

# **WIB MOV Local Plan 2015-16**

## **Section I – Executive Summary**

The Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley serves nine counties in West Virginia. Those counties are Calhoun, Clay, Jackson, Mason, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Wirt, and Wood. The population of the combined nine counties is just under 200,000 individuals. Wood County is considered metropolitan with 2 municipalities having populations of 10,000 or greater. The Appalachian Regional Commission classifies 3 of the counties as distressed, 3 at risk, and 3 as transitional counties. Wood County is the largest county with a population of 87,350. Wirt County is the smallest with a population of 5,752.

Unemployment rate for the region for 2013 was 7.5%, down 1% from the previous year.

Industry in each county varies. Wood, Pleasants, and Jackson counties have had a greater diversity of industry previously allowing those counties to survive through recessions. Smaller counties have had a more limited industrial base, frequently dependent on declining industries. All nine counties have seen industry changes in the last decade. Gains in one county seem to be off-set by losses in neighboring counties.

The Local Elected Officials (LEO) and the Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley (WIB) have both expressed a desire to identify ways that Workforce Investment Act funds can be used to assist area employers, job seekers, and communities. Coordination with economic development activity to retain and expand area employment opportunities is a primary goal of both the LEO and WIB. Identification of skill needs, existing skill levels, and the gaps between the two continues to be a significant portion of our plan. It is the intent of the LEO and WIB to plan training programs around those gaps.

The Region 4 Workforce Investment Area Local Plan addresses how the region will continue to implement an on-going employment and training program. That program must meet the needs of both the employers and job seekers in our area.

Being aware of the rural nature of the region, diversity of need and the transportation barriers faced by many of the citizens of Region 4, the local plan addresses the need to have WorkForce West Virginia services available in multiple locations in the region. A comprehensive

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WorkForce West Virginia site is located in Parkersburg and in Ripley. If funding allows, additional satellite WorkForce West Virginia sites or access points are located in the remaining counties

Assisting job seekers in finding employment that leads to self-sufficiency is one of the primary goals of the Workforce Investment Act. Individuals who are work ready should find the WorkForce WV system to be the first and best source of information about employment opportunities. As part of core services, information on job openings, labor market information, skill requirements, and career planning should be available both through self-help resource information or staff assisted services.

Intensive services are available for individuals unable to obtain or retain employment at or above the self-sufficiency level. In-depth assessment, career counseling, identification of barriers, referrals to supportive services, and pre-vocational training are available when appropriate. A “smorgasbord” of services should be available, allowing customers to utilize those services needed but without setting a regimented standard applied to all customers.

Training should be utilized when skill level continues to be a barrier to employment after provision of core and intensive services. When training is identified as an appropriate course of action, case managers assist the customer in an informed selection of training. Long term employment opportunities, projected wage rates, potential career path, and potential job location are some of the factors that should be considered in the training decision.

Funding of training should not and will not be the extent of services for individuals enrolled in training. The WIB recognizes the need for continued support to be provided during training. Services will be provided by the WorkForce WV system, including continued evaluation of barriers with possible solutions, assistance in training related activities, job search skills and assistance, and follow up will be part of the services offered. Successful completion of training followed by employment must be a focus for individuals enrolled in training.

Service to employers is the other major component of the Workforce Investment Act. The WIB recognizes a need for improvement and expansion of services to this customer base. It is the

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WIB's intent to continue to increase the focus on employer services. Both partner and contractors will have employer services as an expected portion of any agreements.

As with the job seeker, employers should see the WorkForce West Virginia system as being the service delivery of choice for employment and training related needs. Screening for qualified workers, appropriate and timely labor market information, and assistance in employment related activities should all be available through core services.

As the needs of the employer increase, so should the level of service provided by the WorkForce West Virginia system. Assessment of current and potential employees is becoming an increasingly requested service. Assistance in training both new and incumbent employees in basic work skills is available (basic literacy, computer skills, soft skills, EEO information, etc.) through the WorkForce West Virginia network. Skill training based on employer requirements will also be reviewed and, where appropriate be funded through Workforce Investment Act funds. Classroom training, on-the-job training, and customized training are possible delivery vehicles for the training required by employers.

As with the WorkForce West Virginia system, the WIB recognizes that the needs of area youth are not standard from county to county. Private employment opportunities, transportation, skill training, and social service programs vary across the region. With this in mind, youth programs are designed to be flexible based on the needs of individual communities and / or counties. Year round services are offered through the Youth Advantage Program for both In School and Out of School Youth.

In the spring of 2013, the WIB MOV contracted with Thomas P. Miller and Associates to conduct an in-depth study of workforce related issues in our region. The findings of this study and the Strategic Plan developed as a result of the report are incorporated into this report. Both documents can be accessed at [www.workforcemov.org](http://www.workforcemov.org)

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## **Section II: Assessment of the Current State of the Workforce**

The Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley serves nine counties in West Virginia. Those counties are Calhoun, Clay, Jackson, Mason, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Wirt, and Wood. The population of the combined nine counties is just under 200,000 individuals. Wood County is considered metropolitan with 2 municipalities having populations of 10,000 or greater. The Appalachian Regional Commission classifies 3 of the counties as distressed, 3 at risk, and 3 as transitional counties. Wood County is also the largest county with a population of 87,350. Wirt County is the smallest with a population of 5,752.

In April of 2013, the WIB MOV contracted with Thomas P. Miller and Associates to conduct an assessment of workforce and industry related issues in the nine county region. A variety of methods were used as part of the study including:

- Focus Groups in each of the nine counties
- Employer Survey
- Interviews with community and industry leaders
- Data Analysis
- Targeted industry research

Highlights of information provided in the State of the Workforce include the following:

### **Demographics for the region:**

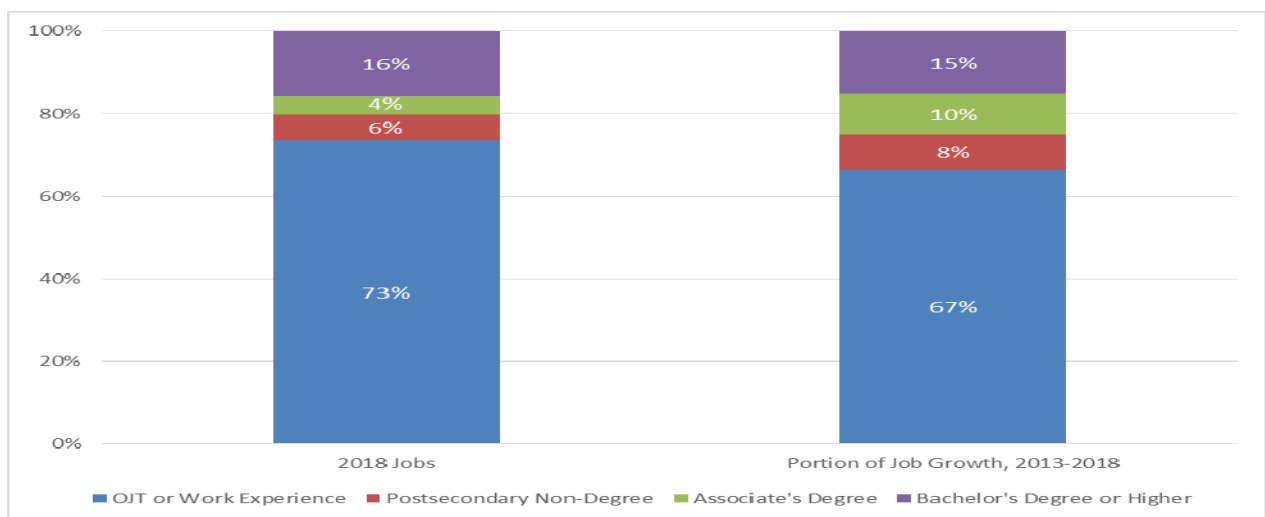
Population:	199,451 individuals
Population by age:	Nearly 40% of population is over 50 years of age.
Median household income:	\$36,468
People living in poverty:	18.2%
Labor Force:	86,482 individuals
Labor Participation Rate:	65%
Education Attainment Levels:	57% have a high school diploma or less (43% nationally) 43% have at least some postsecondary (57% nationally)

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## Top 5 Most Significant Employer Workforce Challenges

- Filling high skill position
- Finding qualified candidates to hire
- Training new workers
- Replacing retiring workers
- Adequately assessing and screening candidates

## Education Requirements for Future Occupations



## Common Employer Skills requested across industry lines:

Employers continue to identify a need for employment related skills across industry lines. Basic academic skills and “soft skills” have been identified as needed in occupations in multiple employment sectors. Employers have expressed concerns that individuals seeking employment and entering the employment labor force are lacking in these skills. Ability to pass drug tests has also been identified by employers as a significant barrier in multiple industries. Qualifications requested in multiple job categories include:

- Troubleshooting
- Problem Solving
- Detail oriented
- Oral / Written communication
- Organizational Skills
- Self-starting / Self-motivated

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### **Top Employment by Industry**

About 3800 businesses are located in the Mid-Ohio Valley region. Each of the nine counties has a diversity of employers / businesses. In reviewing the 10 largest employers, each county has health care, education/ government, services industries, and manufacturing represented. In 6 of the counties energy related employers are also included. 95% of all businesses have fewer than 50 employees. Companies that have less than 5 employees make up 50% of the businesses in the region.

<b>Largest Industries of MOV</b>	<b>Employment 2013</b>	<b>% of Employment</b>
Government	13,768	15%
Health Care and Social Assistance	12,228	13%
Retail Trade	11,497	13%
Manufacturing	6,952	8%
Accommodation and Food Services	6,012	7%
Oil & Gas Extraction , Mining , Quarrying	5,623	6%

The full State of the Workforce Report may be accessed at [www.workforcemov.org](http://www.workforcemov.org).

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## Section III: The Desired State of the Workforce

## Section IV: Analysis and Strategic Planning for Achieving the Desired State of the Workforce

A Strategic Plan team was formed in November of 2013 to address the finding of the Workforce Study. Representatives from economic development, secondary schools, community college, workforce development, and community leaders came together to evaluate the recommendations made in the State of the Workforce Study. The team represents multiple partners and has been identified as a Strategic Plan for the region. Partners were asked to “buy in” and look at the goals from multiple perspectives.

Specific opportunities for growth identified include:

- **Building on target industries** of government, healthcare, plastics and polymers, oil and gas, and construction by preparing for a potential ethane cracker and facilitating business-to-business “matchmaking.”
- **Strengthening retention and expansion of existing businesses** by increasing awareness of business services, coordination among partners and support for business owners.
- **Encouraging entrepreneurship** by connecting students and adults with small business development programs, mentors, and other support networks.
- **Aligning workforce supply with employer demand** by facilitating greater employer involvement in schools and creating sector partnerships that identify and address workforce gaps.
- **Increasing labor participation** to grow the talent base already present in the region by communicating the opportunities and benefits of employment, and by integrating employability skills into existing programs.
- **Travel, tourism, & recreation** to grow the region’s tourism and recreation opportunities.
- **Improving regionalism** with a more proactive and cohesive approach that crosses borders (both county and state) to more effectively attract and serve employers.

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The Strategic Planning Team worked to identify potential strategies in support of the identified goals. In January 2014, the Workforce Investment Board approved the plan and identified top strategies to be addressed during the initial / immediate phases of the plan. Targeted Industries, Retention & Expansion of Existing Businesses, Workforce Supply & Demand, and Entrepreneurship were chosen as the first issues to be addressed. The Board also identified Oil & Gas, Construction, and Plastics / Polymers as initial industry targets. The full Strategic Plan may be accessed at [www.workforcemov.org](http://www.workforcemov.org)

On April 2, 2014, approximately 55 people met to begin the action part of the Strategic Plan. Three action teams were formed to address the top strategies. Each team has representation from education, economic development, and workforce development among the members. Representatives of apprenticeship programs, industry groups, finance, local cities, state agencies, community based organizations, were also among the partners represented. Each team began by identifying top strategies to address in the coming months. The WIB MOV, with assistance from TPMA, are staffing the teams. However, the various team members have stepped up and are contributing to the “real” work that is to be accomplished.

### Projected Employment Opportunities, Workforce Needs, and Supply Pipeline

The economic development community within the region has worked with the WIB MOV to identify and target the most critical occupations and industries. Labor Market information provided by WorkForce West Virginia, job order postings, and local business news were all reviewed to assist in identifying the needs of area employers. Health care, retail sales, and the service occupations were identified as growing and in demand by the 2008-2018 projected demand occupations. Many of the jobs in retail and service industries require short term, on the job training with lower than average wages. While WIB MOV recognizes the growth in those occupations, the board believes it more appropriate to target training dollars to higher skill jobs equal to or above self sufficiency guidelines.

As outlined in the Strategic Plan, WIB MOV is emphasizing training to meet the needs of the plastics / polymers, oil / gas, and construction industries. Manufacturing has been the primary employment sector for many years in this area and continues to employ 10% of the labor force in



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Region 4. Published reports and industry contacts project hiring to continue to grow in the coming years. Education entities in the region routinely review current curriculum and modify training programs and individual course content, including soft skills, to better meet the needs of the region's employers.

*Attachment A* provides a list of occupations that have been identified as demand occupations by the WIB MOV for 2014-15. If during the course of the year, occupational projections change or new industries are identified as in need of workers, the demand occupation list will be reviewed for potential modification.

In addition to the above information, WIB MOV supports the goals of the WorkForce West Virginia Strategic Plan's five goals. The following provides specifics on activities within the Mid-Ohio Valley in support of those goals.

*Goal 1: Develop a workforce that is responsive to changing economic conditions through nimble and effective workforce training programs that will increase work readiness certifications statewide by 20 percent.*

Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley supports the goal of ensuring that job seekers are able to document work readiness through attainment of WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificates. The following activities will continue to encourage WIA participants in this endeavor:

- Participants in Hit the Ground Running and SPOKES pre-employment programs will be required to take WorkKeys tests as part of the curriculum. The testing will be administered after participants have had the opportunity to refresh academic skills, leading to higher WorkKeys scores.
- Participants who request a waiver to soft skills training will be required to complete WorkKeys testing and receive a Career Readiness certificate at a level in line with the occupation / training being requested.
- Youth Advantage participants will be encouraged to take WorkKeys test as part of the career exploration and work readiness activities of the program. Youth who are identified as basic skills deficient will receive tutoring services to help raise academic levels prior to administration of the WorkKeys test.
- All job seekers will be encouraged to complete WorkKeys testing as a means to document basic job ready skills for employment.

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*Goal 2: Develop a broader pool of appropriately prepared natural gas support and downstream industry workers in West Virginia to take full advantage of economic opportunities in the emerging Marcellus Shale industry by working with primary education, Career and Technical Centers, and Community and Technical Colleges to develop statewide curriculum to meet industry demands.*

WIB MOV works with multiple partners to ensure education programs are in line with the needs of the area employers. The WIB MOV director serves on the WVU-Parkersburg Consortium. This consortium has representatives of WVU-Parkersburg, Superintendents of Schools (or designees) from the local counties, and the Technical Education Directors from area Technical Centers. Curriculum development and coordination of the educational institutions are regular agenda items for the Consortium. Area employers (including representation from Oil and Gas) are invited periodically to meet with the Consortium to ensure up to date information is available on the hiring and skill needs of the industry.

WIB MOV and partners, through the recent Workforce Study and Strategic Plan has identified Oil and Gas, along with downstream industry of plastics / polymers as a targeted industry for growth in the region. Action teams are in the process of identifying qualifications for job classifications in these fields which will then be made available to the public. The intent is to ensure job seekers are aware of job descriptions and employer needs as they select career pathways. In addition, the team is working to ensure curriculum are designed around employer needs and will lead to seamless transition between various levels of training.

WIB MOV has also been active in presenting information based on the State of the Workforce to various groups across the region. Examples include high school guidance counselors, technical education administrators, civic groups, workforce professionals, and economic development groups. The intent is to share employer needs with a broad audience that is involved with working directly with job seekers and decision makers in the region.

*Goal 3: Promote technical training and education among students and job seekers to adequately prepare West Virginia workers for highly technical work environment. In collaboration with Community and Technical Colleges and Career and Technical Education centers, the state will increase the number of people receiving technical training by 10 percent.*

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WIB MOV provides career information to job seekers on a wide variety of occupations. While encouraging all job seekers to follow their dream, career exploration is encouraged on a wide range of jobs requiring varying levels of education and skills. Based on current employer needs, job seekers are encouraged to obtain certificate or associate level training, leading to an industry recognized credential.

WIB MOV also promotes apprenticeship opportunities through the Affiliated Construction trades. The WIB director participates in the Joint Labor Union Management Apprenticeship Training Committee (JLUMATC) to assist in recruitment activities for local trade unions.

Youth Advantage participants are encouraged to explore technical training both while in high school and as a post-secondary option.

The Labor Supply and Demand Action Team (part of the Strategic Plan Teams) is developing an employment guide that will outline job titles, descriptions, and training locations that provide specific skills related to the occupations highlighted. This guide will be provided to job seekers across the region to assist in developing career pathways, including training opportunities, leading to employment in demand occupations.

*Goal 4: To ensure job development and workforce readiness is a priority throughout West Virginia, the state will increase the number of credentials awarded through Individual Training Account by 10 percent for Adult and Dislocated Workers.*

WIB MOV is working with local training providers to explore options for short term training and training that can be presented using alternative delivery methods. The ability to take training through on line programs is an option being explored with WVU-P to increase the potential for training for individuals living in rural counties with limited post-secondary options and / or transportation barriers.

The Adult and Dislocated worker case managers have been tasked with additional outreach and recruitment for WIA funded services, including classroom training assistance. Possible methods include job seeker searches of individuals registered with WorkForce WV, presentation to community groups, Adult Basic Education classes, and additional coordination with partner organizations.

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## **Section V: Local Area Governance**

### *Local Elected Officials (LEOs)*

Region 4 is comprised of two (2) municipalities with a population of 10,000 or greater and nine (9) counties. As a result, 9 county commissioners and 2 mayors make up the Local Elected Officials (LEO) in our region. In April 2000, the Local Elected Officials voted to incorporate as the Mid-Ohio Valley Workforce Investment Corporation. Mayor Bob Newell of Parkesburg serves as the current president of the MOV WIC. (*Articles of Incorporation - Attachment B*)

West Virginia law prohibits a governmental organization from accepting liability greater than their ability to cover such costs. As a result, the LEO felt it appropriate to incorporate, allowing participation in economic/workforce development activities in addition to WIA funding.

From the beginning of their responsibilities, this group has provided input into the design of the Workforce Investment system in our region. Equitable provision of service has been stressed by all of the officials. The local plan was submitted to the Local Elected Officials prior to public comment and again after receiving public comment.

### *The Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB)*

The Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley began operations in July of 2000 with the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act. The Local Elected Officials, along with the Board, worked to develop appropriate size and a balanced representation on the board. Current membership includes 15 private sector employers and 12 public sector employers.

During June and July of each year, the Local Elected Officials, with input from the Workforce Investment Board, evaluate current membership on the board and areas that may be under-represented. New appointments or re-appointments are made at the July LEO meeting. The requirements of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA Section 177(b)(2)) provide the specific criteria on membership of the Workforce Investment Board. WIB MOV is in compliance as outlined in WIA. (*Attachment C - WIB MOV Board membership*)

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Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley has standing committees and ad hoc committees as needed in addition to the Executive Committee. The core committees and their duties are:

- Adult / DW Committee – Identification of employment and training needs of the region along with oversight and development of the Work Force WV system.
- Youth Council – Development of youth programs within the region.

Each member of the Workforce Investment Board participates in at least one committee. These committees have the responsibility for much of the planning and review necessary to implement and monitor Workforce Investment Act Title I activities. Committees will continue as the primary design and implementation resource for the Workforce Investment Act in Region 4.

To assist in cooperation and collaboration between the LEO and Workforce Investment Board, the LEO and the Workforce Investment Board have agreed to meet in joint session. The interaction between the members of the two groups provides an opportunity for each organization to hear input from all entities prior to making decisions on program or fiscal matters. (*Attachment D – MOU between WIB MOV and LEO*)

The Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley recognizes that many of the members of the board represent organizations that have a vested interest in the decisions made by the board. As a result, the by-laws approved by the Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley outline conflict of interest issues and appropriate action by board members. Section 1.7 of the by laws addresses this specific issue. (*WIB MOV By Laws – Attachment E*) In addition, the Local Elected Officials, Workforce Investment Board Members, and members of committees sign a Conflict of Interest Statement each year.

Workforce Investment Board *Mid-Ohio Valley* and the Mid-Ohio Valley Workforce Investment Corporation have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council (MOVRC) to serve as the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as well as provide administrative and fiscal services for WIA activities. The Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council was selected because of their role in economic and community development activities throughout the Region. A program director and program staff have been hired to work

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full time with Workforce Investment Board activities. In addition, other MOVRC staff will be working with WIA activities as needed.

In compliance with the Workforce Investment Act, Workforce Investment Board *Mid-Ohio Valley* staff does not operate the WorkForce West Virginia system in Region 4. Coordination of the One Stop system is provided by an independent operator selected through a competitive process.

### *Rapid Response*

Workforce Investment Board *Mid-Ohio Valley* coordinates with the WorkForce West Virginia state office to provide Rapid Response activities for layoffs in the region. The One Stop Coordinator contractor (Ross IES) has primary responsibility for administering Rapid Response activities in Region 4. Specifics of coordination are outlined in the guidance from the State Rapid Response Unit.

When a layoff is announced, an initial meeting is held with the employer and union leadership if appropriate. Representatives from the WorkForce West Virginia Career Center, Employment Service, Unemployment Insurance, and local Workforce Investment Board provide information concerning available services. The next step is to conduct a similar meeting for all affected workers, involving the above mentioned partners and additional representation from WV Rehabilitation Services, Consumer Credit Counseling, WV DHHR, and Affordable Health Care Info. The Workforce Investment Labor Liaison Project is involved in the meeting as well. When appropriate, dislocated worker centers are set up on-site with employers facing significant layoffs.

Coordination has been established with Rapid Response and Trade Act programs to assist employees dislocated within the nine-counties of the Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley. Workforce Investment Act funds are used to assist the workers in coordination with TAA funds. In addition, job and training fairs are held connecting diverse employers with those involved in dislocations.

Workforce Investment Board staff has also developed linkages with the Workforce Investment Boards in Ohio to coordinate rapid response service to provide representation at dislocations where residents of both states are involved.

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## Youth Council

The WIB MOV Youth Committee is comprised of mandated partners required by WIA, Board members who self-selected committees, youth, and a diverse representation of individuals with specific expertise about youth. Representatives of county youth advisory organizations also serve on the youth committee.

*Attachment F* provides a matrix of Youth committee members, the organizations each represents, and a description of the programs offered.

This committee has the responsibility of exploring youth related issues, developing potential programs to meet the needs of eligible youth, and establishing expectations for those programs based on the requirements and guidelines under the Workforce Investment Act. The recommendations of the youth committee are presented to the Workforce Investment Board and the LEO for consideration and approval.

## Meeting Schedules

The Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley and the Mid-Ohio Valley Workforce Investment Corporation (LEOs) hold joint quarterly meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of July, October, January, and April. If needed, a publically announced, joint meeting of the Local Elected officials and the Executive Committee of the WIB MOV may be held between the quarterly meetings. The proposed schedule of meetings for the upcoming year is presented to the WIB MOV in July of each year. (*Attachment G – WIB MOV Meeting Schedule for 2014-15*)

Public Notice of the Executive Committee, Workforce Investment Board, and the Mid-Ohio Valley Workforce Investment Corporation meetings are provided to newspapers in each of the 9 counties. An E-mail notice of Workforce Investment Board meetings is sent to interested parties at the beginning of each month. Public forum opportunities are available at all WIA meetings.

## Fiscal Agent

The Local Elected Officials board selected the Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council to be the fiscal agent for the Mid-Ohio Valley Workforce Investment Corporation (*Attachment H – MOU between WIB, LEO, and MOVRC and Attachment I – Organizational Chart*). The LEO, through the non-profit corporation that it formed, has secured Fidelity Honest Bonds with the State Board

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of Risk and Insurance Management to cover activities of the LEO, Workforce Investment Board, and committees thereof.

Workforce Investment Act funds will be administered in accordance with OMB Circular A-122 Cost Principals, A-110 Administrative Requirements, and GAAP. The annual audit will be conducted in accordance with OMB Circular A-133.

The accounting office and program staff maintains an inventory listing of furniture and equipment purchased with WIA funds. Any items costing \$5,000 or more are recorded as a fixed asset and depreciated over the useful life of the specific piece of equipment; any property items under \$5000 will be expensed in the year in which they were purchased.



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## **Section VI: The WORKFORCE West Virginia System**

The WIB-MOV procures coordination, operation and delivery of the One Stop services within our region through a competitive bid process. Ross IES has been selected as the One Stop operator under the oversight of the WIB Adult / DW Committee. Ross, as the One Stop Coordinator has the responsibility of insuring collaboration between partners and contractors in order to meet regional performance goals, including development of the WorkForce WV Business Plan. Ross IES also provides WIA Title I funded integrated services including orientation, assessment, eligibility, case management, placement, retention, recordkeeping, and referral to services and training, and follow up.

The WorkForce West Virginia system in Mid-Ohio Valley region includes comprehensive sites located in Parkersburg and Ripley with satellite / affiliate / access sites located in the other counties, if funding allows. The One Stop operator will be responsible for managing these facilities, including coordinating and assigning resources for these sites and supervising some staff.

### *WORKFORCE West Virginia Partner Services and Governance*

A memorandum of understanding has been developed with the WORKFORCE West Virginia partners within our region. Under this MOU (*Attachment J*), the partners agree to provide a seamless delivery of service to customers through core, intensive, and training activities. WorkForce WV partners have agreed to support the One Stop concept, to make services available through the One Stop system, and to assist in the support of the One Stop system. Emphasis has been placed on collaboration and reduction of duplication in services. The Region 4 MOU is based on the WV ICT MOU between partners at the state level. In some instances, state agencies have opted to use the state MOU as the document of choice rather than sign an individual MOU with the region.

In addition to the MOU, a Business Plan (*Attachment K*) has been developed to outline what services will be delivered at the Comprehensive Center, affiliate sites, and satellite sites. The One Stop Coordinator, with input from the partners, has developed the business plan, Standard Operating Procedures, and guides to ensure coordinated services are offered as required. The

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Business Plan also addresses the quality improvement process within the WorkForce WV system to continually evaluate and grow the One Stop services.

Youth Advantage activities and staff are integrated in the operations of the Workforce WV System, including co-location at most facilities. Staff are also involved with system cross training to be educated about the partner services available under the WorkForce WV system and to ensure partners are aware of the services available through Youth Advantage. The specific goal is to make the Workforce WV System a seamless delivery model. Activities include cross training for all Workforce WV staff and outreach to employers, educational entities, community based as well as faith based agencies.

At least twice each year, front line staff of the One Stop partners are invited to meet together to share information and to keep up to date about the services available through the partners. These meetings offer an opportunity to see other front line staff “face to face” and frequently provide an opportunity to solve communication issues that may arise.

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## **Section VII: Workforce Investment Services**

### *General Information Regarding Access to Services*

In addition to the comprehensive Wood County Work Force WV center, satellite or affiliate sites are located in several counties to provide a broader access to services. The WorkForce WV Management Information System has provided additional electronic access across the region and among partners. Customers are encouraged to access WorkForce WV from their home computers or other public access computers (including the Broadband Centers located in the Parkersburg and Ripley Workforce WV offices) to obtain current information on job and training opportunities.

Assessment and case management activities are provided daily at the comprehensive center, and at satellite and affiliate sites in each of the other counties on a regular basis. A common orientation presentation has been developed for use in the WorkForce WV centers in the region. The power point presentation provides an overview of services provided by all partner organizations and allows a customer to target services that meet their specific needs.

### *Access to Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers*

Three levels of services are provided through Workforce Investment Activities in the WIB MOV. Core services provide general information including labor market information, job opportunities, Internet access, etc. Customers may participate in workshops provided by various WorkForce WV partners on topics such as work applications, budgeting, resume development and interview skills. Customers who attend 3 workshops at WorkForce West Virginia receive a gas card to encourage attendance for those that can benefit and help offset the cost of attending the workshops

Intensive services are provided to individuals who cannot find employment through core services and meet WIA eligibility criteria for adult or dislocated workers. WIB MOV currently has established adult priority of services to include individuals whose family income is at or below 150% of the lower living income standards. This level will be evaluated as the 2014-15 budget is developed.

Case management is the primary service delivery model for intensive services. Customers work individually with a case manager to develop an Individual Service Strategy and Employment

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Plan to meet the needs of the job seeker. Steps in this process vary to meet the needs of each individual job seeker. Common services include career exploration, intensive job search assistance, practice interviews, etc.

If the customer's education, work history and assessments indicate a need, the job seeker is scheduled to attend Hit the Ground Running class. This four week program, provided through RESA 5, is designed to provide basic soft skills identified by employers. There are 4 primary components: Job seeking skills, job keeping skills, basic academics, and basic computer skills. During the fourth week of Hit the Ground Running, participants complete WorkKeys®. Students who complete the program with 90% attendance, successful completion of all lessons, and at least Level 3 on WorkKeys® receive a Ready to Work Certificate.

Support services assistance are made available to individuals enrolled in WIA activities. If participating in training, customers receive gas cards to offset the expenses of traveling to training. WIB MOV also offers child care reimbursement if the participant does not qualify for assistance through another program. WIA participants may receive reimbursement for other work related expenditures such as uniforms, clothing, tools, etc. The amount of support services available to an individual is contingent upon availability of funds.

In addition to WIA funded activities, WIB MOV also administers the Employment and Training component of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Services are delivered by Ross IES through an addendum to the One Stop Operator contract. SNAP customers receive intensive services through the DHHR funds. Workshops for SNAP participants are offered collaboratively with those provided to other WorkForce West Virginia customers. Where appropriate, SNAP participants may be referred and enrolled in WIA programs for additional assistance.

The third level of services is training activities. Individual Training Accounts are used to offer training services to those individuals who need additional skills for employment. The ITA policy establishes the following guidelines:

- Voucher Caps: \$4000 for the 1<sup>st</sup> 12 months with a maximum of \$8000
- Length of Training: Up to 36 months of WIA funded training
- Types of occupations: Must be a demand occupation or a bona fide job offer of employment
- Training limits: Customers will qualify for one (1) occupational training program in each five-year period. This limitation may be waived if a customer is affected by sudden, severe economic dislocation or approved by the Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley Program Director.

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Additional requirements: To qualify for and continue training, trainees must:

- Document soft skills or complete a Soft Skills training program prior to or in conjunction with skill training.
- Demonstrate through assessment results (i.e.: TABE, WorkKeys, college entrance exams) the basic skill sets to successfully complete training and obtain employment in the proposed occupation.
- Maintain a “C” (2.0) grade point average each semester or quarter. The customer will be on probation for the next semester/quarter when the GPA falls between a 1.0 and a 2.0; if two back to back terms are below the 2.0 GPA, funding will be terminated.
- If the GPA for a term falls below 1.0, the award will not be renewed for the next term. If the customer brings his/her grades up to the required 2.0 in that next term, the award may be reinstated once the proper documents are received, if funds are available.
- Have acceptable attendance as defined by the training provider.
- Maintain required contact with Workforce WV case manager.

WIB MOV WIA funds cannot be used for

- Funding a customer who (1) has a student loan in default, or (2) is in default with the current training institution.
- Medical or dental procedures (excluding required exams, drug screenings, and TB tests)
- Lost books or supplies
- Classes that must be repeated
- Any training beyond a bachelor’s level

In compliance with the State of West Virginia’s guidelines, WIB MOV requires drug testing of individuals applying for training assistance. If the job seeker fails the drug test, no training assistance will be provided. After 90 days, the job seeker will be eligible to repeat the drug test and re-apply for training assistance. If the drug test is failed a second time, the job seeker will not qualify for training assistance for a period of one year.

WIB MOV recognizes the Individual Training Account is the primary means of providing skill training to individuals. However, if training opportunities are not available that meet the needs of a demand occupation identified within the region, the WIB MOV may choose to contract for training services as outlined and authorized in Section 134(d)(4)(G)(ii)(II) of the Workforce Investment Act and 2- CFR Part 663 Subpart D Section 663.430. If such a need is identified, the WIB MOV will solicit training services for the identified demand occupation based on the requirement of the WIB MOV procurement policy.

The WIB MOV administers On the Job Training and Customized Training programs in the Mid-Ohio Valley. On the job training provides reimbursement to employers to offset the costs of training a new employee. The training must be in a demand occupation and meet the wage and /

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or benefit requirements outlined in the WIB MOV OJT policy. Currently, the WIB MOV OJT policy current allows reimbursement of up to 90% of wages depending on the size of the employer, as allowed by the West Virginia waiver for OJT funds.

Customized training is generally used when an employee is in need of special requirements of an employer to obtain or retain employment. As with OJT, the amount the employer contributes is based on a sliding scale as allowed by the DOL waiver received by the State of WV.

Training providers have been invited to submit new and subsequent applications for training programs to the Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley utilizing the WorkForce West Virginia website. Initial eligibility and subsequent eligibility is based on criteria outlined in the Workforce Investment Act, as well as criteria established by the state WorkForce WV office. This criteria includes program performance data.

An appeals process has been established for training programs not approved at the local level. The first level of an appeal is to the employment and training committee. If not resolved at that level, the appeal is forwarded to the executive committee of the Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley. The next level of appeal is to the state WorkForce West Virginia agency.

### *Discuss the local area's priority of service policy.*

As required by law, priority of services at each level of service will be given to Veterans. Work Force WV partners are asked to provide and coordinate services for specific populations including individuals with disabilities, minorities, offenders, the homeless and displaced homemakers in their services.

Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley has established a priority of service policy to address access to services funded by the Workforce Investment Act. Core services are available within each county with universal access for all customers. Priority of service will be given in intensive services and training funds as outlined in WIB MOV Policy # 03. Individuals receiving public assistance or with a family income at or below 70% of the Lower Living Income Standards receive first priority. Priority is then given to higher income levels. Currently WIB MOV is providing intensive and training services to individuals that are at or below 150% of the lower living income standard.

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Individuals living in the WIB MOV region who are dislocated workers or individuals who are dislocated from employers located in the region will receive priority of service for WIB MOV dislocated worker funds.

Depending on the level of allocations and individuals receiving services, the local WIB may request transfer of funds between Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams during the coming year. During the past 2 years, funds have been transferred from adult to serve dislocated workers. It is expected this will be needed again in 2014-15.

### Access to Services for Youth

WIB MOV contracts with Ross IES for provision of both in school and out of school WIA funded youth services in the Mid-Ohio Valley area. The Youth Advantage Program serves youth in all nine counties.

The WIB MOV and Youth Advantage program have developed partnerships to provide services to those youth facing significant barriers to employment. For example, Children's Home Society provides some assistance to youth that are homeless or aging out of foster care. Rehabilitation Services provides assistance to youth with disabilities. County school systems connect our program with potential drops outs and youth in alternative education settings. Youth probation officers refer offenders to the Youth Advantage program for the structure and work readiness aspects of the program. Through the collaboration of all these organizations, youth are able to receive a full array of services, addressing multiple barriers to employment and stability.

Youth Advantage offers the ten mandated elements of WIA for delivery of service. The mandated program elements are as follows:

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Tutoring                     | 2. Alternative secondary school offerings |
| 3. Summer employment            | 4. Paid and unpaid work experiences       |
| 5. Occupational skills training | 6. Leadership development opportunities   |
| 7. Supportive services          | 8. Adult mentoring                        |
| 9. Follow-up services           | 10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling |

Compliance with safety and child labor laws is emphasized when soliciting proposals for funding under the work experience component of the Workforce Investment Act.

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The Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley has included the following as barriers when determining eligibility for youth seeking enrollment in the WIA funded youth advantage program.

- Youth at risk of dropping out of school
- Immigrant youth
- Youth with limited English proficiency
- Youth deficient in occupational skills
- Youth who reside in area of high rates of poverty, crime and /or unemployment.

Basic Skills deficient is defined in the federal register as a youth that:

- Computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or a comparable score on a criterion-referenced test
- Or
- Is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family or in society.

Youth are assessed at time of enrollment into the Youth Advantage Program. TABE is the primary assessment tool used in the region to determine basic skills levels. Youth that are basic skills deficient are offered tutoring through the Youth Advantage program.

WIB MOV plans to provide summer employment opportunities for 50 to 60 Youth Advantage participants during summer 2014. Funding will be from local WIA Youth funds and from incentive funds awarded to the WIB by WorkForce WV. Priority will be given to worksites that have opportunities in line with a youth's employment goals. If that opportunity is not available for a youth, other worksites will be considered that will provide youth with the opportunity to gain transferable skills, including soft skills, for future employment opportunities.

### *Access to Services for Employers*

WIB-MOV employs a program specialist, whose responsibilities are initiating, coordinating and implementing employer services. This staff person has developed relationships with local Economic Development Authorities, Chambers of Commerce and employers in each of the nine counties within the Mid-Ohio Valley region. Economic Development Directors are assisting staff in prioritizing employer visits. A Business Employer Solutions Teams (BEST) has been



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developed within the WorkForce WV system. Representatives of partner organizations come together to share, coordinate, and plan activities related to employers. As a result, a single point of contact is identified for individual employers, reducing the number of individuals contacting the employer, and providing a comprehensive menu of services to the employer. This group is also involved in the Business Retention / Expansion and Targeted Industries team of the Strategic Plan Action Team.

During 2014-15, the WIB MOV also provided partial funding for an employee to assist with job orders and job seekers at the Parkersburg WorkForce WV office. The staff person was also employed part time through Wagner Peyser funds. By combining the funds, the local WorkForce WV office was also able to place additional emphasis on identifying employers that may need extra assistance in recruiting and / or training employees as well as assistance in placing WIA funded participants in employment.

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## Section VIII: Additional Information

### Procurement

Procurement policies for the Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley will follow those required by Workforce Investment Act, state policies, and relevant OMB Circulars. The Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley Procurement Policy states:

Procurement under grants shall be made by one of the following methods, as described herein:

A) small purchase procedures; B) procurement through state contracts; C) competitive negotiation; D) sole source proposals. Awards shall be made only to responsible contractors that possess the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed contract. Consideration shall be given to such matters as contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, and financial and technical resources.

- A. Small purchases or contract procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods that are sound and appropriate for procurement of services, supplies or other property, costing in the aggregate not more than \$5000. If small purchase procedures are used for procurement, price or rate quotations shall be obtained from at least three (3) qualified sources, where practical.
- B. Items and/or services may be procured using the state procurement system. Items included on this list meet federal and state procurement standards.
- C. Purchases or contracts of greater than \$5000 not listed on the state purchasing contracts must use competitive negotiation procurement process.
  1. Advertisements for the requested service must be posted in county newspapers in the Region 4 Workforce Investment Area. Proposals must also be solicited from an adequate number of known suppliers, providing them sufficient time prior to the due date for proposals.
  2. Evaluation criteria must be developed for an objective evaluation of proposals received. Whenever possible, a Workforce Investment Board member will assist Workforce Investment Board staff with the evaluation of proposals. Such evaluation should consider cost of services but cost should not be the sole deciding factor in the award of contract.
- D. Sole source procurement may be used under the following conditions:
  1. The item is available only from a single source;
  2. Public exigency or emergency when the urgency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation;
  3. After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

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### Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Grievance Procedures

The Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley has approved an Equal Opportunity Policy outlining expectations for all individuals and entities receiving funding through Title I of the Workforce Investment Act, as outlined in 29CFR Part 37. -Gail Holleron has been appointed the EO officer for the Workforce Investment Board Mid-Ohio Valley. Procedures to process complaints will be those developed by the State WorkForce West Virginia office.

The Workforce Investment Board has approved a grievance policy as required by the Workforce Investment Act. The policy encourages resolution at the lowest level of a grievance with the first step being with the supervisor/instructor. If unable to be resolved at that level, subsequent steps allow the grievance to progress to the Workforce Investment Board. As required, a hearing will be offered within 30 days and response within 60 days of the filing of the grievance. The Program Director is the point of contact for grievance issues.

### Performance Measures

Performance standards for 2014-15 for the local region will be the same as those negotiated between the WorkForce West Virginia and the Dept. of Labor. (*Attachment L - Performance Standards*) The WIB-MOV has also established performance measures for WIA Title I contractors.

WIB MOV Requests for Proposals for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services require all proposals to be performance based contracts. Performance of each individual contract is tied to the overall performance of the WIB MOV. Each partner also has individual performance measures as part of their contract.

### Program Planning / Budget Information

The WIB MOV projects, as required, expenditures and participant activities for each year.

### Public Comment

The WIB MOV Local Plan is released for public comment as required by WIA. Advertisements are placed in local newspapers in each of the 9 counties served by the WIB MOV. In addition, the local plan is posted on the WIB MOV web site. Comments are reviewed and presented to the appropriate WIB MOV committee and to the full board. Modifications to the local plan are evaluated based on the input from the public. (*Public Comments – Attachment M*)