

## MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board (MHCWB) WIOA Local 4-Year Plan

### 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 *(Note: ALL Hampden responses are in sections (i) and (ii))*

The following is our analysis for Hampden County, however we also wish to note that the regional analysis for the Pioneer Valley via our Regional Blueprint also provides a wealth of information.

Please see our Updated Blueprint as approved by the Governor's Workforce Skills Cabinet:

<http://masshirehcb.com/massachusetts-regional-workforce-development-planning/>

Also a Tableau view of our Priority and Other Critical Industries at Occupations are at:

- <http://masshirehcb.com/massachusetts-regional-workforce-development-planning/regional-blueprint-priority-industries/> and
- <http://masshirehcb.com/massachusetts-regional-workforce-development-planning/occupations/>

- i. Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations

## Economy Overview

<b>466,382</b>	<b>219,060</b>	<b>\$55.4K</b>
Population (2020)	Total Regional Employment	Median Household Income (2019)
Population decreased by 2,731 over the last 5 years but is projected to grow by 417 over the next 5 years.	Jobs decreased by 7,050 over the last 5 years but are projected to grow by 605 over the next 5 years.	Median household income is \$7.4K below the national median household income of \$62.8K.

- As of 2020 the region's population declined by 0.6% since 2015, falling by 2,731. Population is expected to increase by 0.1% between 2020 and 2025, adding 417.
- From 2015 to 2020, jobs declined by 3.1% in Hampden County, MA from 226,110 to 219,060. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 1.3% by 4.4%. As the number of jobs declined, the labor force participation rate decreased from 58.1% to 57.9% between 2015 and 2020.
- Concerning educational attainment, 16.6% of Hampden County, MA residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (3.5% below the national average), and 9.3% hold an Associate's Degree (0.7% above the national average).
- The top three industries in 2020 are Individual and Family Services, Education and Hospitals (Local Government), and General Medical and Surgical Hospitals.

**Largest Industries (Top 20) - Priority Industries are bolded:**

Industry	2015 Jobs	2020 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2020 LQ
<b>Health Care and Social Assistance</b>	50,738	54,133	3,395	7%	1.90
Government	35,739	33,545	(2,194)	(6%)	1.01
Retail Trade	23,002	19,948	(3,055)	(13%)	0.93
<b>Manufacturing</b>	19,149	18,164	(985)	(5%)	1.06
Accommodation and Food Services	15,398	14,467	(931)	(6%)	0.87
Other Services (except Public Administration)	10,921	10,101	(819)	(8%)	0.88
Construction	9,754	9,967	213	2%	0.79
Finance and Insurance	9,009	8,798	(211)	(2%)	0.96
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	9,670	8,477	(1,193)	(12%)	0.64
<b>Educational Services</b>	9,333	8,465	(868)	(9%)	1.52
Transportation and Warehousing	6,966	8,339	1,373	20%	0.96
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	7,038	6,697	(341)	(5%)	0.45
Wholesale Trade	6,012	6,083	71	1%	0.76
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,918	2,863	(55)	(2%)	0.76
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,685	2,599	(86)	(3%)	0.81
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3,567	2,591	(976)	(27%)	0.78
Information	2,516	2,085	(431)	(17%)	0.52
Utilities	1,236	1,246	10	1%	1.65
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	376	424	48	13%	0.16
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	81	67	(14)	(17%)	0.08

**EMSI Regional Economy Overview for Hampden County; extracted 5-11-21**

**Largest Occupations (Top 23) Priority Occupational Groups are bolded:**

Occupation	2015 Jobs	2020 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2020 LQ
Office and Administrative Support	27,887	24,950	(2,937)	(11%)	0.92
<b>Healthcare Support</b>	16,577	20,735	4,159	25%	2.07
Sales and Related	20,034	17,273	(2,761)	(14%)	0.85
<b>Healthcare Practitioners and Technical</b>	16,162	16,359	198	1%	1.31
Transportation and Material Moving	15,745	16,118	373	2%	0.89
Management	14,994	16,031	1,037	7%	1.18
<b>Educational Instruction and Library</b>	17,177	15,872	(1,305)	(8%)	1.22
Food Preparation and Serving Related	16,093	14,626	(1,467)	(9%)	0.90
<b>Production</b>	12,904	11,520	(1,384)	(11%)	0.93
Business and Financial Operations	9,985	10,688	703	7%	0.83
Construction and Extraction	8,613	8,044	(569)	(7%)	0.79
<b>Community and Social Service</b>	7,727	7,308	(419)	(5%)	1.87
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	7,466	7,232	(234)	(3%)	0.85
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	6,964	6,576	(388)	(6%)	0.84
<b>Personal Care and Service</b>	6,856	6,549	(308)	(4%)	1.04
Protective Service	5,357	4,905	(452)	(8%)	1.02
<b>Computer and Mathematical</b>	4,155	4,021	(134)	(3%)	0.60
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	3,208	2,945	(264)	(8%)	0.75
Architecture and Engineering	3,204	2,872	(332)	(10%)	0.78
Life, Physical, and Social Science	2,333	1,893	(440)	(19%)	0.92
Legal	1,649	1,562	(86)	(5%)	0.83
Military-only	711	647	(64)	(9%)	0.48
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	312	335	23	8%	0.20

**EMSI Regional Economy Overview for Hampden County; extracted 5-11-21**

### ***Employment Needs***

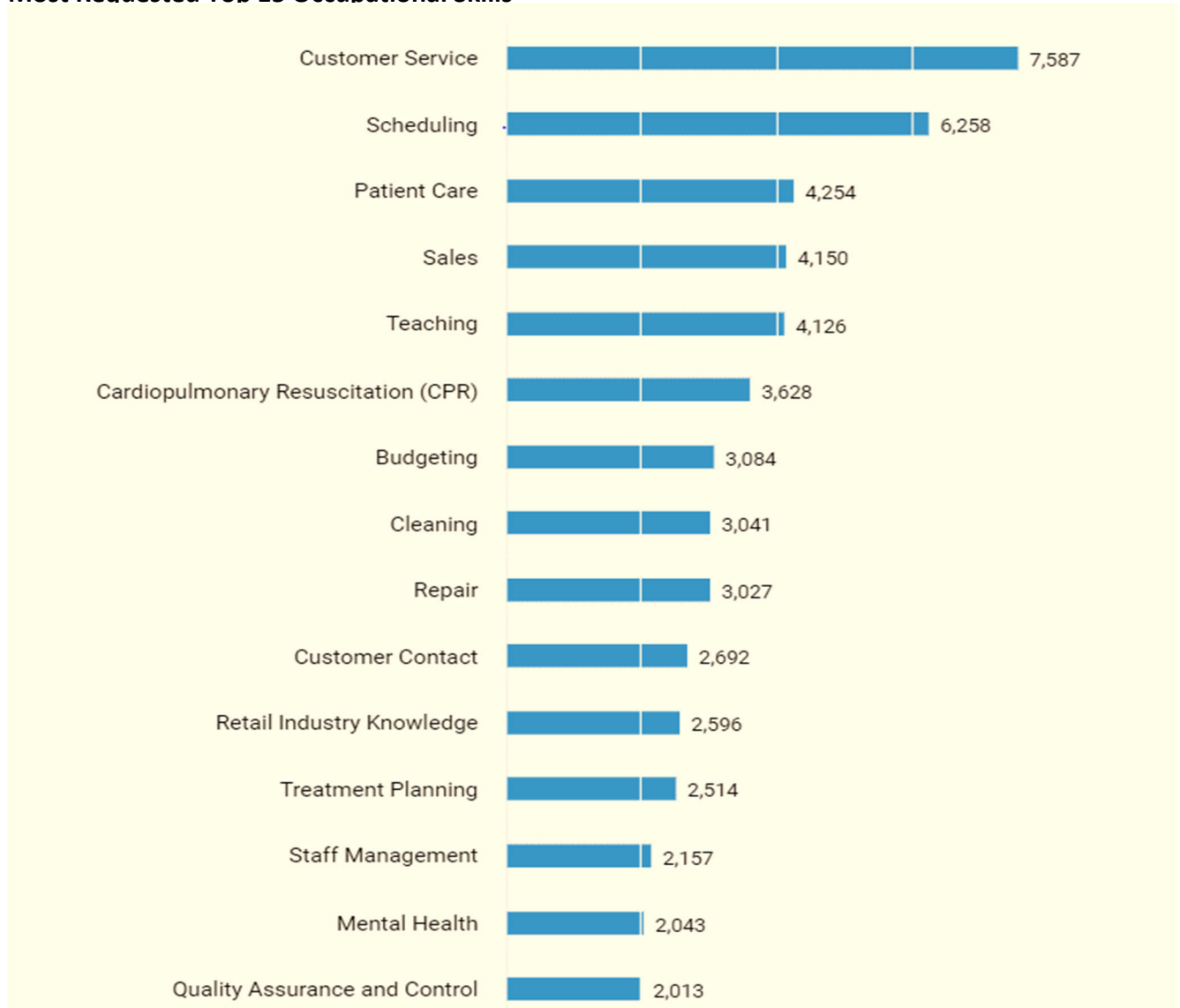
The following depicts the **Hard to Fill Jobs (Top 20)**

<b>ONET</b>	<b>ONET Family</b>	<b>Number of Job Postings</b>	<b>Demand</b>	<b>Time to Fill</b>	<b>BLS/OES Salary</b>
Registered Nurses	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	3,374	Very High	47 days	\$93,160
Retail Salespersons	Sales and Related	1,255	Very High	39 days	\$31,690
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing,	Sales and Related	1,075	Very High	48 days	\$82,220
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	Transportation and Material Moving	1,059	Very High	45 days	\$36,300
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Transportation and Material Moving	1,012	Very High	43 days	\$52,230
Medical and Health Services Managers	Management	1,008	Very High	52 days	\$132,960
Customer Service Representatives	Office and Administrative Support	967	Very High	43 days	\$44,730
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	Sales and Related	924	Very High	41 days	\$49,590
Managers, All Other	Management	766	Very High	52 days	\$134,310
Software Developers, Applications	Computer and Mathematical	717	Very High	50 days	\$115,270
Nursing Assistants	Healthcare Support	699	Very High	49 days	\$35,040
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	665	Very High	53 days	\$60,340
Production Workers, All Other	Production	664	Very High	45 days	\$39,900
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	632	Very High	43 days	\$49,110
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	Office and Administrative Support	592	Very High	48 days	\$47,870
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	Food Preparation and Serving Related	537	Very High	37 days	\$28,020
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	Education, Training, and Library	535	Very High	55 days	\$80,520
Personal Care Aides	Personal Care and Service	465	Very High	44 days	\$31,500
Teacher Assistants	Education, Training, and Library	453	Very High	58 days	\$36,230
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	453	Very High	41 days	\$36,890

**Source: Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies) January 2020 – January 2021**

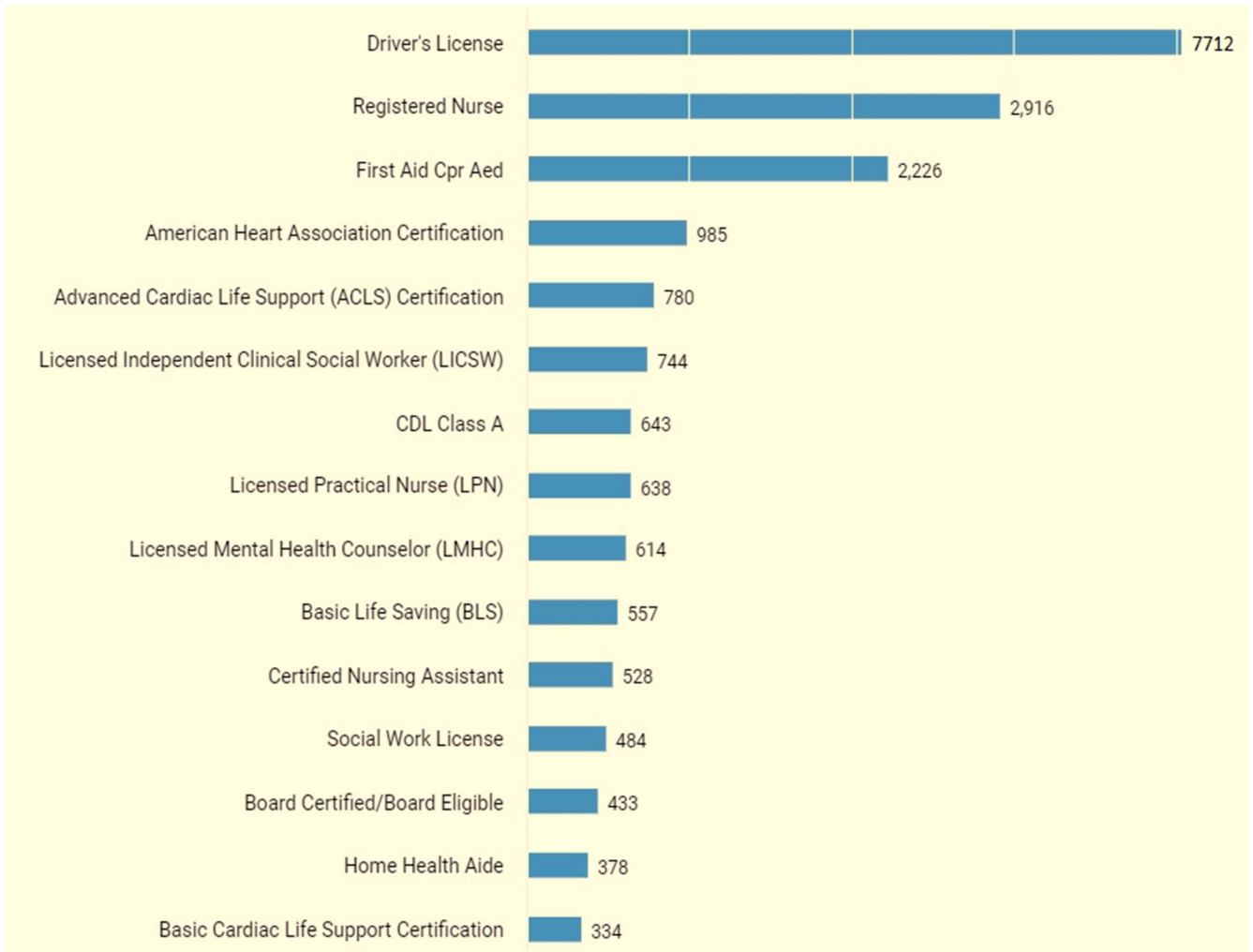
- ii. Describe the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the businesses in your region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

#### Most Requested Top 15 Occupational Skills



Source: Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies) Regional Analysis January 2020 – January 2021

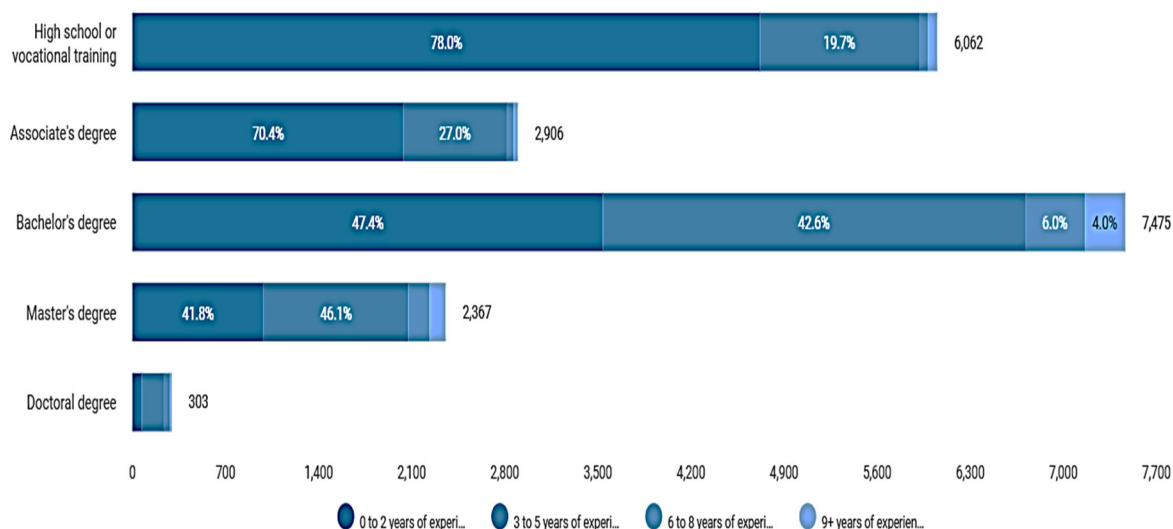
## Most Requested Top 15 Occupational Certifications



Source: Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies) Regional Analysis January 2020 – January 2021

## Education and Experience Levels requested by Employers

The following levels of education and levels of experience are requested



Source: Labor Insight Jobs (Burning Glass Technologies) Regional Analysis; January 2020 – January 2021

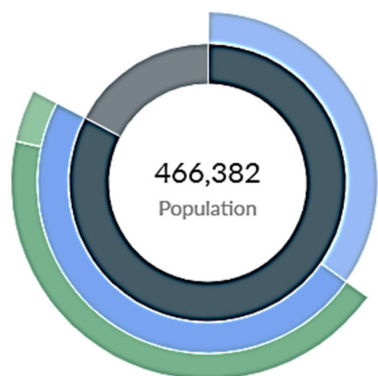
MHHCWB supplements State data for employment needs with real-time local and regional data in priority industries as documented in the Pioneer Valley Labor Market Blueprint. MHHCWB produces periodic labor market reports such as the 2020 Workforce Development and Technology Adoption Report (see link here: <http://massshirehwcwb.com/industry-initiatives/precision-manufacturing-pmrap2-0/>) on the regional advanced manufacturing industry that provides critical guidance on the employment needs of local and regional employers in this sector. The data informs MHHCWB's decision-making, supports analysis of current and emerging in-demand occupations, and drives decisions on resource allocation to support a coordinated response to the documented employer need.

- (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. 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.

The unemployment rate for the most recent 13 months was severely impacted by the COVID pandemic. From April 2020 to March 2021, unemployment averaged 11.6% for Hampden County, 15.4% for Springfield, the largest city in the county and 14.0% for Holyoke, the poorest city per capita in Massachusetts. The unemployment rate for Massachusetts averaged 9.5% for the same time period, with a high of 16.4% in April 2020. (Source: <https://www.mass.gov/find-unemployment-rates>)

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## 2020 Labor Force Breakdown



	Population
● Total Working Age Population	385,538
● Not in Labor Force (15+) ?	162,151
● Labor Force ?	223,387
● Employed ?	203,032
● Unemployed ?	20,355
● Under 15	80,844

### EMSI Regional Economy Overview for Hampden County; extracted 5-11-21

The following tables show the educational attainment, job trends, unemployment rate trends, employment status by disability status, veteran characteristics, Limited English Speaking household characteristics, and the region's population in poverty and their characteristics ~ the key groups with barriers to employment for which statistics are available from EMSI Economic Overview Report for Hampden County extracted on 5/11/21 and the demographics tables extracted from Census Bureau: data.census.gov on 5/12-21.

## Educational Attainment

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Concerning educational attainment, 16.6% of Hampden County, MA residents possess a Bachelor's Degree (3.5% below the national average), and 9.3% hold an Associate's Degree (0.7% above the national average).



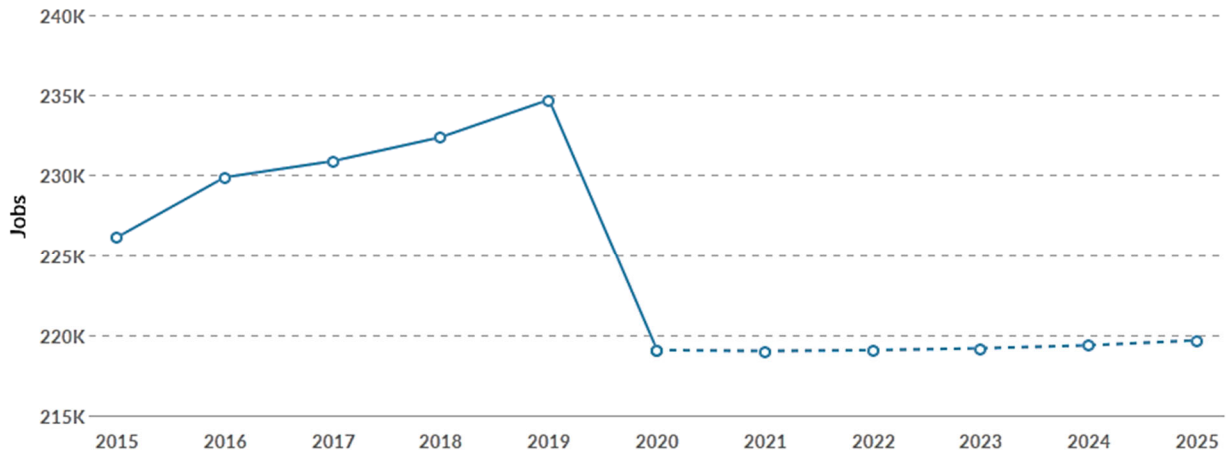
	% of Population	Population
● Less Than 9th Grade	5.6%	18,031
● 9th Grade to 12th Grade	8.8%	28,184
● High School Diploma	30.6%	98,270
● Some College	18.5%	59,488
● Associate's Degree	9.3%	30,022
● Bachelor's Degree	16.6%	53,307
● Graduate Degree and Higher	10.6%	33,992

### EMSI Regional Economy Overview for Hampden County; extracted 5-11-21



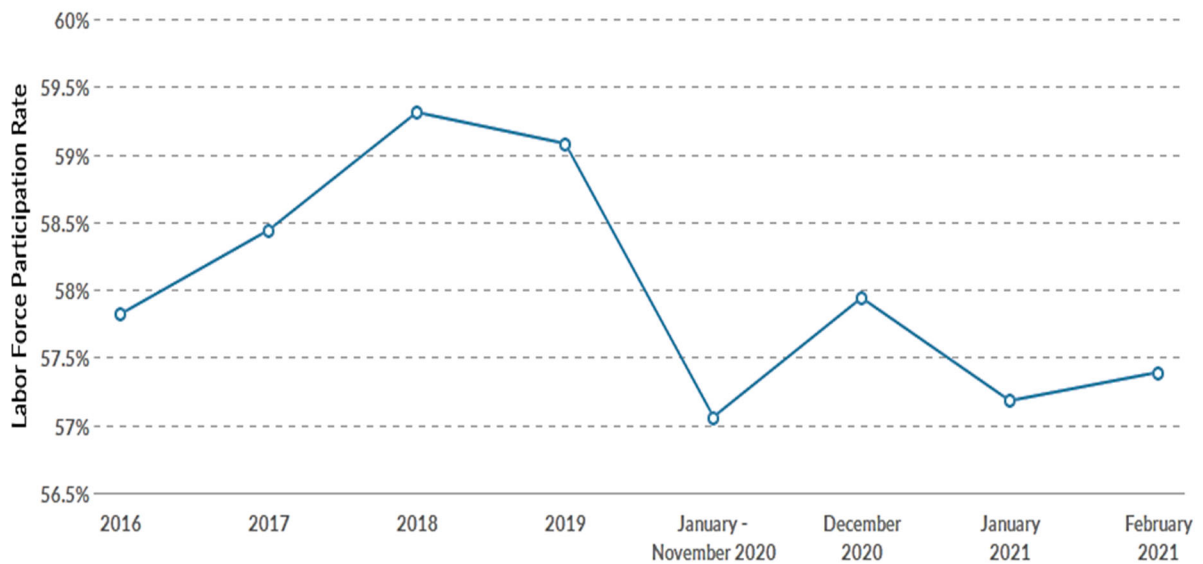
## Job Trends

From 2015 to 2020, jobs declined by 3.1% in Hampden County, MA from 226,110 to 219,060. This change fell short of the national growth rate of 1.3% by 4.4%.



EMSI Regional Economy Overview for Hampden County; extracted 5-11-21

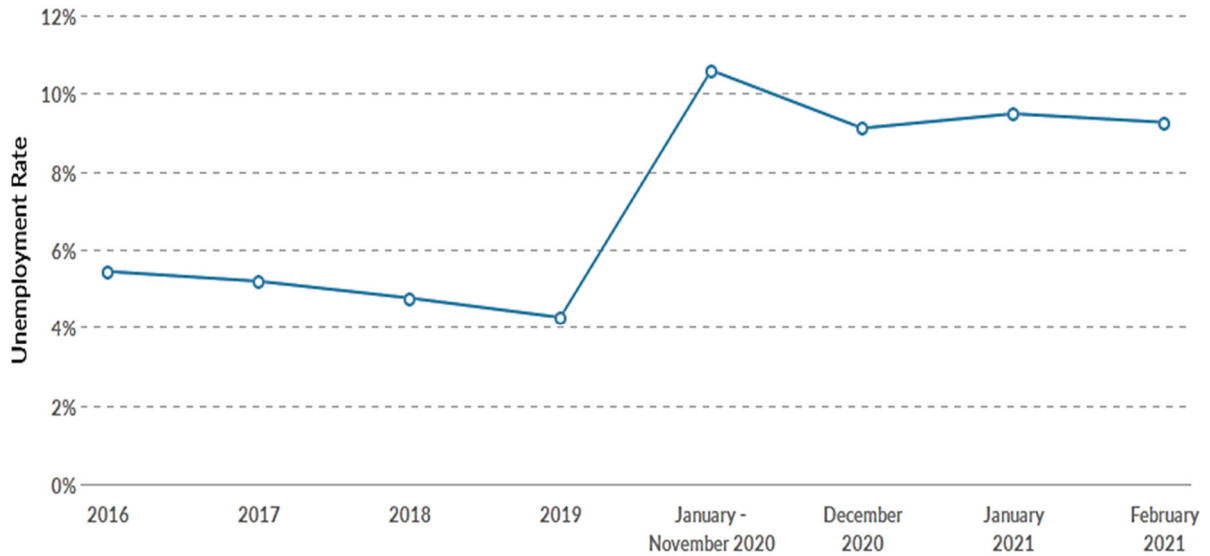
## Labor Force Participation Rate Trends



EMSI Regional Economy Overview for Hampden County; extracted 5-11-21

## Unemployment Rate Trends

Hampden County, MA had a February 2021 unemployment rate of 9.26%, increasing from 5.44% 5 years before.



EMSI Regional Economy Overview for Hampden County; extracted 5-11-21

## EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY DISABILITY STATUS AND TYPE

Universe: Civilian noninstitutionalized population 18 to 64 years

Hampden County, Massachusetts		
Label	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total:	283,282	±1,042
In the labor force:	217,860	±4,903
Employed:	208,515	±5,174
With a disability:	11,998	±2,306
With a hearing difficulty	2,296	±830
With a vision difficulty	2,315	±955
With a cognitive difficulty	4,859	±1,299
With an ambulatory difficulty	3,036	±867

With a self-care difficulty	1,507	±669
With an independent living difficulty	3,051	±890
No disability	196,517	±5,264
Unemployed:	9,345	±1,457
With a disability:	2,153	±815
With a hearing difficulty	0	±216
With a vision difficulty	228	±224
With a cognitive difficulty	1,249	±582
With an ambulatory difficulty	541	±468
With a self-care difficulty	199	±242
With an independent living difficulty	577	±463
No disability	7,192	±1,355
Not in labor force:	65,422	±4,907
With a disability:	20,255	±2,826
With a hearing difficulty	1,187	±604
With a vision difficulty	2,505	±811
With a cognitive difficulty	9,620	±1,601
With an ambulatory difficulty	12,236	±1,993
With a self-care difficulty	5,422	±1,536
With an independent living difficulty	9,702	±1,699
No disability	45,167	±3,490

2019 Data.Census.gov 1-Year Estimates

#### S2101: VETERAN STATUS

Hampden County, Massachusetts	Total	Percent	Veterans	Percent Veterans
Label	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
Civilian population 18 years and over	365,658	(X)	21,106	5.8%
PERIOD OF SERVICE				
Gulf War (9/2001 or later) veterans	(X)	(X)	3,992	18.9%

Gulf War (8/1990 to 8/2001) veterans	(X)	(X)	3,966	18.8%
Vietnam era veterans	(X)	(X)	6,843	32.4%
Korean War veterans	(X)	(X)	2,279	10.8%
World War II veterans	(X)	(X)	831	3.9%
SEX				
Male	173,237	47.4%	19,650	93.1%
Female	192,421	52.6%	1,456	6.9%
AGE				
18 to 34 years	108,949	29.8%	1,123	5.3%
35 to 54 years	112,009	30.6%	4,896	23.2%
55 to 64 years	63,634	17.4%	3,834	18.2%
65 to 74 years	47,298	12.9%	4,791	22.7%
75 years and over	33,768	9.2%	6,462	30.6%
RACE AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN				
White alone	299,962	82.0%	19,297	91.4%
Black or African American alone	30,753	8.4%	1,070	5.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	N	N	N	N
Asian alone	9,200	2.5%	105	0.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	N	N	N	N
Some other race alone	15,816	4.3%	237	1.1%
Two or more races	N	N	N	N
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	83,084	22.7%	1,680	8.0%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	240,528	65.8%	17,940	85.0%
MEDIAN INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS (IN 2019 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)				
Civilian population 18 years and over with income	31,784	(X)	41,235	(X)
Male	(X)	(X)	40,659	(X)
Female	(X)	(X)	50,197	(X)
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				
Civilian population 25 years and over	318,914	(X)	20,728	(X)
Less than high school graduate	42,263	13.3%	1,264	6.1%

High school graduate (includes equivalency)	106,999	33.6%	8,152	39.3%
Some college or associate's degree	81,112	25.4%	7,222	34.8%
Bachelor's degree or higher	88,540	27.8%	4,090	19.7%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Civilian population 18 to 64 years	284,592	(X)	9,853	(X)
Labor force participation rate	(X)	76.6%	(X)	73.8%
Civilian labor force 18 to 64 years	217,860	(X)	7,267	(X)
Unemployment rate	(X)	4.3%	(X)	2.1%
POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS				
Civilian population 18 years and over for whom poverty status is determined	353,333	(X)	20,200	(X)
Income in the past 12 months below poverty level	43,537	12.3%	1,500	7.4%
Income in the past 12 months at or above poverty level	309,796	87.7%	18,700	92.6%
DISABILITY STATUS				
Civilian population 18 years and over for whom poverty status is determined	353,333	(X)	20,200	(X)
With any disability	62,277	17.6%	5,420	26.8%
Without a disability	291,056	82.4%	14,780	73.2%

2019 Data.Census.gov 1-Year Estimates

#### S17004: POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS

Hampden County, Massachusetts		
Label	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total:	367,601	±2,247
Income in the past 12 months below poverty level:	45,363	±4,025
Worked full time, year-round	3,691	±1,043
Worked part-time or part-year	10,182	±1,768
Did not work	31,490	±3,439

Income in the past 12 months at or above poverty level:	322,238	±4,474
Worked full time, year-round	147,669	±5,270
Worked part-time or part-year	81,201	±4,726
Did not work	93,368	±4,743

2019 Data.Census.gov 1-Year Estimates

#### S1602: LIMITED ENGLISH SPEAKING HOUSEHOLDS

Hampden County, Massachusetts	Total	Percent	Limited English-speaking households	Percent limited English-speaking households
Label	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
All households	179,970	(X)	15,514	8.6%
Households speaking --				
Spanish	37,916	21.1%	12,196	32.2%
Other Indo-European languages	11,872	6.6%	2,411	20.3%
Asian and Pacific Island languages	2,506	1.4%	656	26.2%
Other languages	2,067	1.1%	251	12.1%

2019 Data.Census.gov 1-Year Estimates

- (3) 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.

The MHHCWB was one of the first state designated high performing workforce boards, prior to WIOA. Further responses to sections of this Plan demonstrate how we strive to deliver the highest quality of workforce development services and activities in partnership with our two One-Stop Career Centers, a number of youth programs, a wide range of occupational training providers and a myriad of work-based learning modalities. The variety and quality of workforce interventions available in our region targeting youth pipeline, low-income adults and dislocated workers, particularly those with barriers to employment, and the incumbent workforce, are our strengths. In addition, our regional post-secondary educational programs have capacity to expand career pathway and credentialing programs in our priority industries and occupational groupings. Four (4) of our school districts have attained Innovation Pathway Designation status with pathways targeted to the priority industries codified in our Regional Blueprint. Our workforce development eco-system is networked with our community serving organizations and non-profit agencies thereby allowing for a continuum of programming and

an array of services to individuals and customers.

In our Year 3 Mid-Year Report on the implementation of the UPDATED Pioneer Valley Labor Market Blueprint (February 26, 2021) to the Workforce Skills Cabinet, the Region 2 partnership, co-chaired by MHHCWB and MHF/HWFB, identified the following training, and job creation/retention issues emanating, in part, from the economic impact of a prolonged pandemic that must be considered in order to implement pathway development programs that effectively respond to changing labor market demands and conditions. These issues will require MHHCWB to continue to be innovative, collaborative, resourceful, and deliberate throughout CY 2021.

- a) Consolidation in selected occupations within the priority industries due to the adoption of new technologies and processes and the emergence of new post- pandemic work structures and patterns.
- b) Reduction in entry level employment opportunities in targeted industries and occupations for new labor market entrants in particular for disconnected youth aged 18-24.
- c) Identifying NEW COVID-19 related occupational groupings, codifying desired skills and competencies, and developing appropriate curriculum and training programs.
- d) Ensuring sustainable funding to provide training/ retraining at a level and scale commensurate with number of permanently separated workers requiring these services in order to either return to or re-enter the labor market.

Meeting the workforce demand needs of our regions' employers is a key priority. The economic downturn created, in part, by the pandemic has added to the pre-COVID-19 issues of stagnant population growth, an aging population, and too many adults who feel disconnected from job opportunities. These issues continue to constrain our labor market participation rate and presents challenges to fully closing the supply gap in several high demand occupational groupings. Moving forward, MHHHCWB is committed to having a broader participation of employers in our workforce system. We continue to leverage the "MassHire" branding initiative as a mechanism to improve our employer engagement across a wide spectrum of industries via the Hampden County "MassHire Business Solutions"; a coordinated approach to employer engagement, as staffed by our two MassHire Career Centers, to allow for greater job creation opportunities for our job seekers. ***Please see the responses to the remaining questions for more details on our programs, services, and strategies.***

- (4) 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. **See B. #15 for local performance accountability indicators.**

The MHHCWB has an approved Strategic Plan covering the years of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023 that has the following vision, mission and strategic priorities to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency:

**VISION:** Hampden County residents have access to and are prepared for high quality career employment opportunities at family-sustaining wages that accelerate business growth, ensure continued economic development, and strengthen our communities.

**MISSION:** The MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board leads a dynamic, efficient and integrated workforce development system that plans, coordinates and oversees the growth and effective use of public and private investment in workforce development initiatives for quality careers. The Board provides leadership in creating and sustaining strategic alliances that provide access to education, training and career opportunities for all workers while ensuring a skilled workforce for all employers.





Based on this, the FY 2021-2023 Strategic Plan continues our commitment to developing a continuum of strategies that address all segments of the workforce.

- The Emerging workforce of in-school and out-of-school, particularly Pre-K and at-risk youth aged 14-24, who are or will be the newest entrants into the workplace, and who need education, career guidance, job readiness skills, and support services.
- The Transitional workforce of unemployed or underemployed workers who need retraining and job search assistance to move into new jobs, including ex-offenders, and disconnected older youth.
- The Incumbent workforce of employed workers who need additional education and training to retain or advance in their jobs.

See more on our website at: <http://masshirehwcw.com/about-mhhcwb/strategic-plan/>

Our Strategic Plan Scoreboard/Key Performance Indicators, also found on our website above, supplements our Plan with specific goals and priorities (including for adults and youth and our workforce partners, One-Stop Career Centers and Youth Providers) that support this vision. As does our recently approved Updated Pioneer Valley Regional Planning Labor Market Blueprint – found here at: <http://masshirehwcw.com/massachusetts-regional-workforce-development-planning/> and our Local Plan Performance Charts as submitted to MassHire DCS and found here at: <http://masshirehwcw.com/about-mhhcwb/wioa-plan-and-publications/>

(5) 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.

MHHCWB acts as the convener of the WIOA Hampden County MOU, which outlines agreements between MHHCWB, our two Career Centers, and required and non-required partners, to deliver coordinated workforce development services. Hampden County MOU signatories include: The Adult Program, Dislocated Worker Program, and Youth Program (Title I), as part of DCS/EOLWD; The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program (Title II), as part of ACLS/DESE; The Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Title III), as part of DCS/EOLWD; Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Program, Vocational Rehabilitation Program, as part of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, EOHHS; Federal-State Unemployment Compensation Program as part of DUA/EOLWD; Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs, as part of DCS/EOLWD; Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program, as part of DCS/EOLWD; Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program, as part of DTA/EOHHS; Employment & Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, as part of DTA/EOHHS; Senior Community Services Employment Programs; Holyoke Community College; Springfield Technical Community College; Way Finders Housing; Westover Job Corps Center, New England Farm Workers Council, as part of the Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Program (MSFW).

The MOU defines roles and responsibilities of all partners and is designed to meet the strategic vision and goals described in (a)(5) and produce the best possible outcomes for youth, job seekers and

businesses in our region. In developing the MOU, partners worked together to define shared customers, design customer flow and service practices, identify and align resources, and develop procedures to track activities and outcomes. In the FY22 MOU (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024), required partners will continue to collaborate to achieve outcomes for each target population, and will prioritize the development of new strategies in the following areas:

- Employer engagement
- Career pathway activities
- Staff cross-training to ensure shared knowledge of new policies and service delivery options that have developed in response to the pandemic
- Coordinated marketing and outreach for programs and services to address current enrollment challenges

**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).
  - Wagner Peyser Labor Exchange
  - State One-Stop funded Labor Exchange
  - Veteran’s Programs
  - Unemployment Insurance Program Services
  - Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment
  - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) Title-1 Youth
  - WIOA Title-1 DW
  - WIOA T-1 Adult
  - WIOA Core Partner Services/Programs
  - Job Corps
  - Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Program
  - National Dislocated Worker Grants (Various)
  - Rapid Response Services
  - Registered Apprenticeship
  - On-The-Job Training (OJT) Program
  - DESE School-to-Career and Adult Education and Community Programs
  - Commonwealth Corporation Summer Youth and Year-Round Programs
  - EOHED Advanced Manufacturing Programs/Services
  - Various Commonwealth Corporation funded Competitive Training Grants/Programs (as a Grantee and as a Partner)
  - Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
  - Reentry Program
- b. How your Board will support the strategies identified in the StatePlan 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.

In addition to A.4. above, MHCWB has a unique partnership with our Perkins funded programs as carried out by our two area community colleges; which are separate signatories to our Core Partner MOU than the Adult Education Programs that they operate. Further, we are working to support alignment with programs at the secondary education level for Perkins funded vocational and technical education programming, locally and regionally through our Pioneer Valley Regional Blueprint strategies. MHCWB President & CEO is a member of Board of Directors of the Roger L. Putnam Technical Fund which provides guidance and strategic direction to the Ch. 74 programs at Roger L. Putnam Vocational Technical Academy, the largest vocational technical high school in the county. In addition, two MHCWB staff serve on the Ch. 74 required Program Advisory Committees at two vocational technical high schools.

(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.

MHCWB has worked with each partner carrying out core programs to understand specific educational and services needs of priority populations, and ensure that all services are accessible to job seekers with barriers to employment. Career center services, including the frequency of workshops and level of support available for self-service resources have been made more accessible to adults with low levels of reading, writing, and computer skills. The addition of virtual services and technology tools and training at both Hampden County Career Centers have expanded access for individuals with various barriers to training and employment, as these services can be accessed anytime and anywhere, and can be accessed with support from a teacher or case manager. Job search and placement services include strategies to support those who have never worked in the U.S. and who may have experience and credentials from other countries. Career Center staff have knowledge of current services available to people with physical and mental disabilities and visual impairment, Veterans, and mature workers. Staff from entities carrying out core programs are co-located at the Career Centers and work closely with Career Center staff to ensure expanded access for priority populations.

- 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 post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

All MOU Partners collaborate to provide an integrated system that aligns with the needs of priority sectors and occupations in Hampden County and provides job seekers with education, training, employment and support services that prepare them to enter career pathways leading to family-sustaining wages, as seen in “Hampden County Workforce Region Career Pathway Model” (attached to MOU) adapted from CLASP’s Alliance for Quality Career Pathways Initiative. Career pathway

models are being developed for specific industry sectors with input from local employers and labor market information, and adapted for specific populations through the inclusion of multiple entry and exit points. MHHWCW is working with employers and MOU partners on the development of career pathways in multiple Opportunity Occupations, defined as jobs that are currently in demand and expected to grow; have pathways that lead to family sustaining wages; and are accessible to workers without a college degree. Collaboration includes strategies to improve career readiness/essential skills, and career pathways specific occupations in Healthcare (Medical Assistant, Social & Human Services Assistant), Manufacturing (Machinist), Education (Paraprofessional, Early Education Lead Teacher) and Information Technology (Computer User Support, Cybersecurity Analyst) industries. This work will be done in conjunction with the implementation of the Pioneer Valley Regional Blueprint.

(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.

MHHWCW, its WIOA Core Partners, and two MassHire One Stop Career Center Operators follow a demand-driven, employer led engagement model that is focused on solutions and creating positive outcomes for both employers and job seekers. In order to operationalize this model, MHHWCW utilizes an Employer Engagement Framework that is imbedded as a part of the MHHWCW of Directors approved four-year Charter between MHHWCW and MassHire Springfield Career Center and MassHire Holyoke Career Center, on file with MassHire DCS and on our website found here - <http://masshirehwcw.com/employers-businesses/>. The Framework is focused on Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SME), and sets forth an integrated and coordinated process to identify and sustain employer engagement in workforce development programming and activities. The Framework is aligned with the Goals and Strategies focused on employer engagement that are contained in the Pioneer Valley Labor Market Blueprint and the UPDATED Blueprint (September 2020) that has been have been approved by the MA Workforce Skills Cabinet.

MHHWCW will continue to work within the following employer-led partnerships that are aligned with our Blueprint Priority Industries:

1. Advanced Manufacturing-Western MA Chapter of the National Tooling and Machining Association
2. Healthcare and Social Assistance- Healthcare Workforce Partnership of Western MA
3. Educational Services- Diverse Teacher Workforce Coalition

MHHWCW will continue to ensure that our post-pandemic infrastructure capacity building is inclusive and broad, and focused on identifying new ways to ensure meaningful and sustained engagement both across and within industries, regardless of size or market segmentation. We will continue to broaden our employer partners to include more small and medium size enterprises that are positioned to drive both innovation and job creation within our Updated Blueprint priority and other critical industries.

In addition, MHHWCW's Healthcare Partnership of Western Mass has an updated Strategic Plan 2020-2023 – found here <http://masshirehwcw.com/industry-initiatives/healthcare/> - that directs employer

engagement in the HealthCare and Social Assistance industry, a priority industry in the region. The Plan was developed by the employer led Nursing Collaborative, a work group of the Healthcare Workforce Partnership of Western Massachusetts. Additionally, MHHCWB, in collaboration with the Berkshire and Franklin Hampshire County workforce boards, has developed the West Region Five Year Manufacturing Plan- 2019-2023 which sets forth Solutions to the workforce challenges facing advanced manufacturing companies, particularly small and medium size companies and is posted on the home page of our website <http://masshirehwcwb.com/>.

- b. To serve agricultural businesses including plans to improve those services.

MHHCWB, working in collaboration with the MassHire Franklin Hampshire Workforce Board as part of the Regional Planning process in Region 2, has identified Agriculture and Sustainable Food Systems as an “critical industry” in the Pioneer Valley Region of Massachusetts. We have included the head of the regional agriculture employers’ association as a part of our Labor Market Blueprint Implementation Employer Advisory Committee. MHHCWB fully expects to be successful in identifying a critical mass of employers/independent farmers and growers, and farm to table entrepreneurs, and use our proven outreach and engagement strategies to create collaborations and partnerships that will respond to their workforce needs, and other workforce related issues that impact their ability to remain relevant and competitive moving forward.

- c. To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses.

MHHCWB, under its four-year Charter with MassHire Springfield Career Center and MassHire Holyoke Career Center, is providing technical guidance and financial resources to the Career Centers to continue the implementation of Hampden County MassHire Business Solutions, a strategic, coordinated, integrated demand driven response ensuring a systemic response to matching job seekers to career pathway employment opportunities. OSCCs will provide services to employers consistent with WIOA principles and state-adopted standards for “demand-driven” strategies. OSCCs will be positioned to serve employers covering wide ranges of size, industry, location and requirements. OSCCs will devote considerable resources and efforts to developing effective and valuable relationships with employers. Services will be coordinated with WIOA Core Partners and will follow customer service flow charts as mutually agreed upon among partners and as outlined in the WIOA MOU during four-year Charter period.

- d. To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.

The Pioneer Valley Labor Market Blueprint and UPDATED Blueprint (September 2020) that has have been approved by the Workforce Skills Cabinet has have adopted the following as its First Goal: ***“Align workforce development, education and economic development activities to ensure successful implementation of Blueprint activities”***. MHHCWB and the economic development entities in the region have agreed to reference our collaborative work in Regional Planning in each of their future Strategic Planning processes, and have embedded the Pioneer Valley Labor Market Blueprint on their individual web sites. MHHCWB continues to work collaboratively to determine collaborative assets

and resources, and any identify any gaps in service delivery that require intervention and mitigation.

In addition, MHHCWB works closely with local municipal economic development departments to support any workforce development needs or issues that may arise as a result of expansion of existing businesses, siting of new companies, training of incumbent employees, and company downsizing or closings that occur within their respective cities/towns. Regional economic development is closely linked to the work that emanates from economic development initiatives at the local municipal level, and MHHCWB is strategically positioned to engage at either level.

- e. To strengthen linkages between reemployment assistance and unemployment insurance programs.

Both OSCCs have a UI person out-stationed at their locations to facilitate linkages between UI services and OSCC services. Also the RESEA program for UI claimants is very active in both centers.

All RESEA activities are provided virtually. RESEA customers to have the option to complete the electronic fillable Needs Assessment during or after CCS. The electronic form must be submitted prior to the next customer's next RESEA Review. All services are recorded into MOSES.

- f. Describe how your Board coordinates workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide Rapid Response activities.

When the MHHCWB, the MH OSCCs or the Rapid Response local contact formally or informally receives notification about a potential closing or layoff, contacts are made to the others parties to ensure all are informed. The Rapid Response team will also notify the Chief Elected Officials of the layoff or plant closing. Rapid Response activities are initiated by the Rapid Response Team and coordinated with the MHHCWB and MH OSCC's. RR will schedule a meeting with the employer and provide information regarding initial employer contact, date of layoff, assist affected dislocated workers, investigate possible layoff aversion strategies, determine labor union involvement, provide company with services and request the scheduling of on-site company meetings.

Members of the Business Service Team are available to assist at information tables and have provided information about Career Center services for both business partners and job seekers. Contact is made with representatives of Rapid Response, as well as responding to requests for assistance from it. The Rapid Response, MHHCWFB and MH OSCC'S staff attend the BizWorks meetings. Information and best practices are shared regarding regional layoffs, recruitments, and closings. Career Centers and RR staff have hosted Regional BizWorks meetings including other state agencies. New MassHire marketing and training materials have been developed and disseminated.

Once notified by Rapid Response of upcoming layoffs, a plan is put in place coordinated among the MHHCWB, the MH OSCCs and RR. The plan may include information/registration sessions at the career center, methods of outreach, listings of impacted persons to contact, and specifics on grant resources available (Formula, TRADE, NDWG) and time frames. In addition, the RR team informs the dislocated worker the process for UI claim, section 30, severance packages, job search workshops,



educational or vocational training caps, and services available at the OSCC. The RR team and OSCC's coordinate the MOSES & TRADE data entry information obtained from dislocated workers at employee meetings and provides guidance to the employer and/or employees on how to file a TRADE Petition, if applicable. The MassHire HCWB will coordinate NDWG requests with the Regional Rapid Response Manager.

- g. Please describe procedures to offer MassHire Career Center Business Services and MassHire BizWorks programs to local businesses.

The Hampden County MassHire Business Solutions team follow the MHHCWB Employer Engagement Framework in developing and implementing all strategic planning, process development, and allocation of staff and staff resources that pertain to the provision of Employer Services. The statewide Demand Driven 2.0 and Mass BizWorks strategies are imbedded in the offering of business services to employers.

- 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.

MHHCWB, serving as a well-respected and strategically positioned workforce intermediary, has been at the forefront, via funding from WIOA/DOL at the federal level, EOHED/ DESE/Commonwealth Corporation at the state level and the City of Springfield at the local level to implement *all of these types of programming* in our region. These job creation and retention initiatives are targeted to our Blueprint priority industries of Healthcare and Social Assistance, Advanced Manufacturing, and Educational Services. MHHCWB is one of two workforce boards in Massachusetts approved as a Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor, and we continue to work closely with our employer partners to use Registered Apprenticeship as an additional viable and practical job creation and employee retention tool to respond to regional demand in priority occupational groupings. Please reference paragraph (b)(3) of this section., **as well as B. 20.** for more on work-based training interventions.

- (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.

**See response to B. 3. d) above, plus more below.**

The acknowledged regional economic development entities in Hampden County have been members of the Regional Planning core team and continue in that role in the Labor Market Blueprint Implementation phase of our work in Hampden County. The following consensus list of Mutually Reinforcing Activities, developed in our original Blueprint and reaffirmed in the UPDATE Blueprint, continue to frame our relationship with the economic development entities in Hampden County, and guide both our strategic thinking and our tactical deployment of assets and resources.

1. Regional and municipal economic development partners will transition appropriate Blueprint data into actionable ideas within their purviews (business development, regional economic development, regional economic planning, and local economic development).
2. Actively engage with workforce development and education partners to address current and future workforce needs of business and industry sectors, participate in the design and development of education and training pathway programs that prepare jobseekers to obtain, and retain career employment within the region.
3. Work with the workforce development boards to develop systems and processes to create a system of communication and coordination around business outreach and engagement.
4. Work with educational institutions, workforce development entities and employers to further recommend and assist in the development of increased internship opportunities at the high school and college levels that may serve to support graduate retention in the Pioneer Valley.
5. Include the workforce development and educational partners in new business attraction development and/or the expansion of existing businesses to ensure a coordinated response to talent attraction, development and retention.
6. Collaborate on collecting real time regional labor market data to identify new and emerging industries, and codify future employer demand and skills requirements
7. Identify and pursue public funding for local and regional capital and infrastructure needs necessary to support and expand priority sectors, including traditional infrastructure such as roads, bridges, broadband and wastewater expansion and less traditional infrastructure like maker's spaces, business development centers and business ecosystems.
8. Frame and market the region's value and its assets to attract employers, entrepreneurs and a new generation of workforce.
9. Continue to convene and expand discussions with stakeholders from economic development, workforce, education and private industry to better understand and address regional economic needs and expand economic opportunity.

In addition to the above, MHHCWB is intentionally committed to continuing its involvement in the following initiatives that support new business start-up activity and the development and refinement of microenterprises and systems:

- Identify research being conducted in advanced technologies at UMass-Amherst with the potential to drive new innovation to regional priority industries and related new venture ecosystems that will inform the Blueprint implementation process.
- Support the work of regional entities such as Valley Venture Mentors (Springfield), EForAll Holyoke (Holyoke), FORGE (Springfield) and similar regional entities to ensure representation of new entrepreneurs and start-ups in the Blueprint implementation process.

MHHCWB will collaborate with our economic development partners, as indicated in No. 8 above, to identify and engage existing and emerging entrepreneurs; microenterprises, and new start-ups in workforce development programing that includes targeted industry-specific skills training, and identification of services and supports that will support their business plans, and short and long term workforce goals.



We also support entrepreneurial training in our WIOA youth programming as one option for appropriate youth. We are also a supporter of the Wellspring Cooperative which is creating an engine for new, community-based, worker-owned companies in inner-city Springfield as well as DevelopSpringfield; formed in 2008 as a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) corporation to advance development and redevelopment projects, to stimulate and support economic growth, and to expedite the revitalization process within the City of Springfield. We also support and are an active partner in two Federal Reserve Working Cities grants; one in Holyoke called SPARK which is committed to equipping entrepreneurs and small business owners with the tools and resources they need to be successful and Springfield Works, to develop and drive innovative strategies to connect low income Springfield residents with a wide array of services and supports that will accelerate their transition to gainful employment with family sustaining wages.

(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.

The MHHCWB follows the State's Policy for Initial and Subsequent Eligibility for approving eligible training providers and placing them on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Verifiable performance in the areas of Training Completions Rate, Entered Employment/Placement Rate, and Placement Wage are supplied by the Provider and must meet minimum standards. Additionally, when determining Subsequent Eligibility, the MHHCWB reviews the performance of these providers as it relates specifically to the participants we have funded through various sources. Should a vendor fail to meet the minimum standards for this specific cohort, Subsequent Eligibility may be impacted.

The MH OSCCs also collect feedback from training participants regarding the programs they have participated in to determine the quality of instruction they believe they have received. Additionally, the MHHCWB convenes Sector based initiatives that solicit feedback on the experiences of Employers hiring individuals who have completed Occupational Training. Typically training providers are involved in these initiatives and receive feedback relating to the effectiveness of their curriculum.

- 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.

Access to services provided through the One-Stop delivery system is enabled through a variety of access points both physical and technological. Remote and virtual services include Veteran priority of services information and provision, case management for WIOA Title I and other grant or contract related program enrolled individuals, services for customers living with disabilities, DUA application and assistance when on-site, DUA Level 1 and Level 2 assistance provided virtually. Also provided remotely are RESEA Review and triage services, Mature Worker, Re-Entry and Recovery Services, Homeless referrals and career services support, job development and job matching, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program (Title III-including ABE, HiSet/GED, ESOL referrals), and job or personal stress referrals, as well as access to supportive staff who are available on-line and

telephonically. Remote connections with DTA FEW staff, MRC, and other WIOA partners. With the exception of DUA Level 1 and 2 support, the above are all provided when on-site and virtually. Hampden County Business Solutions combined job postings, Hot Jobs Board, and Education and Training information, also are viewable remotely. (On-site services include RC computer access, fax machine, copier, and telephones; hard copies of industry occupation information, directories, company specific applications and referrals, Hampden County Business Services combined job postings, Hot Jobs Board, Education and Training information.)

On-site access is available at One Stop Career Centers that are located on public transportation routes and offer hours that include at least one evening for those customers who cannot visit during daytime hours. Both Centers have developed their web access functionality to enable both Job seekers and employers the ability to access services electronically. Examples include an “Ask the Counselor” service, a library of computer and job search webinars, and the ability to search and post job orders via the internet. Staff also provide services in locations other than the One Stop facility through job fairs, recruiting for Training Programs, visits to local High Schools as well as teleconferencing capabilities. Additionally, social media (Twitter, LinkedIn and texting) are utilized to inform both Jobseeker and Business customers about events and programs that might be of interest to them.

- 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.

Each Center has a full time Disabilities Resource Coordinator (DRC), for individual assistance, handicapped accessible materials & a variety of accommodation equipment. The disability agency partnerships give us varied referral resources. The MHOSCC's are also a long time member of the Ticket to Work Program and we can access the special technical assistance of the UMASS Work Opportunities program and the Institute for Community Inclusion. Investments have been made at both Centers to acquire adaptive technology that enables customers with physical disabilities to utilize and benefit from the resources at the One Stop Career Centers. The Centers Disabilities Resource Team meet on a regular basis with other local agencies, which includes MRC, MCOB, DMH, DMR, NEBA, Goodwill, Lighthouse, WMEC and others.

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

MHHCWB convenes WIOA required partners to identify shared customers and work on improved customer flow in Hampden County. As infrastructure funding agreements are reached at the state level, MHHCWB oversees the budget to ensure all allocations are incorporated into the local integrated budget, and determines how infrastructure amounts will be distributed between MassHire Springfield Career Center and MassHire Holyoke Career Center. The MOU Leadership Team, with

representatives from all Core Partners, reviews quarterly reports on shared customers and monitors the ongoing use of infrastructure funding and other resource contributions of partners.

- (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.

The One Stop Career Centers are the hub of employment and Training activities for adult and dislocated workers in Hampden County. The core of these services offered at the One Stop Career Centers include:

***Self Service/Universal Access:***

There is universal access to Employment Services involving self-help. Unregistered services include self-help or other unassisted basic career services not tailored to specific needs or basic information, including: self-service, including virtual services, facilitated self-help, job listings, Labor Market Information (LMI), labor exchange services, and Information about other services.

***Basic Career Services:***

- WIOA eligibility,
- outreach/intake orientation to information registration,
- job search assistance,
- initial assessment of skills level & gaps, and
- provision of information on English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, support services, aptitudes and other services available at the one-stop delivery systems.

***Labor Exchange Services:***

- job search and placement assistance,
- career counseling,
- information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations and provision of information on nontraditional employment,
- appropriate business/employer recruitment,
- coordination of referrals/activities with Core Partners and other agencies including program and services within the One-Stop delivery system,
- other business/employer services,
- delivery of local, regional and national labor market information,
- provision of information on eligible training vendor's performance, cost, and training services by type of program and provider,
- provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's One-Stop delivery system, and
- provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation, by which the One-Stop must provide meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation.

***Individualized Career Services:***

- comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs,
- identification of employment barriers,
- selection of career path and/or training, which will lead to employment,
- development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to identify career planning, employment goals, barriers, skills gaps, and training needs,
- internships,
- paid or unpaid work experience,
- financial literacy services and develop short term essential skills needed to obtain employment.

Short-term prevocational or employment services can be provided in a group setting, individual one-on-one counseling, attending specific workshops and other professional conduct service to prepare individuals to successfully transition into the completion of post-secondary education, or training or unsubsidized employment.

***Referral to Training Services:***

Training services are provided to equip individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment. Training may be made available to individuals after an interview, assessment, or evaluation resulting in a determination that the individual requires training to obtain employment or to remain employed. Training services may be made available to an employed and unemployed adult and dislocated worker who is unable to retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency. A customer must be determined that they possess the skills and qualifications to participate in training services. Training is to meet the customer's needs, not wants. Customer must exhaust all other grant sources to pay for training including Federal Pell grants before utilizing WIOA Title I funds. Training services may include the following:

- occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment,
- on-the-Job training,
- registered apprenticeships
- incumbent worker training,
- programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs,
- training programs operated by the private sector,
- skill upgrading and retraining,
- entrepreneurial training programs that assist qualified unemployed individuals who are seriously interested in starting a business and becoming self-employed,
- transitional jobs training, which is time-limited work experiences that are subsidized and are in the public, private, or non-profit sectors for individuals with barriers to employment, who are chronically unemployed and/or have an inconsistent work history, combined with comprehensive employment and support services. ***(See question 18 as well)***

In most circumstances, an individual will receive training services through an individual training account ("ITA"). The selection of a training program should be fully informed by the performance of relevant training providers and individuals must be provided with performance for all training providers who provide a relevant program.

***Follow-up Services:***

Follow-up services must be provided for up to 12 months after the first day of employment, as appropriate, for participants enrolled in WIOA adult or dislocated worker workforce activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment. Follow-up services must be made available, however some adults and dislocated workers who are registered and placed into unsubsidized employment may not require or want such services. Follow-up services could include, but are not limited to, additional career planning and counseling, and direct intervention with the with the participant's employer.

***Employer Services:***

WIOA emphasizes Employer Services as an integral part of a demand driven system. As such, the MHHCWB identifies the provision of Employer Services as a core component of the OSCC service delivery system. The One Stop Career Centers' coordinated business Service team provides Employer Services to all employers, covering wide ranges of size, industry, location and requirements, and will have the ability to identify and meet the needs of all employers. The Hampden County Business Services follow a Framework in developing and implementing all strategic planning, process development, and allocation of staff and staff resources that pertain to the provision of Employer Services. The Operators have an Employer Services Flow Chart (see attached WIOA MOU, Core Partner and Other Customer Flow Charts, which may be updated) that describes the linear process to be implemented to deliver Employer Services.

- (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.

In the MHHCWB's Strategic Plan, there are strategic goals in four key areas to build the overall quality of our workforce are set forth. One of those is to "Develop 21st Century Youth Education and Employability Skills for Quality Careers" in which we commit to improving and expanding successful models of workforce development programs and services for youth, especially older youth who need basic skills development, English language proficiency and employment.

In order to accomplish that, the MHHCWB engages community partners in collaborations that will align youth services and result in a more coordinated system of youth development; expands and improves youth work readiness services and internships and works with our One-Stop Career Center services to meet the unique employability needs of out-of-school and unemployed youth.

As such, the MHHCWB has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding that is co-signed by the One-Stop Career Centers, WIOA Title I Youth service providers, YouthWorks providers, DESE School-to-Career Connecting Activities (STC-CA) funded partners, the Westover Job Corps Center, the MA Rehabilitation Commission/MA Commission for the Blind (MRC/MCB) WIOA 15% funded youth

program/activities and the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) funded youth program/activities as they relate to the operation of youth services and programs in Hampden County.

This MOU augments the WIOA Core Partner Umbrella MOU that defines the roles and responsibilities of the OSCC Required Partners to operationalize the delivery of services necessary to produce the best possible outcomes for shared WIOA Core Partner customers, which includes youth. This MOU is designed to specifically align and coordinate the delivery of WIOA and other services to youth aged 14-24 with the other MHHWCW youth-funded programs. The MOU, as well as an inventory of these successful models of the programs they are funded to operate, can be viewed, sorted, printed and/or downloaded, can be found on this link: <http://masshirehwcw.com/youth-development-14-24-year-olds/>

- (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.

MHHWCW's MOU partners (WIOA Core Partner and Youth) as noted above include our community colleges and in-school services providers (WIOA, STC, MRC-MCB, etc.) that provides the framework for coordination of strategies, services, programs and for cross-referrals where appropriate to ensure we avoid duplication of services as much as possible. Eventually, and as noted under **Q B. 22**, we hope to see a state-level technology-enabled intake and case management system that can efficiently enable workforce system partners see what services shared customers have already received to make duplication of services even rarer.

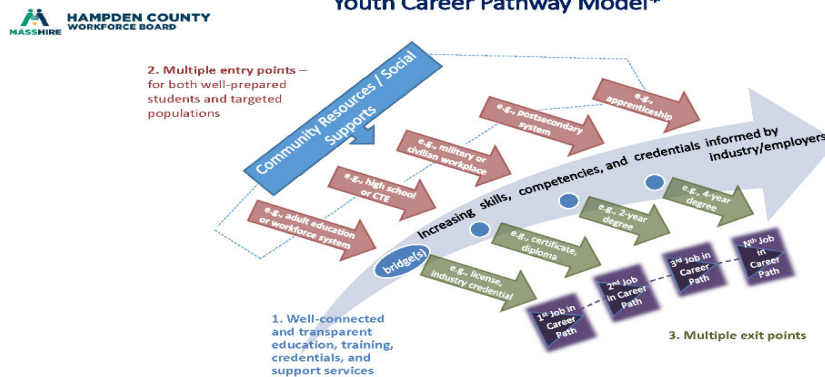
MHHWCW's Regional Planning and Blueprint Core Planning Team consists of three Superintendents of K-12 Schools whose districts include both vocational technical high schools and comprehensive high schools, and the President of Springfield Technical Community College, the only chartered technical community college in the Commonwealth. MHHWCW is working with these educational leaders, and others, to codify existing educational courses and degree and certificate programs in order to develop and implement clear, coordinated and integrated career pathway programs and services for students, and individuals touching the workforce system in Hampden County, in particular out-of-school and disconnected youth.

- (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.

The MHHWCW Title I Support Services Policy and Procedures, and our Integrated Budget, as submitted and reviewed to MassHire DCS, provides for the provision of transportation and other required supportive services to Title I enrollees following a process to document the need for such support and track its provision in MOSES and in case files. We also partner with several community-based organizations that provide various support and wrap-around services and make referrals between our funded programs and those entities to leverage and complement our Title I resources. For youth in particular, we included in our MOU previously mentioned co-signed by multiple partners the following graphic that includes the community supports needed to ensure a youths' success:



Attachment A: Hampden County Workforce Region  
Youth Career Pathway Model\*



\* As adapted from CLASP's Alliance for Quality Career Pathways Initiative's Model

(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 otherservices provided through the Career Center delivery system?

Prior to WIOA, the one stop career center operators in Hampden County were competitively selected in a manner that Wagner-Peyser services are provided directly by the operators' staff and are imbedded into the service delivery along with WIA (now WIOA) services and so duplication of services is not an issue. With the WIOA, the initial new, and recent second competitive selection process, maintained this arrangement which is also codified in the WIOA State Plan.

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

MSFW signage is posted in English and Spanish on the front desk and resource center. Once identified, a MSFW would be given information specific to their specific needs, just as someone with a disability, or a veteran would. The CCS/Orientation PowerPoint presentation includes two detailed slides describing the MSFW process. All persons coming into the centers receive access to all of the same resources, referrals, and services under "Universal Access." Also, during the Orientation/CCS, customers learn about all the training programs and services available to them, and a slide also describes the definitions of Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers/Food Processors. Customers who think they may be MSFWs are asked to speak individually with the Orientation/CCS facilitator at the end of the session, at which time questions can be answered, and how to access "farm jobs" is explained. Customers who come to the center asking about farm jobs receive a one-to-one Orientation describing all of the career center services in addition to receiving referrals to any open farm job postings. The Farm jobs Book is kept in the Resource Center and is available, as well. All customers are told of their rights to file a complaint if they believe they've experienced discrimination or denied a service. Staff were provided the MSFW Desk Guides, and Spanish and English language support is available regarding EEO rights.

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

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MHHCWB staff will continue to with state funded adult education programs in the following areas:

- Review of adult education proposals for funding for consistency and compliance with above.
- Participation in program quality reviews/monitoring and selected site visits
- Development of effective employer partnerships to place adult education graduates
- Support and guidance to adult education programs related to the development of viable career pathways for adult learners in Hampden County
- Support and guidance to adult education programs related to the development of bridge classes and integrated education and training programs
- Support and guidance to adult education programs in serving shared customers, including processes to connect adult education students to career and employment services, resources and supports available at each Hampden County Career Center
- Support and guidance to the adult education staff located at both Career Centers

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

The MHHCWB, Inc., pursuant to our LWDB-CEO Agreement, is also the Fiscal Agent for all WIOA and state funds to the region that we are responsible for. Contact Information:

- David M. Cruise, President & CEO, [dcruise@masshirehwcwb.com](mailto:dcruise@masshirehwcwb.com), 413-755-1362



- Diana Carr, Vice-President & Comptroller, [dcarr@massshirehwcw.com](mailto:dcarr@massshirehwcw.com), 413-755-1363
- MHCWB, Inc. 1441 Main Street, Suite 1, Springfield, MA 01103

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

MHCWB, Inc. follows its approved Procurement & Contracting Policies and Procedures, pursuant to MA Issuance 100 DCS 01.102 and 100 DCS 03.114 (and any subsequent updates to these issuances) and as a non-profit organization, 2 CFR Part 200.317-200.326 for the competitive procurement to any sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities. We procure WIOA Youth Providers every two years, and One-Stop Career Center Operators, every four years.

The MHCWB will promote and maximize the competitive procurement process. All competitive procurements will:

- appropriately target resources based on approved job training plans;
- be made impartially and at "arms length";
- be based upon demonstrated performance
- include a determination of cost/price reasonableness; and
- be in compliance with all related federal and state laws, regulations and policy.

Youth and OSCC Operators will be selected via Request for Proposal process. Some WIOA funded services may utilize a Request for Qualifications process. Individual Training Accounts to eligible training providers follow a different state-driven process.

From our policies:

Procurement by competitive proposals (e.g., Request for Proposals).

The technique of competitive proposals is normally conducted with more than one source submitting an offer, and either a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement type contract is awarded. It is generally used when conditions are not appropriate for the use of sealed bids. The MHCWB will primarily utilize a Request for Proposals (RFP) method when competitively procuring services over \$150,000. The RFP process for formal proposal solicitation will ensure adequate competition and reasonable price.

When using the RFP method, the following requirements apply:

- Requests for proposals will be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Any response to publicized requests for proposals shall be honored to the maximum extent practical;
- Proposals will be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources;
- The MHCWB will develop impartial review teams of Board members and/or other local experts for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for recommending awardees; and
- Awards will be made to the responsible firm/organization whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered

### Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

The process of a Request for Qualifications is a two-part process. First, a formal solicitation is issued to obtain submissions from contractors. These submissions are then reviewed and a list of contractors qualified to provide the goods or services required is developed. The second stage of the process is the comparison of two or more qualified providers to determine which will be chosen to provide the goods or services.

### Individual Training Accounts

The process of choosing a provider to train a participant through an Individual Training Account is an exception to the RFP/RFQ process. Please refer to Policy 100 DCS 14.100 “Massachusetts Eligible Training Provider List (MA ETPL) Initial and Subsequent Eligibility Process” located on MassWorkforce.org: <http://www.mass.gov/massworkforce/issuances/wioa-policy/14-training/>

- (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 CareerCenter system in the local area.

See below and as posted on our website at: <http://masshirehwcw.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/FY21-Hampden-Local-Operating-Plan-Approved.pdf>

<b>MASSHIRE WORKFORCE AREA: HAMPDEN COUNTY</b>			
<b>WIOA PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>	<b>FY 2021 STATE GOALS</b>	<b>FY 2021 PROPOSED</b>	<b>FY 2021-22 APPROVED</b>
<b><u>WIOA Adult Measures</u></b>			
Employment Q2	86.5%	85.0%	85.0%
Employment Q4	78.0%	76.0%	76.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$5,800	\$4,700	\$5,000
Credential Rate	73.0%	71.0%	71.0%
Measurable Skill Gain	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
<b><u>WIOA Dislocated Worker Measures</u></b>			
Employment Q2	86.0%	85.0%	85.0%
Employment Q4	85.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$8,300	\$7,600	\$7,600
Credential Rate	65.0%	57.0%	57.0%
Measurable Skill Gain	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%

<b>WIOA Youth Measures</b>			
Employment/Education Q2	81.0%	81.0%	81.0%
Employment/Education Q4	74.0%	73.5%	73.5%
Median Earnings Q2	\$3,500	\$3,600	\$3,500
Credential Rate	70.5%	66.0%	66.0%
Measurable Skill Gain	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%

Also, the Local Board sets the following minimum standards for ITA providers:

- Positive Completion Rate for Program - 70%
- Entered Unsubsidized Employment Rate for Program (for all who are enrolled in the program and not just from those that graduate and/or successfully complete) - 60%
- Minimum Hourly Wage at Placement - - \$13.50\*
  - Massachusetts Minimum Wage effective January 1, 2021
- Occupational skills programs must result in Certificate as defined by the USDOL-ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter TEGL 17-05, Attachment B

Our One-Stop Career Center Committee also has the following numerical metrics for our MassHire Career Centers:

<b>Job Seekers</b>		<b>MassHire Springfield</b>	<b>MassHire Holyoke</b>
<b>Jobseeker Performance Measures</b>		<b>Annual Plan</b>	<b>Annual Plan</b>
1	New Jobseekers Served	3,458	2,903
2	Total Jobseekers Served	8,250	6,750
3	Total Unemployed Jobseekers Served	7,295	5,969
4	Full time Jobs as % of Total Jobs	6234	5100
5	Total Customers Securing Employment (FT/PT) Wage Record*	70%	70%
6	Employment Rate of Exited Customers Quarter 2*	62%	62%
7	Employment Rate of Exited Customers Quarter 4*	60%	60%
8	Job Seeker Median Earnings 2nd Quarter*	\$5,500	\$5,500
9	Average Wage at Hire for all Jobs	\$15.00	\$15.00
10	Educational Referrals	165	135
11	Training Referrals	165	135

\* Wage Record Information for 12 month period ending

<b>Population Served</b>		<b>Annual Plan</b>	<b>Annual Plan</b>
1	Service by Gender		
	o Male	51%	51%
	o Female	49%	49%

2	Service by Ethnicity		
	o African American	22%	7%
	o Hispanic	35%	44%
	o Alaskan & Native American	1%	1%
	o Asian/Pacific Islanders	1%	1%
	o Whites	34%	40%
	o Other/Information Not Available	7%	7%
3	Service by Targeted Groups		
	o Individuals with Disabilities	605	495
	o Veterans	468	382

4	Service by Age (Target Based on Average of Past 3 Year Average Actuals)	<b>MassHire Springfield</b>	<b>MassHire Holyoke</b>
	o 18 and Under	3%	12%
	o 19 - 21	6%	6%
	o 22 - 45	57%	52%
	o 46 - 54	16%	15%
	o 55 and Over	16%	15%

5	Service by Education (Target Based on Average of Past 3 Year Average Actuals)		
	o Less than High School	17%	24%
	o High School Diploma/GED	42%	39%
	o Some College	19%	16%
	o Associate Degree	8%	8%
	o Bachelor Degree	10%	9%
	o Advanced Degree	4%	4%

### COMBINED OSCCs

Business Engagement Performance Measure		Annual Plan
1	Total Businesses Served (State measure)	1,500
2	Total Businesses Receiving Enhanced Services (MHHWCWB Measure)	1,100
3	New Businesses Served (State measure)	400
4	Repeat Businesses (WIOA measure)	700
5	Businesses Listing Job Orders (State Measure)	600
6	Job Orders Received (MHHWCWB measure)	2,800
7	Employers Receiving Job Seeker Referrals (State Measure)	400
8	Employers Hiring From Referrals	50

(16) What are the actions and activities that support the MassHire Board's continued status as a high-performance workforce board?

One of the hallmarks of the standards set by EOLWD relating to its certification of workforce boards as "high performing", which was a process initiated prior to the inception of WIOA, was to have a current and Board approved Strategic Plan. MHHCWB's current plan, on file with the state and on our website at <http://masshirehwcw.com/about-mhhcwb/strategic-plan/> has gone through several updates since our first plan in 2006-2009. Our current plan is from July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023. The companion document our strategic Plan is our **Scoreboard** which contains Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) that measure on a quarterly basis our progress toward meeting Plan Strategic Priorities and Goals. The **Scoreboard** is reviewed quarterly by the Board Strategic Planning Committee, and posted on our website for transparency to internal collaborators, external partners and the public.

Also, we conduct via our Governance Committee an Annual Board Effectiveness Survey to assess Board member responsibilities, Board composition (i.e. right mix of member-director expertise), Board-management relationships, Board performance and Board leader performance, and other Board matters. It includes 17 rating questions related to the board itself, 7 rating questions on the member's individual contributions to the board and 12 open comment questions. The ratings are reviewed against scores over the prior 3 years to see where we may need to work on areas to improve our effectiveness and the open comment questions are grouped into categories from year-to-year when we also assess progress in addressing those comments or suggestions.

a. What trainings are applicable to Board members?

New MHHCWB members receive a formal 2.5-hour orientation by the President & CEO. An opportunity to pair with a "seasoned" member to act as a mentor is offered at this time. Also the MHHCWB website is a source of information and guidance on WIOA policies that may impact board members. A "member only" section of our website also includes relevant information. We include on agendas for all of our Strategic Planning and Executive Committee, and full Board meetings, a strategic thinking section that allows Board members to input into high level strategic issues that inform their decision making and provide them with talking points within their professional networks, in particular with private sector associates and colleagues.

b. How do business Board members contribute to workforce development in your region?

Our MHHCWB Board members:

- Establish and promote workforce development policies that improve the social and economic life of the community.
- Approve MHHCWB's strategic Vision and set measurable goals and outcomes for a market-driven workforce development system, including the certification of standards and training vendors.

- Serve on the Review Team and approve the four-year Charter of MHHWCW's two customer-driven MassHire One-Stop Career Centers.
- Facilitate and influence collaborations among local elected officials, government, and community groups to work in collaboration with MHHWCW.
- Influence the design and performance of an integrated system that prepares youth for successful employment.
- Become summer youth worksites, hire youth as interns and/or new employees and/or contribute to the organization in support of youth employment support.
- Provide employment data trend analysis, and labor market information to MHHWCW management on employment needs and industry trends.
- Oversee progress towards the strategic vision and ensure that the delivery system is measured by customer satisfaction and performance standards.

c. How does your Board support the business services in the career centers?

Our MHHWCW Board members:

- Serve as members of the Board's One-Stop Career Center Committee that monitors the Hampden County Business Services at the two MassHire Career Centers, provides feedback to the centers through the MHHWCW management team, and recommends annual re-contracting of the two MassHire Career Centers to the full MHHWCW for approval.
- Provide employment data, trend analysis, and labor market information on industry needs and trends that support implementation of the MHHWCW Employer Engagement Framework.
- Hire job seekers registered at the two MassHire Career Centers and referred through the Hampden County MassHire Business Solutions team.

d. To what extent does inter-/intra-Board collaboration result in positive outcomes for job-seekers and businesses?

All of the above activities result in collaboration that ultimately supports our workforce delivery system and helps it to better serve its job seeker and business customers as well as our region's youth.

(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 MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board, Inc. (MHHWCW) is responsible for reviewing training programs for local approval under the ITA eligibility process outlined by the state. Once courses are approved, they are included on the "State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)" that is available to customers at the One Stop Career Centers. As WIOA participants work with their case manager at the career center, and have been determined eligible and appropriate candidates for training, they are required to research at least two providers from the list that offer training in their

desired occupation. Once a provider has been selected, the case manager identifies the funding is available and prepares an ITA request package that is submitted to the MHHCWB. The MHHCWB prepares “Umbrella Contracts” with each provider that outlines the general provisions and requirements under the ITA system. An individual Face Sheet is prepared for each participant that identifies the Specific Course information and cost for the ITA.

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

a. On-the-Job Training

MHHCWB has decided that formula or NDWG funds would institute the 75% wage reimbursement to businesses with fewer than 250 employees and 50% to employers with 251 plus employee. MHHCWB will apply the 75%, and 50% wage reimbursement formula where allowable and appropriate and has significant expertise and experience in this aspect of the OJT contract development process.

Over the past five years, MHHCWB has been contracted by EOLWD-DCS to be the State-wide manager for multiple On-the-Job Training contracts, included use of the Commonwealth’s waiver, *which has expired*, to provide 90% wages reimbursement to businesses with fewer than 50 employees. MHHCWB has not only managed the operational and financial aspects of OJT’s but has been an actual practitioner; including the writing of the OJT Training plan, executing all employer and participant eligibility protocols, writing and executing the OJT Contract, case managing the OJT contracts, and completing all paperwork transitioning the OJT position from subsidized to unsubsidized employment.

MHHCWB continues as an OJT manager and practitioner and provides state-wide professional development on the OJT model. MHHCWB has developed an EOLWD-DCS approved Standard Operating Procedures for the OJT work-based training model and continues to update the SOP to reflect changes in policy and operating protocols and procedures.

b. Apprenticeship

MHHCWB is currently one of two workforce boards in Massachusetts that is approved by the MA Division of Apprenticeship Standard, and contracted by EOLWD-DCS to manage the Massachusetts Apprentice Initiative (MAI) and the Massachusetts Apprentice Expansion (MAE) grants from USDOL. MHHCWB works as part of a team that includes the MA Division of Apprentice Standards, DCS, MassHire Career Centers and employers in priority industries as identified by state-wide data and documented in the seven state-wide regional Labor Market Blueprints that emanated from the WIOA Regional Planning process.

MHHCWB is also an apprenticeship practitioner and has developed, executed, and manages registered apprenticeships within Hampden County and across the state. MHHCWB has presented at selected regional and MA state conferences on the efficacy and value added of registered apprenticeships as a work –based training model.

c. Incumbent Worker Training

MHHCWB has thirteen (13) years of practical experience in the development, execution, management and evaluation of priority, sector-based work-based training programs and courses for incumbent employees. We have developed the training programs in concert with the employer, identified and secured the appropriate training providers, managed the financial and contracting phases of the program, and in concert with the participating employers, conducted evaluations on the delivery and outcomes of the training program. We have published several Business Impact Reports that identify the value of the program and its impact on the employer's business operations.

d. Work Experiences (paid or unpaid)

MHHCWB's WIOA Youth program is the only federal funding providing paid work experience to in-school and out-of-school youth aged 14-24 as part of 14 required program elements. Performance reports will show that our region exceeds all others in the numbers of youth enrolled in summer employment and work experience, even in COVID times. Commonwealth Corporation YouthWorks State funding provides additional paid work experience opportunities.

e. Transitional jobs

MHHCWB is not currently using this particular form of work-based training with our WIOA formula funding.

f. Online remediation tools

Tools for OJT/apprenticeship screening in support of cultivating and demonstrating workplace competencies include the utilization of WorkKeys Curriculum & the Bennett Mechanical as an assessment tool to measure basic skills abilities for the purpose of eligibility and appropriateness of training options. Depending on the OJT/Apprenticeship occupation, we may use any number of assessments or tools in consultation with the Employer that will give us the most useful information when creating a Training Plan for OJT customers or selecting the best candidate for an Apprenticeship opportunity.

- (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.

MHHCWB posted the draft 4-Year Plan on May 21, 2021 for a public comment period through June 18, 2021, in advance of our June 22, 2021 Board meeting.

Notices of the posting were sent via email to our Local Board, Youth Council distribution list (members and regular attendees, including all our youth providers), non-Board members of our One-Stop Committee, our Bidder's list, local Mayors, and MOU Core Partners. Notice of the posting was also sent out via an E-Newsletter which has over 600 subscribers.



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

MHHCWB has worked with representatives from each WIOA Core Partner agency and both Hampden County Career Centers to develop intake, referral, case management, follow-up and tracking processes for each target population. A referral form, point of contact, and process has been developed for each target population, and as staff increase the use of these tools and processes, MHHCWB will monitor changes in identified shared customers through quarterly reports. As partners continue to address identification of shared customers and outcomes at the state-level, MHHCWB will communicate with state and local partners to ensure accuracy and consistency in these processes.

- (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.

While all services are currently being provided remotely, the personalized assistance continues to be provided by one-on-one phone or zoom invites.

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

Once the Centers reopen and fully operational, members being on site to access will have access to services via in person or virtual: Career Counseling, Skills Building: Access to Publicly Funded Training (WIOA), Short-Term Training Programs (City of Springfield, UMass, Springfield Technical Community College, Holyoke Community College) Computer Skills Training and Job Search Webinars. Job Postings (On-line & Hard Copy), Remote Employer Recruitments. Resource Room-Computers, Phones, Fax Machines & Resource Room, Career Specialists, Resource Materials and mock interviews. One Unemployment Representative: Walk-In Claimant Service. ESOL and Educational Planning Assistance, Veterans, Reemployment, YouthWorks-Youth Program, and Reentry Program for Ex-Offenders.

- b. How will staff be assigned/deployed?

We will adapt our procedures and technology to maintain the quality and quantity of our services, by utilizing the staff's strengths and expertise.

- 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 MassHire Board, OSCCs and partner agencies are committed to strategize and develop cross trainings to ensure that all OSCCs staff, required Core Partners, non-required partners agencies receive training for delivery and access of services to shared customers through the MHCC customer flow whether in-person or virtual.

(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 (Attachment C).

- 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 MHHCWB and our OSCC Standard Operating Procedures and Policies have been submitted to the state according to the guidance.

Please describe the local board's policy and process related to Priority of Service for adult career and training services for recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient (100 DCS 08-116).

Priority of service status is established at the time of eligibility determination and does not change during the period of participation. With the exception of Veterans and eligible spouses, priority of service status does not apply to the Dislocated Worker or Youth populations. Priority of service are implemented regardless of the amount of funds available. Priority for individual career and training services will be provided in the following order:

- Veterans and eligible spouses who are recipients of public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient.
- Recipients of public assistance, and/or basic skills deficient
- Other low income individuals (in accordance with Federal Poverty Guidelines and Lower Living Level Standard Income Levels)
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient

The priority of service for Veterans and eligible spouses, public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient is a statutory priority that applies only to the receipt of individualized career services and training services in the WIOA Title I Adult program.

WIOA establishes a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities. Under this section, MassHire OSCC staff, when using WIOA Adult funds to provide individualized career services, training services, or both.

The delivery of individualized career services and training services will be provided on an as-needed basis to customers that move to the tiers of service options. Resources for individual career services and training services will be targeted for those who are veterans, recipients of public assistance (TANF), and individuals who are basic skills deficient as follows:

- Veterans will have immediate access to individualized career services and training services, or be placed at the top of a waiting list, if any, when such services are not available.
- In regards to covered persons, the priority of provision of services would be established as follows: Available funds would not change. First to be served would be public assistance recipients and low-income individuals who are also covered persons. The second group to be served would be public assistance recipients and low-income non-veterans. Among participants who are not public assistance recipients or low-income individuals, covered persons will receive priority over non-veterans.
- Recipients of welfare will have immediate access to intensive and training services, or be placed at the top of a waiting list, if any, when such services are not available to that individual under TANF resources.
- Individuals, employed or unemployed, that are determined to be in a family that meets the "low income" definition will have immediate access to intensive and training services or be placed at the top of a waiting list, if any.

When an individual is unable to secure gainful employment through the delivery of Basic services, eligibility determination, and an initial facilitated triage of an assessment of marketability will be completed and they will then meet with a Career Counselor to receive individualized services. (Note: Only WIOA registrants who meet priority determinations described in this policy will receive such services.) These may include the following services:

- A comprehensive and specialized assessment of skill levels and service needs, as needed;
- Development of a Case Plan to identify employment goals, achievement objectives, and what combination of services are needed to achieve goals;
- Individualized job development;
- Group counseling, individual counseling and career planning (as needed);
- Short-term specialized computer skills workshops;
- Case management for participants seeking job search, re-employment services, and who participate in training activities; and
- Others that may be added based on customer needs.

When an individual is unable to secure gainful employment through the delivery of Basic and Individualized services (which for individualizes services, at a minimum, may include completion of an objective assessment, participation in an individualized counseling and career planning session and completion of a Case Plan that has identified a need for skills training), training options will be explored. These would include:

- Occupational skills training delivered by an eligible provider that has been approved for ITA's and is on the state wide ITA list or
- Occupational skills training, combined with adult education services, delivered by an eligible provider that has been approved for ITA's and is on the state wide ITA list or
- On-the-Job Training

In order to match the individual to an ITA that will result in employment, the Career Counselor will ensure that the individual:

- Has the skills and qualifications to successfully complete the selected training program,
- Conducts labor market research to assess the availability of jobs once training is complete, submit 5 job ads indicating the training they are seeking is in demand and selects a program of training services that is directly linked to employment opportunities either in the local area or in another area to which the individual is willing to relocate,
- Assesses the quality and cost of the training provider, which will be greatly enhanced as consumer reports are made available on MOSES, and
- Is unable to obtain grant assistance from other non-WIOA sources to pay the costs of such training, including Federal Pell Grants, Mass Rehab., Vet Benefits, etc. Funds of Last Resort must be utilized.

(23) Comments submitted during the public comment period that represent disagreement with the plan are required to be included with your local plan.

No comments received.

## WIOA Local Four-Year Plan Signatories

Fiscal Years 2022 - 2025

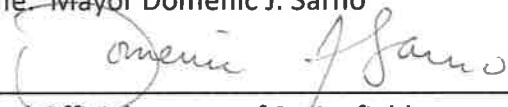
### MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board

#### 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: Mayor Domenic J. Sarno



Chief Elected Official, Mayor of Springfield

6/23/21

Date

Typed Name: Meredith Wise

Meredith Wise

Meredith Wise (Jul 1, 2021 10:54 EDT)

7/1/2021

MassHire Workforce Board Chair

Date

Typed Name: David M. Cruise

David M. Cruise

David M. Cruise (Jul 1, 2021 15:49 EDT)

June 30, 2021

MassHire Workforce Board President & CEO/Title I Fiscal Agent

Date

Typed Name: David Gadaire

David Gadaire

David Gadaire (Jul 1, 2021 11:18 EDT)

7/1/2021

MassHire Holyoke Career Center President & CEO

Date

Typed Name: Kevin Lynn

Kevin E. Lynn

Kevin E. Lynn (Jul 1, 2021 14:22 EDT)

7/1/2021

MassHire Springfield Career Center Executive Director

Date

Typed Name: Kenneth Messina

Ken Messina

Ken Messina (Jul 1, 2021 11:11 EDT)

MDCS Rapid Response & Business Services Manager/Operations Manager

Date












# SignatureSheet-Mayor Signed

Final Audit Report

2021-07-01

Created:	2021-07-01
By:	Tina Efantis (tefantis@massshirehcb.com)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAA6AYIfnU8Wxf7FMvu7-lZmwWUWtdKSaWS

## "SignatureSheet-Mayor Signed" History


-  Document created by Tina Efantis (tefantis@massshirehcb.com)  
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 Agreement completed.

2021-07-01 - 7:49:32 PM GMT