

**Western Virginia
Workforce Development Board**

Business Plan

**PY 2004
Revised May 2006**

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I. Defining the Business

- A. What communities are served through the local Virginia Workforce Network covered under this plan?

The Western Virginia Workforce Development Board serves the cities of Covington, Roanoke and Salem and the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke.

- B. Other than regulatory requirements, what was the reason for the establishment of the local Virginia Workforce Network system as it currently exists?

The Western Virginia Workforce Development Board (WVWDB), under the governance of a volunteer board of directors, was established to develop policy and oversee local workforce development initiatives in partnership with the local elected officials. Members are appointed by the chief local elected officials in each of the eight jurisdictions and represent businesses, educational institutions, community-based organizations, economic development groups, public employment services, public assistance agencies, vocational rehabilitation and labor organizations. Membership is drawn from individuals who have policy-making authority within their organization.

- C. How will the local Virginia Workforce Network benefit the customer rather than the organizations?

The WVWDB serves as a single point of contact for business, industry and the public sectors to

- communicate their workforce needs,
- promote strategies to encourage lifelong learning, and
- improve workplace skills.

The WVWDB also

- assists in developing new training programs to benefit the area's workforce;
- conducts planning, oversight and evaluation of local workforce development programs, including the local Virginia Workforce Centers;
- coordinates efforts and activities with economic development organizations to promote the availability of qualified workers in the area; and
- promotes cooperation among the business and the public sector.

- D. What is the local Virginia Workforce Network vision and mission?

The WVWDB seeks to cultivate a dynamic workforce development system that stimulates economic development in Workforce Investment Area III (the cities of Covington, Roanoke and Salem and the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke).

- E. What is the local Virginia Workforce Network's primary business objective?

The WVWDB's primary business objective is to effectively and efficiently operate the WIA Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs and play a strategic role in focusing Area III workforce development organizations on building a world-class, dynamic workforce.

- F. What is the concise definition of the Virginia Workforce Network core business as it relates to the local labor market?

The WVWDB uses current demand-occupation information to build present and future worker skill sets that meet the expectations of employers in Area III.

- G. What is the composition of the local Virginia Workforce Network current customer base?

The WIA Area III population is described as follows:

- Total population of 312,000, of which 160,000 make up the workforce, which is projected to grow 4 percent between 2000 and 2010 (U.S. Census 2000).
- The greatest population cluster is the 25-to-54-age bracket, with a median age of 40.2 years (U.S. Census 2000).
- Race breakdown is 85.4 percent white; 11.9 percent African American; 1.8 percent American Indian, Alaska Native and other/multi-race; 1.1 percent Hispanic; and 1 percent Asian (Virginia Employment Commission Community Profile).
- Males make up 48 percent and females 52 percent of the population (U.S. Census 2000).
- Median family income is \$47,145; 9.7 percent of the population lives below the poverty line (VEC Community Profile).
- Regarding educational attainment, 20.9 percent of the population have less than high school diploma, 31.3 percent are high-school graduates or the equivalent, 20.9 percent have some college but no degree, 6.7 percent have an associate's degree, and 13.4 percent have a bachelor's degree. (VEC Community Profile)
- Commuting patterns indicate 68.9 percent are people who live and work in the community, 8.5 percent are out-commuters, and 22.6 percent are in-commuters (VEC Community Profile).

H. What locations are being used for the local Virginia Workforce Network sites in the local system and why?

Area III is divided into roughly three geographic areas. The Roanoke region is the economic center of Area III and hosts the largest population.

- The Roanoke Workforce Center is centrally located in Valley View Mall area , the largest shopping center in Area III. The location was chosen due to its accessibility to transportation and its visibility to the citizenship.
- The Alleghany Highlands region is located in the northern part of Area III. The Covington Workforce Center location was chosen to serve the Alleghany area due to the familiarity of citizenship to its location.
- Located in the southern part of the Area III, The Franklin County region is served by the Franklin County Workforce Development Consortium in Rocky Mount, which was already functioning as a one-stop center before implementation of WIA.

Alleghany Highlands

106 N. Maple Avenue
 Box 918
 Covington, VA 24426
 540-962-1151
 540-962-8750 Fax

Roanoke Valley

5060 Valley View Blvd.
 Roanoke, VA 24012
 540-561-6632
 540-561-7510 Fax

Franklin County

Franklin County Workforce
 Development Consortium
 70 Wray Street
 Rocky Mount, VA 24151
 540-483-0179
 540-483-1297 Fax

I. What is the local Virginia Workforce Network centers' relationship to other community service providers?

The workforce centers operate on the philosophy that partnership, rather than competition, is the most effective approach to achieving the common goals of current and future partners. More than 30 partner community-service providers share in building a world-class workforce development system in Area III.

II. Governance and Management Structure: Definition of Relationships and Roles

A. What are the roles and responsibilities of the partners in the local Virginia Workforce Network?

Through its employees, each of the 30 Area III workforce partner organizations and the contracted WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Program providers brings specialized knowledge and services to the system while also working together to provide WIA core services and refer customers to programs that will benefit them. Each partner and contractor contributes staff time, materials and other resources, as needed, as available and as contracted.

B. What is the local Virginia Workforce Network management structure?



C. What is the background and expertise of key management and operations staff that influence success or failure of the local Virginia Workforce Network?

Officers of the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board of Directors:

Wayne Flippen (2008), Chair
General Manager
John C. Nordt, Inc.
Roanoke, VA

Joyce Kessinger (2007), Vice Chair
Human Resources Manager
Boxley Materials Company
Botetourt, VA

William Jones (2008), Treasurer
Branch Manager
Hometown Bank
Roanoke, VA

Beth Doughty (2007), Secretary
President
Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce
Roanoke, VA

D. What is the relationship between local Virginia Workforce Network management and staff?

The WVVWDB officers and staff focus on maintaining open, free-flowing, two-way communication. Through the use of e-mail, conference calls and face-to-face meetings, the management and staff create a team environment that produces an ever-improving working environment focused on serving Area III customers and building the system.

The WVWDB president serves as liaison between the board, the Workforce Center Consortium, program providers and partners. Additionally, the Workforce Center Oversight Committee provides input and advice from the business community.

- E. What staff is available at the local Virginia Workforce Network centers and what are their duties?

Workforce center partners staff and WIA program providers report to each center's manager and to their respective partner supervisors. Provider, partner and center supervisory staff work with the Workforce System Director to provide guidance and continuity throughout the system. Partners and program providers' supervisory staff are members of each center's partners council and confer on decisions regarding the workforce center's systems operations. WVWDB staff participates in these meetings to provide technical assistance and act as liaison between the WVWDB and the partners and program providers in the centers.

- F. Are there any additional structures that still need to be developed or acquired?

The local system has three comprehensive centers and is investigating the institution of specialty centers, such as those directed at specific target audiences, including youth.

- G. What employee development/capacity building strategies are in place, planned or needed?

The WVWDB supports continuous learning, staff development, empowerment and organizational growth through a team-based approach. While Area III takes full advantage of operational training offered by state and federal agencies, WVWDB has initiated a local planning effort to certify center staff in accordance with center certification criteria, recognizing the need to develop a training process to ensure all Area III staff members have the skills, education and qualifications to fully assist customers in their employment and training needs. The training system will focus on enhanced success with customers and presenting a seamless service-delivery system.

III. Shared Responsibility For Meeting Center and System Goals and Each Agency's Goals

- A. What process is in place for partners to determine and reach consensus on joint goals?

The WVWDB partners have been directly involved in establishing the five goals in the Area III Strategic Plan. To establish the five goals, the WVWDB's Strategic Planning Committee requested and received input from Area III partners, customers and other interested parties. After dissecting the information in relation to available community economic data, the committee presented the plan for review by Chief local elected officials' representatives, the Area III Youth Council, the WVWDB Executive Committee and the general public. The five goals are currently the focus of every meeting in Area III.

- B. How are partners sharing responsibility for attainment, costs and outcomes for joint goals?

The Workforce centers are a voluntary, cooperative system in which all members provide in-kind services, as explained in the Memorandums of Understanding, in support of each center's operation. Each partner provides input and guidance to ensure the centers provide seamless and non-discriminatory services to meet the goals and performance measures as set forth by the WVWDB.

- C. How are the goals (and the responsibilities related to the goals) shared with all community Virginia Workforce Network staff?

The WVWDB Strategic Plan, which includes the five strategic goals, is posted on the WVWDB website. Each WVWDB partner has been e-mailed the Strategic Plan and contacted directly regarding the importance of successfully accomplishing each of the five goals. Additionally, the accomplishment of these five goals is at the core of discussions during each meeting in Area III.

- D. Describe how the local Virginia Workforce Network staff has been cross-trained in other partner programs and services.

WVWDB Partner organizations meet at least monthly to facilitate and enhance each center's operation. Problems and concerns are discussed to find reasonable solutions that satisfy the needs of partners and center clients. Partners participate and assist in cross-training to promote full integration and referral of services.

- E Does the plan contain guidelines for how partners will share any incentive funds that may result from achievement of those goals?

No. Because programs are in a growth stage, focus has remained squarely on accomplishing goals for the benefit of system users and the community as a whole. Future strategic planning will incorporate more detailed information on the allocation process.

- F Describe how information management and data collection systems are used by the local Virginia Workforce Network partners for purposes of providing customer-focused and seamless delivery of services.

The process for measuring internal customer service satisfaction is as follows: Center staff and partners are asked to complete a monthly Workforce Center Report that includes an inquiry as to concerns, problems and questions and solicits recommendations for ascertaining customer satisfaction and improving center services. Center leadership collects this data and compiles a report which is disseminated and discussed during staff meetings. Leadership addresses identified problems and follows up with staff and partners as appropriate. Center leadership also incorporates the internal customer service satisfaction information with the monthly Workforce Center Report that is submitted to the Workforce Center Consortium and WVWDB staff.

The process for measuring external customer service satisfaction is as follows: Customers are asked to complete a satisfaction survey at each visit. Information and Referral Specialists collect the completed surveys daily. Center leadership reviews the surveys and generates a report distributed to the center partners, staff and the Workforce Center Consortium. Leadership addresses problems and concerns and follows up with customers and staff as appropriate.

IV. Products and Services Provided by the System and at Each Virginia Workforce Network Center

- A. What are the primary products and services of the local Virginia Workforce Network?

1. **Individual Services.** The primary products and services for job seekers include

- job listings
- job referrals
- job-seeking skills workshops
- job-search assistance
- vocational/occupational/on-the-job training
- résumé writing assistance
- unemployment insurance
- copier and fax services
- work experience
- GED classes and testing
- educational opportunities
- disadvantaged youth intensive summer and year-round mentoring program
- supportive services
- local educational facilities and program referral

2. **Business Services.** Primary services for employers include

- job-vacancy listing and advertisement
- computerized skills-based matching
- applicant screening
- skill-proficiency testing
- pre-employment assessment
- pre-employment training
- on-the-job training
- Work Keys® assessment
- labor-market information
- area wage surveys
 - prevailing wage information
 - economic trends
 - small business assistance
- entrepreneurial training

- tax credits for hiring eligible employees
- other business resources

B. Who will provide these products and services?

The products and services are provided by WVDDB contractors (Goodwill Industries of the Valleys and the Virginia Employment Commission) and the more than 30 community partners that deliver services in the Area III Workforce Centers.

C. Who are the targeted customers of each product and service that will be available through the local Virginia Workforce Network (i.e., employers or individuals)?

Please Section IV(A)(1) Individual Services and (2) Business Services above.

D. What services are included in the continuum of core, intensive and training services in the local Virginia Workforce Network site?

Core services are universally available to all residents of the service area seeking employment, employment changes, or educational information. Services are self directed or staff-assisted depending on the needs and preferences of the customer. Core services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- eligibility determinations
- outreach, intake and orientation
- initial assessment
- job search and placement assistance
- provision of employment statistics information
- provision of performance information and program-cost information on eligible providers of training services
- provision of information regarding how the local area is performing on the local performance measures
- provision of information on the availability of supportive services
- provision of information on filing claims for unemployment compensation

Customers needing assistance beyond core services to secure employment are eligible to receive intensive services from the appropriate WIA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Intensive services include:

- comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs
- development of an individual employment plan (IEP)
- group counseling
- individual counseling and career planning
- case management for participants
- short-term prevocational services

E. What services within the continuum of core, intensive and training services will be delivered by each of the local Virginia Workforce Network partners, and how will they be provided?

As noted in Section IV(B) above, core, intensive and training services are offered by WVDDB contractors and community partners. The following is a breakout of services included in the continuum of core, intensive and training services:

1. **Core Services**

- a) Eligibility Determination: There is no eligibility requirement for core services. If customers need services beyond core services, then they are referred for eligibility determination to appropriate staff. Those not eligible for the first such identified program receive a brief eligibility screening to determine if they are eligible for other programs available through the center (e.g. a WIA-ineligible customer may be

screened for UI potential eligibility), and a referral is made to that specific program through the referral process.

- b) Outreach, Intake and Orientation: Several methods are in place to reach potential customers, including ads, community presentations and flyer distributions at local community sites, and participation in job fairs and other community events. Center information is made available at off-site locations of all the partners. Signs at the centers have been modified to identify the center as members of the Virginia Workforce Network.

We believe the intake process begins with the first interaction that occurs between a customer and the center staff, specifically the information desk. With each inquiry, staff begins the preliminary screening process to identify needs and refers the customer to appropriate workforce center partners.

Each customer completes the center's Information and Referral Form. Based on this information the customer is referred to appropriate partners for eligibility determination or for specific services through the customer-referral process. Where more than one partner offers needed services, referrals are made to all appropriate partners. The customer decides which partner will best provide the services that individual needs.

The Information and Referral Specialist on duty at the center offers orientation to services available. Customers receive brochures or other information detailing center services and how to access them. A continuous-loop video highlighting partners plays in the Roanoke center lobby. (True only at Roanoke? Or all 3 sites?)

- c) Initial Assessment: Initial assessments begin with the "Virginia Workforce Center Information and Referral Form" on which customers indicate areas of interest. A staff review ensures appropriate services are offered. Staff also provides ongoing assessments, through their interactions with customers, to ensure needs are being met. Basic interviews, skills inventory and career-planning consultations are conducted as appropriate for the level of service being provided.
- d) Job Search, Placement Assistance and Career Counseling: Each partner at the center provides job search, placement-assistance and career-counseling services. The VEC, for example, provides all Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services and provides all customers with access to ALEX and other job-search and placement tools that customers can use on their own. Other partners supplement VEC services with their own, more specialized offerings, including career counseling.

Job search and placement assistance is available in the Resource Room/Area on various topics, including:

- interviewing techniques
- résumé writing
- Internet usage
- application completion
- personal development: dress for success, financial planning, self-esteem, etc.

The Roanoke center offers a biweekly workshop on job-seeking skills. This four-hour workshop covers identification of skills, goal setting, job search techniques, resumes and cover letters, completing job applications, effective job-interviewing skills and information sharing. This workshop is provided as a core service and is available to all customers who wish to participate. The workshop is facilitated by volunteer human resource professionals in Area III.

- e) Employment Statistics Information: Employment statistics information is available through the job listings and postings provided at the center as well as through labor market information available via computer from the following resources:

- State Labor Market Information (LMI)
- America's Labor Market Information System (ALMIS)
- Occupational Information Network (O*NET)
- DOL Occupational Outlook

Staff is available to review the information with individuals to ensure understanding of the technical data.

- f) **Eligible Provider Performance and Cost Information:** Access to performance and program-cost information from eligible training is available at the center. This information is maintained by the state WIA Unit and is located on the VEC web site. Access to the information is via the centers' Internet computers to the VEC web site.
- g) **Local Area Performance Measures:** Access to information regarding how the local area is performing on the local performance measures is available at the centers. This information is maintained by the state WIA Unit and is located on the VEC web site. Information on this topic is also located in the Strategic Plan for WIA Area III and is available on the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board website. Access to this information is provided via the centers' Internet computers to the web sites mentioned.
- h) **Support Services:** Information regarding support services is available through informational workshops/orientation and through staff interactions with customers. Staff members identify needs through interviews or through requests from customers for assistance. WIA-eligible customers receive supportive services including transportation (mileage reimbursement or bus tokens) and child-care or for other identified needs. Those who are not eligible for WIA-funded support services are referred to community service agencies for assistance.

A monthly workshop on "Budgeting & Money Management" is offered at the center as a community supportive service. This two-hour workshop is provided by American Credit Counselors without charge to any customer who wishes to attend.

- i) **Unemployment Insurance Information:** Information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation is available at the center. VEC staff provides information, answers questions and accepts applications for unemployment benefits. Claim filing is also available via the Internet.
 - j) **Follow-up Services:** Participants in WIA activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment receive follow-up services, including workplace counseling, for at least 12 months. The case manager maintains periodic contact with the customer during the first year of employment to offer additional services as needed. Such services may include seminars, networking support groups, mentoring programs and counseling.
2. **Intensive Services.** Customers needing assistance beyond core services to secure employment are eligible to receive intensive services from the appropriate WIA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Intensive services include comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs, development of an individual employment plan (IEP), group counseling, individual counseling and career planning, case management for participants, and short-term prevocational services.
- a) **Comprehensive Assessments:** Case managers use a combination of diagnostic testing and in-depth interviewing to complete comprehensive, specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs for adults and dislocated workers. The Test of Adult Basic Education determines educational grade level and readiness to pursue educational training. Other tests that may be used include the Leisure Interest Inventory, Career Ability Placement Survey, Virginia Occupational Information Network and Occupational

Information Ability Profiler. In-depth interviewing is used to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.

- b) Development of an Individual Employment Plan: Together, case managers and customers identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and appropriate services to achieve the goals. This information is set forth in a written individual employment plan agreed to and signed by the participant.
 - c) Group/Individual Counseling: Case managers provide on-going counseling in group or individual settings while the participant is enrolled in a program. Counseling relates directly to achieving the goals and objectives set forth in the individual employment plan.
 - d) Case Management: Case management services are provided to each participant in a program. Case managers provide counseling and supportive services to enable participants to achieve the goals and objectives set forth in the individual employment plan.
 - e) Short-Term Prevocational Services: Classes and two weekly workshops help program participants develop learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills and professional conduct to prepare for unsubsidized employment or training. One workshop is offered as a core service; the other is offered as an intensive service to participants in adult programs.
3. **Training Services.** If customers need assistance beyond intensive services to secure employment, individual training account (ITA) vouchers are available from the appropriate WIA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. The customer, in consultation with the program case manager, chooses whether to pursue training and, if so, decides upon the type of training, chooses a provider, and receives an individual training account voucher to fund the selected training. As the customer progresses through training, case management continues; and supportive services, if needed, are provided to allow the customer to remain in training until its completion.

Training services may include

- occupational-skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
- on-the-job training;
- programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, including cooperative education programs;
- training programs operated by the private sector;
- skill upgrading and retraining;
- entrepreneurial training;
- job-readiness training;
- adult-education and literacy activities provided in combination with other training services; and
- customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

Training services are directly linked, via labor market information, to occupations that are in demand in the local area, or in another area to which an adult or dislocated worker is willing to relocate. The system maximizes consumer choice by including the participant in developing the employment plan and by giving him or her final authority on training.

- F. What services will be accessible only through the Virginia Workforce Network Internet-based systems?

All services are available by accessing the WVDDB website. WVDDB contractor and community partners (where available) are linked.

- G. What is the relationship between alternate locations and the local Virginia Workforce Network centers for services that are not available at the local site?

The WVVDB Workforce Centers continue to build a working relationship with the region's Council of Community Services, which maintains a comprehensive database of available community-based services.

- H. How will information be shared among the partners at each local Virginia Workforce Network site?

The center contractors and partners work together actively to share information through regular partner meetings and meetings of the Workforce Center Consortium. Staff members are encouraged to share their ideas for improvement with lead staff and during meetings. The general approach is to follow the Baldrige Criteria for continuous improvement and to maintain open lines of communication among customers, staff, supervisory staff, partners, the Workforce Center Consortium and the WVVDB.

- I. How will information about the local Virginia Workforce Network's products and services be communicated to the community it serves, including businesses? Please attach any local VWN marketing plan and materials.

The Workforce Center Consortium Business Plan calls for an aggressive marketing program consisting of the following elements:

- Development and distribution of brochures and other print materials that provide information on available services and how to access them.
- Public-service advertising with local print and broadcast media.
- Radio and television advertising as funds are available.
- News coverage of "human interest" stories about workforce development services.
- Periodic open houses at the workforce centers.
- Presentations to community organizations, service organizations and employer organizations.
- Placement of posters and brochures in transportation services used by persons with disabilities.

To date, the centers have developed brochures that describe their services and partner agencies. In addition, a pamphlet describing the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board Services has been developed and is in use. The managers of the centers and the WVVDB president speak regularly to numerous groups and organizations concerning the center services. The Western Virginia Workforce Development Board web site features information concerning the centers and partners.

- J. How has the state Virginia Workforce Network logo and identity been incorporated into the local products and services identified in item I. above?

All WVVDB materials are identified by the State Virginia Workforce Network logo. (Please see attached material.)

- K. How will the local Virginia Workforce Network ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure accessibility to customers and other pertinent special populations within the Workforce Investment Area?

1. Service strategies for individuals with disabilities

- a) The local Virginia Workforce Centers encourage all citizens to take advantage of offered services. Center staff has the opportunity daily to communicate with people, some of whom have known disabilities, who are seeking a variety of assistance. Anyone with a substantial impairment (restrictions to hearing, seeing, speaking, breathing, performance of manual tasks, walking, learning, or working) receives

accommodations of a reasonable nature to enable them to receive information about services to which they may be entitled. These accommodations include but may not be limited to:

- program information and many applications for services, available via the Internet;
- parking spaces designated "Handicapped Use Only" at public and staff entrances;
- a variety of available seating – desk chairs as well as unattached chairs and tabletop space;
- work counters of varying heights;
- automatic door openers;
- access to the TDD system and interpreters for the hearing-impaired;
- accessible restroom facilities; and
- availability of private meeting areas and unencumbered spaces and connecting hallways in which all individuals may move about the centers as necessary and without difficulty.

Program requirements are presented to individuals with disabilities in the same manner presented to all customers. Supportive information may be required from some applicants. (For example, when applying for unemployment benefits, all persons are asked if they can accept full-time work. A negative response to this inquiry will prompt additional questioning by the staff member.) All applications for services are reviewed and processed according to the programs' associated laws, rules and regulations in the absence of any discriminatory practice.

The Department of Rehabilitative Services, Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, and the Department of the Blind and Visually Impaired are center partners working most often with disabled individuals. The partners' interaction and provision of services are broad based and inclusive of all potential benefits, job placements and training opportunities.

- b) The centers use a survey form (the Virginia Workforce Center Information and Referral Form) to ask customers to self-disclose if "disability is a barrier to employment." The centers' Information and Referral Specialists review this form and take appropriate action to initiate services requested on the form. The VEC's automated system collects data on the number of persons with disabilities who register for employment services at the centers. The data indicates that persons with disabilities are receiving services through the centers.
- c) The WVWDB has a written, published nondiscrimination policy that covers discrimination on the basis of physical or mental disability. Partner agencies providing services at the centers also have agency nondiscrimination policies that cover discrimination on the basis of physical and mental disability.
- d) Policies on nondiscrimination have been disseminated to all center staff. Copies of the nondiscrimination policies are posted on the centers' bulletin boards for all staff and customers to read.
- e) The Workforce Center managers and EEO Officer are responsible for regularly reviewing service practices with respect to the treatment of customers with disabilities. Appropriate physical aspects of the building, including entrances, exits, furniture and traffic pathways, are checked for ample accessibility. Signs indicating, "Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities" are posted at each center's initial contact station, the Customer Service Desk, in the main lobby.

An assessment of the facilities in all three center by the Department of Rehabilitative Services indicated compliance with all applicable requirements. A copy of this assessment is maintained in the centers.

2. Employment Practices under the Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines

All staff members in the centers are employees of a partner agency or organization as the centers have no staff of their own. Each partner at the center is the recipient of federal/state/local funding that requires compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act employment practices. This compliance is accomplished through the employment practices and procedures of each partner. Partners have provided copies of their policies and procedures as documentation of compliance. These are available for review at the centers.

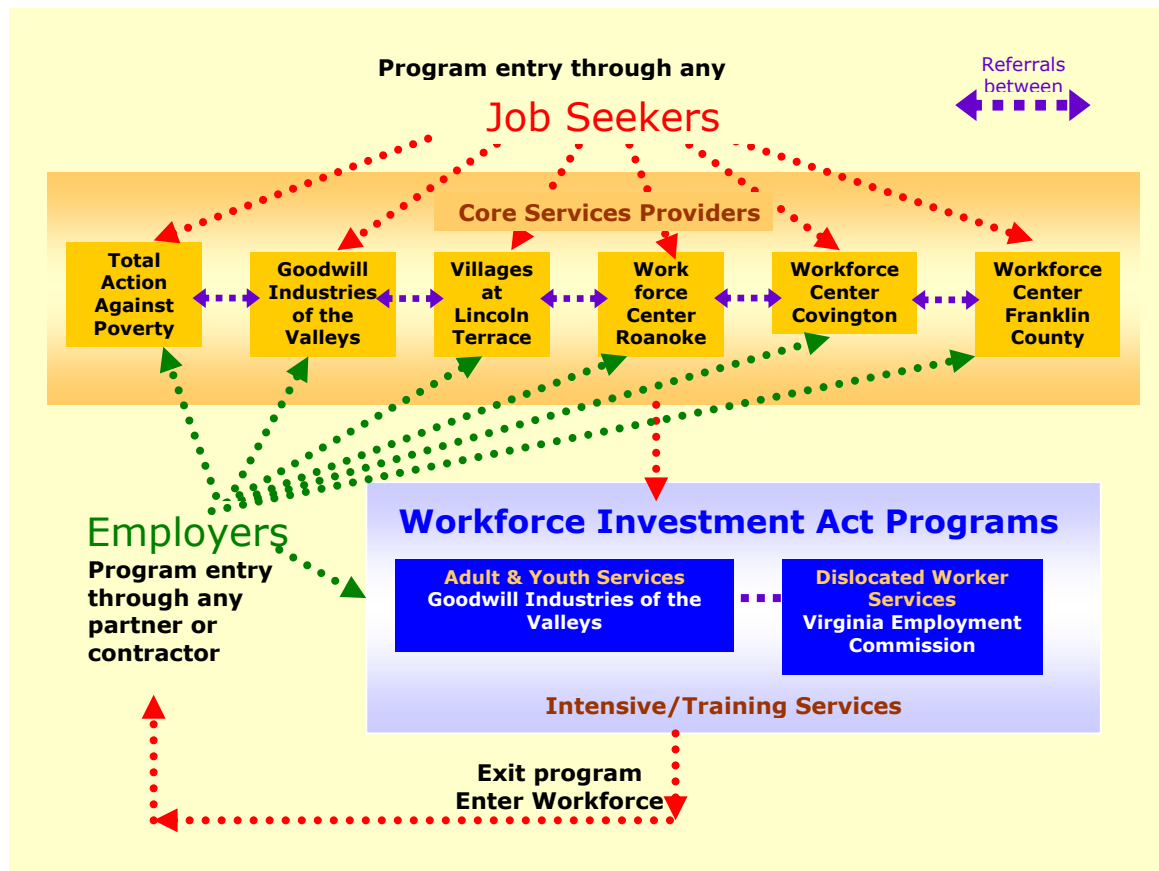
3. Reasonable Accommodation for Staff and Customers

- a) The centers demonstrate an awareness of reasonable accommodations by ensuring that the facilities meet accessibility guidelines, providing a TTY device in the resource room for customer and staff use, using adjustable height tables for computers, using computer software that offers disability accessible features, and providing assistance to any staff or customer requesting assistance due to a disability.
- b) Employees working in the centers are aware they are entitled to reasonable accommodations for a disability. Standard ADA policies are followed by all partner agencies. Customers are informed about aids by signage in the main lobby stating, "Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities."
 - (1) Reasonable accommodations are provided to center program staff, applicants and customers with disabilities. Existing accessibility and furnishings meet the needs of most requests, and additional reasonable accommodations can be provided upon request. These accommodations include but are not limited to:
 - program information and many applications for services, available via the Internet;
 - six parking spaces, one of which is van-accessible, designated "Handicapped Use Only" at public and staff entrances;
 - a variety of available seating – desk chairs as well as unattached chairs and table top space;
 - work counters of varying heights;
 - automatic door openers;
 - access to the TDD system and interpreters for the hearing-impaired;
 - accessible restroom facilities;
 - availability of private meeting areas; and
 - unencumbered spaces and connecting hallways in which all individuals may move about the centers as necessary without difficulty.
 - (2) The centers provide reasonable accommodations to any staff, applicants and customers who have a physical or mental impairment substantially limiting one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. Thereby, every person is guaranteed the opportunity to participate fully in the provision of and/or receipt of services from all center partners.

- (3) Center supervisory staff discusses potential needs for accommodations and strives to continually maintain physical and informational accessibility for all. Varied resources for additional needs are available to the supervisory staff.
 - (4) The centers' managers are responsible for coordinating requests for reasonable accommodations.
 - (5) When sign language interpreters are needed, supervisors refer to a listing of these resources that has been provided by the Department of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
 - (6) For a request requiring transcription of materials into Braille onto audiocassette or an ASII diskette, supervisory staff is aware the Department of Blind and Visually Impaired is to be contacted for direction.
- c) The Workforce Centers' staff is continually aware of the varying needs of employees and customers. Locations without accessibility barriers will be selected for interviews, staff meetings, workshops and other gatherings of staff, customers, or combination of all parties. Appropriate consideration is given to any staff member or customer requiring reasonable accommodations that will enable them to attend all gatherings and participate fully in all functions.
 - d) Documentation of specific, reasonable accommodation actions that have been taken is available for review at the centers.

V. Referral Methods for Customers

A. What is the local service delivery structure – i.e., location, service mix and customer flow?



B. How have the local Virginia Workforce Network center sites been configured to be physically welcoming to customers and facilitate in the delivery of seamless services?

All three WVDDB Workforce Centers have practical signage that invites potential customers in. Each WVDDB Workforce Center is unique in its physical appearance and configuration, but all three focus on the most important issue – welcoming the customer. All three centers utilize Information and Referral Specialists to offer every person who enters the workforce center the appropriate workforce development guidance and direction.

- C. What is the systematic approach to the referral of customers needing local Virginia Workforce Network services in a seamless manner?

WVDDB Workforce Center Information & Referral Specialists provide a necessary link among the customer, the partners and their services. This includes providing information and referrals to the customer and to the center partners. Specific functions include: connecting customers to the appropriate partner, distributing referral surveys and evaluation forms to appropriate partners, guide public in the use of site computers to obtain information regarding job seeking and provide customers information regarding all services housed at the center including ALEX, Resource Room and self-registration. Each center has a resource area that assists customers with the following activities: writing resumes and cover letters; furnishing printed and video materials on job-search activities; referring customers to workshops and center partners, assisting with Internet job searches; posting résumés on web sites, sending job-related email attachments, filling out on-line applications, and providing information on community resources.

- D. How will customers within the continuum of services be referred among local Virginia Workforce Network system/center/site partner services/agencies?

The current workforce staff has been involved in cross-training. Periodic meetings have been held in which a representative from each contractor/partner agency provides an orientation to the services of that partner to the rest of the staff. This process continues to take place during center staff meetings as needed and at other times as determined by the needs of staff. Through this process all staff members, including new staff, become cross-trained for all programs available. This cross-training is supplemented by written materials (center brochures) that are used as desk aides to assist staff in describing all programs and services available at the centers, regardless of the partner providing the service. There are plans to establish a more formal program of training for staff, to ensure continuous staff improvement, and training of new partner staff members.

- E. How will customers receiving services through the local Virginia Workforce Network move through intake, enrollment and assessment?

See Section V(A) above.

- F. What are the collaborative efforts of the Virginia Workforce Network partner services/agencies to ensure that a shared responsibility exists for coordinating employer contacts for job orders and job development activities?

The WVDDB operates on the philosophy that partnership, rather than competition, is the most effective approach to achieving the common goals of current and future contractors and partners in Area III. The vision of the WVDDB is to provide high-quality workforce development services to meet the needs of businesses, job seekers and the community. This vision is consistent with its mission: To cultivate a dynamic workforce development system that stimulates economic development in the Western Virginia Workforce area.

The WVDDB consists of employees of the 30 workforce center partners and the contracted WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Program providers (Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, Virginia Employment Commission, Total Action Against Poverty, County of Allegheny). Each organization brings its own specialized knowledge and services to Area III, while working together to provide WIA core, intensive and training services and to refer customers to programs that will benefit them. Each partner and contractor contributes staff time, materials and other resources as needed and as available.

VI. Measuring Success

- A. What are the major milestones of success identified by the local WIB for the local Virginia Workforce Network?

WVWDB Strategic Goals are as follows:

1. Improve regional cooperation on workforce issues through enhanced communication.
2. Provide opportunities for improving skills for entry-level and incumbent workers.
3. Improve access to employment for workers with challenges.
4. Demonstrate the need for and the value of workers in the technical, vocational and trade areas.
5. Take action to meet performance standards.

- B. How will the local WIB and Virginia Workforce Network management recognize and reward success among local Virginia Workforce Network staff?

A recent independent assessment reiterated the need for a local system of recognition and reward. WVWDB staff, the Workforce Center Consortium and the Workforce Center Oversight Committee have begun efforts to prioritize the reports recommendations and implement strategies to accomplish them.

- C. What are the quality goals for services that will be provided to customers (i.e., prompt/ courteous service designed to assist customer in achieving their educational/employment goals, etc.)?

The quality goals will be established by the WVWDB from recommendations by the Strategic Planning Committee.

- D. What are the quality goals for services that will be provided to employees (i.e., to work in safe/professional environment and receive the tools necessary to achieve the desired outcome, etc.)?

The goals for services that will be provided to employees will be established by the WVWDB from recommendations by the Strategic Planning Committee.

- E. What are the quality goals for Virginia Workforce Network partners (for example, provide jobseeker referrals/contact/services to employers within **X** hours; increase number of job vacancy postings and new employer contacts by **X** percent per year; etc.)?

1. Improve regional cooperation on workforce issues through enhanced communication.

Key Metrics: Conduct annual pre-test and post-tests to gauge cooperation between regional workforce development partners and customers.

2. Provide opportunities for improving skills for entry level and incumbent workers.

Key Metrics:

- Implement Career Readiness Certificate and utilize results to establish benchmarks for future evaluation.
- Measure number of skill training opportunities available considering both quantity and location.

3. Improve access to employment for workers with challenges.

Key Metrics:

- Assess and identify barriers, availability of services and gaps.
- Utilize the data to address breaking down the barriers and utilizing Area III workforce development resources to close demand gaps.

4. Demonstrate the need for and the value of workers in the technical, vocational and trade areas.

Key Metrics:

- Develop an awareness campaign to demonstrate to Area III students, parents, educators and community leaders the need for technical, vocational and trade skills.
- Measure secondary and higher education enrollments in technical, vocational and trade programs.

5. Take action to meet performance standards

Key Metrics:

- Meet or surpass at least 80 percent of each of the 17 Area III's performance standards.

- F. How will you evaluate operational performance (faster, better, cheaper) internally and against competitors or similar high-achieving organizations?

The WVVWDB's operational goal will be for staff to research similar workforce areas around the Commonwealth and the United States for best practice operational-performance standards. Appropriate Area III standards would be established by the WVVWDB. The Virginia Area Executive Directors are reviewing possible statewide operational and financial standards.

- G. Describe how information-management and data-collection systems are used by the local Virginia Workforce Network partners for purposes of measuring success.

The WVVWDB uses a monthly reporting process to collect and monitor performance for all programs and services offered in Area III and the Workforce Centers, including applicable WIA performance standards. These reports are prepared by each contractor/partner and provided to the board, board staff and the Workforce Center Consortium. The report shows program and service outcomes that are directly related to performance standards.

VII. WIA Program Plan

- A. Describe how the LWIB will ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants.

Area III contractors and partners have performance expectations communicated through staff meetings and performance reviews of providers' performance. WVVWDB staff meets with service providers at least bimonthly where performance expectations are discussed. Each organization staffing Area III is responsible for evaluating the performance of its assigned staff and addressing performance expectations and performance results as appropriate.

The WVVWDB encourages staff learning by providing periodic training opportunities. These training opportunities may be provided by the individual organizations to whom staff report, or may be provided by state agencies, federal agencies, or other appropriate training resources.

Contractors and partners are expected to train staff to fully perform the duties and responsibilities of their assigned positions. As professional staff, they are empowered to make decisions consistent with all applicable policy and procedures, on a daily basis, necessary for providing services to customers. Staff members are trained to consult staff leadership if providing services in a particular instance requires deviation from state policy and procedure.

WVVWDB leadership solicits contractor and partner feedback during regularly scheduled meetings and uses the information for improving organizational and management effectiveness. Staff feedback also is solicited via the monthly report each contractor or partner completes to report activities.

WVWDB contractors and partners are encouraged to think “outside the box” and present innovative ideas for service improvement. The WVWDB seeks to provide a work environment that encourages new ideas, risk-taking and pilot projects without fear of failure or sanction if results do not meet expectations.

- B. Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

The primary employment activities in Area III focus on the Virginia Employment Commission, local staffing agencies, and job fairs. The WVWDB works closely with all three. Since the Virginia Employment Commission, located in each Area III Workforce Center, is the Area III contractor for the WIA Dislocated Worker Program, the WVWDB has practical partnership that focuses on successful implementation of the WIA. The VEC also works closely with Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, the WVWDB contractor for the WIA Adult Program, in referring customers to the most appropriate service. The WVWDB is cultivating a working relationship with local staffing agencies (Manpower, Kelly Services, Adecco, etc.) to offer WIA job seekers job opportunities through a nontraditional WIA workforce resource. Local staffing connections also offer access to employers who otherwise may not understand WIA opportunities. The WVWDB participates in local job fairs through direct sponsorship and/or manning a booth.

The primary training activities in Area III focus on community and technical colleges, universities and colleges, secondary-education adult, and technical-education programs and approved training providers. As members of the WVWDB, Virginia Western Community College and Dabney S. Lancaster Community College have taken a leadership role in assisting Area III’s focus on the need to strengthen workforce development training. As Area III builds a stronger approved training provider database, the need for diversity of training resources become more important. Area III continues to support local secondary education technical programs by participating on advisory councils and SkillsUSA Program. Because the WVWDB office is located in the Roanoke Higher Education Center, the staff interacts constantly with the 16 Workforce-related education institutions that are housed in that facility.

- C. Describe and assess the type and availability of youth activities in the local area and identify youth program providers.

- Goodwill/WVWDB WIA Youth Contractor
- TAP/This Valley Works
- County of Alleghany
- Junior Achievement/Free Enterprise training in Schools
- YMCA/After School Programs
- Boys & Girls Clubs/After School Programs
- West End Center/After School Programs
- Secondary School Systems/After School Programs
- Municipal Parks and Recreation Programs
- Local Truancy Boards

While not a complete list of youth providers, the above list gives the flavor for the type of organizations that focus their programs and services on Youth. The WVWDB contractors focus on executing the spirit and letter of WIA with practical yet innovative delivery of services. Utilizing work experience, tutoring, field trips, and individual and group recognition, Area III WIA youth customers are given every opportunity to understand the importance of staying in school or getting their GED or acquiring the work skills necessary to lead a successful and self-sufficient life. Area III contractors look for ways to partner with other community and faith-based youth organizations. Area III contractors and staff serve and/or participate on local truancy boards, and community action organization boards, and make presentations to local business and social groups.

- D. Describe how the LWIB will coordinate its local activities with statewide rapid response activities, as appropriate.

The WVVWDB is notified of each rapid-response situation that occurs in Area III. The WVVWDB is represented at each rapid-response event, giving WIA program information to prospective customers.

E. Describe or identify the following process elements:

1. Opportunity for public comment:

All WVVWDB events are published on the WVVWDB website. WVVWDB meeting minutes, agendas and meeting materials are posted on the WVVWDB website. WVVWDB documents and processes that require public review (RFP, Strategic Plan, etc.) are advertised in the Area III print media and distributed in other public locations. Board of Directors, committee and Youth Council meetings are publicized on local cable channels.

2. The fiscal agent identified by the Chief Local Elected Official:

The City of Roanoke

3. The competitive process used to award grants and contracts locally:

The Workforce Development Board utilizes the City of Roanoke and Commonwealth of Virginia procurement system.

F. Local levels of performance for the 17 required measures as negotiated with the state.

<i>Performance Measure</i>	PY 2005 Negotiated Level
Adult	
Entered Employment Rate	75.0
Retention Rate at 6 months	80.0
Average Earnings Change in 6 Months	\$2,735
Employment and Credential Rate	62.0
Dislocated Worker	
Entered Employment Rate	80.0
Employment Retention Rate at 6 months	86.0
Earnings Replacement Rate in 6 months	\$160
Employment and Credential Rate	62.5
Older Youth	
Entered Employment Rate	70.0
Employment Retention Rate	82.5
Average Earnings Change in 6 months	\$2,200
Credential Rate	51.0
Younger Youth	
Skill Attainment Rate	83.0
Diploma or Equivalent Attainment	63.0
Retention Rate	55.0
Customer Satisfaction	
Employer	72.5
Participant	71.0