

Two Year Local Plan Modifications PY 2021-24 Richmond Workforce Development Board

I. WIOA Core and Required Partner Coordination

A. Coordination with AJCC MOU Partners

How Local Boards and AJCC partners will coordinate the services and resources identified in their MOU, as outlined in WIOA Memorandums of Understanding (WSD18-12).

The RWDB is committed to aligning its core programs with those of the AJCC partner services, thus allowing the AJCC to operate as a unified system. The RWDB Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines current partnership processes for service collaborations for mutual clients. The RWDB continues to strengthen its collaboration efforts with core partners such as EDD, Adult Education, and DOR to strengthen its service outreach and provide seamless core program services to Richmond residents.

Some of the key AJCC MOU partners include: YouthBuild (a DOL funded construction training and education program); Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP) (a program of the Richmond Library providing educational assessment, basic skills, GED, and ESL instruction); West Contra Costa Adult School (part of the West Contra Costa Unified School District, offering academic enrichment, GED preparation, and skills training); Department of Rehabilitation (a state program serving participants with disabilities); and West Contra Costa Unified School District (high school CTE programs in areas such as sewing, welding, and media).

The RWDB has a well-developed referral system that includes a form to refer any participant to an AJCC partner so participants don't need to repeat the same information multiple times. The form includes name contact information, needs, what they are seeking—a priority of service form for referral to partners. The form includes a list of all the programs the client is working with to facilitate coordination. Prior to the release of information, the client must sign a waiver to permit the information to be provided to another organization.

B. Implementing Co-enrollment and/or Common Case Management

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will work towards co-enrollment and/or common case management as a service delivery strategy, as outlined in Strategic Co-Enrollment – Unified Plan Partners (WSD19-09).

Through an MOU, RWDB currently works with YouthBuild, Rubicon and San Pablo Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to co-enroll participants to provide training resources and supportive services. It is anticipated we will be developing MOUs with additional AJCC and community partners to expand our co-enrollment and co-case management services. To support our collaboration, RWDB holds weekly case conferences with Rubicon and San Pablo EDC to coordinate services for clients. We also hold weekly case conferences with staff from the Literacy for Every Adult Program, and community partner Weigh of Life to discuss service delivery.

Participants in the public input session suggested that the RWDB expand its collaborations with partners such as the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and adult schools to help support the costs of effective service delivery. Coordination with these partners is already underway, and we will continue to strengthen these efforts.

C. Facilitating Access to One-Stop Services

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.

The RWDB has implemented a wide array of strategies using technology and other approaches to facilitate access to one-stop services. The RWDB has provided program orientations via Zoom in partnership with West Contra Costa Adult Education and Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP) for ELL participants. In addition, the RWDB has developed a video orientation that introduces participants to the services available at the One Stop AJCC. Richmond YouthWORKS has a strong Internet presence through the use of multiple social media platforms that are more likely to be accessed by young people. The One Stop AJCC is also exploring the use of Virtual Reality as a tool for career exploration. The One Stop uses Career Hub as a tool to provide rapid communication to participants, including texts. During COVID the One Stop expanded the use of electronic signature programs such as DocuSign to facilitate completion of forms when participants could not be present in person.

To provide access to a wide array of online career training, RWDB has subscribed to Metrix Learning, scheduled to launch in February 2023. This resource provides all levels of training online to participants.

The RWDB is also developing a strategy to deliver place-based services in disadvantaged communities, increasing access for those who have difficulty traveling to the One Stop/AJCC to receive services. This new approach will include the assignment

of staff to different communities, who will oversee the delivery of services at local partner sites.

Recommendations from the public input sessions included the use of a text message system for communication with clients, which is already happening through the Career Hub tool. Participants also suggested the expanded use of virtual and telephone appointments for clients—this approach is currently being used by program staff, such as using Zoom and a shared Google Doc to collaborate on resume development. RWDB staff are already implementing the use of online scheduling tools with clients, as recommended by public input participants. Another recommendation suggested expanding resources for people with language barriers—because the majority of RWDB staff are bilingual, and can reach out to colleagues or City of Richmond staff in other departments for translation support, the RWDB already has strong capacity in this area.

D. Coordinating Workforce and Education Activities With Provision Of Supportive Services

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will coordinate workforce and education activities with the provision of appropriate supportive services.

The RWDB is continuing to build on partnerships with its AJCC partners to provide supportive services for participants. New coordination strategies include the following: Expanded co-location of AJCC partners at the AJCC; partnering with LEAP (Literacy for Every Adult Program) in providing academic assessment for all participants; hosting a Community Resource Fair for the community and partners to develop relationships and stronger coordination; and holding monthly partnership meetings. The RWDB has also developed a partnership with John Muir Schools to provide credit recovery for participants. In all of its partnerships, the RWDB seeks to provide clear information to the partner on what services it is able to provide for each client.

Supportive services are commonly the most important item identified by potential clients during the outreach process. The RWDB takes a whole person approach to service planning, identifying what participants need in multiple areas, including education, workforce, health, mental health, housing, and reentry resources. Using the Human Centered Design framework, RWDB staff seek to tailor supportive service provision to the unique needs of each participant.

Due to its relationship with the City of Richmond, the RWDB is able to leverage the City general fund to provide some kinds of support, including providing work experience to individuals through placement in City departments, and connecting people with waiting lists for housing.

In feedback from the public input sessions, participants identified the importance of providing outreach and information on available services to clients and partners. The RWDB provides this through information sessions held at partner sites, such as presentations and intake of participants at the RYSE Youth Center and alternative schools. Youth services has also developed presentations for school district and community events to inform students, parents and the community about WIOA and other services offered through the RWDB. RWDB services are also promoted in public service announcements on KCRT and the local public information channel. A recommendation was also made to strengthen communication with partners related to client needs. RWDB staff currently work with training providers who provide reverse referrals to RWDB to ensure participants receive the supportive services necessary to complete training (e.g. transportation, tuition, work clothes, etc.).

E. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will comply with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, as outlined in Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures (WSD17-01).

The RWDB provides physical and programmatic accessibility to employment and training services for individuals with disabilities. We make every attempt to provide reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities with regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment, unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship such as a significant expense.

The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DOR) remains our core partner in services to individuals with disabilities. DOR is represented on our RWDB and is an AJCC partner. RWDB provides auxiliary aids, services and assistive technology and continues to collaborate with DOR in these efforts.

The RWDB has a designated Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer who coordinates and updates ADA requirement activities with the State. In addition, the RWDB's EO Officer meets and assesses facility access compliance with the City of Richmond's Public Works Department, the owner, or the building. The RWDB works to continually improve facility access and maintain compliance with all federal and state requirements. The RWDB works closely with the State's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Specialist to identify and address ADA accessibility guidelines of our building and facility. The physical and programmatic accessibility of the building will continue to undergo a

required assessment at least every three years in order to better focus on the employment needs of those with disabilities.

Through RWDB's collaboration with the DOR in the Employment Training Panel on the Summer Training and Employment Program for Students (STEPS) grant program, Richmond youth with disabilities receive extensive pre-employment transition services so they can successfully obtain competitive integrated employment.

Annual training is provided to staff and partners on disability etiquette, as well as, ensuring that staff and partners are informed and updated on promoting disability access. Staff and partners will be directed to <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/ccda> (California Commission on Disability Access), where they can further educate themselves on Disability Access. The RWDB will also collaborate with the DOR to coordinate future training that DOR will provide to staff and partners.

II. State Strategic Partner Coordination

A. Coordination with Partners Serving CalFresh E&T Beneficiaries

How the Local Board will coordinate with County Health and Human Services Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who access CalFresh Employment and Training services.

Prior to the pandemic, the RWDB had limited collaboration with partners in the Local Area offering CalFresh E&T services. The RWDB has been invited to collaborate with the CalFresh E&T program and plans to establish relationships with CalFresh E&T partners. Currently, the RWDB helps participants apply for CalFresh E&T through the CalWIN website.

In the public input session, participants suggested the expansion of outreach and marketing for CalFresh E&T programs, which are underutilized by people who are eligible to participate in them—the RWDB plans to do this as it builds relationships with CBO providers of CalFresh E&T, including Rubicon and Opportunity Junction. Participants also suggested that RWDB staff develop a clear understanding of CalFresh E&T and its eligibility requirements to facilitate successful referrals—the RWDB will provide necessary information for staff to ensure that this takes place.

B. Coordination with Local Child Support Agencies Serving Non-Custodial Parents

How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Child Support Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who are non-custodial parents.

As with CalFresh E&T, the RWDB has had limited collaboration with partners in the Local Area that were focused on serving non-custodial parents, and plans to explore building partnerships with organizations that serve this population.

Input from the public input sessions recommended the provision of assessments and referrals for non-custodial parents. This is something that is currently happening, although people are not always clearly identified as non-custodial parents—the RWDB will seek ways to better identify this population so they can be more effectively served. Public input session participants also suggested strengthening engagement with child services organizations, including DCSS, which the RWDB intends to do in order to more effectively serve non-custodial parents and their families.

C. Coordinating with LPA Partners Serving Individuals with Disabilities

How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Partnership Agreement partners, established in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint, and other local partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

The RWDB has built a strong partnership with the DOR. The RWDB regularly invites the DOR to come and provide information for RWDB staff and partners regarding DOR services, assessment, referral process. A key area of collaboration is the DOR grant-funded Student Training and Employment Program (STEP), focused on serving young people with disabilities (ages 16-21) through work experience placements. The relationship has also been strengthened through DOR co-location at the AJCC. Through the STEP program students are given the opportunity to access other services that they need: academic services, supported employment, transportation, digital tools such as laptop computers, and other life-enhancing services. Gaining access to an employment counselor that expands the geographic area of job opportunities. RWDB staff meet with the director of the transitional program at WCCUSD to recruit students to STEP, and also travel to school sites to meet with students and make them aware of resources available. WCCUSD staff also come to YouthWORKS to gain an understanding of what is available to students.

In the public input sessions, participants suggested that the RWDB should ensure that its case managers are familiar with the DOR and other programs that serve this population. The RWDB conducts regular orientations to provide this information to staff. Presentations at schools, as described above, were also recommended. Participants suggested the effective use of assessments to ensure that individuals with disabilities are placed in settings where they have the necessary support. To facilitate this, the

STEP program reviews information in each student's Individual Education Plan to identify strengths and weaknesses, and areas where support may be needed. It was also recommended that STEP graduates be provided with a warm handoff to placement in employment, with continued engagement through Richmond YouthWORKS. STEP participants who are over 21 are currently supported in applying for post-secondary education, and a system is in place to support a warm handoff to both Richmond WORKS and DOR at age 21.

D. Coordinating with Local Partners Serving ELLs, Foreign-Born and Refugees

How the Local Board will coordinate with community-based organizations and other local partners who serve individuals who are English language learners, foreign-born, and/or refugees.

The RWDB has recently secured two English Language Learner (ELL) grants focused on providing workforce training to this population. The RWDB also has established a monthly meeting with CBOs that serve ELLs (Weigh of Life, Familia Unidas, etc.), the majority of whom are partners on these grants. The RWDB also serves youth from these communities who are not participants in these grant funded programs. The RWDB also provides presentations at existing community events, such as the West Contra Costa Concilio Latino, a monthly meeting where organizations present their services, and coordinate activities. The RWDB is working to establish a referral process with partners that serve ELLs, foreign-born and refugees beyond the partners in the ELL grant funding. These organizations include the Latina Center, Catholic Charities, Rescue Mission, International Rescue Committee, Lao Family, and Asian Pacific Environmental Network.

Feedback from the public input sessions suggested continuing to build a list of referral partners that serve these groups, which the RWDB is doing through its current outreach efforts. A recommendation regarding the availability of translation services is something that RWDB provides through its multilingual staff, and a policy of regular access to staff in other City departments who are fluent in additional languages spoken by clients. Regarding the suggestion from the public input session that the RWDB engage these groups in the community at partner locations where they feel most comfortable: the RWDB is implementing the new place-based strategy, described on page 3 above, to provide this kind of community presence.

III. WIOA Title I Coordination

A. Training for Staff in Digital Fluency and Distance Learning

Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to gain and expand proficiency in digital fluency and distance learning.

Staff received training prior to and during the pandemic in digital fluency and distance learning and have been gradually implementing some of the strategies they have learned, including using Zoom for program orientations, classroom instruction, interviews and coaching. The RWDB has also developed a video orientation that introduces participants to the services available at the One Stop AJCC. RWDB staff participate in weekly EDD capacity-building webinars on topics related to digital fluency and distance learning.

Public input session participants suggested that staff receive training in the following online tools: Metrix Learning, Microsoft Suite, Google Docs and Google Sheets, Social Media, and Jamboard. RWDB staff are using many of these tools to serve clients, and will continue to be trained in new tools to build their capacity for remote support.

B. Staff Training in Cultural Competencies and Trauma Responsive Services

Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma-exposed populations.

RWDB staff attended regular training in cultural competency and serving trauma-exposed populations offered through the West Contra Costa Family Justice Center (FJC) prior to the pandemic, but have not been able to participate since that time. The RWDB plans to resume that training through the FJC or another provider. (Contra Costa Mental Health Services and other partner organizations also provide training in trauma response.) The RWDB is also developing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) framework that will be used to structure service delivery, which will be completed within the next six months.

Input from public session participants included the recommendation that cultural competency training include a component that addresses effective outreach to specific target populations. This recommendation will be implemented in the preparation of staff for place-based service delivery in the communities the RWDB serves. The suggestion was also made that trauma informed training address the emotional support needed by staff related to secondary trauma that may result from serving trauma-impacted populations. The RWDB will insure that this component is included in trauma-informed training.

C. Coordination with Statewide Rapid Response Activities

How the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as outlined in Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities (WSD16-04).

RWDB works closely with the established State Boards' Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion workgroup. This workgroup includes representatives from each LWIOA to consolidate various state guidance, that include recommending policies, proactive business engagement, lay-off aversion strategies, layoff and business closure trends, and potential grant funding availability to transitional workers. It is the policy of the WDB to provide Rapid Response Services to all employers and impacted employees located within our jurisdiction. The services will be provided utilizing the full resources of the RWDB, the AJCC, and the local community, including cooperative efforts with adjacent Workforce Development Boards.

In partnership with the Employment and Development Department (EDD), the RWDB is fully equipped and educated to provide Rapid Response resources to those covered by the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA). This includes the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) notice announcement received by the City of Richmond and the RWDB. Layoff aversion focusses on saving jobs, putting people back to work, shortening the length of layoff, and revitalizing the community.

Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion is designed to prevent or minimize unemployment for employees of companies that have announced layoffs or are struggling and at risk for layoffs. Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion also provides early intervention and strategic support to assist businesses faced with closure or layoffs.

D. Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area. This includes how the Local Board will ensure that priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as outlined in WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service (WSD15-14).

Assessment of adult and dislocated workers includes daily one-on-one sessions to determine need for immediate training. Participants are referred to services on the same day to ensure that their needs are met as rapidly as possible. Basic math and reading skills are necessary to participate in training, and those who do not meet the standards are referred for remedial support. The goal is to have someone employed or enrolled in training within 30 days. Training opportunities are provided in high-growth high-wage

sectors, including IT, health, transportation and logistics, advanced manufacturing, and construction. The RWDB Board is also preparing to adopt a definition of a “good job” which will be used to shape kind of training and pathways that are provided for clients.

E. Type and Availability of Youth Workforce Investment Activities

A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the Local Area, as outlined in WIOA Youth Program Requirements (WSD17-07). This includes any strategies the Local Board has regarding how to increase the digital literacy and fluency of youth participants, including youth with disabilities.

The RWDB offers an array of workforce investment activities for youth. Upon entry to the program, young people are able to complete online assessments accessible from anywhere. These are used to identify assets, needs and aptitudes and to determine the unique mix of services that each young person will need.

All Richmond YouthWORKS participants are registered in CalJobs to give them access to resources, training, employment. Staff have knowledge of all WIOA programs available to youth, enabling them to refer participants to appropriate services. Youth may receive referrals to work readiness services, DOR, community colleges, basic literacy skills instruction, community worksites, and work experience.

Richmond YouthWORKS staff are also able to leverage general funds to offer paid work experience to all youth participants within City departments. Information technology apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships are available with partners Bitwise and Love Never Fails through a WAF 10.0 regional grant. YouthWORKS receives support through the Reimagine Richmond program (funded by the City’s general fund) to provide 500 youth with 300 to 500 hours of work experience at a wide array of employers at a wage of \$16.64.

Richmond YouthWORKS administers the STEP program in partnership with DOR and the California Community Colleges, enabling youth with disabilities to participate in job readiness training and obtain placements in work experience settings. Participants can transition to WIOA following participation in STEP.

The RWDB is currently administering two additional grants that serve youth. Through a Dislocated Youth Worker Innovation Challenge grant, the RWDB serves 50 youth ages 18-24 in sectors that include construction, IT, health care, and urban forestry. The RWDB is also serving 150 participants ages 16-30 in paid work experience focused on COVID recovery, food insecurity, climate change with funding from a Californians for All Youth grant.

The RWDB partners with the Richmond Promise (a Richmond program providing scholarships to college for Richmond High School graduates) to support those who've graduated from college and are having difficulty finding employment. The program provides employment within the City in the hope of eventually hiring them to address shortage of city staff.

Participants in the public input sessions suggested strengthening partnerships with IT companies to facilitate opportunities for youth in this sector: this work is already underway through the partnerships with Bitwise and Love Never Fails. Richmond YouthWORKS' extensive work experience programs for young people address the comment that the RWDB should focus on helping youth make connections with key people and opportunities in priority sectors.

F. The Entity Responsible for the Disbursal of Grant Funds

The entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or the Governor and the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

As administrative entity for the City of Richmond Workforce Development Board, the City of Richmond is responsible for the disbursal of grant funds.

The RWDB shall conduct all procurements in compliance with federal and state regulations governing the Final Rule of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). All provisions of the WIOA Proposed Rule became effective in the summer of 2016. All Richmond Local Area WIOA-funded programs and activities comply with applicable provisions sets forth in the requirements provided by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Final Rule Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations; 2 CFR 200. Further, the City of Richmond Local Area shall conduct all procurements in compliance with the Final Rule governing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant provisions.

The RWDB, in association with the City of Richmond Finance Department/ Purchasing Division, shall develop and maintain a list of qualified vendors and consultants for delivery of core and intensive (and training, where applicable) services and programs, under WIOA guidelines of WIOA grant provisions. Procurements shall be conducted as often as necessary to meet the needs of participants and the requirements of the One-Stop delivery system. All procurements shall be conducted in such a manner as to ensure open and free competition (29 CFR 95.43 and 97.36 (c); (2 CFR 200.321)).

The City of Richmond procurement practices encourage the utilization of small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises whenever possible. The City of Richmond Local Area shall conduct all procurements in accordance with its Conflict of Interest Policy.

Procurement records for each funding period are retained for three years following the date on which the City of Richmond Local Area submits its final expenditure report for that funding period. Records for non-expendable property are retained for three years after final disposition of the property.

G. How the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider Roles are Fulfilled

A description of how the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider roles are fulfilled within the Local Area as outlined in Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers (WSD19-13). This should include the name(s) and role(s) of all entities.

The RWDB and its administrative entity internally fulfill the role of AJCC Operator for the City of Richmond Local Area. This position was approved by the Secretary of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, on behalf of the Governor through June 30, 2023. In addition to the existing Written Agreement between the Chief Elected Official and the Richmond Workforce Development Board, ratified July 2021, the RWDB and City of Richmond petitioned the Governor to allow the RWDB and its administrative entity to retain responsibility for AJCC Operations and WIOA Career Services in the Richmond local area through June 30, 2023. A new petition process will be initiated prior to the end of the current period.