA Skills Capital Grant program</i>	<i>Pathfinder HS</i>	<i>Science and Health - Prototyping and Fabrication Lab- digital fabrication tools related to medical and biomedical engineering</i>	<i>Professional services, STEM, Manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA – Re-entry Planning Grant</i>	<i>Blackstone Valley EdHub, MWCC</i>	<i>Quality Control Technicians, Electro-Mechanical Wire Technicians and Machine Operators,</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA – Re-entry Planning Grant</i>	<i>Worcester Community Action Council</i>	<i>CDL – Class B drivers</i>	<i>Transportation</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>US DOL - YouthBuild</i>	<i>Training Resources of America</i>	<i>Construction trades; health careers</i>	<i>Construction, healthcare</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>MA Skills Capital Grant Program</i>	<i>QCC</i>	<i>Dental Tech, Healthcare</i>	<i>Healthcare</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA Department of Early Education and Care</i>	<i>QCC</i>	<i>Child Development Teachers</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Received</i>

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<i>MA Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development – Urban Agenda</i>	<i>Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce/Town of Clinton</i>	<i>Culinary/Hospitality Maker Space Training Center</i>	<i>Hospitality Clinton K-12 Manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>US DOL – WANTO grant</i>	<i>Northeast Center For Tradeswomen Equity</i>	<i>Construction trades</i>	<i>construction</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>City of Worcester; Worcester Jobs Fund</i>	<i>MCRWB - COW</i>	<i>Various (CDL, EKG Tech, Phlebotomy Tech, Medical Admin, Customer Service)</i>	<i>Healthcare, Retail, Transportation</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>TRAIN Grant</i>	<i>QCC</i>	<i>Pharmacy tech</i>	<i>Healthcare</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>STEM focused Internships (MA Exec. Office of Education)</i>	<i>NMRWB</i>	<i>STEM/Advanced manufacturing</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA Dept. of Transportation</i>	<i>MCRWB</i>	<i>Various – construction trades</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>YouthWorks – Commonwealth Corporation (Pilot B)</i>	<i>MCRWB</i>	<i>IT Customer Support/Help Desk</i>	<i>IT</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>MA-DESE Innovation Pathways Grant</i>	<i>Quabbin Regional School District</i>	<i>Robotics/manufacturing</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>

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<i>MA Skills Capital Grant Program</i>	<i>Worcester Public Schools – Night Life Adult CTE Program</i>	<i>Biomanufacturing , diesel tech</i>	<i>Manufacturing – lifesciences, transportation</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA Skills Capital Grant Program</i>	<i>MA Project Lead the Way</i>	<i>STEM fields</i>	<i>STEM</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA Skills Capital Grant Program</i>	<i>Quinsigamond Community College</i>	<i>Interactive Media Design</i>	<i>Communications</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>United Way of Central MA</i>	<i>Worcester Community Action Council</i>	<i>Youth Employment Readiness</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>Received</i>
<i>MassDOT's Workforce Transportation Program,</i>	<i>Central MA Regional Planning Commission</i>	<i>Various – transportation assistance</i>	<i>NA</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA Project Lead The Way</i>	<i>Worcester Public Schools – Forest Grove Middle School</i>	<i>STEM</i>	<i>STEM</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA DESE – Chapter 74 HS Vocational program</i>	<i>for Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School</i>	<i>Veterinary sciences</i>	<i>Veterinary</i>	<i>Applied</i>
<i>MA Skills Capital Grant Program</i>	<i>Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District</i>	<i>Veterinary science; manufacturing</i>	<i>Veterinary; manufacturing</i>	<i>Applied</i>



APPENDIX E. PIPELINE CAPACITY TRACKER

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PROGRAM	PROVIDER	OCCUPATION	INDUSTRY	CAPACITY CHANGE
<i>WCTF Health Care Training for workers with disabilities</i>	<i>Polus Center</i>	<i>Pharmacy Technician</i>	<i>Health Care</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>EOHED Manufacturing Training Grant Yr. 2</i>	<i>Central Region Advanced manufacturing Consortium</i>	<i>Production worker, CNC Operator, CNC Technician</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>110</i>
<i>WCTF Pharmacy Technician Training</i>	<i>MCRWB</i>	<i>Pharmacy Tech</i>	<i>Healthcare</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>TRAIN Grant</i>	<i>QCC</i>	<i>Pharmacy Tech</i>	<i>Healthcare</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Worcester Jobs Fund</i>	<i>City of Worcester</i>	<i>Commercial Drivers</i>	<i>Transportation</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>WCTF – CDL Training</i>	<i>MassHire Metro South/West Workforce Board</i>	<i>Commercial Drivers</i>	<i>Transportation</i>	<i>8 (central MA)</i>

## APPENDIX F. 2020 PROGRESS REPORT

GOAL	STRATEGY	PROGRESS
<b>Goal 1: Align and coordinate regional Education, Workforce Development, and Economic Development systems.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Convene Partnership leaders twice annually</i></li> </ul>	<i>Successfully established – continued work in process</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Interconnect existing workforce structures (including Workforce Development Boards &amp; committees, BizWorks regional team, WIOA Partners, School advisory groups, etc.</i></li> </ul>	<i>Blueprint process integrated into existing WDB &amp; Committees, as well as WIOA Partnerships and Regional BizWorks team integrated (with inclusion of Metro South/West); Blueprint/WDB's now integrated into school programming decisions and regional grant projects</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Collect business service performance and outcome data from all stakeholders to create a comprehensive regional “dashboard” report</i></li> </ul>	<i>Beta testing on data from career center system has begun; information by industry for business utilization, vacancy rate, supply/demand remains a challenge. Dashboard of WSC partner effort remains a challenge due to data sharing concerns and procedures.</i>
<b>Goal 2: Provide industry with a training system responsive to workforce needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Create a real-time regional Mass BizWorks “response-team” to serve as the connection between businesses in need and system partners</i></li> </ul>	<i>Regional online business services staff network established (via Slack platform) – utilization has been a challenge</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Integrate business need feedback into regional Youth Council, Career Center, and partner program development processes</i></li> </ul>	<i>WIOA Partners, area schools, and WDB's utilizing regional blueprint as guide to program development</i>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement MA EOLWD Recruitment Solutions Initiative (RSI) referral process at all of the region's MassHire Career Centers</li> </ul>	RSI successfully implemented in Central region, however, staff vacancies have limited its impact
<b>Goal 3: Improve the foundational and work readiness/soft skills of our region's labor force</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase exposure to soft skills in high schools, colleges, training programs and career centers through the creation and expanded access to career readiness training materials</li> </ul>	Working with Commonwealth Corporation on Signal Success WIOA Youth pilot; Increasing capacity for soft skills training through the regional manufacturing consortium
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase career awareness activities in the region's high schools</li> </ul>	Working with schools through Connecting Activities (including Worcester Public Schools – Opportunity Fairs; North Central Manufacturing education summit, North Central Youth Job Fair with the Leominster/Fitchburg Boys and Girls Club etc.)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build stronger foundational computer skills for residents (both youth and adults)</li> </ul>	Establishing Coding for Elementary School working group; Conducted Apprenti employer outreach; expansion of high school IT programs in Milford & Worcester
<b>Goal 4: Close the skills gap for priority industries and occupations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish regional baseline measures for priority industries/ occupation goals and set target goals, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decrease vacancy rate</li> <li>Increase the number of CTE program placements</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Creation of baseline measures for CTE completion in manufacturing has been identified, however this has not yet been completed by the other two consortia; a source for vacancy rate, utilization rate, supply/demand ratio data has not been identified

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Improve the supply/demand ratio</i></li> <li>• <i>Increase the business utilization percentage rate for MassBizWorks-affiliated partner services</i></li> <li>• <i>Improve career center/WIOA Partner performance (number of businesses served, job orders, job referrals, and hiring)</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expand Career Technical Education (CTE), both day and evening, for priority industries/occupations</i></li> </ul>	<i>Expansion in all three fields (plus additional occupational priority areas) has been accomplished</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increase exposure in secondary education to high priority industries</i></li> </ul>	<i>Alignment through Connecting Activities is a work in progress</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expand incumbent worker career advancement and Registered Apprenticeships for priority industries</i></li> </ul>	<i>Apprenticeship discussions begun in health and manufacturing, and established for diesel technicians; WTFP for incumbent workers continues</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increase contextualized ABE and ESOL programming that trains for high priority industries</i></li> </ul>	<i>Accomplished through DESE IET programming and manufacturing consortium</i>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Expand articulation agreements between education and training institutions for priority industries/occupations</i></li></ul>	<i>Articulation agreements mapped out but not yet established where gaps exist</i>
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## APPENDIX G. 2022 PROGRESS REPORT

GOAL	STRATEGY	PROGRESS
<b>Goal 1: Align and coordinate regional Education, Workforce Development, and Economic Development systems.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Convene Partnership leaders twice annually</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Interconnect existing workforce structures (including Workforce Development Boards &amp; committees, BizWorks regional team, WIOA Partners, School advisory groups, etc.</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Collect business service performance and outcome data from all stakeholders to create a comprehensive regional “dashboard” report</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Goal 2: Provide industry with a training system responsive to workforce needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Continue the regional real-time Mass BizWorks “response-team” to serve as the connection between businesses in need and system partners</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Integrate business need feedback into regional Youth Council, Career Center, and partner program development processes</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Continue use of the MA EOLWD Recruitment Solutions Initiative (RSI) referral process at all of the</i></li> </ul>	

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	<i>region's MassHire Career Centers</i>	
<b>Goal 3: Improve the foundational and work readiness/soft skills of our region's labor force</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increase exposure to soft skills in high schools, colleges, training programs and career centers through the creation and expanded access to career readiness training materials</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increase career awareness activities in the region's high schools</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Build stronger foundational computer skills for residents (both youth and adults)</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Goal 4: Close the skills gap for priority industries and occupations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Establish regional baseline measures for priority industries/ occupation goals and set target goals, including:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Decrease vacancy rate</i></li> <li>• <i>Increase the number of CTE program placements</i></li> <li>• <i>Improve the supply/demand ratio</i></li> <li>• <i>Increase the business utilization percentage rate for MassBizWorks-affiliated partner services</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Improve career center/WIOA Partner performance (number of businesses served, job orders, job referrals, and hiring)</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expand Career Technical Education (CTE), both day and evening, for priority industries/occupations</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increase exposure in secondary education to high priority industries</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expand incumbent worker career advancement and Registered Apprenticeships for priority industries</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increase contextualized ABE and ESOL programming that trains for high priority industries</i></li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expand articulation agreements between education and training institutions for priority industries/occupations</i></li> </ul>	



## APPENDIX H: IMPACTS FROM COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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- i. How have your priority industries been impacted by COVID-19?
  - Our manufacturing sector has largely stayed the same as many companies kept up production or switched to making needed supplies/equipment for the pandemic, however the onset of the pandemic and increased benefits has exacerbated the staffing shortage that existed before this crisis.
  - The need for frontline allied health staff (certified nurses, phlebotomy techs, home health aides) has worsened the staff shortage. Unfortunately, many training programs have also had to cease operations during the outbreak, decreasing potential new staff. This challenge is being addressed through the State's new long term care staffing policy (creation of new patient care technician role and bonus pay for new hires) and outreach portal.
  - The transportation/logistics/warehousing sector has likewise stayed active as an industry during the pandemic and has continued hiring logistics, warehousing, and commercial drivers.
  
- ii. At this time, what do you envision to be the top 3-5 priority occupations impacted by COVID 19?

The five occupations with the most claimants are:

  - 1) Food Preparation and Serving Related, (including hospitality workers)
  - 2) Construction
  - 3) Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance,
  - 4) Management – general office
  - 5) Office & Administrative Support.
  
- iii. What education/training programs in your region are still available and able to retrain the unemployed population for job openings in your region?

The Career Centers are offering access to a variety of basic career preparation related classes available online through such organizations as Goodwill (LearnFree courses), as well as discounted educational courses through EdEx, Coursera, Worcester Night Life, Quinsigamond Community College (QCC), and Mount Wachusett Community College, as well as our region's two universities, Fitchburg State and Worcester State. These include the following free courses through QCC:

  - Managing the Virtual Workplace – Tips & Strategies
  - Crisis Management
  - Employee Accountability
  - Microsoft Skype for Business
  - Creating Winning Webinars-Getting Your Message Out
  - Successfully Managing Change
  - Excel 2016 Part 1

CENTRAL MA  
REGIONAL LABOR MARKET BLUEPRINT UPDATE

- Excel 2016 Part 2
- Excel 2016 Part 3
- Customer Service Training: Managing Customer Service
- Call Center Training
- Stress Management
- Office 365 Part 1
- Office 365 Part 2
- Microsoft Teams
- Social Selling for Small Business
- Building a Brand on Social Media
- Communications for Small Business
- Leadership Skills for Supervisors
- Effective Performance Reviews

Additionally, there are a number of career technical training related to our priority occupations that are still being offered, these include:

- EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN (EMT); training (Mount Wachusett Community College)
- PHARMACY TECHNICIAN: CVS PRE-APPRENTICE TRAINING; (MCRWB)
- QUALITY- LEAN SIX SIGMA YELLOW BELT TRAINING; (Mount Wachusett Community College)
- COMPUTER AUTOMATED DESIGN (CAD) Training; (Mount Wachusett Community College )
- MANUFACTURING ESSENTIALS SUPERVISOR CLASS; (Quinsigamond Community College)
- MANUFACTURING – BASIC MACHINE OPERATION; (Quinsigamond Community College)
- COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE TRAINING; (Worcester Jobs Fund)

- iv. What are the overall top 3 challenges you anticipate in FY21 facing in deploying training solutions?
- i. Large upheaval of front line staff that will not have a job to go back that are not job seeking in the short term and not sure where to go following the end of restrictions– what field to go into
  - ii. State resources for training may be significantly reduced due to the pandemic's drastic impact on state revenue
  - iii. Smaller training providers may no longer be operating – and many of the remaining programs may only be operating online, limiting accessibility for our higher need populations
- v. What are the largest challenges that you anticipate jobseekers in your region will face in attempting to return back to work?

- i. Emotional insecurity – fear of making career change in this uncertain time and the need for counseling support in making career direction decisions and referral for wrap-around services
- ii. Change in economy and shift away from in-person retail and service delivery, causing some jobs to no longer be available
- iii. Financial insecurity – limited resources available for training or for taking time away from work to go into training
- iv. Child care services being available as they look to re-enter the workplace – especially for single heads of households
- v. Transportation – this was already an area that was a challenge, especially in the less populated portions of our region, and it may be made worse with the potential for reduced availability of public transportation and ride-sharing services

# Attachment 2 - Regional Training Capacity for Priority Industries

School	Program	Degree/ Certification	timeline	Notes	Location	Web Link
<b>Regional College Programs</b>						
Anna Maria College	Pre-licensure four-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing for entry level students and the online RN to BSN. Bachelor of Arts in Human Services. Psychology-BA, MA/LMHC, MS				Paxton	<a href="https://annamaria.edu/academics/undergraduate-studies/">https://annamaria.edu/academics/undergraduate-studies/</a>
Assumption	Human Services and Rehabilitation studies, Nursing B.S, psychology				worcester	<a href="https://www.assumption.edu/explore-academics/undergraduate-studies/majors-minors">https://www.assumption.edu/explore-academics/undergraduate-studies/majors-minors</a>
Becker	Nursing-ASN, RN-BSN, pre-licensure, psychology, psych-mental health counseling. Online RN-BSN, psychology, psych-addictions counseling				worcester	<a href="https://www.becker.edu/academic/academic-programs/">https://www.becker.edu/academic/academic-programs/</a>
Clark University	Psychology				worcester	<a href="https://www.clarku.edu/academics/majors-and-minors/">https://www.clarku.edu/academics/majors-and-minors/</a>
Fitchburg State University	Nursing, RN-B.S.(online); LPN-B.S Nursing Bridge program(online); Biology/Health Sciences; Psychology; Human Services; Clinical Exercise Physiology; Counseling (LMHC); Forensic Nursing (online), Forensic Nursing Certificate (online); Special Issues in Mental Health Certificate; Healthcare Management (online/accelerated)	<b>Undergraduate Programs:</b> Nursing-B.S., RN- B.S.(online), LPN-B.S Nursing Bridge program(online), B.S. in Biology/Health Sciences, B.S. in Psychology, B.S. in Human Services, B.S. in Clinical Exercise Physiology; <b>Graduate Programs:</b> M.S. in Counseling (LMHC), M.S. in Forensic Nursing (online), Forensic Nursing Certificate (online), Special Issues in Mental Health Certificate; MBA/Healthcare Managment (online/accelerated)			Fitchburg	<a href="https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/undergraduate/">https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/undergraduate/</a>
Mass College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences	Nursing, PT, Pharmacy, Sonography				worcester	<a href="https://www.mcphs.edu/academics">https://www.mcphs.edu/academics</a>
Mt. Wachusett Community College	Nursing-ASN, medical assistant, pharmacy, human services, human services tech, LPN, medical office, substance abuse counseling, CNA, ESOL Nurse Assistant, Pharmacy Tech				gardner, leominster, devens	<a href="https://mwcc.edu/academics/degrees-certificates/">https://mwcc.edu/academics/degrees-certificates/</a>
QCC	Ophthalmic Assistant, Nurse Assistant, Home Health Aide, Personal Care Aide, Sterile Processing Technician Certificate,	AS, AA, Certificates Certificates	15 weeks - 2 years 1 week - 30 weeks	Credit courses Non-credit courses	worcester worchester	<a href="https://www.qcc.edu/academics">https://www.qcc.edu/academics</a> <a href="https://www.qcc.edu/center-workforce-development-and-continuing-education">https://www.qcc.edu/center-workforce-development-and-continuing-education</a>
QCC	medical office, LPN, pre-nursing, medical support specialist, medical assistant, pharmacy tech, human services				worcester	<a href="https://www.qcc.edu/academics/online-degrees-courses">https://www.qcc.edu/academics/online-degrees-courses</a>
Worcester State University	Nursing-traditional Bachelors of Science in Nursing Degree (BSN), RN to BSN, LPN to BSN; Fast Track BSN to Master of Science Nursing (MSN); Master of Science Nursing Educator (MSN); Master of Science Nursing Community Public Health (MSN) Post-Masters Certificate in Nursing Education (PMC); Post-Masters Certificate in Community Public Health (PMC); Bachelors of Science (Public Health); Master of Science-Speech Pathology; Master of Science-Occupational Therapy; Bachelors of Science (Health Education); Bachelors of Science (Psychology); Addiction Counseling Certificate (Interdisciplinary)	MS, BS, and Certificates	15 weeks to 4 years		Worcester	<a href="https://catalog.worcester.edu/undergraduate/school-education-health-natural-sciences/nursing/#programstext">https://catalog.worcester.edu/undergraduate/school-education-health-natural-sciences/nursing/#programstext</a> <a href="https://www.worcester.edu/PMC-Nursing-Education/">https://www.worcester.edu/PMC-Nursing-Education/</a> <a href="https://www.worcester.edu/Graduate-Programs/">https://www.worcester.edu/Graduate-Programs/</a> <a href="https://www.worcester.edu/Majors-Minors/?tax=Health%20Sciences">https://www.worcester.edu/Majors-Minors/?tax=Health%20Sciences</a> <a href="https://www.worcester.edu/CBI-Courses-in-Healthcare-and-Medical-Office/">https://www.worcester.edu/CBI-Courses-in-Healthcare-and-Medical-Office/</a>
<b>Regional Chapter 74 programs</b>						
Leominster HS	Health Assisting				Leominster	<a href="https://leominsterctei.org/shops-programs/health-occupations/">https://leominsterctei.org/shops-programs/health-occupations/</a>
Worcester Public Schools (North HS & WTHS)	Health Assisting				Worcester	<a href="https://worcesterschools.org/academics/career-pathways/the-health-science-academy-at-north-high-school/">https://worcesterschools.org/academics/career-pathways/the-health-science-academy-at-north-high-school/</a>
Tantasqua	Health Assisting				Brookfield	<a href="https://techhigh.us/health/">https://techhigh.us/health/</a>
Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical	Health Assisting				Upton	<a href="http://www.tantasqua.org/technical/health/">http://www.tantasqua.org/technical/health/</a>
Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical	Health Assisting				Fitchburg	<a href="https://www.montytech.net/domain/2142">https://www.montytech.net/domain/2142</a>
Bay path RVTHS Southern Worcester County Regional V	Health Assisting				Charlton	
<b>Regional Non-Credit Programs</b>						
Notre Dame Educational Bridge Center	High School Equivalency - with healthcare focus	High School equivalency	14 weeks	Offered virtually during COVID	Worcester	<a href="https://www.notredamehealthcare.org/education-center/about-the-center/">https://www.notredamehealthcare.org/education-center/about-the-center/</a> ; <a href="mailto:ssrandberg@NotreDamehealthcare.org">ssrandberg@NotreDamehealthcare.org</a>
Notre Dame Educational Bridge Center	English for the Workplace (ESOL course with healthcare focus)	Program completion certificate	14 weeks	Offered virtually during COVID	Worcester	<a href="https://www.notredamehealthcare.org/education-center/about-the-center/">https://www.notredamehealthcare.org/education-center/about-the-center/</a> ; <a href="mailto:ssrandberg@NotreDamehealthcare.org">ssrandberg@NotreDamehealthcare.org</a>
YOU Inc.	Nurse Assistant / Home Health Aide Training	Certificate	120 hours		Worcester	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GaDF2v3cbapjuN6XR1UNIFAGccilANx/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GaDF2v3cbapjuN6XR1UNIFAGccilANx/view?usp=sharing</a>
Fieldstone School	Phlebotomy Technician Program	National Phlebotmy Certification	10 weeks	7 weeks class and 3 weeks of clinical	worcester/Fitchburg	<a href="https://www.thefieldstoneschool.com/">https://www.thefieldstoneschool.com/</a>
Fieldstone School	Electrocardiogram	National ECG Certification	3 weeks		worcester/Fitchburg	<a href="https://www.thefieldstoneschool.com/">https://www.thefieldstoneschool.com/</a>
Fieldstone School	Nurses Aide, Home Health Aide,	Nurse Aide Certificate, Home Health Aide Certificate and CNA.	AM 4 weeks, PM 6 weeks	1 week clinical in a Nursing Home	worcester/fitchburg	<a href="https://www.thefieldstoneschool.com/">https://www.thefieldstoneschool.com/</a>
QCC	Ophthalmic Assistant, Nurse Assistant, Home Health Aide, Personal Care Aide (English & Spanish), Sterile Processing Technician Certificate, Veterinary Assistant, Personal Fitness Trainer Certification, Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers (CPR/AED), EMT-Basic, , Administrative Medical Professional,Registered Behavior Technician,Local Anesthesia for Dental Hygienists Permit L Certification,Dental Radiographic Techniques and Safeguards for the Dental Assistant, RN / LPN Refresher, Pharmacy Tech Bi-lingual, Contact Tracer and Infection Control	certificate	22 hours			
Porter & Chester	Med Assistant, LPN; dental assisting				worcester	<a href="https://porterchester.edu/programs/healthcare-programs">https://porterchester.edu/programs/healthcare-programs</a>
Peak Medical	medical Assistant; CNA/HHA; cardiac tech; phlebotomy tech				Worcester	<a href="https://peakmedicalacademy.com/">https://peakmedicalacademy.com/</a>
Bay Path RVTHS evening career tech ed	Health technology careers; dental assistant				Charlton	<a href="http://www.baypath.net/career-areas/health-technologies/">http://www.baypath.net/career-areas/health-technologies/</a>

Worcester Night Life	Medical admin; medical billing; medical assistant; medical admin assistant; dental assistant; medical coding; unit coordinator; physical therapy aide; medical interpreter; medical transcriptionist				Worcester	<a href="https://careertraining.ed2go.com/nightlife/health-and-fitness-programs?PAGE_NUMBER=3">https://careertraining.ed2go.com/nightlife/health-and-fitness-programs?PAGE_NUMBER=3</a>
Blackstone valley RTHS evening programs	Practical Nursing				Upton	<a href="https://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=803">https://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=803</a>
Worcester State University	Addiction Services Counselor; Advanced Medical Interpreter; Canine Massage Therapist; Clinical Medical Assistant; Dental Assistant; Dental Office Administrative Assistant; Health & Wellness Coach; Healthcare IT Professional; Health IT Cybersecurity Professional; EKG Technician; Hemodialysis Technician; HIPAA Security for Compliance Officer; In-Patient Coder; Legal; Nurse Consulting; MACRA-MIPS Professional (CMHP); Medical Administrative Assistant with EHR; Medical Billing; Medical Billing and Coding; Medical Interpreter (Spanish/English); Medical Office Manager; Medical Professional Legal Consultant; Medical Records Technician; Medical Scribe; Medical Transcription; Outpatient Coding; Optical Manager; Optician; Patient Care Technician; Pharmacy Technician; Phlebotomy Technician; Physical Therapy Aide; Professional Recovery Coach; Sterile Processing Technician; Professional Medical Auditor; Medical Risk Adjustment Coder; Veterinary Assistant; Veterinary Receptionist; Veterinary Office Manager	Certificate programs	6 weeks-52 weeks		Worcester	<a href="https://www.worcester.edu/CBI-Courses-in-Healthcare-and-Medical-Office/">https://www.worcester.edu/CBI-Courses-in-Healthcare-and-Medical-Office/</a>
Health Training Center	clinical med Assistant, patient care technician	certificate programs			worcester	<a href="https://healthtrainingcenter.com/">https://healthtrainingcenter.com/</a>
<b>OTHER MA PROGRAMS OUTSIDE CENTRAL REGION</b>						
American International College	Nursing-BSN, RN to BSN, MSN				Springfield	<a href="https://www.aic.edu/school-of-health-sciences/programs/">https://www.aic.edu/school-of-health-sciences/programs/</a>
Regis College	Nursing, Sonography				weston	<a href="https://www.regiscollege.edu/academics/schools">https://www.regiscollege.edu/academics/schools</a>
Salem State University	Nursing,-LPN-BSN, RN-BSN, Social Work				saalem	<a href="https://www.salemstate.edu/academics/majors-and-programs">https://www.salemstate.edu/academics/majors-and-programs</a>
Simmons College	Nursing-BSN, BS-MS Social Work				boston	<a href="https://www.simmons.edu/undergraduate/academics/majors-minors">https://www.simmons.edu/undergraduate/academics/majors-minors</a>
Springfield College	human services-online, substance use disorder-online				springfield	<a href="https://springfield.edu/programs/health-profession-programs-and-degrees">https://springfield.edu/programs/health-profession-programs-and-degrees</a>
Springfield Technical Community College	human services, medical assistant, medical lab tech, medical office, Nursing-ASN,				Springfield	<a href="https://www.stcc.edu/explore/programs/">https://www.stcc.edu/explore/programs/</a>
UMass Amherst	Nursing,				amherst	<a href="http://www.umassonline.net/programs/subject/147-health-sciences">http://www.umassonline.net/programs/subject/147-health-sciences</a>
UMass Boston	Nursing				boston	<a href="http://www.umassonline.net/programs/subject/147-health-sciences">http://www.umassonline.net/programs/subject/147-health-sciences</a>
UMass Dartmouth	Nursing				dartmouth	<a href="http://www.umassonline.net/programs/subject/147-health-sciences">http://www.umassonline.net/programs/subject/147-health-sciences</a>
UMass Lowell	Nursing, Lab Tech				lowell	<a href="http://www.umassonline.net/programs/subject/147-health-sciences">http://www.umassonline.net/programs/subject/147-health-sciences</a>
Bay State College	Nursing-RN-BSN also online , LPN-RN, ADN,				Boston	<a href="https://www.baystate.edu/programs/">https://www.baystate.edu/programs/</a>
Boston Career Institute	Medical Assistant, medical office administration				lowell, brookline, malden	<a href="https://bostoncareer.org/">https://bostoncareer.org/</a>
Boston College	Nursing-BA, MA, PHD, Social Work				newton	<a href="https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/academics/schools-fields-of-study.html">https://www.bc.edu/content/bc-web/academics/schools-fields-of-study.html</a>
Boston University	Health and Rehab, Lab Tech				boston	<a href="https://www.bu.edu/academics/">https://www.bu.edu/academics/</a>
Bristol Comm College	Nursing-RN-BSN, substance abuse counseling cert.				fall river	<a href="http://www.bristolcc.edu/learnatbristol/programsandcourses/">http://www.bristolcc.edu/learnatbristol/programsandcourses/</a>
Bunker Hill Community College	Medical assistant, patient care tech, nurses aid, home health aid. Professional human services cert. RN, Pharmacy Tech				Boston	<a href="https://www.bhcc.edu/academics/departments/">https://www.bhcc.edu/academics/departments/</a>
Endicott College	Nuesing-B.S.				beverly	<a href="https://www.endicott.edu/academics/programs-of-study">https://www.endicott.edu/academics/programs-of-study</a>
Framingham State University	RN-BSN				Framingham	<a href="https://www.framingham.edu/academics/colleges/science-technology-engineering-and-mathematics/">https://www.framingham.edu/academics/colleges/science-technology-engineering-and-mathematics/</a>
Laboure College	Nursing, LPN-RN, RN-BSN				Milton	<a href="https://www.laboure.edu/academic-programs">https://www.laboure.edu/academic-programs</a>
Lincoln Tech	Med Assistant, medical office assistant, LPN				somerville	<a href="https://www.lincolntech.edu/campus/somerville-ma">https://www.lincolntech.edu/campus/somerville-ma</a>
Mass Bay Community College	Sterile Processing, EMT, Lab Tech, Med Coding, ASN, Pharmacy, Phlebotomy, Sonography, Surg Tech				wellesly hills, framingham	<a href="https://www.massbay.edu/degrees-certificates">https://www.massbay.edu/degrees-certificates</a>
MGH Institute of Health Professions	Nursing-BSN-MS				charlestown	<a href="https://www.mghihp.edu/school-nursing">https://www.mghihp.edu/school-nursing</a>
Middlesex Comm College	medical assistant, medical lab tech, medical receptionist, nursing, nursing assistant				bedford, lowell	<a href="https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/academics/departments.aspx">https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/academics/departments.aspx</a>
Northeastern University	Nursing, Pharmacy				Boston	<a href="https://bouve.northeastern.edu/academics/undergraduate-and-plus-one-programs/">https://bouve.northeastern.edu/academics/undergraduate-and-plus-one-programs/</a>
Northern Essex Community College	med assistant, nursing-LPN-ASN, human services-alcohol/drug abuse, direct support, human services associate, childrens behavioral health specialist, community support human services practitioner				Haverhill	<a href="https://www.necc.mass.edu/learn/credit-programs/">https://www.necc.mass.edu/learn/credit-programs/</a>
Northshore Community College	Human services-direct support, dev.disabilities, drug/alcohol counseling, elder advocate, human services practitioner, child/youth advocate, medical assistant, nursing-LPN, nurse assistant, pharmacy tech,				danvers	<a href="https://www.northshore.edu/academics/index.html">https://www.northshore.edu/academics/index.html</a>
Bay Path University	BS in Health Services Administration; 18-credit Certificate in Health and Wellness				Longmeadow	<a href="https://www.baypath.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/health-and-wellness/">https://www.baypath.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/health-and-wellness/</a>
Quincy College	home health aide, human services, medical lab tech, nursing ASN				plymouth, quincy, online	<a href="https://quincycollege.edu/academics/areas-of-study/">https://quincycollege.edu/academics/areas-of-study/</a>
CareAcademy	caregiving certification training				online	<a href="https://careacademy.com/training/">https://careacademy.com/training/</a>

## Central Region Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (CRAMC)

### Section 11: Five Year Regional Training Plan - Region's Past and Present Manufacturing

**What is the present manufacturing training capacity in the region? (including all available programs).**

Provider	Program	Per class enrollment	Number of classes annually	Total Annual enrollment	
Quinsigamond Community College (QCC)	Manufacturing Technology (Program Code: MP)	30	3	90	
	Manufacturing Technology, Applied Manuf Option (Program Code: MPA)	30	3	90	
	Applied Manufacturing Certificate (Program Code: AMC)	30	3	90	
	CNC Technologies (Program Code: CNC)	30	3	90	
	Computer Aided Design (Program Code: CAD)	30	3	90	
	Manufacturing Technology (Program Code: MPC)	30	3	90	
	Electronics Engineering Technology-Biomedical Instrumentation Option (AS; Program Code: EEBI)	30	3	90	
	Electronics Engineering Technology-Mechatronics Option (AS; Program Code: EEMO)	30	3	90	
QCC – Center for Workforce Development & Continuing Ed (non-Credit)	Contextualized ESOL for Manufacturing	20	3	60	
	Fast Track Work Ready/MACWIC Level 1	20	3	60	
	2D Design & Fabrication	20	3	60	
	3D Design & Fabrication	20	3	60	
	Arduino Basics for Beginners	20	3	60	
	Basic Employability/Job Readiness	20	3	60	
	Contextualized Reading/Writing/Communication	20	3	60	
	Mechanical Aptitude Skills	20	3	60	
	Technical Mathematics	20	3	60	
	Machining Skills Basics	20	3	60	
	Reading & Interpreting Blueprints	20	3	60	
Mount Wachusett Community College	Robotics and Automation Technician	14			
	Quality Technician Training	20			
	Mechatronics Certificate	100			
	Manufacturing Technology	100			
	Industrial Readiness Training (Non-Credit)	24	1	24	
Worcester Polytechnic Institute	Continuing Ed – Certificate in Bio-manufacturing	8	2	16	
Montachusett Regional Vocational High School	HS Manufacturing Program: Advanced Manufacturing – Foundational Skills	25	2	50	
Worcester Technical High School	HS Manufacturing Program	12	1	12	

Worcester Public Schools	Innovation pathways Manufacturing Program	12	1	12	
Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School	HS Manufacturing Program – MACWIC L1	16	1	16	
	HS Manufacturing Program – MACWIC L1	16	1	16	
Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School	HS Machine Tool Technology	12	1	12	
	Adult Evening programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to 3-D CAD The SolidWorks® Way</li> <li>• Introduction to Machine Shop/ Manufacturing</li> <li>• Introduction to Welding</li> <li>• Basic MIG &amp; TIG welding</li> <li>• Intro To Mechanical Blue Print Reading</li> <li>• Introduction to MasterCam®</li> </ul>	68	2	136	
Webster Public Schools	Contextualized manufacturing ESOL program	12	2	24	
Blackstone Valley Education Hub*	Intro to manufacturing	0	0	0	
Grafton Job Corps	Manufacturing Trade Program	10	1	10	
MassMEP	WTFP Consortium Training Program				
Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce	Basic Manufacturing Training	15	1	15	

\*BV Ed Hub has not yet begun training

# Training & Education Search Results

24 item(s) found | Show  results per page

Sort by clicking on Column Headings. Reverse sort order by clicking the same column heading a second time.

Course Name	Address	Provider Name
<a href="#">40 Hour Refresher Program</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> ITA	255 Liberty Street Springfield, MA 01104  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">Tri-State CDL Training Center</a>
<a href="#">CDL A</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> Section 30 ITA Trade	978 NASH ROAD, 2ND FLOOR NEW BEDFORD, MA 02746  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">J &amp; J Driving School &amp; Logistics, Inc.</a>
<a href="#">CDL A 160 Commercial Drivers License Preparation Weekdays</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> Section 30 Trade ITA	1600 Osgood Street North Andover, MA 01845  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">New England Tractor Trailer</a>
<a href="#">CDL A 540</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> Trade ITA Section 30	1600 Osgood Street No. Andover, MA 01845  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">New England Tractor Trailer</a>
<a href="#">CDL A Commercial Drivers license preparation weekends only</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> Section 30 ITA Trade	1600 Osgood Street North Andover, MA 01845  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303300 - Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	<a href="#">New England Tractor Trailer</a>
<a href="#">CDL B 80</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> Section 30 Trade	1600 Osgood North Andover, MA 01845  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">New England Tractor Trailer</a>
<a href="#">CDL class A</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> ITA	10 Carter Street Tewksbury, MA 01876  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">Teamsters Local 25 Training Fund</a>
<a href="#">CDL Class A Driver Training_(Week End classes)</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> Trade ITA	11-13 Robbie Road Avon, MA 02322  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">Parker Professional Driving School</a>
<a href="#">CDL class b</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> ITA Trade	10 Carter Street Tewksbury, MA 01876  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers 53303300 - Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	<a href="#">Teamsters Local 25 Training Fund</a>
<a href="#">CDL Class B</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> Section 30 Trade ITA	1090 State Road Westport, MA 02790  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">Amaral Auto &amp; Truck Driving School, Inc.</a>
<a href="#">CDL CLASS B / DPU</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> Section 30 Trade	978 NASH ROAD, 2ND FLOOR NEW BEDFORD, MA 02746  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53302200 - Bus Drivers, School or Special Client 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">J &amp; J Driving School &amp; Logistics, Inc.</a>
<a href="#">CDL Class B w/School Bus Cert.</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> ITA Section 30 Trade	1090 State Road Westport, MA 02790  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53302200 - Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	<a href="#">Amaral Auto &amp; Truck Driving School, Inc.</a>
<a href="#">CDL Class B w/School Bus Cert. Hydraulic Brakes Only</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> Trade ITA Section 30	1090 State Road Westport, MA 02790  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53302200 - Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	<a href="#">Amaral Auto &amp; Truck Driving School, Inc.</a>
<a href="#">CDL DRIVER TRAINING FOR BUS DRIVER</a>  <b>Course Approved For:</b> ITA	11-13 Robbie Road Avon, MA 02322  <b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	<a href="#">Parker Professional Driving School</a>



<a href="#">CDL-B</a>	978 Nash Road, 2nd Floor New Bedford, MA 02746	<a href="#">J &amp; J Driving School &amp; Logistics, Inc.</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> Section 30 ITA Trade	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303300 - Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	
<a href="#">CLASS A CDL TRAINING FOR TRACTOR TRAILER DRIVERS</a>	11-13 Robbie Rd. Avon, MA 02322	<a href="#">Parker Professional Driving School</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> ITA Trade Section 30	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	
<a href="#">CLASS B TRUCK CDL TRAINING</a>	11-13 Robbie Road Avon, MA 02322	<a href="#">Parker Professional Driving School</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> Trade ITA Section 30	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	
<a href="#">Class B with Passenger Endorsment Combo / Without Automatic Restriction</a>	50 Holyoke St Holyoke, MA 01040	<a href="#">United Tractor Trailer School, Inc.</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> ITA	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53302100 - Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	
<a href="#">Commercial Driver License Program</a>	32 Field Road Somers, CT 06071	<a href="#">New England Tractor Trailer</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> Trade ITA	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	
<a href="#">Commercial Driver's License (CDL A)</a>	32 Field Road Somers, CT 06071	<a href="#">New England Tractor Trailer</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> Trade Section 30	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	
<a href="#">Commercial Driver's License 160 (CDL-A)</a>	600 Moshassuck Valley Industrial High Pawtucket, RI 02860	<a href="#">New England Tractor Trailer</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> ITA Section 30 Trade	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	
<a href="#">Commercial Drivers License 540 (CDL - A)</a>	600 MOSHASSUCK VALLEY INDUSTRIAL HIGHWAY PAWTUCKET, RI 02860	<a href="#">New England Tractor Trailer</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> Section 30 Trade	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 53303200 - Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	

Sort by clicking on Column Headings. Reverse sort order by clicking the same column heading a second time.

▲ Course Name	Address	Provider Name
<a href="#">APICS Certifications</a>	28 Lord Road, Suite 205, Marlborough, MA 01752	<a href="#">Quality &amp; Productivity Solutions, Inc.</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> Trade ITA	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 11306100 - Purchasing Managers 13102200 - Wholesale and Retail Buyers, Except Farm Products 11305103 - Biofuels Production Managers 43508103 - Stock Clerks- Stockroom, Warehouse, or Storage Yard 11307100 - Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers 11305102 - Geothermal Production Managers 51919800 - Helpers--Production Workers 11919904 - Supply Chain Managers 11305100 - Industrial Production Managers	

<a href="#">Logistics and Distribution Management</a>	1250 Hancock Street Quincy, MA 02169	<a href="#">Quincy College</a>
<b>Course Approved For:</b> Trade Section 30 ITA	<b>Targeted Occupations:</b> 11307100 - Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**FOR THE**  
**CENTRAL MA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA**  
**BETWEEN THE**  
**MASSHIRE CENTRAL REGION WORKFORCE BOARD AND ITS WORKFORCE INNOVATION**  
**AND OPPORTUNITY ACT PARTNERS**

## **I. PURPOSE**

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) communicates the agreement developed and executed between the MassHire Central Region Workforce Board (MCRWB), with agreement of the City Manager, City of Worcester, serving as the region’s Chief Elected Official (CEO), the One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) operator, the MassHire Central Career Centers (MCCC), and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Partners (herein referred to as “Partners”), relating to the operation of the OSCC delivery of service in the Central MA Workforce Development Area (WDA).

The MCRWB will act as the convener of MOU negotiations and together with the Partners will shape how local OSCC services are delivered.

This MOU defines the roles and responsibilities of the MOU parties in operationalizing the delivery of services and other activities to produce the best possible outcomes for shared customers, including youth, job seekers and businesses, consistent with all Partner program authorizing statutes and regulations.

For purposes of this MOU, shared customers are defined as youth, job seekers, and businesses that are eligible for and receive services from more than one WIOA Partner program. Shared customers benefit from services and resources delivered across multiple WIOA Partner programs and other stakeholders that are aligned to meet an individual’s needs. Shared customers also meet the definition in the Title II regulations of WIOA, CFR 34 Part 463.3 of “concurrent enrollment or co-enrollment referring to enrollment by an eligible individual in two or more of the six core programs administered under the Act.” (Programs and Activities Authorized by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II of the WIOA).)

## **II. CENTRAL MA WIOA PARTNERS**

In accordance with WIOA Section 121(c), this Local Memorandum of Understanding has been developed and executed with agreement of the region’s CEO and the WIOA OSCC required partners mandated in 20 CFR Part 678.400 (See Attachment A for regional partner contact list).

The required OSCC partners are:

1. **The Adult Program** (Title I), as part of the Department of Career Services (DCS), Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD);
2. **The Dislocated Worker Program** (Title I), as part of DCS/EOLWD;
3. **The Youth Program** (Title I), as part of DCS/EOLWD;
4. **The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program** (Title II), as part of Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Executive Office of Education (EOE); represented by the Worcester Public Schools, the Webster Public Schools, Training Resources of America, and Ascentria Community Services, Inc., Quinsigamond Community College, Sheriff's Department of Worcester, and Catholic Charities.
5. **The Wagner-Peyser Act Program** (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III), as part of DCS, EOLWD; represented through the region's OSCC operator, MCCC;
6. **The Vocational Rehabilitation Program** (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV), as part of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS);
7. **Federal-state unemployment compensation program**, as part of the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA), EOLWD;
8. **Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs** (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.)), as part of DCS, EOLWD;
9. **Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program** (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.) as part of DCS, EOLWD;
10. **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program** (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) as part of Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), EOHHS;
11. **Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**, (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)), as part of DTA, EOHHS;
12. **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)** (Programs authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.)); represented by Catholic Charities and Operation A.B.L.E. of Greater Boston.
13. **Ex-Offender Program (Sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007)**: Sheriff's Department of Worcester.
14. **YouthBuild**; operated in the Central MA region by Training Resources of America, Inc.

Non-required community partners in this local MOU are:

15. The Worcester Community Action Council, the federally-designated anti-poverty agency for Worcester and 45 neighboring communities;
16. Job Corps; operated in the Central MA region at the Grafton Job Corps Center by Adams and Associates, Inc.;
17. New England Farm Workers' Council

Additional parties to this MOU may be added.

### **III. DURATION**

WIOA Section 121(c) (g) requires that the MOU shall be reviewed not less than once in every 3-year period to ensure appropriate funding and effective delivery of services, and physical and programmatic accessibility. WIOA Regulations Subpart C 20 CFR Part 678.500 further requires MOU renewal following the 3-year review if substantial changes have occurred.

This agreement shall commence on July 1, 2021 and shall terminate on June 30, 2024, unless otherwise terminated by an individual Partner with 30-days written notice to all Partners, by agreement of all parties, or superseded.

By signing the MOU, all parties agree to reviewing and modifying the local MOU on an as needed basis to ensure further development and alignment with local area priorities and strategies to serve shared customers as well as to update the MOU to satisfy all requirements as identified by WIOA.

### **IV. ASSURANCES**

The MCRWB and he Partners agree to conduct the following activities at a local level:

1. Enter into a local MOU with the MassHire Workforce Board relating to operation of the MassHire Career Center delivery system.
2. Participate in the operation of the MassHire Career Center delivery system consistent with the terms of this MOU, the requirements of WIOA, and the requirements of Federal laws authorizing the programs and activities.
3. Agree to serve Shared Customers and define how multiple providers, services and resources should support youth, job seekers, and businesses.
4. Utilize the MassHire Career Center Customer Flow and incorporate partner agency points of referral whether in-person or virtual to ensure accessibility and availability of programs and services for shared customers.
5. Ensure the effective use of modern tools and technology that enable shared customers to access needed services to complete program participation and achieve training and employment goals.
6. Develop a process for partner communication, referrals, enrollment, and sharing outcome information on shared customers to staff, and develop a process to review data on shared customers.
7. Use a portion of the funds available for programs and activities to maintain the MassHire Career

Center delivery system, including infrastructure and shared costs of MassHire Career Centers, through methods agreed upon by the Local Board, Chief Elected Official, and Partners. If no consensus on methods is reached, the Governor, after consultation with the Chief Elected Official, Local Board, and State Board shall determine the portion of funds to be provided (WIOA sec. 121(a) (h) (1) (C)).

8. Provide representation on the Local Workforce Boards to the extent possible and/or participate in Local Board ad hoc activities/events or on standing committees.
9. Convene locally as an MOU Team at least quarterly and agree to the roles and responsibilities each Partner will have in the development of a diversity, equitable, and inclusive integrated service delivery strategy that meets the needs of customers and businesses.
10. The MOU will be reviewed, and if substantial changes have occurred, renewed, not less than once every 3-year period to ensure appropriate funding and delivery of services. The MOU must be updated to reflect any change in the MHCC Partner infrastructure cost contributions.

## **V. MOU CONTENT (DEVELOPMENT, PRIORITY POPULATIONS, AND SHARED SERVICES)**

1. This MOU was developed through a joint task force consisting of Partner representatives from within the Central MA WDA. These staff have come together to form the region's WIOA Partner Leadership Council (see Attachment B: Central MA WIOA Partnership Structure).
2. The following regional populations are prioritized by the Partners for receipt of shared services:
  - a. Unemployment insurance claimants;
  - b. Low-income adults, including TANF and SNAP recipients;
  - c. Homeless;
  - d. Adult Education participants (Title II);
  - e. Individuals with disabilities (Vocational Rehabilitation Title IV);
  - f. Veterans;
  - g. Older workers;
  - h. Re-entry populations;
  - i. Youth, including youth with barriers to employment; and
  - j. Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers.
3. The Central MA WDA continuum of services available for shared customers (including each priority populations) includes:
  - a. Referrals: until such time as the Commonwealth may develop an online referral process, Partners shall utilize the regional referral process guidebook to assist in the smooth referral of shared customers to Partner programs as appropriate. This regional guidebook has been developed by the Partners, be available electronically to all Partner staff, and describe:
    - The services and activities available from each Partner program;
    - General eligibility for each Partner program;

- Details regarding the steps necessary for program enrollment;
- A lead contact person to serve as a Partner staff liaison.

Additionally, partners will further work together to identify and implement new methods to increase referrals to Partners and joint service delivery, such as the use of virtual/online tools.

- b. Intake & Orientation: until such time as the Commonwealth shall develop an online tool to share intake and enrollment data between Partner agencies, each Partner shall utilize the intake and orientation process necessary to fulfill their program requirements. Partners shall document within their system(s) if a customer is currently receiving services from WIOA Partners, and also include introductory information regarding services and programming available through the other regional Partners when appropriate.
- c. Career Assessment: the Partners agree to share career assessment results when a referral is given.
- d. Career Planning: when making a referral, the Partners will forward any career planning information that has been developed with the customer or coordinating shared follow-up activities.
- e. Career Readiness /Training/Education: the Partners agree to review and where appropriate consolidate (combine/share) workshops/curricula. Partners will also seek to leverage each other's staff resources through cross-training of staff in workshop delivery, including online readiness tools and shall allow for priority enrollment of Partner-referred customers when offering career pathway training and education, to the maximum extent possible under program requirements and logistical or time constraints.
- f. Job Search Assistance: the Partners agree to coordinate shared customer job search activities through joint case-management efforts when practical and offer customer referrals to the career center when these services are appropriate, including referrals for placement opportunities available through the career center's employment referral process.
- g. Case-management: the Partners agree to coordinate services for high-need/high risk shared customers through regular contact with each other. These contacts may be via phone, email or in-person and utilize electronic tools as appropriate to manage and document their efforts. The region's WIOA Partner staff will further connect through quarterly networking opportunities.
- h. Data/Performance Tracking: Subject to applicable legal constraints, including but not necessarily limited to those contained in G. L. 151A and 20 C.F.R. Pt. 603, the parties of this MOU agree to seek increased sharing of data with a view to improving the quality of service-delivery to both job-seekers and business-customers. The Party whose data is requested to be shared shall be the judge, in its sole discretion, of the legal constraints governing whether and how its data may be shared. The parties of this MOU understand that a shared data system is being designed at the state level and will fully support the development and implementation of a state-level data system, subject to the foregoing limitations.

The Central MA WDA WIOA Partnership services delivery model map for priority populations can be found in Attachment C.

4. A description of the continuum of services available for business customers in the Central MA WDA can be found in Attachment D, which also includes information regarding the flow of business services and the labor-matching process used at the career centers, and business customer feedback shall be utilized by the career center. Partners that interact with businesses are able to identify demand-driven career pathway programming needs and assist with the development and coordination of responses to these identified employer needs (see Attachment E: Central MA Demand Driven Development Chart).
5. The Partners collectively recognize the pain and disparities caused by systemic racism and other institutional sources of inequality and pledge to advance the principles of greater access to programmatic resources, as well as inclusion of our diverse WDA's residents when forming policy and planning programming. We commit to addressing structural barriers to equality and to professional development regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion.
6. The Central MA WDA WIOA Partnership services delivery continuum charts for priority populations is found in Attachment F. These charts include information regarding access to technology and materials available through the region's OSCC, for each of the above priority populations in the region. Furthermore, Partners agree to share technology-based tools wherever practical and allowable to support delivery of items a-h above to shared customers with career center membership, including the use of MA JobQuest, Career Ready 101, TORQ, and the online resume builder by the career center and Partner staff. See Virtual Customer Flow chart (Attachment G).
7. When necessary and appropriate, the Partners will work to develop and implement service delivery for shared customers outside of regular hours of operation (e.g. evenings and weekends), including virtual services made available online.
8. The partners agree to support the work of the MCRWB and regional career centers in building skilled worker pipelines for priority and critical industries identified in the Central Region Workforce Blueprint (see Attachment H) to the extent possible, including assistance with project development, recruitment, and case-management.
9. As part of the region's ongoing effort to improve coordination and effectiveness of services, the Partners shall work together to develop and deliver coordinated staff development and training, including training on topics such as:
  - System integration: Partner program benefits/services/eligibility, MassHire BizWorks, performance data tracking, customer referral process, online services use
  - Professional growth: time management, case-notes,
  - Specific interest: cultural competence, disability tools and supports, language resources
 The Professional Development Staff Group shall coordinate these trainings and identify additional topics as appropriate to support continuous improvement, including equity and inclusion.

10. Partners agree to assist with the development and implementation of a joint regional WIOA partner plan for coordinating marketing and outreach of programs and services for jobseekers, youth and businesses.
11. The Partners agree that they will support the ongoing effort to create an effective cross-Partner staff networking group and to assist with the recognition and celebration of staff, Partner and customer success, including nominating teams and individuals for the MassHire Awards.
12. All required WIOA Partners will work in good faith locally and with state officials from each of the Partner agencies as necessary to fund joint costs in a manner that satisfies the requirements of section 121(h) of WIOA for purposes of funding the one-stop system. Partners agree to therefore work together to develop the formula for distribution of shared and infrastructure funding based upon local data for each of the 16 workforce areas. Inter-Agency Service Agreements have been executed with MassHire Department of Career Services, who is the State Workforce Agency (SWA), and each required WIOA State Partner to utilize the current integrated budget format to show in-kind and shared costs, including infrastructure costs as a method to record joint costs. Notwithstanding the above, the City of Worcester is not required to contribute funding beyond amounts received from federal, state or private sources. A general framework of this funding, including use of programmatic, administrative, and in-kind costs can be found in Attachment I: Central Region WIOA Partner Resource Sharing Matrix.
13. The Partners agree to negotiate with WIOA Required Partners locally when state level infrastructure agreements are not in place.

## **VI. COMPETITIVE SELECTION OF ONE STOP CAREER CENTERS**

Required WIOA Partners agree to participate in the selection process of the OSCC Operator as required by WIOA and coordinated by the MCRWB, at least once every four years.

## **VII. PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The MCRWB, in agreement with the required WIOA Partners, agree to jointly review the WIOA mandated performance metrics for the workforce area and/or metrics as negotiated as part of any shared services and infrastructure contract costs between the MCRWB and the mandated Partner, including potential incentives and penalties.

## **VIII. SIGNATORIES**



By signing this agreement, all parties agree to the provisions contained herein are subject to all applicable, Federal, State, and local laws, regulations and/or guidelines relating to nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, displacement, privacy rights of participants, and maintenance of data and other confidential information relating to OSCC customers.

This MOU may be executed in counterparts, and when each party has signed and delivered at least one such counterpart, each counterpart shall be deemed an original, and, when taken together with other signed counterparts, shall constitute one MOU, which shall be binding upon and effective as to all parties.

By signatures affixed below, the parties specify their agreement:

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Edward M. Augustus, Jr.  
City of Worcester (Chief Elected Official)

---

Paul Gilbody  
MassHire Central Region Workforce Board, Chair

---

Jeffrey T. Turgeon  
MassHire Central Region Workforce Board

---

Janice Ryan Weekes  
MassHire Central Career Centers (Service Provider)

---

Heriberto Flores  
New England Farm Workers' Council

---

Evelize Arroyo-Barrows  
MA Department of Unemployment Assistance

---

Mervyn Campbell  
MA Commission for the Blind

---

Ellen Spencer  
MA Rehabilitation Commission

---

Angela Bovill  
Ascentria Community Services, Inc.

---

Lori Jacques  
MA Department of Transitional Assistance

---

Mark Gyurina  
Operation A.B.L.E., Inc

---

Susan Maedler  
Catholic Charities of Worcester (SCSEP)

---

Jennifer Brunelle  
Worcester Public Schools

---

Colleen Lanza  
Grafton Job Corps Center

---

Stephen Marini  
Quinsigamond Community College

---

David Tuttle  
Sheriff's Department of Worcester

---

Jenna Gouin  
Webster Public Schools

---

Douglas Daigle  
Training Resources of America (ACLS)

---

Marybeth Campbell  
Worcester Community Action Council

---

Douglas Daigle  
Training Resources of America (YouthBuild)

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Deborah Baillargeon  
MA Department of Career Services

---

Sonia Hernandez  
MA Department of Career Services

---

Jason Matthews  
Central region WIOA Operator

# Attachment 4

## MCRWB Regional Career Center Scorecard

Quarter:

FY21

1

Career Center Qualitative Feedback				
Measure	Feedback Outcomes	Orientation Survey	Workshop Survey	Employer Survey
Weight	5	5	5	10
Goal	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8
Actual	3.92	3.65	3.73	2.43
Weighted Score	5.16	4.93	4.91	6.39
Prev. Quarter Change				
Prev. Year Change				

Job Seeker Measures						
Measure	Total Job Seekers Served V. Goal	Job Seekers Entering Employment V. Goal	Job Seekers Receiving Referrals V. Goal	WIOA Performance (summary)	RESEA Performance (Summary)	Job Seekers counseled % v. Goal
Weight	7.5	12.5	5	10	10	5
Goal	2,444	87.0%	158.25	10	10	611
Actual	1,851	82.0%	85	10.60	6.72	1,193
Weighted Score	5.68	11.78	2.69	10.60	6.72	9.77
Prev. Quarter Change	-6,506					
Prev. Year Change						

Employer Services Measures				
Measure	Total Employers Served V. Goal	Employers - Job Fairs & recruitments	Employers Receiving Referrals	Employers Hiring Referrals
Weight	7.5	7.5	5	5
Goal	212.25	73	31.25	4.25
Actual	170	64	23	1
Weighted Score	6.01	6.62	3.68	1.18
Prev. Quarter Change				
Prev. Year Change				

Total	
Measure	Total
Weight	100
Goal	100
Actual	
Weighted Score	86.11
Prev. Quarter Change	
Prev. Year Change	



Measure	WIOA Adult Entered Employment Q2 Rate V. Goal	WIOA Adult Emp. Retention Q4 Rate V. Goal	WIOA Adult Median Earnings in 2nd Quarter after Exit Actual v. Goal	WIOA DW Entered Employment Q2 Rate V. Goal	WIOA DW Emp. Retention Q4 Rate V. Goal	WIOA DW Median Earnings in 2nd Quarter after Exit Actual v. Goal	TOTAL
Weight	2	1.5	1.5	2	1.5	1.5	10.60
Goal	87%	78%	\$5,800	86%	85%	\$8,300	
Actual	66%	67.0%	\$7,910	87%	89%	\$11,923	
Weighted Score	1.52	1.29	2.05	2.02	1.57	2.15	
Prev. Quarter Change							
Prev. Year Change							

Total Employers Served - Tab 1 Employers/Table 1 Plan vs Actual

Total Job Seekers Served - Tab 3 Jobseekers/Table 1 - Planned vs Actual

WIOA Adult Entered Employment - Table 11/Chart 1/Column H&I

WIOA Adult Employment Retention - Table 11/Chart 2/Column H&I

WIOA Adult Median Earnings - Table 11/Chart 3/Column H&I

WIOA DW Entered Employment - Tab11/Chart 6/Column H&I

WIOA DW Employment Retention - Table11/Chart 7/Column H&I

WIOA DW Median Earnings - Tab11/Chart 8/Column H&I

Measure	RESEA Completion Rate V. Goal (95%)	RESEA entered employment Rate V. Goal (12%)	Total
Weight	5	5	
Goal	95%	12%	
Actual	96%	4.0%	
Weighted Score	5.05	1.67	
Prev. Quarter Change	13%	-77%	
Prev. Year Change			


6.72

From the special RESEA state report (Note calendar year):

REEMPLOYMENT  
SERVICES AND  
ELIGIBILITY  
ASSESSMENT (RESEA)  
PLAN VS. ACTUAL  
JANUARY 1, 2019 -  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

GOAL / OBJECTIVE	STAFF	PERFORMANCE
1. Increase # of employers new to the Career Center by 5% (231 in FY19)	BSRs	Conduct company site visits to introduce business services and assist with recruiting / hiring needs. Make a minimum of 2 site visits per month per BSR. Use LMI to identify companies new to the Service Delivery Area, and locate companies posting jobs using external websites.
2. Meet or exceed # of employers listing job orders by 5% (238 in FY19)	BSRs	Fulfill employer post-a-job requests. Add job orders to MOSES / JobQuest within 2 business days of request. Conduct follow up activities with employers who previously listed job orders to solicit additional postings.
3. Increase # of employers receiving referrals by 10% (114 in FY19)	Recruiters	Manage all elements of the recruiting process for assigned Candidate Matching services. Perform outreach, screening/vetting, resume & interview preparation with jobseekers. Submit candidate list to company by 10th business day of request.
4. Increase # of job fairs and recruitments by 5% (179 in FY19)	BSRs	Execute and or assist with monthly, quarterly and annual recruiting events / job days / job fairs. Hold a minimum of 20 job days, 3 job fairs and 4 specialized job fairs per year. Arrange ad hoc recruiting events on an ongoing basis. Expand recruiting events into the Milford area.
5. Increase number of job seeker job referrals (575 in FY19)	ALL Employment Counselors	Make a minimum of 5 job referrals per month per Employment Counselor. Reference Job Order Listing to locate potential job matches for each customer served. Make specific referrals to recruiting events / job days jobs.
6. Increase # of employers who hired a referral by 25% (15 in FY19)	Recruiters	Conduct 90 day follow up activities (on the 15th and 30th of each month) with employers to solicit customer satisfaction levels and hiring data for Candidate Matching Services job referrals.
	BSRs	Conduct 30 day follow up activities (on the 15th of each month) with employers to solicit customer satisfaction levels and hiring data. Conduct 90 day follow up activities for specialized and annual job fairs.
7. Increase marketing / outreach activities by 2% (758 in FY19)	BSRs	Initiate employer events, such as training and resource sessions; attend community and business related forums; perform outreach to industry specific businesses for the purpose of specialized job fairs; improve distribution strategy for disseminating relevant industry and employment related information such as LMI, information on grants, OJT and Apprenticeship opportunities, etc.
8. Provide employment counseling services to at least 30% of total customers served through the Career Center	Employment Counselors	Conduct post-CCS 1:1 assessment meetings and provide individualized employment counseling services as relevant to jobseekers within target populations (WPP, Spanish Speaking, shared partner customers, etc.)
9. Increase # of entered employments by 2% (1364 in FY19)	Employment Counselors	Add a minimum of one entered employment per month per Counselor; conduct follow up activities to capture employment data.
10. Maintain a 95% or higher completion rate for all RESEA enrollments (calendar year)	RESEA Counselors	Conduct Initial RESEA Review and RESEA Review meetings according to RESEA policies & procedures.
11. Maintain a 12% or higher entered employment rate for RESEA customers (calendar year)	RESEA Counselors	Conduct employment status follow up activities; enter employment data into MOSES in a timely manner
12. Provide resource room services to at least 15% of total customers served through the Career Center and increase Professor Teaches participation by 1%	Resource Room	Provide guidance, technical support and resources to customers using the Resource Room and Professor Teaches. Promote Professor Teaches tutorials to resource room visitors.

# Attachment 5

	<b>Function:</b> Priority of Services	<b>SOP #</b>	C5-C8.1
		<b>Revision #</b>	1
		<b>Implementation Date</b>	11/25/2018
<b>Page #</b>	1 of 9	<b>Last Reviewed/Update Date</b>	12/19/2018
<b>SOP Owner</b>	Operations Manager	<b>Approval</b>	JRW

## Priority of Services

### 1. Purpose

To provide priority of service to Veterans and eligible spouses of certain Veterans as well as other priority populations as identified in WIOA ((WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E)) —Priority for individualized career services (ref. § 678.430(b)) for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services in any workforce preparation program directly funded, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.

### 2. Scope

Priority of Service (POS) requires that our Veterans and WIOA priority populations receive priority throughout the full array of services provided through the MassHire Career Center System.

**NOTE:** See C5-C8.2 for further information regarding services and reporting for Veterans.

### 3. Prerequisites

To obtain priority of service for a specific program, a Veteran or eligible spouse must meet the statutory definition of a “covered person” and also must meet any other statutory eligibility requirements applicable to that program.:

#### Active Duty

Served 180 (peacetime) / 90 (wartime) days of Active Federal Service (not to include training) AND has a discharge classified as anything other than dishonorable.

#### OR

Discharged from active duty due to a service-connected disability AND has a discharge classified as anything other than dishonorable.


#### National Guard or Reserves

Served 180+ days of Active Federal Service (not to include training) pursuant to Title 10, US Code during a period of war, or during a period in which a campaign or expedition badge was authorized AND has a discharge classified as anything other than dishonorable.

#### Eligible Spouse ★

- ▶ Spouse of a veteran, who died as a result of a service connected disability



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- ▶ Spouse of a veteran, who is listed, for a period of more than 90 days, as missing in action (MIA), captured or detained
- ▶ Spouse of a veteran with a 100% service connected disability

★ Spouse is removed from POS eligibility list upon the veteran's receipt of a revised disability rating or upon divorce

#### **Priority WIOA Adult Populations:**

(WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E)) —Priority for individualized career services (ref. § 678.430(b)) and training services funded with Title I adult funds must be given to recipients of:

- public assistance,
- other low income individuals, and
- individuals who are basic skills deficient (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(5)(B)) in the local area.

The priority established under §680.600(b) does not necessarily mean that these services may only be provided to recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, and individuals without basic work skills.

## **4. Responsibilities**


### **Reports**

- **Bi-Weekly:** On a bi-weekly basis, the Veteran Representative (V/R) will generate a Crystal Report - "*Veterans Not Contacted*" - which captures veterans who may not have been contacted by a V/R.

**Monthly:** On a monthly basis, the V/R will generate the following Crystal Reports and use the resulting information to follow up and / or conduct outreach activities with veteran customers

- Vets in Training: Captures veterans who should be dual enrolled in veteran case management and Title 1 case management
- Veterans with SBE (Significant Barriers to Employment): Captures veterans with SBE's

Once a month, the Veterans Employment and Training Program Coordinator generates a Veteran Activity Report from MOSES that provides a summary of

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individual performance of veteran services for the state of Massachusetts. (See Below)

#### **WIOA Adult Priority Populations:**

For WIOA Adult priority populations, all career center counselors and staff will utilize the priority of service as a guide to the managing of accessibility for the individualized career services (ref. § 678.430(b)) and training services funded with Title I adult funds he/she oversees.

### **5. Procedure**

#### **Veterans Intake Process**

All customers are screened for Priority of Service (POS) and Significant Barriers to Employment (SBEs).

Customers are asked, "Have you ever served in the military?" at point of entry (walk-in or upon arrival for Career Center Seminar).

Customers who respond in the affirmative are asked to complete an SBE checklist.

The SBE Checklist is referred to the Veterans Representative (V/R) for handling.


#### **WIOA Adult Priority Intake Process**

Additionally, all customers seeking individualized career services (ref. § 678.430(b)) and training services funded with Title I adult funds will be asked if they are recipients of:

- public assistance,
- other low income individuals, and
- individuals who are basic skills deficient (as defined in WIOA sec. 3(5)(B)) in the local area.

Whenever a staff person determines an applicant meets the above definition they shall gather the necessary eligibility documentation and apply this priority during the enrollment process.

Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all DOL-funded job training programs, which include WIOA programs. However, as described in TEGl 10-09, when programs are statutorily required to provide

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priority for a particular group of individuals, such as the WIOA priority described above, priority must be provided in the following order:

- i. First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds.
- ii. Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds.
- iii. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
- iv. Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.


*“Note: When past income is an eligibility determinant for Federal employment or training programs, any amounts received as military pay or allowances by any person who served on active duty, and certain other specified benefits must be disregarded for the veteran and for other individuals for whom those amounts would normally be applied in making an eligibility determination. Military earnings are not to be included when calculating income for veterans or transitioning service members for this priority, in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4213.”*

## 6. References

**Veterans under WIOA sec. 3(63)(A) and 38 U.S.C. 101** receive priority of service in all Department of Labor-funded training programs under 38 U.S.C. 4215 and described in 20 CFR 1010. A Veteran must still meet each program's eligibility criteria to receive services under the respective employment and training program.

**WIOA Adult priority population:** (WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E)) —Priority for individualized career services (ref. § 678.430(b)), and 38 U.S.C. 4213.

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## 7. Definitions

### Veterans Priority of Service (POS)

US Military Veterans and covered persons receive Priority of Service (POS) over all non-covered persons in all employment, training, and placement services in any workforce preparation program funded by the Department of Labor. Veterans receive access to services or resources provided by the US Department of Labor earlier in time than non-covered persons. Covered persons also include spouse of a Veteran who died of a service connected disability, has a total service connected disability, missing in action or prisoner of war.

### Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE's)

Veterans with significant barriers to employment include:

- Service Connected Disability
- Homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Left military service within the past 36 months AND has been unemployed for 27+ weeks
- Ex-offender
- Lacks a High School Diploma or Hi-SET
- Low income (economically disadvantaged) OR receiving Chapter 115 benefits from a VSO (Veteran Service Officer)
- Between the ages of 18 & 24
- Domestic violence
- Transitioning service member
  - Involuntarily separated reduction in force (RIF)
  - Not meeting career readiness plan / DD form 2958
  - Wounded Warriors

### Covered Persons

To obtain priority of service for a specific program, a Veteran or eligible spouse must meet any eligibility requirements applicable to that program.

**WIOA Local Four-Year Plan Signatories**

**Fiscal Years 2022 - 2025**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of MassHire Workforce Board

This Local Four-Year Plan shall be fully executed as of the date of signatures below, and effective through June 30, 2025. The Plan may be amended or modified if agreed to by all parties.

**Signature indicates acceptance of the Local Four-Year Plan.**

**Typed Name: Edward M. Augustus, Jr.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Elected Official (or Designee) **CITY MANAGER**

**7/23/21**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Typed Name: Paul Gilbody**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MassHire Workforce Board Chair (or Designee)

**7/21/21**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Typed Name: Jeffrey Turgeon**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MassHire Workforce Board Director (or Designee)

**7/21/21**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Typed Name: Janice Ryan Weekes**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MassHire Career Center Director and Title I Fiscal Agent

**7/21/21**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Typed Name: Deborah Baillargeon**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MDCS Operations Manager

**7/21/21**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date