



Agenda

Planning and Oversight Committee

January 22, 2026

10:30 AM

Missouri Job Center
1660 N Campbell Ave
Springfield, MO 65803

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/96620225659?pwd=4EbULF4H6JrXnKPHZ3Maa1bu2f44Ny.1>

Meeting ID: 966 2022 5659

Passcode: 485815

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1. November 18, 2025, Planning & Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes

3. New Business

3.1. Testing & Assessment Policy

3.2. Business Service and Outreach Plan

3.3. Veterans Priority of Service

3.4. Harassment Policy

3.5. *Complaint and Grievance Policy*

3.6. MOU

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In accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines, if you need special accommodations when attending any Department of Workforce Development meeting, please notify the Executive Secretary at 417-841-3346 as soon as possible to ensure our ability to accommodate your needs.

3.7. Cost Allocation Plan

3.8. The Plan of Service

4. Reports

4.1. Performance

4.2. Monitoring

4.3. Workforce Update

5. Adjournment

Call to Order			
	A regular meeting of the Ozark Region Workforce Development Board’s Planning and Oversight Committee was held via Zoom on Tuesday, November 18, 2025. The meeting convened at 11:30 a.m., with Committee Chair Dan Montgomery presiding.		
Attendance			
☒ Notes in attendance: * Notes Board Member			
Committee Members	☒ Dan Montgomery*, Chair*	☒ Dr. Abby Benz*	☒ Charlyce Ruth
	☐ Jeremy MacLaughlin	☐ Michelle Clark	☐ Susan Johanson
Guests in Attendance	Kevin McGill*, Saul O’Dell*, Pat Shay*, Karen Dowdy, Robert Hansen, Maddy MacNeill, Carmen May, Katherine Proctor, Ericka Schmeeckle, Laura Vales		
Approval of Minutes			
September 16, 2025 Planning & Oversight Committee Meeting Minutes	Mr. Montgomery asked for any adjustments to the minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Pat Shay and seconded by Mr. Kevin McGill to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2025, meeting as presented. Motion carried.		
New Business			
2026 Planning & Oversight Committee Meeting Calendar	Presentation: Ms. Maddy MacNeill presented a draft 2026 meeting schedule for the Committee and Board, noting it avoids holiday conflicts. Discussion: One member noted they would be absent for two dates due to international travel. Action: A motion to approve the calendar was made by Dr. Benz and seconded by Ms. Charlyce Ruth. <i>The motion carried.</i>		
Youth Incentive Policy (Revised)	Updates: Ms. Karen Dowdy explained that minor revisions were made to the Youth Incentive policy based on State monitor recommendations. The primary change reflects the transition from hard files to digital uploads in the system (MOJobs). Clarification: It was clarified that "MOJobs screens" refers to the digital database system where incentives must be logged. Benefits: The transition to electronic files offers cost savings on paper and easier access to records across different locations. Action: A motion to approve the revised policy was made by Mr. Shay and seconded by Ms. Ruth. <i>The motion carried.</i>		

Reports	
<i>Performance</i>	Ms. Dowdy provided data for PY25 Quarter 1 (ending September 2025): Adult Performance: Meeting goals for credentials and skill gains, but employment in Quarter 4 is currently at 47% (below the 90% goal). Staff are performing follow-ups to assist with resumes and interviews to improve this. Dislocated Workers: Performance in skill gains is expected to rise once end-of-semester grades are received. Youth: Doing well in credentials (100% of goal for the quarter). Median Earnings: A decrease in median earnings was noted (from 64.82 last year to 47.25 this year), which Karen will monitor closely. Training Stats: 35 individuals are currently in training (11 adult, 1 dislocated worker, 13 youth).
<i>Monitoring</i>	Monitoring Report: Ms. Dowdy reported on monitoring. The State monitoring visit resulted in minor recommendations regarding objective assessments and individual service strategies (ISS). There were no disallowed costs.
<i>Workforce Update</i>	Ms. Ericka Schmeeckle gave her workforce updates: Regional Outreach: Ms. Schmeeckle reported progress on expanding services to Stone County. A new staff member is being trained to staff the Stone County site after the first of the year. Funding: The region was awarded \$45,000 in Wagner-Peyser funds, which allows for quicker connection to staff-assisted services with fewer initial eligibility documents. Staffing Announcement: Ms. MacNeill has been promoted to Grant Coordinator. Mr. Robert Hansen will assist during the transition period as the search for her replacement begins.
Adjournment	
	The meeting was adjourned at 12:33 pm.

Notes taken by: Robert Hansen, Administrative Assistant

Next Meeting: January 20, 2026



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Assessment Policy for Training

The use of assessments is an integral part in guiding individuals on the correct career path and to ensure successful completion of training. It is emphasized in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and through Issuances by the State of Missouri. It is the intent of the Ozark Region to utilize various assessments to assist our customers in this goal. Potential assessments include but are not limited to the following: National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), TABE, Missouri Connections, Talify, school entrance exam, SAT, ACT, previously completed higher education credits, certificate, or degree or another assessment as deemed necessary or appropriate by staff to show a client's interest level and/or competency to complete the training. The following policy has been developed to guide staff and to ensure consistency in use of assessments. Any deviation from this policy must be approved by the Supervisor or designee in writing.

I. ADULT/DISLOCATED

Competency to Succeed in Training

Assessments that can be used to show a client's competency to succeed in training include the NCRC, TABE, Talify, school entrance exam, SAT, ACT, previously completed higher education credits, certificate, or degree or another assessment as deemed necessary or appropriate by staff. For individuals seeking tuition-based training, staff will select an appropriate assessment based on length and level of tuition-based training to evaluate a client's competency to complete the training and/or interest level in selected training. For individuals seeking work related training, staff will have an assessment completed to ensure appropriate job matching with an employer. Work related training could include but is not limited to the following: On the Job Training (OJT), Pre-Apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, Transitional Jobs, Incumbent Worker, Work Experience or Internship.

High School Diploma/HiSET

If required by the training institute, individuals must complete high school or the HiSET prior to establishment of an Individual Training Account (ITA). If it's not required by the training institute, the client will be encouraged to complete their education as part of a career pathway.

II. YOUTH

Individual Service Strategy

The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) identifies appropriate career pathways that include education and employment goals, considers career planning and the results of the objective assessment, and includes



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achievement objectives and services for the youth. Training services must be supported by Individual Service Strategy goals and needs.

Basic Skills Assessments

All out-of-school youth shall be administered a Basic Skills Screening Tool to determine if there is a likelihood of Basic Skills Deficiency. If the form cannot be completed without assistance, the youth will be required to take the TABE/NCRC/Other State or Nationally recognized assessment/tests to determine whether they are basic skills deficient or if needed for eligibility. **If documented need, other assessments may be used as approved by the program supervisor that provide sufficient details to determine skill level.**

Any participant determined Basic Skills Deficient will be referred to complete education remediation to increase identified low skill areas.

High School Diploma/HiSET

Participants will be required to complete their High School Diploma/HiSET as part of a career pathway. Any exception will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and approved by the Director of Workforce Development and/or designee.

General Assessments

Participants seeking training will be required to take additional assessments; such as, O*Net Interest Profiler, Talify, or another assessments as deemed necessary/appropriate by staff. These assessments can also be used in conjunction with the other testing to show a client's aptitude/interest in training. General assessments are also necessary to identify suitable Career Pathway and Individual Service Strategy goals.

Approved by the WDB 6-5-19, by the CLEO 6-26-19.

Revision approved by the WDB & CLEO 12-6-2022

Revision approved by WDB 10-04-23 and CLEO 10-06-23

BUSINESS SERVICE & OUTREACH PLAN



~~2024-2027~~2026-2029



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ENGAGING EMPLOYERS IN THE OZARK REGION

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to the Ozark Region on engaging employers to meet the needs of the Region. By being proactive and responsive to our business community, we can ensure that the Region has a well-trained and skilled workforce and that each employer has the tools and manpower they need to be successful.

Engage, Listen, Supply

We shall accomplish this through the following and by adhering to the guidance set forth by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Mission, Vision, and the goals of the Workforce Development Board.

BOARD'S MISSION AND VISION

Vision- A thriving regional economy supported by diverse employment opportunities and a highly trained and sustainable workforce.

Mission- The Workforce Development Board facilitates, advocates, and allocates resources for workforce solutions resulting in employer engagement and improved quality of life in the region.

OUTREACH

Staff will actively engage new employers through resources available (i.e. attendance at Chamber events, ~~new business license~~, and other ~~media sources~~ community events.) Staff will continue to strengthen relationships with current employers by follow-up contact, follow-up visit, reviewing the state's database system for activity, and by networking. Follow-up with the employer will allow staff to determine employers' current needs and future projections, as well as satisfaction with services.

Face-to-face meetings with the employers begin by listening. Through these meetings, staff can gauge the employer's needs as it relates to hiring and training.

~~Staff will also continue to be involved in community events and associations such as SAHRA (Springfield Area Human Resources Association, SMCOG (Southwest Missouri Council of Governments), Springfield Technical Council (STC), and the Multi-Cultural Fair.~~

One of the Board's committees will assist staff in planning the establishment of satellite offices in each county. Specific Workforce Development Specialists will be assigned to the satellite

offices for designated times to provide assistance to the community in which the satellite office is located. These staff members will also attend community events and meetings.

Outreach materials shall be reviewed for consistent messaging and updated accordingly.

Coordination

To avoid duplication of effort, the ~~staff~~ Communications Coordinator will continue to ensure that the communication channels are open with partner ~~agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation, the local Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) provider, Family Support Division, Ozarks Technical Community College, OACAC, Job Corps, and area educational institutions~~ agencies. Partner agency business service personnel will be invited to business service meetings at least quarterly. ~~In addition, one of the goals will be to increase the communication within the Job Center.~~ Sharing of resources and contacts with partner agencies will assist in ensuring connecting job seekers with employers. One of the goals will be to increase the communication within the Job Center.

Business Service Staff

The Ozark Region is fortunate to have an experienced supervisor who has worked with business services for several years. ~~This individual also provides supervision to the Career Services Team, which allows a greater ability to match job seekers with employers.~~

ROLES

Supervisor

Develop and lead staff in business relationships by providing workforce solutions for employers in the seven counties served in the Ozark Region.

~~Career Services Personnel~~

~~Work with Missouri Job Center job seekers, and employers to ensure every training completer is matched with an open position.~~

Business Support Unit

- The Business Support Unit has responsibility of building and maintaining professional relationships with employers. Their primary role is to understand the needs of the employers and connect them with resources that can help support their organizations. Duties include, but not limited to, promoting Missouri Job Center employer services, assisting with recruitment and retention, coordinating hiring events, posting and customizing job orders in MoJobs, facilitating employment transition meetings for laid-off workers, establishing and monitoring on-the-job training contracts, establishing worksites for the work experience program (WEP), educating employers on building a registered apprenticeship, and connecting employers to resources such as the Division of Employment Security, the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Labor, and other supportive service agencies to provide a more comprehensive approach to serving their needs.
- The Ozark Region is fortunate to have an OWD Business Support Unit team member based in the Springfield MJC. Because of the close working proximity staff are in regular communication and work closely with the OWD team member. Though they work together, the Ozark Region recognizes that the OWD's Business Support Team member is the primary contact to avoid

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duplication and confusion. Local staff members do not initiate contact with an employer regarding a layoff without first speaking with the OWD team member. The local member is responsible for sharing information regarding layoffs (as permitted) to prepare staff for any influx of customers.

Veteran Representatives

The LVER (Local Veterans Employment Representative) assists Veterans by providing outreach to employers, according to JVSG rules, in order to link Veterans with appropriate employment and training opportunities.

Communications Coordinator

Personnel assigned has the responsibility to prepare and/or coordinate all communications and marketing, including social media and news releases.

Vocational Rehabilitation-Business Specialist

Vocational Rehabilitation candidates are people with disabilities with a variety of skill sets who are motivated to work. A dual customer approach by the Business Specialist supports both business and candidates to ensure successful outcomes utilizing resources such as workplace accommodations and assistive technology, and disability-related training including diversity and inclusion.

GOALS

Goal	Activity	Responsible Party	Completion Date	Expected Outcome
Increase Customer Satisfaction	Encourage the completion of the Business Services Survey	Business Services Supervisor <u>Staff</u> Business Support <u>Unit Lead</u>	Ongoing	Number of Surveys will increase by 20<u>5</u>% in the first year, and 10% each year thereafter for the next three years.
Hiring Events	Conduct industry specific events	COS staff Communication staff Business Support <u>Unit Lead</u> Services <u>Staff</u>	One per industry per year	A minimum of 10 employers will participate
	Conduct employer hiring events, <u>which include events for Veterans such as</u>	COS Communication Staff Business Support <u>Unit Lead</u> Services <u>Staff</u>	Ongoing	Engage three <u>seven</u> major employers and conduct <u>specific hiring event with hiring events</u>

	Wednesday Works			
Roundtables	Host at least two multi-industry industry roundtables in the Region	COS Communication Staff <u>Business Service Staff</u>	Annually	A minimum of 150 employers will attend each RoundTable
	Host Youth Roundtable in the Region	COS Staff Communications Staff <u>Aspire Staff</u>	<u>Bi-annually</u>	A minimum of 15 youth will attend
Community Outreach	Represent the Department at various business and community events	COS Business Services Supervisor Staff Communication Staff <u>Specific Staff assigned in the counties</u>	On-going	Participate in a minimum of three community events per year
Rural Outreach	Develop a strategic rural outreach plan	COS Staff Communication Staff	July 202 4 <u>7</u>	Outreach plan will be developed as a guide to staff
	Attend Chamber meetings in all seven counties	COS Business Supervisor Services Staff <u>Specific staff assigned in the counties</u>	Monthly <u>Quarterly</u>	At least one) meeting per month <u>quarter</u>
	Host Town Hall meetings in each county <u>Establish satellite locations in each county</u>	COS Staff and Business Services Supervisor <u>Board Committee Designated COS Staff</u>	July 2025 <u>2027</u>	Each County will host a town hall meeting within the year. Staff will be placed in each county at least one day per week.
Contact Visit	Contact new employers	COS Business Services Supervisor Staff Business Support Unit Lead	Annually	35-50 <u>20-25</u> new employers will be engaged and active in MoJobs
	Maintain relationship with current employers	COS staff	Annually	100-150 <u>60</u> % employers will take advantage of additional services.

Referrals	Refer job seekers to employers	COS Staff	Ongoing	Number of referrals made to businesses will increase by 50 over the next three years.
Job Orders	Receive Job postings from employers	COS Staff and State Liaison Business Support Unit <u>Lead Services Staff</u>	Ongoing	Increase the number of job postings in system to 50-25 per month <u>quarter</u>
Meet Performance Measures	Employer Penetration <u>Employer Retention</u>	COS Staff and State Liaison Business Support Unit <u>Lead Services Staff</u>	Ongoing	The Employee Penetration Rate will increase by 1-3% based on statewide data
	Repeat Business Customer	COS Staff and Business Support Unit Lead	Ongoing <u>2028-29</u>	The Repeat Business Customer will increase by 30% <u>Performance for this measure will be negotiated in 2028-29</u>
Services	Posting of Services	COS staff	Ongoing	The number of services placed in the system will increase by 23 <u>35</u> % over the next three years,

DEFINITIONS

Apprenticeships- Registered Apprenticeship (RA) is a proven, employer-driven workforce development model that combines paid, on-the-job training with related technical instruction and leads to a nationally recognized credential. Programs are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency and are designed to meet employers' talent needs while providing workers with clear career pathways and wage progression.

Federal Bonding-a job incentive for employers to hire and job seekers and retain at-risk employees.

Incumbent worker-a program designed to meet the special requirements of an employer to retain a skilled workforce or avert the need to lay off employees by assisting the workers in obtaining the skill necessary to retain employment.

Internship-an internship is a planned, structure, time-limited learning experiences that takes place in a workplace and typically tied to a related educational component. An internship may be paid or unpaid as appropriate.

National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) - The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), issued by ACT. This work-related skills credential provides objective documentation of an employee's

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skills in three areas critical to on-the-job success: Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Locating Information.

On-the-Job Training (OJT)- An OJT's primary purpose is to provide participants with knowledge and skills on the job for full performance of a job. OJT reimburses employers a portion of the wages for the extraordinary costs of providing training and additional supervision.

Talify- Assessments for personality and behaviors along with key competencies.

Work Experience- A planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Work experience may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)- A Federal tax credit available to employers for hiring individuals from specific target groups who face barriers to employment.



Veteran's Priority of Service Policy

Veterans defined under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), receive priority of service in all Department of Labor-funded training programs. Priority of Service is the right of eligible, covered persons to take precedence over eligible, non-covered persons in obtaining services funded, in whole or in part, by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). This priority means:

- The covered person receives access to the service or resource earlier in time than the non-covered person; or
- If the service or resource is limited, the covered person receives access to the service or resource instead of, or before, the non-covered person.

The Ozark Region follows the Public Law 107-288 and any issuances provided by the State.

Definitions

A "veteran" is a person who served [at least one day] in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under any condition other than "dishonorable." "Active service" includes full-time service in the National Guard or a Reserve component, other than full-time duty for training purposes.

"Eligible spouse" means the spouse of any of the following:

- a. Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability;
- b. Any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for the priority, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days:
 - i. Missing in action;
 - ii. Captured in the line of duty by a hostile force; or
 - iii. Forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power;
- c. Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
- d. Any veteran who died while a disability was in existence.

A spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member (i.e., categories b. or c. above) would lose his or her eligibility if the veteran or service member were to lose the status that is the basis for the eligibility (e.g. if a veteran with a total service-connected disability were to receive a revised disability rating at a lower level). Similarly, for a spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member, that eligibility would be lost upon divorce from the veteran or service member.



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The WIOA Title I Adult program also provides priority services for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient. States and local areas must apply priority of service in the order below:

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

Process

The Ozark Region provides customers the opportunity to self-identify themselves as veterans or covered persons when they enter the Missouri Job Center (MJC). Data is collected during the registration process. Additionally, MJC staff members may also identify an individual as a veteran or covered person during the intake and assessment process.

Overall, the internal communication process in the MJC allows for an effective flow of information and process for referring veterans to on-site veterans' staff. The orientation video, which is made available to all customers, provides information regarding priority of service to veterans. There is also a consistent flow of information to and from businesses regarding opportunities available for veterans and employers alike.

When a customer is identified as a veteran or covered person, they are provided with printed materials that details eligibility for priority of service. Signage is also posted throughout the Resource Room in the MJC to further advise them of their eligibility for priority of service.

Established February 2020

Latest revision November 2025

Revision approved by the Workforce Development Board on 08-07-2024 and by the Council of Local Elected Officials on 09-16-2024.



Ozark Region

Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation Policy

The Ozark Region Missouri Job Center (MJC) is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. MJC staff are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and to show respect for their co-workers and others. MJC expects that all relationships among staff will be business-like, free of bias, prejudice, and harassment.

MJC has developed this policy to ensure that all staff can work in an environment free from unlawful harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. MJC will make every reasonable effort to ensure that all concerned are familiar with these policies and aware that any complaint in violation of such policies will be investigated and resolved appropriately. This policy applies to all work-related settings and activities, whether inside or outside the work place, and includes business trips and business-related social events. Any staff member who has questions about these policies should talk with their immediate supervisors of record, the Director of Workforce Development, or Assistant Director of Workforce Development and Economic Vitality at the Job Center. This policy does not supersede any partner agency's policy on harassment, discrimination, and retaliation.

Staff of the MJC are expected to treat one another, as well as customers, fairly and equitably regardless of age, ancestry, color, disability, genetic information, military/veteran status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, or sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity).

Sexual Harassment

Definition: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 recognizes two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and b) hostile work environment. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling, or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal, or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

Missouri Job Center, 2900 East Sunshine
Springfield, MO 65804

Phone: 417-887-4343

Fax: 417-887-1892

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Ozark Region

Harassment

Section 188 of WIOA prohibits harassment. According to 29 CFR 38.10, “harassment of an individual based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, for beneficiaries, applicants, and participants only, based on citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, is a violation of the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA and this part.

(a) Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or offensive remarks about a person's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, or citizenship or participation, and other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct based on one or more of these protected categories constitutes unlawful harassment on that basis when:

(1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of accessing the aid, benefit, service, or training of, or employment in the administration of or in connection with, any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity;

(2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for limiting that individual's access to any aid, benefit, service, training, or employment from, or employment in the administration of or in connection with, any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity; or

(3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's participation in a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive program environment.

(b) Harassment because of sex includes harassment based on gender identity; harassment based on failure to comport with sex stereotypes; harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions; and sex-based harassment that is not sexual in nature but that is because of sex or where one sex is targeted for the harassment. “

Definition: verbal, written, or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her age, ancestry, color, disability, genetic information, military/veteran status, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, or sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), or any other characteristic protected by law, or that of his or her relatives, friends or associates, and that a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or c) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the premises or circulated in the Job Center, on Job Center time or using Job Center equipment by e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, social networking sites or other means.

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Ozark Region

Reporting

MJC staff and customers may report discrimination complaints to the Local Equal Opportunity Officer, ~~Karen Dowdy, Phone 417-887-4343; email: kdowdy@springfieldmo.gov~~, ~~Laura Laramore, Phone 417-625-3627; email: Laura.Laramore@dhewd.mo.gov~~ or Danielle Smith, State EO Officer, Phone 573-751-2428; email: danielle.smith@dhewd.mo.gov. Or you may report complaints to the Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210 or electronically as directed on the CRC Web site at www.dol.gov/crc. Individuals may also report harassment to the Local EO Officer, the State EO Officer, or the CRC at the addresses listed above.

MJC encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and to request that it be discontinued. Often, this action alone will resolve the problem.

MJC encourages reporting of all perceived incidents, whether experienced or witnessed, of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Staff should follow the procedures of reporting such activities according to their employer of record's established procedures. If unsure, the staff member should report it to their supervisor of record, Director, or Human Resources.

Each agency housed in the MJC shall be expected to thoroughly investigate all reports of harassment as discreetly and confidentially as practicable. In the event that an incident involves personnel from more than one agency, it shall be the responsibility of the reported to agency's human resources department to contact the other agency's human resource department.

Retaliation

According to 29 CFR 38.19, MJC and its recipients must not discharge, intimidate, retaliate, threaten, coerce or discriminate against any individual (staff or general public) because the individual has filed a complaint alleging a violation of Section 188 of WIOA, or opposed a practice prohibited by the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA, or furnished information to, or assisted or participated in any manner in, an investigation, review, hearing, or any other activity related to any, administration of the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Section 188 of WIOA, exercise of authority under those provisions, or exercise of privilege secured by those provisions, or otherwise exercised any rights and privileges under the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Section 188 of WIOA.

Updated 04/03/2020

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Ozark Region

DISCRIMINATION AND PROGRAM COMPLAINT & GRIEVANCE POLICY

2026



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Ozark Region

Discrimination and Program Complaint & Grievance Policy

Discrimination Complaints

No staff member of the Missouri Job Center shall discriminate

“Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual’s citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

“The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas:

“Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity; providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity.

“Recipients of federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. This means that, upon request and at no cost to the individual, recipients are required to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities.” 29 CFR 38.35.

In the event an individual or party believes an act of discrimination has occurred, the following policy shall be followed.

Timeframe

Complainants may file within one hundred and eighty (180) days of the alleged discrimination

Who May File

Any person who believes that either he or she, or any specific class of individuals, has been or is being subjected to discrimination prohibited by WIOA or its implementing regulations may file a written complaint, either by him/herself or through an authorized representative.

Process

Discrimination complaints may be filed with a state or local administrative entity, service provider, One-Stop operator or with the Director of the Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Room N-4123, Washington D.C. 20210. They may contact the local or State EO Officer at:

Missouri Job Center, 2900 East Sunshine
Springfield, MO 65804

Phone: 417-887-4343

Fax: 417-887-1892

The Ozark Region Missouri Job Center is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aides and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Mo TTY users may call 800-735-2966 or contact Missouri Relay at 7-1-1.



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Ozark Region

~~Karen Dowdy~~[Laura Laramore](#), Local Equal Opportunity Officer
~~Springfield~~ Missouri Job Center
~~2900 E. Sunshine~~[730 South Wall Avenue](#)
~~Springfield~~[Joplin](#), MO ~~65804~~[64801](#)
~~417-841-3349~~[625-3627](#)
~~kdowdy@springfieldmo.gov~~Laura.Laramore@dhewd.mo.gov

Danielle Smith, State Equal Opportunity Officer
Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development –
Office of Workforce Development
301 W. High Street
PO Box 1087
Jefferson City, MO 65102
danielle.smith@dhewd.mo.gov
Phone: (573) 751-2428 | Fax: (573) 751-4088
Missouri Relay Services at 711

The Office of Workforce Development (OWD) must complete its discrimination complaint processing procedures and issue a written notice of final action within ninety (90) calendar days from the date the complaint was filed.

Jurisdiction of the Discrimination Complaint

OWD's State WIOA EO Office has jurisdiction over complaints that:

- Are filed against a WIOA recipient;
- Allege a basis for discrimination that is prohibited by WIOA; and
- Are filed within one hundred and eighty (180) calendar days of the alleged discrimination.

Program Complaints

Timeframe

Complaints may be made up to one (1) year from the date the alleged event occurred. Complaints may be filed with the local administrative entity or service provider.

Process

General Complaints

General complaints may be accepted in writing or by utilizing the DWD General Complaint Form. The complaint should provide a clear and complete explanation. Staff may provide assistance to individuals who have difficulty completing a written explanation due to literacy issues. If the DWD General Complaint Form is not utilized, staff should ensure that the written complaint contains the full name, telephone number, and address of the individuals making the complaint, full name of the respondent; and the statement of the facts (including dates) of the alleged violation(s).

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Springfield, MO 65804

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Fax: 417-887-1892

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Accommodations shall be provided to individuals with disabilities who need assistance filing a complaint and need assistance throughout the resolution period.

Who May File

Any applicant, employee, participant, service provider, program recipient, or other interested party, may file a complaint alleging a violation of the local WIOA programs, agreements or Local Workforce Development Board's (WDB) policies and activities.

Resolution

Review & Log-Step 1

Once the complaint is received, it shall be reviewed and logged on the appropriate log form. A file shall be created that shall contain:

- Application and enrollment forms:
- Completed General Complaint Form or written statement
- Chronological log of events or conditions alleged to be in violation of WIOA;
- Any relevant correspondence; and
- Record of the attempted informal resolution

Informal Resolution-Step 2

An attempt will be made to resolve the complaint informally to the satisfaction of all parties within ten business days from the date of the filing of the complaint. If in agreement, the complaint shall be considered resolved. This shall be documented in the file. If not in agreement, the complaint will be elevated to a formal resolution.

Formal Resolution-Step 3

The complaint shall be reviewed and a determination made within 20 days from the date the complaint was filed. The complainant shall have the right to request an appeal of the determination. If no appeal is requested, the complaint shall be considered resolved, which shall be documented in the file. Any party dissatisfied with the determination may request a hearing within seven calendar days of the date of the determination.

Hearing-Step 4

A complainant may amend or withdraw his/her complaint at any time prior to the scheduled hearing. If the complaint is not withdrawn, an impartial hearing officer/or panel of at least three impartial individuals shall be designated. The Ozark Region Local Equal Opportunity Officer shall serve as the moderator. The hearing shall be conducted within 45 calendar days from the date the determination was made. The complainant, the respondent, and any other interested party shall receive a written notice by mail or email at least seven business days prior to the hearing. The notice will include the date, time, and place of the hearing. Documentation to be reviewed for the hearing shall be submitted prior to the hearing.

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Springfield, MO 65804

Phone: 417-887-4343

Fax: 417-887-1892

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As this is a formal hearing, parties may present witnesses and discuss documentary evidence that has been submitted, and question others who present evidence and witnesses. The complainant may request that records and documents be produced. Attorneys or another designated representative(s) may represent each party. All parties shall sign a confidentiality statement prior to the beginning of the hearing. All Parties will attest to the validity of their testimony prior to the hearing. Each party will be given a set time to present their case and a set time will be allowed for rebuttals. The hearing will be recorded either in writing or by electronic means.

The hearing officer's or panelists recommended resolution shall include a summary of factual evidence presented and the conclusion in which the recommendation is based. This shall be provided to the moderator for dissemination. The Moderator will also consult with the Chair for the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEO) if it involves Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding, toward reaching a consensus on the recommended resolution to the complaint. If consensus cannot be reached, the moderator will initiate a request to the state for resolution.

Final Decision-Step 5

Once the recommendation is received from the hearing, a final decision will be issued within 60 calendar days from the date the appeal was filed.

Appeal-Step 6

If any party to the decision is dissatisfied, or has not received a final decision or resolution within the 60-day timeframe, they may request an appeal. The appeal must be made within 14 calendar days from the date ~~the determination~~the determination was rendered at the following address:

Danielle Smith, State Equal Opportunity Officer
Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development –
Office of Workforce Development
301 W. High Street
PO Box 1087
Jefferson City, MO 65102
danielle.smith@dhewd.mo.gov
Phone: (573) 751-2428 | Fax: (573) 751-4088
Missouri Relay Services at 711

Approved by the Workforce Development Board 08-07-2024 and by the Council of Local Elected Officials 09-16-2024.

Missouri Job Center, 2900 East Sunshine
Springfield, MO 65804

Phone: 417-887-4343

Fax: 417-887-1892

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Memorandum of Understanding

Between the Ozark Region Workforce Development Board and the WIOA Partners.

The Ozark Region Missouri Job Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aides and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. MO TTY users may call 800-735-2966 or contact Missouri Relay at 7-1-1.

I. Introduction

The Workforce Development Board, hereafter referred to as “WDB”, is appointed by the Council of Local Elected Officials (CLEO) to serve Christian, Dallas, Greene, Polk, Stone, Taney, and Webster counties designated as the Ozark Region. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration by the One-Stop Delivery System signatory Partners, hereafter referred to as “the One-Stop Partners” to describe how their various funding streams and resources will be utilized to better serve their mutual customers, both job seekers and employers, through an integrated system of service delivery operated at one comprehensive One-Stop Job Center site in Springfield, ~~a non-comprehensive site on the northside of Springfield,~~ and another comprehensive site in Branson, MO. It is understood that the operation of these Centers will require mutual trust and teamwork between the One-Stop Partnering agencies, all working together to accomplish the shared goals.

The Chief Elected Officials have chosen the Greene County Presiding Commissioner, currently Bob Dixon, to serve as the Chair of the CLEO. The CLEO has appointed the City of Springfield, Department of Finance, as the fiscal agent for the Region. The City of Springfield, Department of Workforce Development serves as the Youth Provider on behalf of the Board.

Board’s Mission and Vision

Vision- A thriving regional economy supported by diverse employment opportunities and a highly trained and sustainable workforce.

Mission- The Workforce Development Board facilitates, advocates, and allocates resources for workforce solutions resulting in employer engagement and improved quality of life in the region.

II. Strategic Vision

The purpose of the Missouri Job Centers is to advance the economic well-being of the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) by developing and maintaining a quality workforce. The Centers shall serve as focal points for local and regional workforce innovation initiatives. Achieving this will require delivering high quality and integrated workforce innovation, education, and economic development services for jobseekers, incumbent workers, and employers.

A. One-Stop Centers

There are two One-Stop Centers located in the local service delivery area:

~~2900 E. Sunshine St~~ 1660 N. Campbell.
Springfield, MO 658023

2720 Shepherd of the Hills Expressway B
Branson, MO 65616

● ~~Additional Job Centers~~

~~In addition to the One-Stop Centers listed above there is an additional noncomprehensive Job Center located in the service area:~~

~~O'Reilly Center for Hope
1518 E. Dale Street
Springfield MO 65803~~

Parties to this MOU

WIOA requires the Local Board and the CLEO to develop and enter into an MOU with each One-Stop Partner within the Region providing workforce programs and activities required to be available at the Missouri Job Centers. These required partners include:

- WIOA Adult Program (Title I)
- WIOA Dislocated Worker Program (Title I)
- WIOA Youth Program (Title I)
- Job Corps (WIOA Title I)
- YouthBuild (WIOA Title I) (*No provider in the Ozark Region*)
- WIOA Native American programs*
- WIOA 167 Title I National Farmworker Jobs Program
- Wagner-Peyser labor-exchange/employment services
- Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) (Title II)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
- The Senior Community Service Program
- Perkins Career and Technical Education
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants
- Community Services Block Grant Activities
- U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development employment and training activities.
- State Unemployment Compensation Law activities
- Reintegration programs for eligible offenders (*No provider in the Ozark Region*)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training services (If required)

**If receiving grants for field operations or providing substantial services.*

III. Services to be Provided

All parties providing services through the Missouri Job Center agree to provide all necessary customized services to all customers. Please see the definitions attachment. The Job Center will function as a network or system of services at the physical locations of the Centers, as well as bringing Partner agencies together electronically. This will provide clients immediate or accelerated access to an expanded and enhanced menu of services. All partners will observe direct linkage by providing contact with each referral partner through phone, email, or in-person.

All of the career services currently provided will continue to be provided, by one or more of the Partner agencies.

The Partner agencies involved and participating in the Ozark Region One-Stop Job Center(s) are committed to a customer-centered, Team management approach: Career Services, Skill Development, and Business Services.

- **General Services**

General services include the following:

- Initial Assessment
- Orientation to Services
- Intake and needs identification
- Additional Assessments including NCRC and other skill-based assessments
- Access to workshops
- Labor Exchange Information and Services
- Career exploration, job search assistance, and job referrals
- Referrals to other services and/or partner agencies
- Educational services and information
- AEL information and referrals
- Public assistance support services and information
- Career Closet
- Information on other community services not directly available through the Job Center, such as Pell Grant, substance abuse rehabilitation programs, housing, food banks, counseling, etc.
- Business Services including job postings and distribution of applications

These services are necessary to achieve the requirements of each customer while accommodating customer choice. The integration of services and information in a cooperative environment will eliminate duplication and develop performance measurements that will focus on the attainment of quality-based output and customer satisfaction measures. ~~The Partners agree that they are jointly responsible for the achievement of performance outcomes in this agreement.~~

- **Career Services**

- **Initial Contact**

- a. Structured Interview and System Application
- a. Assessment
- b. Refer/Promote Skills Products
- c. Provide Job Search Information/Tools
- d. Conduct Job Match/or Job Development
- e. Make Job Referrals
- f. Identify and Promote Next Step

- **Business Services**

1. **Business Engagement**

- a. Make contact with businesses throughout the region

- b. Obtain job orders and enter into the system
- c. Coordinate with employers on hiring events
- 2. Coordination with Other Business Service Teams**
 - a. Connect with partner organizations to ensure non-duplication of efforts
 - b. Share contacts with partner organizations with specific employer hiring needs
 - c. Share information regarding hiring events or other business service activities
- 3. Employer Matching Services**
 - a. Conduct appropriate referrals to employers
 - b. Prepare On-the-Job Training (OJT), Work Experience, Apprenticeships, Incumbent Worker

Skills Development

- 1. Structured Interview and Eligibility Determination
- 2. Comprehensive Assessment
- 3. Development of Individual Employment Plan
- 4. Training-Classroom, OJT, Internships, Apprenticeships
- 5. Follow-up

- **On Site Partners**

- A) **City of Springfield/Department of Workforce Development-** - The Department is the program operator for the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, providing assessment and training services to individuals and employers. This also includes Career Services and services to Employers.
- B) **Missouri Office of Workforce Development (OWD)** - Under the Missouri's Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, OWD operates Wagner-Peyser, labor-exchange/employment services, TRADE Adjustment Assistance, and Jobs for Veterans State Grants through the One-Stop.
- C) **Job Corps** - Job Corps is a program that offers free-of-charge education and vocational training to young men and women ages 16 to 24 with one or more barriers to employment. Job Corps' mission is to help young people improve the quality and satisfaction of their lives through vocational and academic training. Partners may make referrals by phoning the office located in Springfield. Individuals are also seen on a walk-in basis and by referrals through the national call center.
- D) **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** - assists eligible individuals with disabilities to obtain, maintain, or advance in employment. VR is a part of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Types of services include, but not limited to: pre-employment transition services, vocational exploration, individual guidance and counseling, vocational training and job search assistance.

~~E) **Equus Workforce Solutions Missouri Work Assistance (MWA)** - Equus is the Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) program operator. The Workforce Board recognizes Equus as a partner in the One-stop system. Equus staff are located in the Springfield and Branson Job Centers. The MWA service area is comprised of the counties of Christian, Dallas, Greene, Polk, Stone, Taney, and Webster. Eligibility~~

~~for services is determined by the Family Support Division (FSD) and electronic referrals are received through the MWA System to the MWA program operator. Services will be provided to individuals who are in the application status with Family Support Division (FSD), as well as those determined as eligible recipients. The objective of MWA is to provide the opportunity for individuals through various allowable activities, as determined by the contract, to set a probable path toward self-sufficiency and be removed from temporary assistance.~~

- **Off Site Partners**

- A) **The Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation - Community Services Block Grant Activities.** Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation (OACAC) is a not-for-profit agency working toward alleviating the causes and conditions of poverty in the Ozarks. OACAC serves Barry, Christian, Dade, Dallas, Greene, Lawrence, Polk, Stone, Taney and Webster Counties. The mission of OACAC is to create lasting solutions to poverty for families and communities within Southwest Missouri.

OACAC offers seven programs: Family Planning, Foster Grandparents, Head Start, Housing Assistance, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP), Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), and Weatherization. ~~OACAC Neighborhood Centers are located in each of the ten counties in the service area and OACAC's CSBG program provides services to families with self-sufficiency goals through the ten-county service area. Services are provided through outreach centers, via online/digital means, at a client's home, or at a community partner location. CSBG also provides~~ community projects and activities designed to eliminate the conditions of poverty ~~and to help families and individuals in crisis and those working toward achieving self-sufficiency. Neighborhood Centers~~CSBG provides self-sufficiency case management services, emergency assistance, school readiness fairs, Life Skills programming, and community projects such as REALL, VOICE, and People's Pantries. The centers also mobilize funds from other sources to collaborate on a variety of programs in the OACAC urban/rural service area.

- B) **Ozarks Technical Community College-Perkins Career and Technical Education**-Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC) provides technical, general, developmental education, and continuing education. In addition, OTC provides customized training to address the needs of business and industry
- C) **Missouri Family Support Division-TANF/SNAP**- will serve individuals needing to apply for any public assistance available through the FSD. FSD will accept referrals in person, over the telephone, by e-mail, by fax, or with referral and feedback form. FSD will participate in cross-informational training with other participating Partners to assure the referral procedure is understood. A mutually agreed upon referral procedure will be used by FSD to refer appropriate applicants and recipients to the One-Stop Job Center(s).
- D) **Ozarks Technical Community College Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) Program** - Oversight of AEL programmatic issues is the responsibility of Ozarks Technical Community College AEL Program. The main location for AEL is in Graff Hall on the OTC Springfield campus.

- E) **WIOA 167 Title 1 National Farmworker Jobs Program**– WIOA 167 NFJP is a non-profit advocacy organization, providing programs and services which improve the employment, educational, health and housing opportunities of under-served populations.
- F) **Agricultural Employment Services (AES)**-is operated by the Missouri Department of Workforce Development. This program is responsible for locating and enrolling migrant or seasonal farmworkers into a program to assist with job search and training; as well as services to ensure success in training such as housing, health, and community services. In addition, the program offers assistance to agriculture employers seeking workers.
- G) **Senior Community Service Program-AARP Foundation**-The Senior Community Service Employment program (SCSEP) is a community service and work-based job training program for low-income adults age 55 and older. SCSEP is unique in that it has a dual purpose: it is the only program to focus on building skills and employment opportunities for low-income older workers while also enhancing important community services. By offering stipended training assignments designed to provide participants with the skills they need to obtain employment, SCSEP reduces the risk that they will fall into poverty in later life.
- H) **State Unemployment ~~Compensation Insurance~~ Law activities**-The Division of Employment Security (DES) administers Missouri's Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. UI programs provide partial protection for workers against loss of wages during periods of involuntary unemployment. The benefits paid to insured workers bolster the economy of the state during periods of economic downturns by helping maintain a degree of consumer purchasing power.

UI programs and activities that fall under the operation of DES include the regular UI program, unemployment compensation for ex-service members, unemployment compensation for federal employees, the Shared Work program, the Reemployment Services Eligibility Assessment program, Disaster Unemployment ~~Assistance and Trade Readjustment Allowances, including Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance.~~

WIOA requires that claimants receive meaningful assistance with filing a claim for unemployment insurance. Meaningful assistance means:

- Providing assistance on-site using staff who are well trained in unemployment insurance claims filing and the rights and responsibilities of UI claimants; or
- Providing assistance by phone or other technology, as long as the assistance is provided by trained and available staff and within a reasonable time.

To meet the requirement to provide meaningful assistance to UI claimants in need of help filing a UI claim, MJC staff must be familiar with the DES online claims filing system and the rights and responsibilities of UI claimants to the point of being able to help them understand DES publications and correspondence. Additionally, a priority

phone line is maintained in each MJC for claimants to speak directly with DES staff with little to no wait.

An electronic feedback system is in place for MJC staff to refer potential UI eligibility issues to the DES for investigation.

- I) **HUD. Housing Authority**-The Housing Authority of the City of Springfield, Missouri, (H.A.S. Properties) is committed to providing quality, affordable housing that is decent and safe to eligible families in the community.

- J) **Rehabilitation Services for the Blind**-As part of the Department of Social Services, Family Support Division, Rehabilitation Services for the Blind provides vocational rehabilitation and independent living services for people for visually impaired and blind. The local district covers 22 counties in and around southwest Missouri.

- J)K) **Equus Workforce Solutions Missouri Work Assistance (MWA)** - Equus is the Missouri Work Assistance (MWA) program operator. The Workforce Board recognizes Equus as a partner in the One-stop system. Equus staff are located in the Springfield and Branson Job Centers. The MWA service area is comprised of the counties of Christian, Dallas, Greene, Polk, Stone, Taney, and Webster. Eligibility for services is determined by the Family Support Division (FSD) and electronic referrals are received through the MWA System to the MWA program operator. Services will be provided to individuals who are in the application status with Family Support Division (FSD), as well as those determined as eligible recipients. The objective of MWA is to provide the opportunity for individuals through various allowable activities, as determined by the contract, to set a probable path toward self-sufficiency and be removed from temporary assistance.

K)

IV. **Shared Funding of Infrastructure and Services**

On site partners recognize the need to contribute a “fair” share of the operating costs of the One-Stop delivery system proportionate to their facility usage. A Cost Allocation Plan reflects current agency occupancy rates on which Partner agency rent costs are based. Other shared costs are prorated among Partner agencies consistent with the Cost Allocation Plan approved by the Partner Agencies Under WIOA, all Partners are required to contribute in some manner to the infrastructure of the One-Stop, whether or not the Partner is physically located in the One-Stop.

In the Fall of 2019, invitations were sent to all WIOA partners to attend a meeting to begin discussions on the infrastructure. Subsequent meetings were held, which were led by the One-Stop Coordinator for the Job Center. After careful consideration of the partners, as well as the availability and abundance of opportunity at the Springfield Job Center, a proposal was presented to the non-co-located partners. This proposal allowed for those who were not co-located to have use of a shared desk either one day a week or one day a month for a charge that would benefit the Job Center without causing undue hardship to a partner. This option allows for a true integration of services and streamlined referrals. The amount determined was based on square footage; however, the benefit derived serves both the Job Center and the partner as they have full access of the Job Center. For those partners who determined not to pursue this option, separate

negotiations are held to ensure the infrastructure mandate is met satisfactorily and is equitable to all partners. DOLIR makes a contribution to the Office of Workforce Development for Labor Exchange Services, which is in turn shared with the local Workforce Development Boards. Therefore, DOLIR is exempt from negotiating costs.

V. Systematic Referral Process for Job Center Customers

It is agreed that the Partners of this signed MOU will provide referrals for potential services by:

1. Recording customer and referral information in the State of Missouri database system, as appropriate and as accessible.
2. Direct linkage to a partner is to be ~~observed.~~For~~observed.~~ For customers referred for services, the partner agency will utilize their internal tracking system for monitoring and follow-up.
3. Customers may also be provided general information on community resources.

VI. Section 188

The Ozark Region, Missouri Job Center Partner Agencies are equal employment opportunity employers. As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of WIOA, the Partners assure the Partners shall comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of the following laws found at 29 CFR Part 38 and Section 188 of WIOA.

A. Employment

All Missouri Job Center Partner Agencies, through responsible managers, shall recruit, hire, upgrade, train and promote in all job titles without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

Managers shall ensure that all other personnel actions such as compensation, benefits, layoffs, returns from layoffs, Center-sponsored training, educational tuition assistance, social and recreational programs, shall be administered without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

Managers shall base employment decisions on the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and with the purpose of benefiting the customer, the workforce program, and the operations of the Job Center.

B. Individuals with significant barriers to employment:

1. Shall be identified and receive priority service.
2. Shall be referred to the appropriate agency and/or Team for assistance.
3. Shall receive service(s) designed to assist them in achieving their educational and/or job placement goals.

C. Individuals with disabilities:

1. Shall be provided accommodations and assistive technology upon request.
2. Shall be referred to the appropriate agency and/or Team for assistance.
3. Shall receive service(s) designed to assist them in achieving their educational and/or job placement goals.

D. Distribution of WIOA Program Complaint & Grievance Notice & Equal Opportunity Notice

- Copies of the Equal Opportunity is the Law Notice and WIOA Grievance Procedure Notice are distributed to all protected individuals (e.g. Job Center staff and customers who have a customer or personnel file of any nature). Each individual shall be required to sign said notices, which shall be retained in the protected individual's file and is subject to State audit.
- Copies of the Equal Opportunity is the Law Notice and WIOA Grievance Procedure Notice are readily available to all customers, potential customers, and other individuals visiting the Job Center.
- Copies of the Equal Opportunity is the Law Notice and WIOA Grievance Procedure Notice are posted on the Job Center's public bulletin board for public access.

E. EO Officer/Complaints Investigator:

The following contact information for the locally designated EO Officer/Complaints Investigator is also provided in the WIOA Complaint Guide discussed above.

Locally-designated EO Officer/Complaints Investigator:

~~Karen Dowdy, EO Officer~~ Laura Laramore State/Local EO Representative

Phone: 417-~~887-4343~~ 625-3627; Fax: 417-~~841-629-1881~~ 3011

Mailing Address: ~~2900 E. Sunshine, Springfield, MO,~~
65804730 S. Wall Joplin, MO 64801.

Email: ~~kdowdy@springfield-mo.gov~~
Laura.Laramore@dhewd.mo.gov

The EO Officer is available to assist complainants in understanding the complaint resolution process and completing necessary paperwork to initiate the process. The EO Officer is responsible for interfacing with and assisting the State EO Officer in complaints investigation and resolution.

All Missouri Job Center services shall be available to customers and/or potential customers without regard to race, color, religion, sex, (including pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity) national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

VII. Confidentiality of Information

In all matters associated with Job Center operations, the confidentiality of customer and employer information will be the prime consideration with regard to the release of any information and/or data. All information and/or data related to, or obtained from, the Division of Employment Security (DES) will be treated in accordance with applicable state and federal statutes and regulations. In cases where information must be released to other related agencies, handling of the information will be based on the existing confidentiality policies and procedures of those agencies.

VIII. One-Stop Delivery System Performance Criteria

- **Service Criteria**

It is agreed that the One-Stop Delivery System will strive to achieve the following standards of quality service for its jobseekers, business customers, employees, and Partners.

All customers will receive:

1. Prompt and courteous service from the staff.
2. Service(s) designed to assist them in achieving their educational and/or job placement goals.
3. Business customers will receive prompt attention to requests for job candidates as well as information on other hiring and training programs designed to assist in addressing their workforce needs.

IX. Governance of the One-Stop Delivery System

Structure—The WDB, with concurrence of the Council of Local Elected Officials (CLEO), has designated the City of Springfield Department of Workforce Development, now known as the Department of Workforce and Economic Vitality, as the provider of Career Services. The City's Department of Public Information and Civic Engagement acts as the One-Stop Coordinator Missouri Job Center (MJC) Partners will retain responsibility for respective reporting of required performance data and adhere to reporting schedules as determined by their respective internal systems. The Partners will work collaboratively to develop financial and performance reporting systems to track and report outcomes, service costs, and to achieve the performance and budget objectives outlined in WIOA. Each Partner will maintain responsibility for the management of its respective staff, equipment, finances, management information systems, and customer grievance processes. Though, ultimate responsibility for performance and budget management will be the responsibility of each Partner respectively, **each partner will follow WIOA regulations in reporting.**

The City of Springfield, as WIOA Local Grant Sub-recipient and current facility leaseholder, will assume responsibility for handling all occupancy and maintenance-related requests and inquiries. All participating in-house Partners are responsible for meeting the conditions and commitments of each party to all others and to the Job Center as delineated in this "Memorandum of Understanding" document. The poor performance of any Partner agency in specific areas of Job Center activities is the responsibility of the relevant agency management for subsequent review by the Workforce Development Board and Council of Local Elected Officials.

The responsibility for overseeing the operational management of the Centers shall be the Director of Workforce Development and Economic Vitality. The Branson Supervisor will coordinate and communicate activities for the Branson Center with the Director or Assistant Director who shall coordinate collaborative efforts and initiatives and provide guidance for day-to-day decision-making for all centers.

The Assistant Director will be the point of contact for all Partner agencies on matters relating to Center operations. The One-Stop Coordinator shall gather and make internal distribution of relevant data from Partner agencies regarding established program performance measures. In the case of disputes requiring resolution, a process is defined under the "Dispute Resolution" Section.

In the spirit of mutual cooperation and in close working relationship with the Workforce Development Board, One-Stop Partners, and CLEO, the City shall:

- A. Support** the Director/Assistant Director in the development of operational policies and procedures, coordination of the monitoring process, authorization of centralized expenditures, creation of annual plans and budgets for center operations and the integration of program services.
- B. Coordinate** any procurement, contracting and monitoring processes. The City shall also utilize a computerized management information system, which will collect and integrate data on program participants and employers utilizing the Center.
- C. Maintain** a reporting system for the financial activities of the One-Stop Job Center(s) and provide visibility to shared costs while continuing to operate separate accounting systems relating to each respective agency.

All Partners agree that staff will be cross-trained, where appropriate, to provide joint activities and services. Joint activities and services could include: initial assessments, orientation,

information and referral, full assessment, career guidance, support services, referral to classroom training, post-employment training, job development, job search, and job placement services.

On-site partners agree to abide by policies established for the effective operation of the Job Center.

- Local operating procedures
- Safety and security
- Communication protocol
- Dress Code
- Board policies regarding service delivery (co-enrollments)

X. Duration and Modification

The One-Stop Partners agree that the terms of this MOU will take effect as of January 1, 202⁶⁴ will continue in effect until terminated or such time as any Partner or Partners will modify, extend, or terminate this MOU. Termination of the MOU will be effective when all Partners agree in writing to its termination.

Any Partner of the MOU may request modification of its terms. Ratification of the request by all the other Partners will constitute acceptance of the modification in question. Modifications of the MOU related to changes in federal and/or state UI information confidentiality requirements shall be incorporated to this agreement to comply with new requirements without ratification of all the parties.

Any Partner to this MOU may withdraw, giving written notice of its intent to withdraw as a Partner. In such case, all pertinent terms of the MOU will continue in effect for the remaining Partners. Any party may cancel the contract or agreement at any time for cause, or may cancel without cause on a 30-day written notice.

XI. Appeals

Any partner who does not participate in the infrastructure arrangements, who does not have an existing agreement with the State, shall be reported to the State for non-compliance. An organization may appeal this to the State of Missouri, Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development. Organizations that are currently participating in the infrastructure agreements and do not agree with the process may submit an appeal to the Ozark Region Workforce Development Board. ~~Organizations who are currently participating in the infrastructure agreements; however, do not agree with the process, may also submit an appeal to the Ozark Region Workforce Development Board.~~

<u>Partner Organization</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
WIOA Adult Program	Signatory: WIOA Board Chair Susan Johanson <u>Andrea Stizes</u> Missouri Job Center 2900 E. Sunshine, Springfield, MO 65804 417.887.4343 Local Contact: Tracy Keithley
WIOA Dislocated Worker Program	Signatory: WIOA Board Chair Susan Johanson <u>Andrea Stizes</u> Missouri Job Center 2900 E. Sunshine, Springfield, MO 65804 417.887.4343 Local Contact: Tracy Keithley
WIOA Youth Program	Signatory: WIOA Board Chair Susan Johanson <u>Andrea Stizes</u> Missouri Job Center 2900 E. Sunshine, Springfield, MO 65804 417.887.4343 Local Contact: Tracy Keithley
Job Corps	Signatory: JoAnn Hughey, <u>Career Transition Specialist</u> Mingo Job Corps 4253 State Hwy T Puxico, MO 63960 578.321.0851 <u>712-292-5789</u> Local Contact: JoAnn Hughley
WIOA 167 Title 1 National Farmworker Jobs Program	Signatory: Dr. Cynthia Galvan <u>Tim Schindler</u> VP of Social Services <u>Workforce Development</u> 2701 S. Chase Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53207 414.389.6006 Local Contact: Jeri Cochran
Wagner-Peyser	Signatory: Julie Carter Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development P.O. Box 1469, Jefferson City, MO 65102 Local Contact: Robin McHugh
Adult Education and Literacy	Signatory: Rob Rector Ozarks Technical Community College 1001 E. Chestnut Expressway Springfield, MO 65802 417.447.8152 Local Contact: Linda Whipple
Vocational Rehabilitation	Signatory: Shelley Woods

<u>Partner Organization</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
	Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education 205 Jefferson St. Jefferson City, MO 65101 573.751.4212 Local Contact: Michelle Clark
Senior Community Service Program	Signatory: Demetrius Antzoulatos AARP Foundation SCSEP 1443 N Roberson Ave. Suite 905 Springfield MO 65802 Local Contact: Sharon Lavengood
Perkins Career and Technical Education	Signatory: Rob Rector Ozarks Technical Community College 1001 E. Chestnut Expressway Springfield, MO 65802 417.447.8152 Local Contact: Dr. Abby Bentz
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Signatory: Julie Carter Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development P.O. Box 1469, Jefferson City, MO 65102 Contact: Robin McHugh
Jobs for Veterans State Grants	Signatory: Julie Carter Missouri Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development P.O. Box 1469, Jefferson City, MO 65102 Contact: Robin McHugh
Community Services Block Grant Activities	Signatory: Patrick Luebbering Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation 215 S. Barnes Avenue Springfield, MO 65802-2204 417.862.4314 Local Contact: Jennifer Olson
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	Signatory: Katie Anderson HAS Properties 421 West Madison Street Springfield, MO 65806-2938 417.866.4329 Local Contact: Nicole Looney Amber Arthur
State Unemployment Compensation Insurance Law (Exempt from infrastructure negotiations)	Signatory: Allen Andrews, Division of Employment Security 421 East Dunklin Street, PO Box 59 Jefferson City MO 65104-0059 573.526-8219 Contact: Jared Brockman
Temporary Assistance For Needy Families	Signatory: Patrick Luebbering Signatory: Mark Douglass Equus Workforce Solutions

<u>Partner Organization</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>
	9510 Ormsby Station Road, Suite 104 Louisville, KY 40223 502.394.2100 Local Contact: Lynette Saxton
Rehabilitation for the Blind	Signatory: Patrick Luebbering Contact: Jeffrey La Montia Rehab Services for the Blind 149 Park Central Sq. Room 640 Springfield, MO 65806 (417.895.6391



Ozark Region

COST ALLOCATION PLAN

Effective Date: June 4, 2025
Reviewed & Approved: June 4, 2025

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OZARK REGION MISSOURI JOB CENTER COST ALLOCATION PLAN

Introduction

A cost allocation plan is a document that identifies, accumulates, and distributes allowable direct and indirect costs under grants and contracts, and establishes the allocation methods used for distributing costs. A plan for allocating joint/shared costs is required to support the distribution of those costs to the grant program. Formal accounting records to substantiate the propriety of the eventual charges must support all costs included in the plan.

This Cost Allocation Plan has been prepared for the Ozark Region, Missouri Job Centers. The importance of this plan is to document locally the agreed upon approach/methods to establishing the applicable parameters, definitions, calculations and allocation basis required to operate the Missouri Job Centers located in Springfield, Community Partnership of the Ozarks (CPO) Satellite and Branson offices and ensure that each partner bears its fair share of those costs.

Categories of Costs

There are four basic categories of costs that need to be allocated among local partner agencies as a result of services delivered from the Ozark Region, Missouri Job Centers (Springfield, CPO and Branson) as follows:

- **Space within the Ozark Region, Missouri Job Centers and Satellites.** Rent is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding which has been negotiated and signed by each participating partner. Separate infrastructure budgets are maintained specific to the Springfield, CPO and Branson locations. Rental payments are to be allocated monthly to all partners. Invoices including rent and operating costs will be generated by the City monthly and sent accordingly to the participating partner agencies for payment processing.
- **General operation of the Ozark Region, Missouri Job Centers.**
 - Infrastructure Facility Costs are common to the Centers (Springfield, CPO Satellite and Branson) and as such are applicable to all occupants that have a direct square footage rental relationship. These costs may include but are not limited to rent, maintenance and repair (including tools & equipment), custodial services, alarm

services, janitorial supplies, and utilities (including electricity, gas, water and sewer, and trash costs).

- Infrastructure Communication Costs are common to the Centers (Springfield, CPO Satellite and Branson) and as such are applicable to all occupants that require communication support. These costs may include but are not limited to telephone, internet, related communication hardware and software, intercom service, onsite information system support, and other information technology costs as needed.
- Center Shared Equipment & Supply Costs are common to the Centers (Springfield, CPO Satellite and Branson) and as such are applicable to all occupants that choose to share in commonly used office costs. These costs include but are not limited to copier equipment and maintenance, paper, toner, long distance charges, and stock consumable office supplies for shared use by staff and customers.
- **Staff for general customer activities provided by the Centers.** While staff costs are usually charged directly to specific programs, there may be situations where it is advantageous to treat staff activities for general operation of Job Centers as a common cost. The degree to which staff costs could be treated as common to the specific Job Center would depend on the types of services provided in the respective Center, co-located partners and agreement between the partners. Examples of staffing costs for general operations include but are not limited to City staff from outside departments used for repairs and other infrastructure related services as needed
- **Other costs associated with providing general job seeker and employer services offered by the Job Centers.** As with staff costs, while other costs of providing services are usually charged directly to specific programs, there might be situations where it is advantageous to treat such services as a common cost for a respective Center. Examples of job seeker services might include computer labs, child care, transportation, resume preparation, and customer workshops. Examples of employer services might include employer relations activities and Job Center marketing.

Space and general/common operating costs are typically the major costs that need to be allocated among partner agencies. Staff and services are typically paid directly by specific programs, but there could be situations where the Job Center partners would want to pool these costs or otherwise treat the costs as a collective responsibility and expect partner agencies or programs to pay for a share of the costs. Staffing costs are currently allocated by space utilized per employer of record; however, on a quarterly basis a study of clients served per Team (Youth Skills, Career Services) will be performed and compared to the current allocation percentage. If necessary, an adjustment will be made to ensure costs are being allocated accurately per program. If fees are charged for services, it may be appropriate to treat services as common to the center to provide a source of revenue for the center.

Job Centers (Springfield, CPO, and Branson) typically include partner agencies and/or their subcontractors who are involved in providing employment and training services to

job seekers and employers. Job Centers may also house the offices of related state or local agencies, local training partners, or local staffing partners.

The distinction between being a partner service provider versus a tenant in the Center is important for allocation of space costs and common or general operating expenses. Depending on the situation, it may be appropriate to exclude some staff of service provider agencies from the count of partner service provider staff in order to arrive at an equitable allocation of costs. Alternatively, it may be easier to count all staff as partner service providers to keep the cost allocation simple.

For purposes of discussing cost allocation and cost pooling we must further expand our understanding of the cost categories as either direct costs, joint costs, or indirect costs as follows:

Direct Costs:

Costs charged directly to final cost objectives that do not require any further allocation or breakdown are assignable direct costs.

Joint or Shared Costs:

Costs that cannot be readily assigned to a final cost objective, but which are directly charged to an intermediate cost objective or cost pool and subsequently allocated to final cost objectives are joint costs. These costs are incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting more than one funding stream.

Indirect Costs:

Indirect costs are those: a) incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting more than one cost objective, and b) not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefited, without effort disproportionate to the result achieved. These costs include the costs of supplying goods, services, and facilities that benefit more than one program or department. Some method of allocation must be used to distribute the indirect costs to various direct activities that were benefited.

Categories of Allocation Basis

Office Space:

There are two basic categories of space used within the Ozark Region Job Centers:

- **Dedicated space** (actually occupied) for specific agency/program use. This includes partner and tenant agencies. Dedicated space is easily attributable to specific agencies or programs based on their exclusive or primary use of space. Program funding requirements might require that certain spaces be dedicated primarily to specific programs in order for those programs to fund those areas.
- **Common space** for use by all partners and tenant agencies. Examples of common space could include restrooms, hallways, and employee break rooms, general

meeting rooms, storage areas and other space used by all occupants of the building. Depending on the situation, general reception and waiting areas might be treated as common space. Common space could also include resource areas used by customers, employer interview rooms, child care centers, computer and learning labs.

Dedicated Program Hours:

Staff wages and fringe dedicated to specific programs will be used to ratio and allocate costs that benefit multiple programs. This method is used when the costs shared are not proportionate to the space utilized by the different partners or programs.

Cost Allocation Procedures

All partners of the Job Center should reach consensus on how to categorize the specific space areas. Some areas in the Job Center require special treatment for cost allocation purposes. A basic principle among Job Center partner agencies and tenants is that they should compensate for their dedicated space and fair share of the common space in the center.

All partner/tenants should compensate directly for their **dedicated space**. This includes space for dedicated staff and other space used exclusively or primarily by a specific agency or program. Space costs are computed based on square footage. Certain partners may perform specific functions not necessarily related to their specific program, however, space will still be charged back to their program of record due to the funding streams not being integrated by DHEWD.

All partner/tenants should compensate directly a fair share of the **common space**. Since all partners and tenants use the common space, all should share in the costs. The costs are allocated based on the respective share of the total dedicated space of the program of record.

Job Center partners will continue to be charged for allocated space even if their employee position becomes vacant. They will be charged until that employee position is refilled and continue afterwards. It is the responsibility of partners to notify the City of Springfield, Department of Workforce Development Director and Fiscal Agent in writing, if that employee position is not being refilled and the space is no longer needed. At that time, the office becomes common space until another partner agency decides to occupy it.

General Job Center operating costs can often be treated in a similar manner as space costs, although there may be certain costs or situations where it is appropriate to use different methods for general operating costs such as number of customers served and staffing levels of specific teams. All general Job Centers (Springfield, CPO and Branson) operating costs will be allocated based on the total allocated square footage which combines both dedicated and common space. At the end of each quarter an analysis will be conducted to measure if the space allocation method is working in a fair and equitable method by comparing numbers of customers served and staffing levels and making any

adjustments at that time. Exceptions will include telephone and postage related costs for Trade. **Telephone costs** will be allocated on the basis of square footage for the Springfield and CPO Job Centers. See below for the telephone allocation for the Branson Job Center.

Measuring Benefit is a critical requirement and central task to be performed in allocating costs. Costs are allocable to a specific cost objective on benefits received by that cost objective. Direct costs are measured in terms of expense amounts that are approved on procurement documentation, and this documented expense is viewed as the actual benefit. We will direct charge cost objectives when expenses are clearly identified as specific to that cost objective. When the direct measurement of benefit cannot be done efficiently and effectively, then it is appropriate to treat that expense as a joint cost and charge those expenses to the cost pool for later distribution. The square footage allocation method is applied to the joint costs as they are viewed as a benefit of the leased space. The allocation base is the mechanism then used to allocate the joint/shared costs to final cost objectives. Care should be taken to ensure that the basis chosen does not distort the results, which is why reviews will be conducted. To the extent that general staff and service costs are treated as common costs it is important for programs making contributions to cover the costs and be able to show how the programs benefited due to the allocation of the expenditure.

Costs must be allocable, allowable and reasonable. For a cost to be **allocable** to a particular cost objective, it must be treated consistently with other costs incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances. Any cost allocable to a specific grant or other cost objective under applicable guidelines may not be shifted to other grants to overcome funding deficiencies, to avoid restrictions imposed by law or grant agreements, or for other reasons. To be **allowable**, a cost must be necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient operation of the program. For a cost to be **reasonable** under an award, it will not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the same circumstances. It should be recognized as ordinary and necessary for the operation of the organization and the performance of the award.

Cost Pools

Cost pooling is the process of accumulating similar allocable costs into pools pending allocation to benefiting programs resulting in simplifying the allocation process. The following identifies the cost pools to be utilized within the Ozark Region, Cost Allocation Plan:

Partner Shared Cost Pools

The Partner Shared Cost Pools for Springfield, CPO, and Branson are utilized to allocate common, joint/shared costs that are to be allocated to other cost pools based on the location usage. These pooled costs are allocated to the **Facility Costs, Communication Costs, Job Center Costs**, and **Center Shared Equip & Supplies Cost Pools**.

Facility Cost Pool

The **Facility Cost Pool** will include allocation of rent, custodial services, and facility maintenance costs. Facility maintenance costs such as janitorial supplies and services, utilities, and sanitation type costs will flow through this pool. The identification of these costs is intended for example purposes and is not all inclusive or limited to those listed. Partner agency shared costs captured in the pool will be summarized monthly and allocated based on **square footage for each respective Center location**. Costs allocated to partner agencies will be invoiced monthly and sent directly to the respective partner agency designated contact. Invoices shall be generated for each location and noted as due upon receipt payment terms and be recorded on City books as an outstanding accounts receivable pending partner agency payment. Note: DHEWD will submit a spreadsheet each month which will record their expenses for Branson, CPO, and Springfield offices. We will add our expenses to that and submit to DHEWD through the Financial Reporting System. That information will be documented with a Partner spreadsheet and kept on file for monitoring review. If DHEWD owes the Ozark Job Centers a reimbursement, cash will be drawn down from the DHEWD cash draw system after the reporting month has been closed. If the Ozark Job Center owes DHEWD cash, it is the responsibility of the Job Center to submit payment to DHEWD by the 30th of the reporting month.

Communications Cost Pool

The **Communications Cost Pool** is used to accommodate partner costs for telephone, internet, related communication hardware and software, intercom service, onsite information system support supplies, and other information technology costs as needed.

Job Center Cost Pool

The **Job Center Cost Pool** consist primarily of staff wage and fringe and/or any costs for related onsite information technology support. The pooled job center costs are currently shared between participating partners at each of the center locations (Springfield, CPO, and Branson). The base for allocating these pooled costs is direct time charged at each location and then the square footage of participating partners for the Springfield, CPO, and Branson locations.

Center Shared Equip & Supplies Cost Pool

Center Shared Equip & Supplies Cost Pool is used to accommodate partner costs for office supplies, marketing costs, long distance telephone charges, insurance, membership dues, postage costs, printing costs, publications, and equipment rental (copier) costs and maintenance and repairs on like office equipment. The identification of these costs is intended for example purposes and is not necessarily all inclusive or

limited to those that are named herein. Partner agency shared costs captured in the pool will be summarized monthly and allocated based on **square footage for each respective Center location**.

Allocating Copier Costs

Copier costs may include any rental, maintenance and repairs, toner and paper supplies specific to any copier located within the Center. Because not all copiers in the center have a user code feature that would enable management to track actual usage, copier costs will be allocated consistent with all other operating budget costs based on square footage ratios. Costs will be direct charged to the Center Shared Equip & Supplies Cost Pool for allocation purposes and then allocated in accordance with the methodology described above relevant to this pool. Costs will be charged in accordance with the classification of type of cost including but not limited to the following expenditure line items; rental of equipment, maintenance and repairs of equipment and office supplies. Each month, DHEWD provides the City of Springfield, Finance Department their annual copier lease and maintenance costs for the Springfield and Branson Centers. Each month DHEWD is given a credit on their invoice for actual copier costs.

Postage and mail handling procedures should be followed by all staff and discussed in accordance with the noted policy. Staff must batch and label all outgoing mail by program type daily for the City of Springfield, Print Shop to calculate and record the appropriate postage costs on the monthly log for the Springfield and CPO locations. These charges will be direct charged by general ledger journal entry against program funds as postage line item expenditures and would not appear as part of the monthly operating expense allocated costs as invoiced. DHEWD's account will be credited for these total direct charges for offset against their monthly invoiced operating costs.

Postage Policy for Branson Job Center

Outgoing mail from the Branson office will be batched in groups by the program that is initiating the mailing. The person handling the outgoing mail will then keep a log of costs associated with each program for bill back purposes. At the end of each month the postage log will be sent to the Workforce Development - Finance Department at the Springfield Job Center for processing and billing to each program. The log will be summarized at the end of each month with charges expensed to the appropriate program and/or partner agency based on actual usage.

DHEWD's account will be credited for these total direct charges for offset against their monthly invoiced operating costs. The Branson Receptionist or her designee will be responsible for submitting a copy of the monthly log through email to the attention of the Accounting Supervisor and Accounting Services Representative by the first or second working day of each new month.

Long Distance Telephone Costs will be captured based on the dedicated telephone numbers assigned to each program. Monthly the DHEWD designated staff supervisor shall download the Branson Office telephone bill from within the State of Missouri's automated system and forward the bill to the Springfield Finance Office. Receipt of the monthly billing will create entries into the accounting system that will direct charge long

distance charges and share the overall telephone system infrastructure costs among the participating programs and partner agencies as part of their monthly operating expense costs and invoices. This will be an override of the allocation system for this line only.

Global Cost Pool

Global Cost Pool is utilized to accommodate shared costs within the WIOA system to manage costs exclusive to the programmatic operations carried out by any City department, including the One-Stop Operator functions. Global Pool Costs are allocated based on each program participation level in the activity and the outcome of that activity. Calculated percentages are then utilized as the base for allocating costs to the appropriate programs participating in those activities.

On occasion WIOA program initiatives may align with other programs and the direct benefit received by each program will be the basis for determining the allocation percentages to each participating program.

Administrative Cost Pool

Many indirect costs are provided by the City using local funding sources. Currently these services include, but are not limited to human resources, information support services, and management and oversight through the City Manager's Office and City Council. Currently indirect costs charged to the administrative cost pool include the following items; outside services for administrative support to the board (attorney and consultant fees), board travel, board meeting supplies, board training, Finance Department staff, and the support costs for the designated Finance Department staff.

Administrative funds effective, July 1, 2008, are pooled for further allocation back to programs or specific grants. After advisement from DHEWD and their monitors the Ozark Region is discontinuing the use of and approval of a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Administration costs are held in a pool and allocated to WIOA Youth, Adult, & DWP. Beginning in October 2021, the WIOA allocations will also consider the ratio of dedicated hours in the programs to allow for a more balanced allocation throughout the year. Regular review will be conducted for the annual indirect costs allocated to each program to insure the allowable cost rates are not exceed, and adjustment will be made between the allocations as needed.

WIOA Program Cost Pool

DHEWD and the City negotiated a cost sharing plan for both the Springfield and the Branson Job Centers. At this same time staff costs that were formerly attached to a specific funding source were pooled using the existing WIOA Pool. The basis has

changed to include the ratio of dedicated hours. With a large portion of staffing cost being included in the WIOA pool, it has become a major influence on the expenditures of the City.

The WIOA Program Cost Pool shall be utilized to pool costs that are specific and exclusive to each WIOA Program (Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Programs) only. Costs will primarily consist of staff wages and fringe, travel, auto allowance and/or other program costs that are specific to WIOA and apply to the three programs specifically. These pooled costs will be summarized at each month end and allocated between the WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Programs. On a quarterly basis, staff costs will be reviewed and compared against the ratio of dedicated hours per the respective programs and adjusted as needed.

WIOA Staffing Costs Allocations

- It has been determined that the career services team, skills team, business services team, program compliance coordinator, and the Mobile Job Center driver's costs will be included in the WIOA Program Cost Pool.
- The Assistant Director of Workforce Development & Executive Secretary costs will be allocated based upon current program needs.

The WIOA pool costs will be summarized at each month end and allocated between the WIOA Title 1-B Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Programs on the basis of ratio of dedicated hours within the three designated programs.

Youth Program Cost Categories and Allocation Method

The following describes the WIOA Youth Program specific cost categories and allocation methods to be implemented and utilized by the designated youth service provider. Designated youth staff will direct charge their time on payroll records to either in-school youth (ISY) or out-of-school youth (OSY) activities. When the staff are unable to specifically identify an activity or cost as ISY or OSY, then their charges will default to a joint/shared cost youth activity. The resulting percentage ratios charged within the two Youth Cost Categories, ISY and OSY, will be utilized as the basis for allocating all joint/shared costs that are specifically incurred by designated youth staff or that are allocated to the Youth Program through any cost pools.

WIOA Youth Cost Allocation Guidelines

1. The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) became effective on July 01, 2015, and superseded the Workforce Investment Act. This change has significant impact on the operational and fiscal aspects of providing youth services. One major change is the State's use of two funding categories within the youth fund, and the need to

allocate all expenses to one of these two categories. In addition, any and all special projects or funding through the Youth Services contract must be accounted for in a similar manner. The information contained herein shall be the basic guidelines used to effectively and efficiently allocate such expenses, which include program, participant and staff costs.

The WIOA Youth staff will direct charge their time between time spent on ISY, OSY, and general operations. The time dedicated to ISY and OSY youth will be used to allocate the general youth operation costs on a monthly basis.

Note: Costs allocated within the two Youth categories are currently being tracked on a spreadsheet basis.

a. Funding categories:

- (1) ISY-REG (In School Youth - Regular) This category is for expenses related to providing services to participants that are considered ISY by WIOA guidelines.
- (2) OSY-REG (Out of School Youth - Regular) This category is for expenses related to providing services to participants that are considered OSY by WIOA guidelines.
- (3) In accordance with the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act—Use of funds for youth activities, subparagraph (c) Local Elements and Requirements—(A) In General – At a minimum, 75 percent (75%) of the funds shall be used to provide youth activities to “out-of-school” youth.

b. Participant costs:

- (1) Wages and fringe - registered participants that have a timesheet to be paid through program funds, shall be identified and "coded" for their appropriate category and component. (I.e. ISY-REG, OSY-REG, etc.).
- (2) Supportive services - This is a required service element of WIOA, and the types of expenses are outlined in the local WIOA Youth Services Plan. The documentation of these expenses shall be made on the appropriate forms (check request, voucher, invoice, etc....) and "coded" for the proper category (as listed above).
- (3) Participant supplies and costs - These needs are identified in the local WIOA Youth Services Plan, and the associated expenses shall be documented and "coded" similarly to that described in the Supportive Services above.

c. Program costs:

- (1) All program costs and expenses not specifically outlined herein, shall be documented appropriately, and "coded" as one of the two youth categories, according to the component or client type that is benefited by the expense.
- (2) Once the percentage relationships are established by the staff for the two cost categories (current period), they are used to distribute all current expenses subject to distribution. The exception being expenses that are identified to a specific activity that can be direct charged.

d. **Staff costs:**

- (1) Wages and fringe - all staff must complete timesheets as completely as possible, using the following guidelines:

(A) Work hours - using your method of choice, document the number of hours spent working within the allowable funding categories listed herein. This shall be in increments no smaller than one quarter (1/4) hour. The number of hours claimed toward a funding category must directly benefit from your time and efforts. This is more easily determined by reviewing the descriptions below.

(B) ISY-REG (In School Youth - Regular) Individuals that are ISY by WIOA definition, in a regular or "year-round" component, and specifically NOT in a summer component. Time and effort spent working directly with ISY, or working on issues, projects, materials, programs, reporting or planning that will specifically benefit ISY, are allowable and attributable to this category. Staff may work on issues that benefit ISY without registering/enrolling ISY participants. (I.e. presentations made to public or alternative school audiences, or attending training or conferences that are specifically meant to serve or benefit ISY.)

(C) OSY-REG (Out of School Youth - Regular) Individuals that are OSY by WIOA definition, in a regular or "year round" component, and specifically NOT in a summer component. The same guidelines described above for ISY-REG apply to this category. As a general rule of thumb, if your work time or efforts cannot be directly or specifically related to or benefit ISY or OSY, then staff shall count their work time in this category.

(D) TIME SHEET - The electronic timesheet shall be used to document all staff work time, leave and comp time for which staff wages and fringe costs shall be calculated and paid. This form shall be completed in accordance with guidelines contained herein.

- (2) Mileage costs:

(A) Staff costs - staff shall document local travel performed on behalf of the program that it directly relates to or benefits, in the same manner in which

is described in the section concerning staff costs. Each line documented on the travel (mileage) form and/or payroll record, shall be "coded" to one of the two categories by the staff completing the form. For more detail, see attached Administrative Memorandum covering Mileage Allowance for all City staff.

- (B) Participant costs - participants shall NOT complete travel (mileage) forms for their participation in WIOA services or components. These costs will be handled within the guidelines of "supportive services" for participants, if allowed under WIOA guidelines, and services operated under the local WIOA Youth Plan.

Modification of Plan

This plan shall be reviewed for modification purposes no less than annually in preparation for update and/or modifications on behalf of any or all partners.

Partners agreeing to this plan may request modification of its terms. Ratification of the request by all the other partners will constitute acceptance of a modification.

Any partner to this plan may withdraw, giving written notice of its intent to withdraw as a partner. In such case, all pertinent terms of the Cost Allocation Plan will continue in effect for the remaining partners. Any party may cancel the agreement at any time for cause, or may cancel without cause on a 30-day written notice.

On behalf of the City of Springfield, I Toby Stevenson, Accounting Supervisor for the Department of Workforce & Economic Vitality, certify that the Cost Allocation Plan has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines set forth from both the State and Federal level. It is also consistent with Missouri policies concerning cost allocation for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Signature

Date

Ozark Region 2024-2027 Plan



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Ozark Region

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Strategic Elements

1. Local Workforce Development Board’s Vision

State the Board’s vision for the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) and how this vision meets, interprets, and furthers the Governor’s vision in the current WIOA Missouri Combined State Plan.

The Vision of the Ozark Region Workforce Development Board (ORWDB) is as follows:
“to promote a thriving regional economy supported by diverse employment opportunities and a highly trained and sustainable workforce.”

The ORWDB’s mission is:
“to facilitate, advocate, and allocate resources for workforce solutions resulting in employer engagement and improved quality of life in the region.”

The Governor of Missouri’s vision is as follows:
The vision of the Ozark Workforce Development board is aligned with the Governor’s vision in the PY24-PY27 WIOA Missouri Combined state plan. The Executive leadership of the board has been actively involved in the Governor’s mission of improving the lives of all Missourians through workforce development.

2. Local Workforce Development Board's Goals

Provide the Board's goals for engaging employers and preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance-accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The ORWDB previously met in a strategic session to develop their goals for the Ozark Region. The strategic goals are as follows:

- A. Address skill gaps, placing emphasis on local Labor Market. Accelerate the engagement of employers as the chief customer.
- B. Enhance and strengthen existing partnerships,
- D. Diversify funding strategy to secure additional financial resources,
- E. Increase Board engagement and accountability,
- F. Escalate outreach and engagement strategies,
- G. Build internal capacity to address strategic priorities.
- H. Collaborate with community partners to promote inclusive and to ensure that both youth and adults, as well as individuals with barriers to employment, are provided with equitable opportunities for training, education, and employment as well as wraparound support and referrals,
- I. And establish feedback mechanisms such as surveys and exit interviews for both individuals and employers to evaluate program effectiveness and to track customers satisfaction.
- J. Align with negotiated performance measure to ensure the balance of short-term performance metrics with long-term workforce development goals

3. Local Workforce Development Board's Priorities

Identify the workforce development needs of businesses, jobseekers, and workers in the LWDA, and how those needs are determined.

The ORWDB has identified five major industries as the core sectors for the region - Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing, Construction/Trades, Transportation and Logistics, and IT. The ORWDB intends to identify the needs of the Ozark Region through Ozark Region Fact Finding.

Ozark Region Fact Finding:

- A. *Industry Roundtables:* Employers from the region will be invited to gather for roundtable discussions and provide input on current needs and best practices. Programmatic administrative staff and partners will also be invited to present and gather information, to provide input on available training options, and address other employer needs. Industry roundtables have provided information that assists in focusing training and the skills needed by participants.
- B. *Partnerships:* Increase and strengthen partnerships to support an increased number of participants receiving braided funds and other resources in the region. We've already

- witnessed the benefit of braiding of funds and co-enrollment, which benefits all programs.
- C. *Exploration*: Explore avenues for addressing work readiness and barriers (transportation, childcare, housing, etc.) faced by job seekers and workers.
 - D. *Participants assessments*: Through working with participants staff will assess the needs of participants for entering the workforce and maintaining employment. This could include assessing employee satisfaction and on the job inclusivity of potential employers, barriers, work readiness, training, or education. The Aspire Youth program has begun utilizing Pathful Explorers, which is an additional assessment that provides more insight of participants and guidance to providing them the necessary direction.

Priorities:

Equally important is the element of inclusion and the need to include all groups in the quest for a balanced and equitable economic opportunity. This involves working with the partners to ensure they are reaching those with significant barriers such as:

- A. Limited job experience
- B. Insufficient skill levels to compete for jobs
- C. Poverty
- D. Disability
- E. Educational attainment

The ORWDB and staff also plan to work across the community and be involved with several initiatives geared towards community and regional development. The Missouri Job Center (MJC) is recognized as a key partner for the economic growth and prosperity of the Ozark Region. This plan seeks to increase engagement as a partner with the following entities:

- A. Chambers of Commerce
- B. Economic development organizations
- C. Councils of government
- D. Industry organizations
- E. Various community partners

4. Local Workforce Development Board's Strategies

Describe the Board's strategies and goals for operation, innovation and continual improvement based on meeting requirements for the needs of businesses, job seekers and workers. Required strategies are listed below. Please describe the strategies and objectives for:

A. Career Pathways

Strategy: Develop and enhance career pathways that align with the current and future demands of the local labor market.

Objectives:

- a. Monitor key industry sectors and occupations in demand based on MERIC data.

- b. Establish clear pathways for skill development and advancement within identified sectors.
- c. Collaborate with education and training providers, apprenticeship programs and other employers to ensure programs align with industry needs.
- d. Facilitate opportunities for work-based learning, apprenticeships, and internships while evaluating workforce trends for new opportunities for employers and jobseekers.

B. Employer Engagement

Strategy: Actively engage employers to understand their workforce needs and establish strong partnerships.

Objectives:

- a. Conduct regular employer outreach events and roundtables.
- b. Utilize local and statewide surveys as employer feedback mechanisms to determine the specific needs of local businesses.
- c. Collaborate with industry associations to stay informed about sector-specific requirements.

C. Business Needs Assessment

Strategy: Conduct regular roundtables and employer engagement opportunities to assess evolving business needs in the local market.

Objectives:

- a. Work with local businesses to identify current and future skill requirements.
- b. Monitor workforce trends to anticipate changes in business needs.
- c. Utilize data to inform programmatic adjustments and training offerings.

D. Alignment and Coordination of Core Program Services

Strategy: Ensure seamless coordination and alignment of core program services offered by different stakeholders in the workforce development system.

Objectives:

- a. Establish clear communication channels between partner organizations.
- b. Regularly meet with Core Partners to review and update current service delivery strategies.
- c. Heighten cross-training programs for staff to enhance collaboration.
- d. Provide job seekers with a comprehensive self-guided tour using an orientation video highlighting all available core program services.

E. Coordination with Economic Development

Strategy: Integrate workforce development efforts with broader economic development goals.

Objectives:

- a. Collaborate with economic development agencies, such as local chambers and Taney County Partnership, to align workforce strategies with regional economic priorities.
- b. Identify opportunities for supporting local businesses in expanding and hiring.

- c. Staff continue to engage with the local communities, City Administrators, and school superintendents.

F. Outreach to Jobseekers and Businesses. (The LWDB should explain its outreach plan to attract WIOA eligible individuals. Please highlight any efforts to reach veterans, spouses of veterans, and displaced homemakers.)

Strategy: Implement a comprehensive outreach plan to target employers and eligible individuals, with a focus on priority of service.

Objectives:

- a. Utilize diverse communication channels to reach a broad audience. These include hiring fairs, social media, and other means that will also target Veterans, spouses of veterans, and displaced homemakers.
- b. Participate in targeted outreach events in collaboration with community organizations, employers, and education providers. A veteran hiring event is held each year. Contracted staff are involved in numerous organizations and often make presentations or provide information to all including veterans, spouses of veterans, and displaced homemakers.

G. Access—Improvements to Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

Strategy: Enhance both physical and programmatic accessibility to ensure inclusivity.

Objectives:

- a. Through an annual review, assess and improve physical accessibility at MJC's to include proper signage.
- b. Provide assistive technology and accommodations for individuals with disabilities.
- c. Review and update policies to ensure programmatic accessibility.

H. Customer Service Training

Strategy: Invest in customer service training opportunities for staff to ensure a positive experience for job seekers and businesses.

Objectives:

- a. Hold regularly scheduled trainings for frontline staff.
- b. Emphasize empathy, cultural competence, inclusivity, and effective communication in customer interactions.
- c. Provide opportunities for professional growth by attending or viewing outside trainings.

I. Assessment

Strategy: Implement effective assessment methods to understand the skills and needs of job seekers.

Objectives:

- a. Utilize validated tools for comprehensive skills assessments.
- b. Monitor and review new assessments for continuous improvement.
- c. Tailor assessments to individual needs and career goals.

J. Support Services

Strategy: Provide a range of support services to address barriers faced by job seekers.

Objectives:

- a. Identify common barriers through regular needs assessments.
- b. Enhance collaborations with community organizations and explore diverse avenues to provide supplementary support services.
- c. Provide participants receiving supportive services ongoing financial education and budgeting strategies.

K. Outcome measures assessment, monitoring and management

Strategy: Maintain a system for assessing, monitoring, and managing performance measures.

Objectives:

- a. Negotiate performance measures according to bi-annually.
- b. Regularly monitor and evaluate program activities.
- c. Relaying best practices and statewide training information for continuous improvement.

By implementing these strategies and achieving the outlined objectives, the Ozark Region aims to create an effective, responsive, and innovative workforce development system that meets the diverse needs of businesses, job seekers, and workers in the local community.

Performance Measures are reviewed at each Planning and Oversight Committee meeting, where staff prepare a presentation and discuss the latest performance. As new data is released on performance, rosters are reviewed to identify individuals within the performance and are checked to determine if they met the performance. If not, the record is reviewed for documentation that the performance was actually met and not documented into the system. Participants will be contacted to obtain appropriate documentation if not already received.

5. Economic, Labor Market, and Workforce Analysis Source

Please indicate the source of the information. If using Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) data, please indicate the source is MERIC. If using another resource, please reference the source. MERIC regional representatives can be found online at: <https://meric.mo.gov/about-us>

The Ozark Region utilized MERIC as the source of information for economic, labor market, and workforce analysis.

6. Economic Analysis

Describe the LWDA's current economic condition, including the following information by county (if your LWDA includes more than one county) and the overall region.

- a. Average personal income level
- b. Number and percent of working-age population living at or below poverty level

Personal Income

In the Ozark Region, all counties were below the state average of \$64,920 for per capita personal income. The per capita personal income in three counties in the Ozark Region was above \$51,000.

In 2024, personal income for the US and Missouri increased 4.6 percent and 5.6 percent respectively when compared to 2023.

The statewide poverty rate of working age persons, or those 18-64 years, was 12.1 percent in 2023. In the Ozark Region, the poverty rate was lower than the state average in Christian County (8.0%). Counties with the highest poverty rates were Dallas (20.1%) and Polk (17.4%).

Name	2023 Per Capita Personal Income	Working Age (18-64) Population living below poverty level	
		Number	Percentage
Missouri	\$64,920	435,313	12.1%
Christian	\$52,867	4,230	8.0%
Dallas	\$42,354	1,903	20.1%
Greene	\$56,350	27,461	15.3%
Polk	\$46,061	3,095	17.4%
Stone	\$51,791	2,361	14.4%
Taney	\$48,862	4,452	14.5%
Webster	\$43,890	2,958	13.5%

Sources:

Per Capita Personal Income - U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2023

Poverty Level - American Community Survey-5 Year data (2019-2023)

c. Number and percent of working age population determined to have a barrier to employment

Barriers to employment can include homelessness, disability status, lower education levels, and limited proficiency with the English language. Five counties in the Ozark Region had a higher percentage of the working age population (18-64 years old) with disabilities, as compared to the state average of 12.6 percent, with the highest percentage in Dallas County (19.1%). The percentage of the working age population who speak a language other than English in Missouri was 7.4 percent. Only Taney County in the region had a higher percentage of the working age population who speak a language other than English, at 8.5 percent.

In Missouri, 8.5 percent of the population 25 years or up did not have a high school diploma in 2023. Four of the seven counties in the region had higher percentage of this population group without a high school diploma than the state percentage. Webster County had the highest percentage of the population 25 years and up without a high school diploma at 11.5 percent whereas Greene and Christian counties had the lowest percentage of this population group without a high school diploma at 6.7 percent each.

Barriers To Employment									
Area	Total Population	Total Population 18-64	% of 18-64 in Population	25 years or up with less than high school diploma	% of 25 years or up without high school diploma	Total Population 18-64 with a disability	% of Population 18-64 with a disability	Total Population 18-64 who speak language other than English	% of Population 18-64 who speak language other than English
Missouri	6,168,181	3,702,481	60.0%	354,732	8.5%	457,446	12.6%	274,910	7.4%
Christian	91,229	53,295	58.4%	4,114	6.7%	5,693	10.7%	2,993	5.6%
Dallas	17,344	9,564	55.1%	1,167	9.7%	1,813	19.1%	349	3.6%
Greene	301,121	187,297	62.2%	13,228	6.7%	23,070	12.4%	11,467	6.1%
Polk	32,109	18,753	58.4%	2,363	11.2%	2,530	13.6%	825	4.4%
Stone	31,697	16,434	51.8%	2,024	8.2%	2,774	16.9%	563	3.4%
Taney	56,382	31,983	56.7%	3,609	9.3%	4,136	13.0%	2,712	8.5%
Webster	39,868	22,674	56.9%	2,964	11.5%	2,854	13.0%	981	4.3%

Source: American Community Survey-5 Year data (2019-2023)

d. Employment rates for the last 5 years

The unemployment rate in the Ozark Region is declining after peaking in 2020. The unemployment rate for 2024 was below the state average of 3.7 percent in three of the seven counties. Christian County had the lowest unemployment rate at 3.2 percent. The highest unemployment rate was in Taney County at 5.6 percent.

Unemployment Rate by County - Ozark Region					
Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
US	8.1%	5.3%	3.6%	3.6%	4.0%
Missouri	6.1%	4.2%	2.6%	3.1%	3.7%
Christian	5.2%	3.2%	2.2%	2.7%	3.2%
Dallas	6.1%	4.3%	3.0%	3.4%	4.3%
Greene	5.5%	3.3%	2.2%	2.7%	3.3%
Polk	4.8%	3.4%	2.6%	3.2%	3.8%
Stone	9.6%	6.3%	3.8%	4.6%	5.3%
Taney	12.7%	7.0%	4.1%	4.9%	5.6%
Webster	5.5%	3.3%	2.3%	2.9%	3.5%

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Not Seasonally Adjusted

e. Major layoff events over the past 3 years and any anticipated layoffs

f. Any other factors that may affect local/regional economic conditions

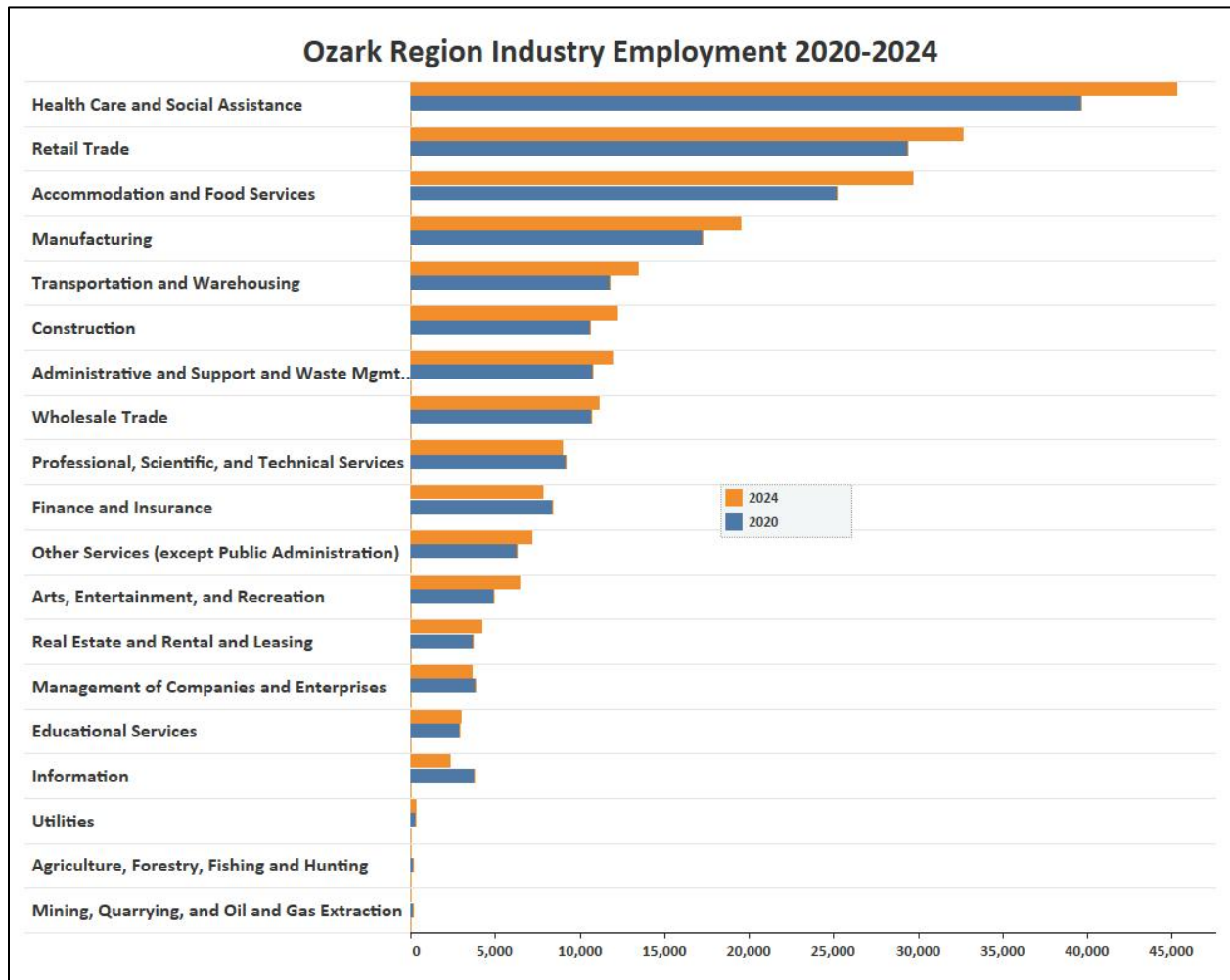
7. Labor Market Analysis

a. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

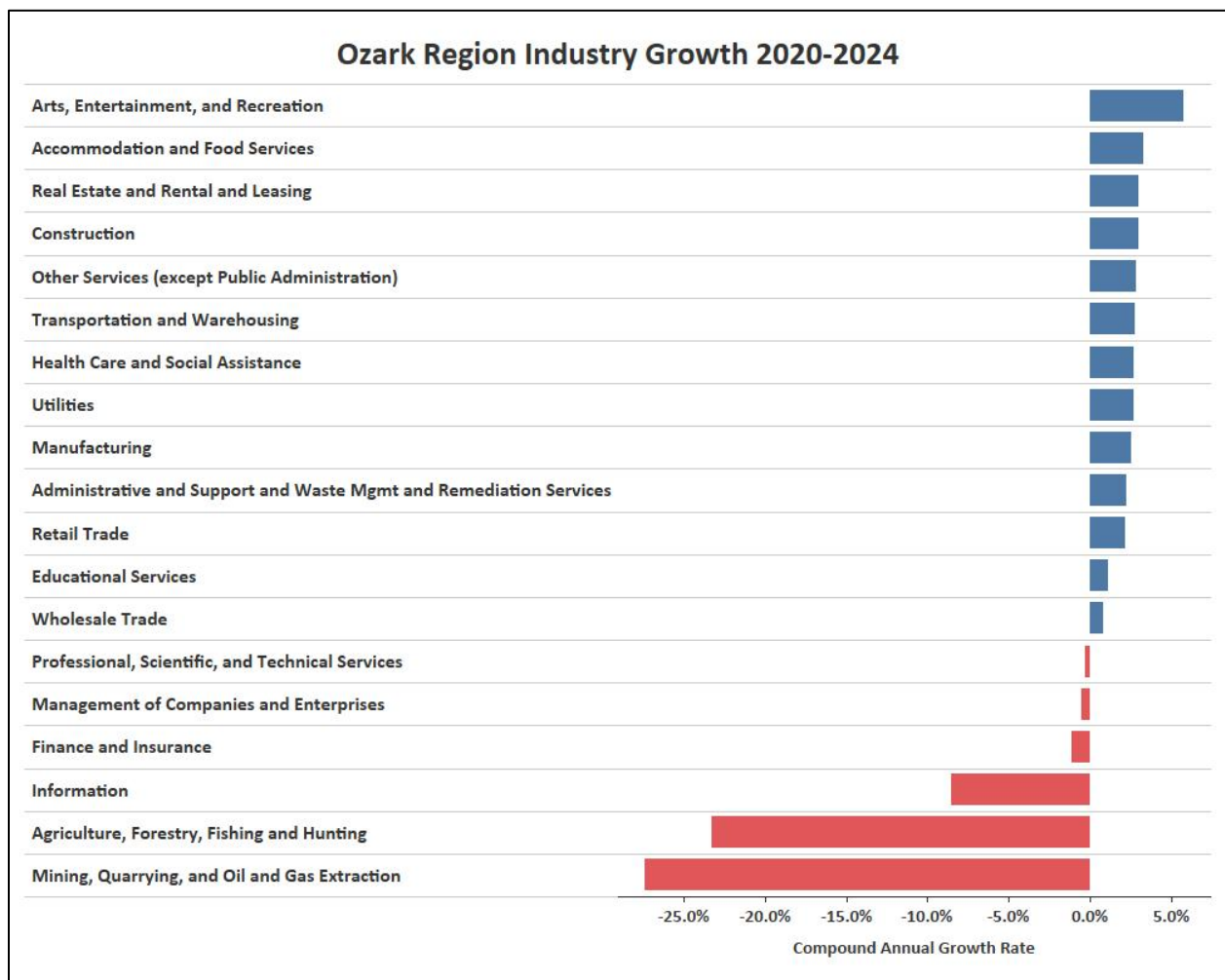
Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

Current Industry Demand

The Ozark Region averaged over 255,700 jobs in 2024. The region gained 2,957 jobs in 2024, an increase of 1.2 percent. Missouri employment increased by 0.8 percent in 2024. From 2020 to 2024, the Ozark Region averaged 2.0 percent compound annual growth for an overall increase of 10.6 percent. During that same period (2020-2024) Missouri's compound annual employment gain was 1.6 percent for an overall gain of 8.3 percent. Several industry groups increased employment at a pace higher than the average compound annual growth rate of 2.0 percent for the region. Those industries included Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (1,587 employment increase at 5.8% compound annual growth rate); Accommodation and Food Services (4,488 at 3.3%); Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (591 at 3.0%); and Construction (1,673 at 3.0%) among others.



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), annual averages, private ownership



Source: *Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), annual averages, private ownership*

Location Quotient

Location Quotient (LQ) describes the concentration of an industry in a geographic region in relation to the nation. The national average is 1.0. Industries with an LQ higher than 1.0 indicate an above average concentration of that industry in the area.

In 2024, the Ozark Region had four industries with LQs of 2.0 or higher: *Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation* (4.2); *Truck Transportation* (3.1); *Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions* (2.2); and *Accommodation* (2.0).

2024 Ozark Region Location Quotients		
Industry	Employment	Location Quotient
Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation	209	4.2
Truck Transportation	7,642	3.1
Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions	637	2.2
Accommodation	6,278	2.0
Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries	1,828	1.9
Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers	2,923	1.7
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, Book, and Miscellaneous Retailers	4,125	1.7
General Merchandise Retailers	8,390	1.6
Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	3,294	1.4
Furniture, Home Furnishings, Electronics, and Appliance Retailers	1,868	1.4
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	3,321	1.4
Machinery Manufacturing	2,544	1.4
Repair and Maintenance	3,220	1.3
Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	7,403	1.3
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	4,284	1.3

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 2024 Annual Averages

Current Occupational Demand

Current occupational demand can be attained through the job ads placed by employers. From October 2024 to September 2025, nearly 69,280 on-line job ads were placed for jobs located in the Ozark Region according to Lightcast™.

Job ads were placed for positions at every skill and education level. Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next**, and **Later** to categorize jobs according to the typical education and experience required for success on the job. **Now** jobs typically require a high school education or less and short-term training. **Next** jobs typically require moderate to long-term training or experience or education beyond high school. **Later** jobs typically require a bachelor's degree or higher education.

Now occupations with the highest number of job postings included *Retail Salespersons*; *Customer Service Representatives*; *Home Health and Personal Care Aides*; *Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers, Hand*; and *Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners*. Occupations with the most job postings in the **Next** category were *Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers*; *First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers*; *Maintenance and Repair Workers, General*; *Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses*; and *Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products*. **Later** occupations with the highest number of job postings were *Registered Nurses*; *Medical and Health Services Managers*; *Physicians, All Other*; *General and Operations Managers*; and *Nurse Practitioners*.

Many of the occupations with the most job postings also had high numbers of projected openings through 2032. The occupations with high numbers of job postings and high numbers of projected annual openings are identified with the star.

Top Job Ads - Ozark Region		
SOC Code	Occupation Title	Online Job Postings
NOW - Typically requires high school education or less and short-term training		
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	2,180 ★
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	1,240 ★
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	1,000 ★
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	910 ★
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	830 ★
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	820 ★
27-1026	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	700
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	680 ★
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	650 ★
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	560
NEXT - Typically requires moderate/long-term training or experience or education beyond high school		
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,750 ★
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	1,350 ★
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,140 ★
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	940
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	880 ★
41-3091	Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	810 ★
29-2099	Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	800
11-9051	Food Service Managers	740
51-9199	Production Workers, All Other	630
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	540 ★
LATER - Typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher		
29-1141	Registered Nurses	5,490 ★
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	760
29-1229	Physicians, All Other	610
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	570 ★
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	480
29-1123	Physical Therapists	480
11-2022	Sales Managers	460
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	440
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	350 ★
27-2022	Coaches and Scouts	340

Source: Lightcast, online job ads between Oct. 1, 2024 - Sept. 30, 2025

★ = Top Job Openings in Now, Next and Later, 2022-2032 Occupational Projections for Ozark Region, MERIC

b. Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupation

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

Industry Projections

The long-term industry projections help determine the industries that are expected to add positions within their organizations over time. The latest round of projections is through the ten-year period ending in 2032.

The projections reveal several industries with both high employment numbers and above average growth rates compared to the regional average. The top five industries by numeric employment

change were *Educational Services; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Hospitals; Administrative and Support Services; and Management of Companies and Enterprises.*

Ozark Region Industry Projections 2022-2032					
NAICS	Industry	Employment		2022-2032 Change	
		2022	2032	Numeric	Percent
10	Total All Industries	271,057	290,613	19,556	7.2%
611	Educational Services	20,346	23,068	2,722	13.4%
541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	9,671	11,619	1,948	20.1%
622	Hospitals	19,139	21,083	1,944	10.2%
561	Administrative and Support Services	11,255	12,584	1,329	11.8%
551	Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,876	5,190	1,314	33.9%
930	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	8,996	9,711	715	7.9%
484	Truck Transportation	8,079	8,773	694	8.6%
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	1,411	1,988	577	40.9%
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	6,470	7,017	547	8.5%
910	Total Federal Government Employment	2,580	3,083	503	19.5%
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	11,778	12,246	468	4.0%
713	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	3,728	4,141	413	11.1%
492	Couriers and Messengers	1,581	1,957	376	23.8%
624	Social Assistance	6,400	6,765	365	5.7%
333	Machinery Manufacturing	2,863	3,189	326	11.4%

Source: MERIC 2022-2032 Long Term Projections

Occupational Projections

Job openings occur due to three reasons – **exits**, **transfers**, and **growth**. **Exits** occur as people leave the workforce for reasons such as retirement. **Transfers** occur when workers leave one occupation for a different occupation. Occupational **growth** occurs as businesses grow and need more workers to serve their customers.

Emerging occupations can be identified through projected growth openings. The following chart identifies occupations that have the highest number of annual growth openings in the region. Total openings are the sum of **transfers**, **exits**, and **growth**, and indicates the projected number of vacancies that businesses will need to fill each year.

Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next**, and **Later** to categorize occupations according to these levels. **Now** jobs typically require a high school education or less and short-term training. **Next** occupations typically require moderate to long-term training or experience or education beyond high school. **Later** occupations typically require a bachelor's degree or higher.

Growth openings are projected at all education and training levels. Occupations in the table below are listed by the highest number of growth openings. **Now** occupations with the highest numbers of projected growth were *Stockers and Order Fillers; Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners; and Customer Service Representatives*. **Next** occupations with the highest numbers of projected growth openings were *Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Maintenance and Repair Workers, General; and Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators*. **Later** occupations with the highest growth were *Registered Nurses; General and Operations Managers; and Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education*.

Ozark Region Highest Growth Openings 2022-2032						
Occupation	Average Wage	Percent Growth	Exits	Annual Openings		
				Transfers	Growth	Total
NOW - Typically requires short-term on-the-job training or less, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma						
Stockers and Order Fillers	\$37,977	7.2%	438	689	49	1,176
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$34,723	10.7%	298	297	44	639
Customer Service Representatives	\$41,961	7.3%	311	437	39	787
Office Clerks, General	\$41,823	7.5%	311	303	37	651
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	\$32,401	6.2%	494	412	37	943
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$38,872	8.4%	198	336	34	568
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Execut	\$42,191	8.0%	234	212	31	477
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	\$31,264	10.8%	174	157	24	355
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	\$37,581	9.5%	117	183	21	321
Light Truck Drivers	\$45,498	10.8%	79	103	18	200
NEXT - Typically requires non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training						
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$56,616	8.5%	355	459	64	878
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	\$47,366	10.4%	151	156	34	341
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	\$42,221	10.7%	102	152	25	279
Nursing Assistants	\$36,065	8.8%	185	228	25	438
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	\$32,426	12.6%	97	101	20	218
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	\$59,962	8.6%	95	122	19	236
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	\$45,288	8.5%	140	110	18	268
Electrical, Electronic, and Electromechanical Assemblers, Except Coil Winder	\$40,336	33.9%	29	32	17	78
Computer User Support Specialists	\$53,858	14.8%	27	45	15	87
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	\$39,520	9.8%	72	69	13	154
LATER - Typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher						
Registered Nurses	\$72,140	9.3%	258	160	69	487
General and Operations Managers	\$87,323	5.4%	214	462	45	721
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	\$51,920	13.6%	105	103	40	248
Accountants and Auditors	\$72,477	12.4%	65	95	24	184
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$55,768	13.5%	49	55	22	126
Software Developers	\$99,464	20.5%	16	32	17	65
Lawyers	\$141,176	15.1%	26	17	16	59
Human Resources Specialists	\$62,116	10.6%	44	76	15	135
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	\$52,752	13.6%	35	34	13	82
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	\$63,487	11.9%	30	55	11	96

Source: MERIC 2022-2032 Long-Term Occupational Projections

c. Employers' Employment Needs

Identify the job skills necessary to obtain current and projected employment opportunities. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations, provide an analysis of the employment needs of employers. Describe the knowledge, skills and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Real-Time Labor Market Data

Job ads placed by employers offer another source of information on the knowledge, skills, and certifications requested by Missouri's employers. Lightcast™ is a data tool that spiders to over several thousand different web sites with job ads. The information found in the ads are placed in a database that can be queried to gain insight on employer needs.

The following table lists the specialized skills, certifications, and software and programming abilities requested most frequently by employers in job ads.

Generally, in the software and programming category, Microsoft Office and its products such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access rank at the top of the list across all industries. Therefore, in the following list, these Microsoft products have not been included as those tend to crowd the list by appearing at the top across all the industries. Industry-specific programs identified in the job ads are listed in the table.

Employer Skill Needs - Ozark Region			
Industry	Specialized Skills	Qualifications	Software and Programming
Health Care & Social Assistance	Nursing	Registered Nurse (RN)	Epic EMR
	Medical Records	Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	Spreadsheets
	Vital Signs	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	eClinicalWorks (ECW)
	Registration	Valid Driver's License	SQL (Programming Language)
	Medical Assistance	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	Inventory Management System
Accommodation & Food Service	Restaurant Operation	Valid Driver's License	Property Management Systems
	Food Safety And Sanitation	ServSafe Certification	Web Browsers
	Housekeeping	Food Handler's Card	Operating Systems
	Marketing	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	Bluetooth Low Energy (Bluetooth)
	Restaurant Management	Certified Pool & Spa Operator	Spreadsheets
Transportation & Warehousing	Warehousing	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Operating Systems
	Forklift Truck	Valid Driver's License	Inventory Control Systems
	Palletizing	Tanker Endorsement	SQL (Programming Language)
	Truck Driving	Hazmat Endorsement	Spreadsheets
	Selling Techniques	Forklift Certification	Applicant Tracking Systems
Manufacturing	Warehousing	Valid Driver's License	SAP Applications
	Forklift Truck	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Spreadsheets
	General Mathematics	Forklift Certification	AutoCAD
	Machinery	Master Of Business Administration (MBA)	Inventory Control Systems
	Power Tool Operation	Security Clearance	Operating Systems
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	Project Management	Valid Driver's License	SQL (Programming Language)
	Auditing	Registered Nurse (RN)	AutoCAD
	Accounting	Professional Engineer (PE) License	Epic EMR
	Marketing	Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	Application Programming Interface (API)
	Computer Science	Project Management Professional Certification	Spreadsheets
Construction	Construction	Valid Driver's License	Software Systems
	Machinery	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Spreadsheets
	Project Management	10-Hour OSHA General Industry Card	Microsoft Project
	Power Tool Operation	Career Readiness Certificate	QuickBooks (Accounting Software)
	Excavation	30-Hour OSHA General Industry Card	AutoCAD
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	Procurement Cards	ServSafe Certification	Inventory Management System
	Cash Handling	Valid Driver's License	Kronos (Timekeeping Software)
	Merchandising	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	Project Management Software
	Selling Techniques	First Aid Certification	PeopleSoft Applications
	Point of Sale	Personal Trainer Certification	Spreadsheets
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	Housekeeping	Valid Driver's License	Spreadsheets
	Plumbing	HVAC Certification	Yardi (Property Management Software)
	Painting	CDL Class A License	Apache Spark
	Carpentry	EPA 608 Technician Certification	Project Management Software
	Marketing	First Aid Certification	Google Workspace
Public Administration	Rehabilitation	Valid Driver's License	Spreadsheets
	Social Work	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Geographic Information Systems
	Law Enforcement	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	Application Programming Interface (API)
	Psychology	Certified Loss Control Specialist	IBM WebSphere MQ
	Case Management	Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	Operating Systems
Educational Services	Office Equipment	Teaching Certificate	Spreadsheets
	Balancing (Ledger/Billing)	Valid Driver's License	Database Application
	General Mathematics	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	Learning Management Systems
	Child Development	First Aid Certification	Operating Systems
	Secondary Education	Registered Nurse (RN)	SQL (Programming Language)
Wholesale Trade	Warehousing	Valid Driver's License	SAP Applications
	Forklift Truck	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Inventory Management System
	Food Services	Forklift Certification	Spreadsheets
	Menu Planning	Pallet Jack Certification	Salesforce
	Merchandising	Master Of Business Administration (MBA)	Operating Systems
Information	Accounting	Valid Driver's License	Electronic News Production Systems
	Auditing	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Operating Systems
	Marketing	Chauffeur License	Salesforce
	Invoicing	10-Hour OSHA General Industry Card	SQL (Programming Language)
	Selling Techniques	CompTIA A+	Accounting Software

Source: Lightcast, job ads between Nov. 1, 2022 - Oct. 31, 2023

8. Workforce Analysis

Describe the current workforce, including individuals with barriers for employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA1. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups in the economic region and across the LWDA.

a. Employment and Unemployment

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data and trends in the LWDA.

Population Data

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that Missouri's population grew to over 6.17 million in 2023, up by 0.2 percent from the previous year. In the Ozark Region, from 2022 to 2023, all counties gained population. The highest population increase, in 2023, was in Greene County, adding 1,933 residents from 2022 to 2023. Greene County also had the largest population growth over the five-year span from 2019 to 2023, with an increase of 11,365 residents.

Ozark Region Population Change by County				
NAME	1 Year Change 2022-2023		5 Year Change 2019-2023	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Missouri	13,759	0.2%	63,271	1.0%
Christian	1,661	1.9%	5,571	6.5%
Dallas	186	1.1%	727	4.4%
Greene	1,933	0.6%	11,365	3.9%
Polk	232	0.7%	361	1.1%
Stone	383	1.2%	82	0.3%
Taney	180	0.3%	1,268	2.3%
Webster	603	1.5%	1,213	3.1%

Source: American Community Survey-5 Year data (2019-2023)

Demographics

Overall, for Missouri, 25.1 percent of the population was under the age of 20. Four of the Ozark Region's counties had percentages above the Missouri percentage for those under age 20. Webster County had the highest percentage of its population under the age 20 (30.0%). The percentage of the population age 55 and older was above the state average of 30.8 percent in four of the seven counties. The county with the highest percentage of residents aged 55 and up was Stone County with 49.0 percent residents in this age group.

One of the seven counties in the Ozark Region had a higher percentage of male population than female. The Missouri statewide average was 49.3 percent male and 50.7 percent female in 2023. Webster County had the highest percentage of male population (50.6%), while Taney County had the highest percentage of female population (51.5%).

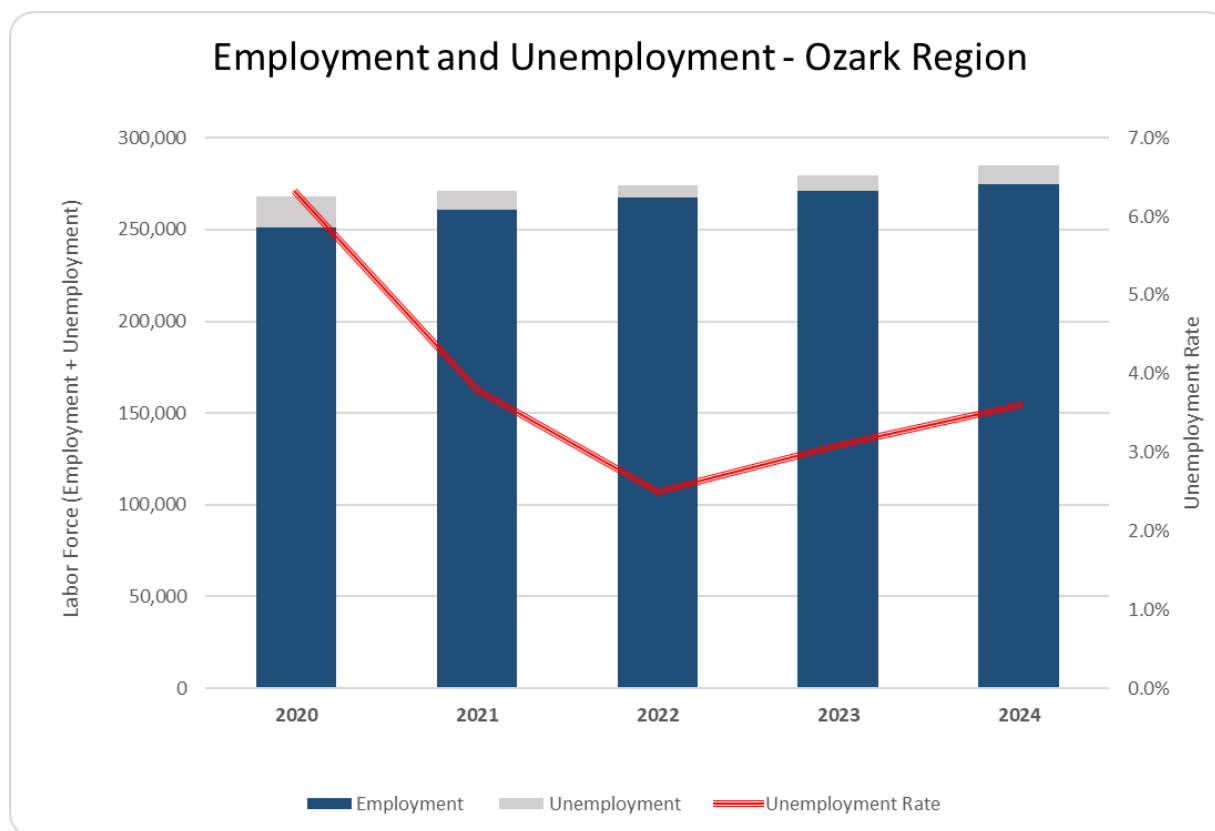
Race/Ethnicity statistics in the Ozark Region differ from the Missouri averages. Taney County at 7.5 percent, had a Hispanic or Latino population higher than the Missouri average of 5.1 percent in 2023.

County	Population						Gender		Race/Ethnicity								
	Total	Under 20	20 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 54	55+	Male	Female	White	Black or African American	Asian	American Indian and Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some other race	One Race	Two or more races	Hispanic or Latino
Missouri	6,168,181	25.1%	6.5%	13.2%	24.4%	30.8%	49.3%	50.7%	78.3%	11.1%	2.1%	0.3%	0.2%	1.7%	93.7%	6.3%	5.1%
Christian	91,229	27.3%	4.9%	12.6%	26.4%	28.8%	48.9%	51.1%	92.3%	0.8%	0.8%	0.3%	0.2%	1.0%	95.4%	4.6%	3.6%
Dallas	17,344	26.2%	4.4%	11.3%	22.9%	35.2%	49.1%	50.9%	95.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	95.7%	4.3%	2.2%
Greene	301,121	24.1%	9.9%	14.1%	23.4%	28.5%	49.0%	51.0%	86.7%	2.9%	1.9%	0.3%	0.1%	1.8%	93.7%	6.3%	5.0%
Polk	32,109	26.6%	7.9%	11.6%	22.4%	31.5%	48.9%	51.1%	93.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.3%	0.0%	0.5%	95.4%	4.6%	2.8%
Stone	31,697	18.5%	3.8%	8.1%	20.6%	49.0%	49.6%	50.4%	94.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.0%	1.2%	96.4%	3.6%	2.7%
Taney	56,382	24.0%	7.1%	11.2%	22.3%	35.4%	48.5%	51.5%	86.9%	1.7%	1.0%	0.3%	0.0%	2.1%	92.0%	8.0%	7.5%
Webster	39,868	30.0%	5.5%	12.1%	23.9%	28.5%	50.6%	49.4%	92.5%	1.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	1.2%	95.4%	4.6%	2.2%

Source: American Community Survey-5 Year data (2019-2023)

Employment and Unemployment

The number of Ozark Region residents in the labor force increased from 267,968 in 2020 to 284,850 in 2024. The unemployment rate for the region was 6.3 percent in 2020. The unemployment rate in 2023 and 2024 was 3.1 percent and 3.6 percent respectively.



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Labor Force Participation

The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The labor force participation rate is the labor force as a percent of the civilian population 16 years and older. Using American

Community Survey 5-year data through 2023, Missouri's labor force participation rate was 62.7 percent. In comparison, the rate for the Ozark Region was slightly lower at 60.9 percent. The county with the highest labor force participation rate in the region was Christian County (64.7%) and the lowest was Stone County (49.5%).

Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate by County			
Region	Population 16 years and over	Civilian Population 16 years and over (In labor force)	Labor Force Participation Rate (Civilian)
Missouri	4,945,676	3,102,218	62.7%
Ozark Total	458,816	279,263	60.9%
Christian	70,873	45,887	64.7%
Dallas	13,573	6,842	50.4%
Greene	245,395	154,312	62.9%
Polk	25,559	14,222	55.6%
Stone	27,156	13,445	49.5%
Taney	46,150	27,166	58.9%
Webster	30,110	17,389	57.8%

Source: American Community Survey-5 Year data (2019-2023)

b. Labor Market Trends

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

In-Demand Occupations

Over the long term, industry needs for certain occupations grow while for others decline. A trained and ready workforce is needed to fill employer demand and offer job seekers bright prospects of employment.

Long-term projections are produced in each state in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Since economies vary throughout the state, projections are also generated for the regions in the state and provide insight on the occupations that are growing and declining. The total number of openings account for three different types of vacancies - **exits**, **transfers**, and **growth**. **Exits** occur as individuals leave the workforce for reasons such as retirement.

Transfers occur as a person leaves an occupation to work in a different occupation. **Growth** simply means that more people are needed to work in the occupation. No matter the reason for the vacancy, skilled workers are needed to fill the job openings.

Missouri adds value to the standard projections template by including the ACT Workkeys Assessment Levels typically required for success in each of the 800+ occupations. Since most of Missouri's counties participate in the Certified Work Ready Communities program, the levels help those researching careers find good options based on their personal assessment.

Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next**, and **Later** to categorize the occupations according to the training and education typically required for success on the job. **Now** occupations typically require a high school education or less along with short-term training. **Next** occupations typically require moderate to long-term training or experience and/or education beyond high school. **Later** occupations typically require a bachelor's degree or higher.

While long-term projections offer a solid understanding of longer-term employer needs, job ads placed by employers help in recognizing the current needs of employers. When projections predict a high number of future openings and job ads show current demand for the same occupation, the occupation may be a good career possibility.

The table below displays the top five jobs by the number of projected openings for the 10-year projection period through 2032 in the **Now**, **Next**, and **Later** categories for the region. The flame beside some of the occupations represents "hot jobs" determined by the number of job ads placed by employers.

The **Now** occupations with the most annual job openings were *Cashiers* (1,343); *Stockers and Order Fillers* (1,176); *Retail Salespersons* (1,069); *Waiters and Waitresses* (987); and *Home Health and Personal Care Aides* (943). The reason for the high number of openings in these occupations is transfers and exits.

Occupations with the highest number of annual openings in the **Next** category were *Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers* (878); *Cooks, Restaurants* (561); *Nursing Assistants* (438); *First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers* (353); and *Maintenance and Repair Workers, General* (341).

Later occupations with the highest number of annual openings were *General and Operations Managers* (721); *Registered Nurses* (487); *Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education* (248); *Accountants and Auditors* (184); and *Human Resources Specialists* (135).

Many high demand occupations correspond directly with certain industry sectors, such as *Health Care*, *Educational Services*, and *Retail*. Other high demand occupations, such as *General and Operations Managers*, and *Accountants and Auditors*, are found in many different industry sectors.

Ozark Region Occupational Projections 2022-2032							
Occupation	2022	2032	Annual Openings			Median Wage	
	Employment	Employment	Growth	Exits	Transfers Total		
NOW - Typically requires short-term on-the-job training or less, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma							
Cashiers	6,875	6,952	8	665	670	1,343	\$27,779
Stockers and Order Fillers	6,793	7,283	49	438	689	1,176	\$34,192
Retail Salespersons 🔥	7,207	7,353	15	478	576	1,069	\$29,726
Waiters and Waitresses 🔥	4,616	4,774	16	404	567	987	\$28,930
Home Health and Personal Care Aides 🔥	5,990	6,359	37	494	412	943	\$29,159
NEXT - Typically requires non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training							
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers 🔥	7,518	8,157	64	355	459	878	\$55,636
Cooks, Restaurant	3,595	3,723	13	250	298	561	\$30,105
Nursing Assistants	2,793	3,039	25	185	228	438	\$34,004
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers 🔥	2,329	2,403	7	119	227	353	\$35,366
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General 🔥	3,260	3,598	34	151	156	341	\$40,503
LATER - Typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher							
General and Operations Managers 🔥	8,382	8,831	45	214	462	721	\$66,023
Registered Nurses 🔥	7,428	8,120	69	258	160	487	\$63,995
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	2,935	3,333	40	105	103	248	\$47,540
Accountants and Auditors 🔥	1,983	2,228	24	65	95	184	\$59,373
Human Resources Specialists	1,389	1,536	15	44	76	135	\$55,150

 Flame icon indicates occupations with high numbers of job ads

Sources: MERIC Long-Term Occupational Projections 2022-2032 and Lightcast, online job ads

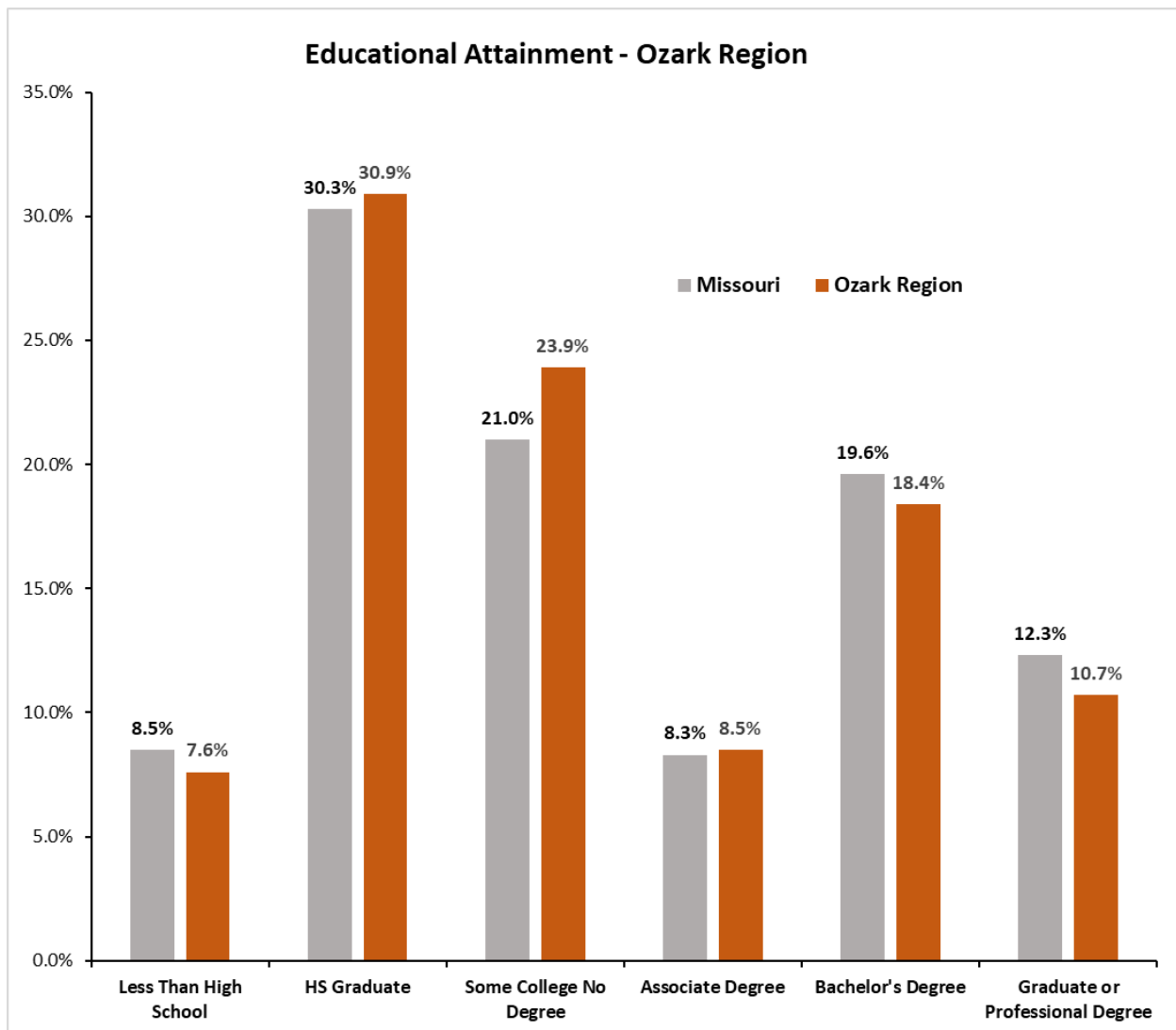
c. Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is a measure of the highest level of education obtained by individuals aged 25 and up, or the population generally in the workforce. Over ninety percent of Missouri's population age 25 and over was a high school graduate or higher in 2023. Over 19 percent held a bachelor's degree and over 12 percent held a graduate or professional degree.

The Ozark region had a higher percentage than the state average of people with an educational attainment of some college but no degree, high school diploma, and associate degree.



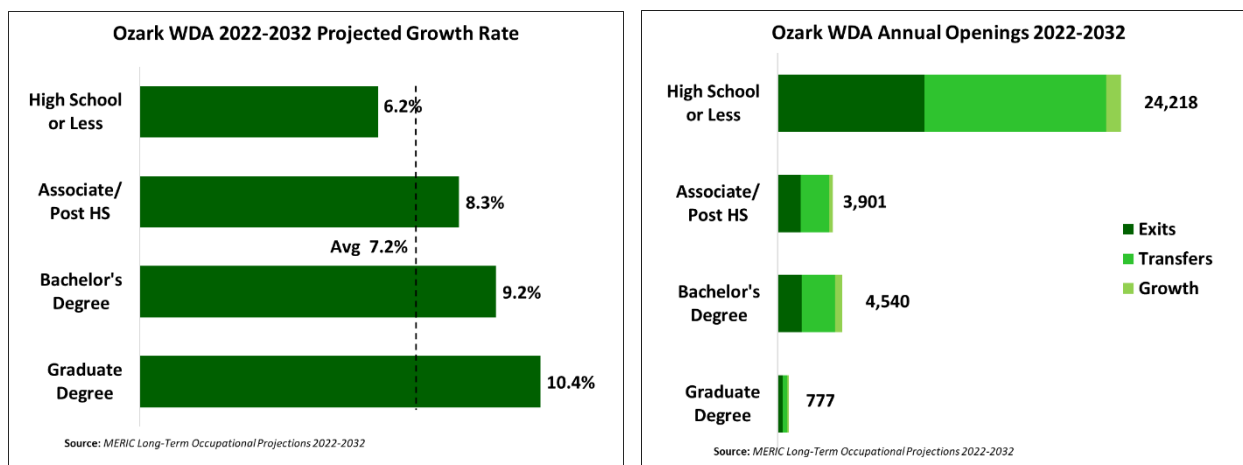
Source: American Community Survey-5 Year data (2019-2023)

Occupational Projections

Long-term projections are used to identify the fastest growing occupations, as well as occupations with a high number of openings through 2032.

The growth rate of an occupation measures the percentage of job growth by an occupation between the base year and projected year. In the Ozark Region, occupations requiring a graduate degree are projected to have the fastest growth rate (10.4%), followed by occupations requiring a bachelor's degree (9.2%).

Long-term projections also present data on expected job openings for each occupation through 2032. Openings in an occupation can occur due to an occupation growing, workers moving into a different occupation, or workers leaving the workforce entirely. No matter the reason, qualified individuals are still needed to fill job vacancies. Most openings will be in entry-level jobs, mostly due to high turnover rates as workers either transfer to other occupations or leave the workforce.



d. Skill Gaps

Describe apparent ‘skill gaps’ in the local area. How were the “skills gaps” determined?

Skills Demand

Employers request a variety of skills from job applicants. Some skills are termed as durable, or soft skills, such as communication, creativity, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, or customer service; while others are more technical or hard skills, such as sales, project management, computer science, or programming languages.

Middle-Skills Overview

Middle-skill occupations are an essential part of Missouri’s workforce, accounting for more than one-third of all jobs. These critical occupations are broadly defined as occupations that require some training after high school but less than a bachelor’s degree. Low-skilled jobs are those that require, at most, a high school education, while high-skill jobs require at least a bachelor’s degree.

There is always a need for a properly skilled workforce, and a lack of skilled workers impacts the ability of businesses and industries to compete globally. Lacking relevant skills hinders the ability to be more productive, thus deterring higher earning potential and improved living standards. Middle-skill workers are pivotal to maintaining and improving society and the U.S. economy. These workers are vital in health care, public services, construction, manufacturing, and information technology infrastructure development.¹

Meeting the continued demand for middle-skill occupations is an important factor in maintaining a strong economy in the state. Middle-skill jobs offer good pay and career opportunities with industry-recognized training and credentials. Such training programs can be as short as a few months. Middle-skill jobs offer an important opportunity for better pay and advancement without needing a bachelor’s degree. This report highlights Missouri’s middle-skill jobs and provides details on several occupational groups where middle-skilled workers are in high demand.

In 2023, middle-skill occupations had an average annual wage of \$53,603. This was lower than the average annual wage of \$57,580 for all occupations in the state, but higher than the average annual wage of \$36,925 for low-skill occupations.

Over 1.1 million jobs in Missouri’s labor market were in middle-skill occupations. In 2022, 35.6 percent of the workforce was employed in middle-skill occupations, compared to 35.5 percent employed in low-skill occupations and 28.9 percent employed in high-skill occupations.

The middle-skill occupation with the highest individual employment was *Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers* (51,366), followed by *Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators* (32,935) and *Maintenance and Repair Workers, General* (32,437). These three occupations combined employed over 116,000 workers in Missouri in 2022.

Middle-skill occupations are projected to produce over 117,000 annual job openings from 2022 to 2032, or 33 percent of all job openings during that period. High-skill occupations are projected to produce 20.6 percent of all job openings and low-skill occupations are projected to produce 46.4 percent of all job openings.

Total job openings are a combination of growth, exit, and transfer openings:

- Growth openings are the result of an occupation growing between the base year and the projected year.
- Exit openings occur when a worker leaves the workforce entirely, such as retirement.
- Transfer openings occur when a worker leaves their occupation for a different one.

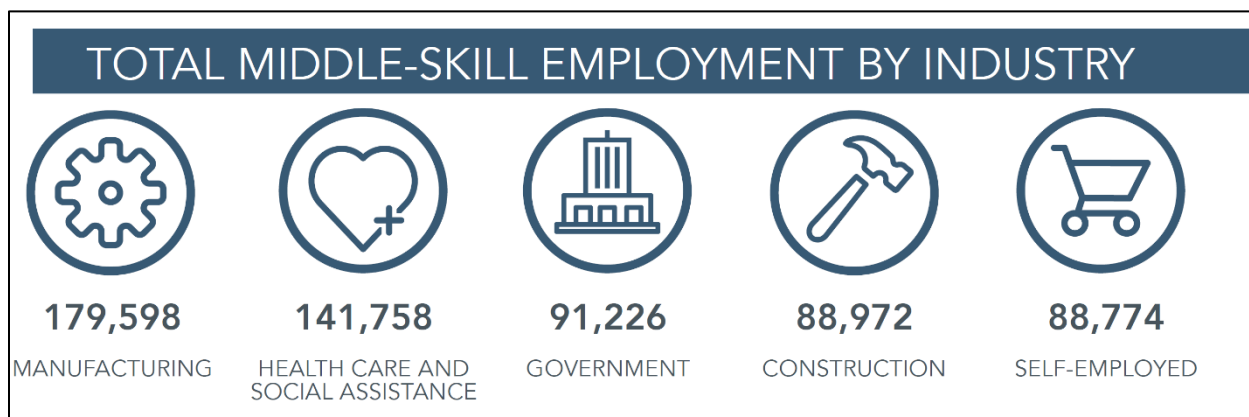
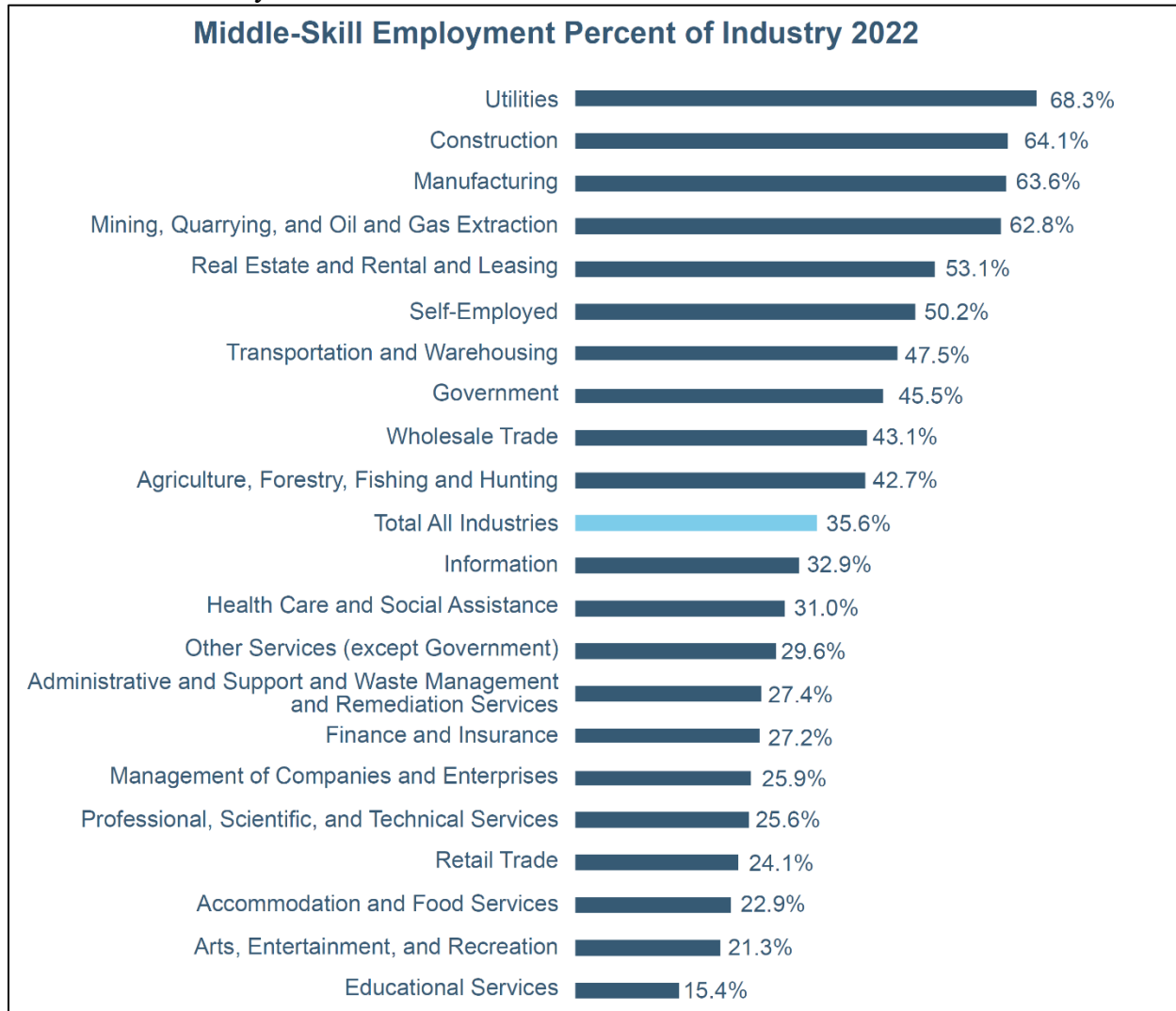
Four occupation groups have particularly high concentrations of middle-skill employment:

- *Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations*
- *Production Occupations*
- *Construction and Extraction Occupations*
- *Protective Service Occupations*

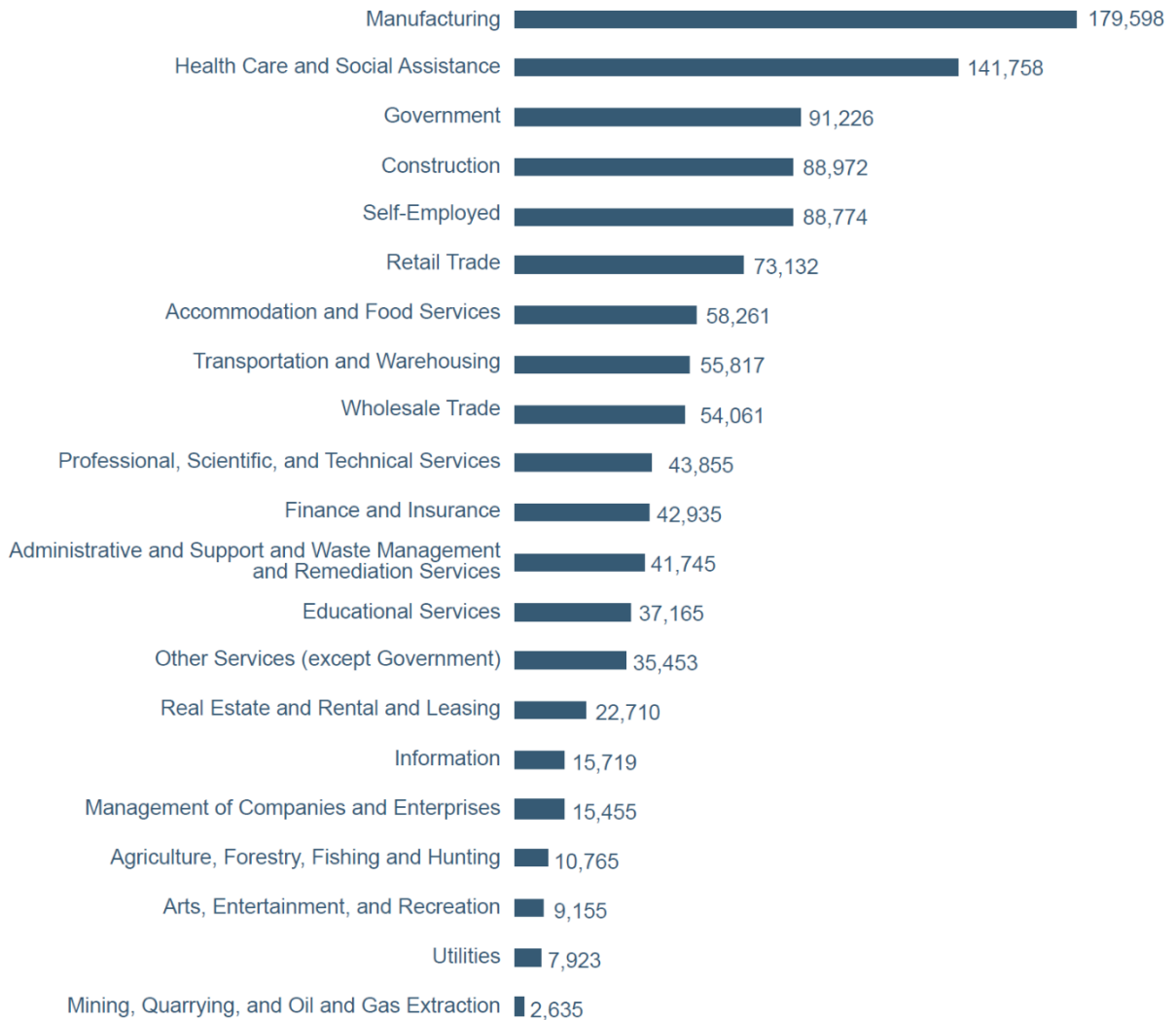


Overall, middle-skill occupations made up 35.6 percent of total employment in Missouri. Some industries, however, had a much higher percentage of middle-skill employment. The

Utilities industry had the highest percentage of middle-skill employment, followed by the *Construction* industry.



Top Middle-Skill Employment by Industry 2022



The middle-skill occupations with the most annual job openings during the projection period are *Cooks, Restaurant; Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; and Nursing Assistants*. These three occupations combined are projected to have over 16,000 job openings per year through 2032. *Cooks, Restaurant* are also projected to have high growth between 2022 and 2032.

Top Middle-Skill Occupations by Annual Openings 2022-2032					
Occupations	2022 Estimated Employment	2032 Projected Employment	Net Change	Annual Total Openings	2023 Average Wage
Cooks, Restaurant	31,981	39,312	7,331	6,070	\$34,000
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	51,366	53,729	2,363	5,693	\$53,440
Nursing Assistants	30,420	32,489	2,069	4,660	\$36,350
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	22,151	23,779	1,628	3,518	\$39,460
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	32,437	34,812	2,375	3,254	\$48,080
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	32,935	30,041	-2,894	3,037	\$44,240
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	22,861	22,048	-813	2,519	\$46,990
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	19,295	19,674	379	2,301	\$34,550
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	23,484	22,797	-687	2,139	\$65,150
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	22,250	21,310	-940	2,040	\$49,020

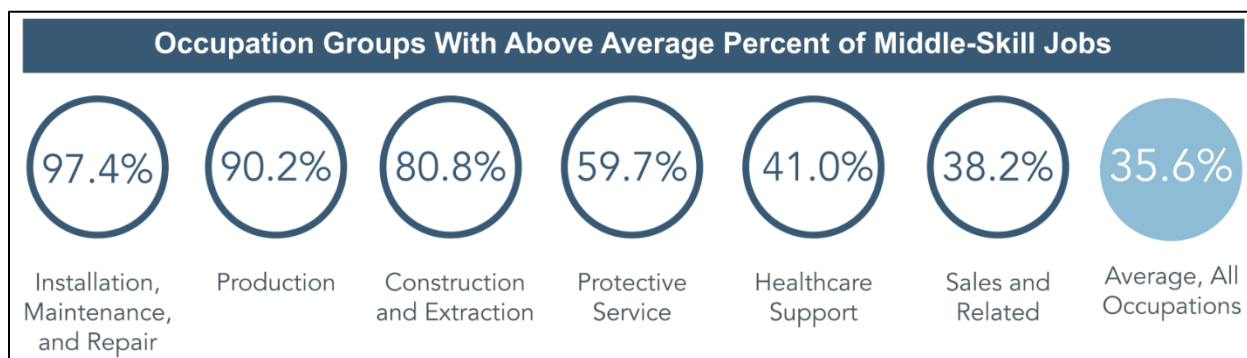
The middle-skill occupations that are projected to experience the fastest rates of growth are *Physical Therapist Assistants*, *Occupational Therapy Assistants*, and *Veterinary Technologists and Technicians*. Each of these three occupations have projected growth rates of over 25 percent, compared to a 4.3 percent growth for all occupations in Missouri. *Cooks, Restaurant* has the highest employment of the top 10 fastest growing occupations.

Middle-Skill Fastest Growing Occupations 2022-2032					
Occupations	2022 Estimated Employment	2032 Projected Employment	Net Change	Percent Change	2023 Average Wage
Physical Therapist Assistants	2,517	3,243	726	28.8%	\$62,750
Occupational Therapy Assistants	1,159	1,492	333	28.7%	\$61,290
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	2,078	2,638	560	26.9%	\$38,600
Cooks, Restaurant	31,981	39,312	7,331	22.9%	\$34,000
Respiratory Therapists	3,110	3,738	628	20.2%	\$70,450
Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Programmers	456	548	92	20.2%	\$63,910
Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	1,462	1,749	287	19.6%	\$50,350
Hearing Aid Specialists	311	371	60	19.3%	\$56,830
Animal Trainers	863	1,017	154	17.8%	\$48,550
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1,301	1,532	231	17.8%	\$85,910

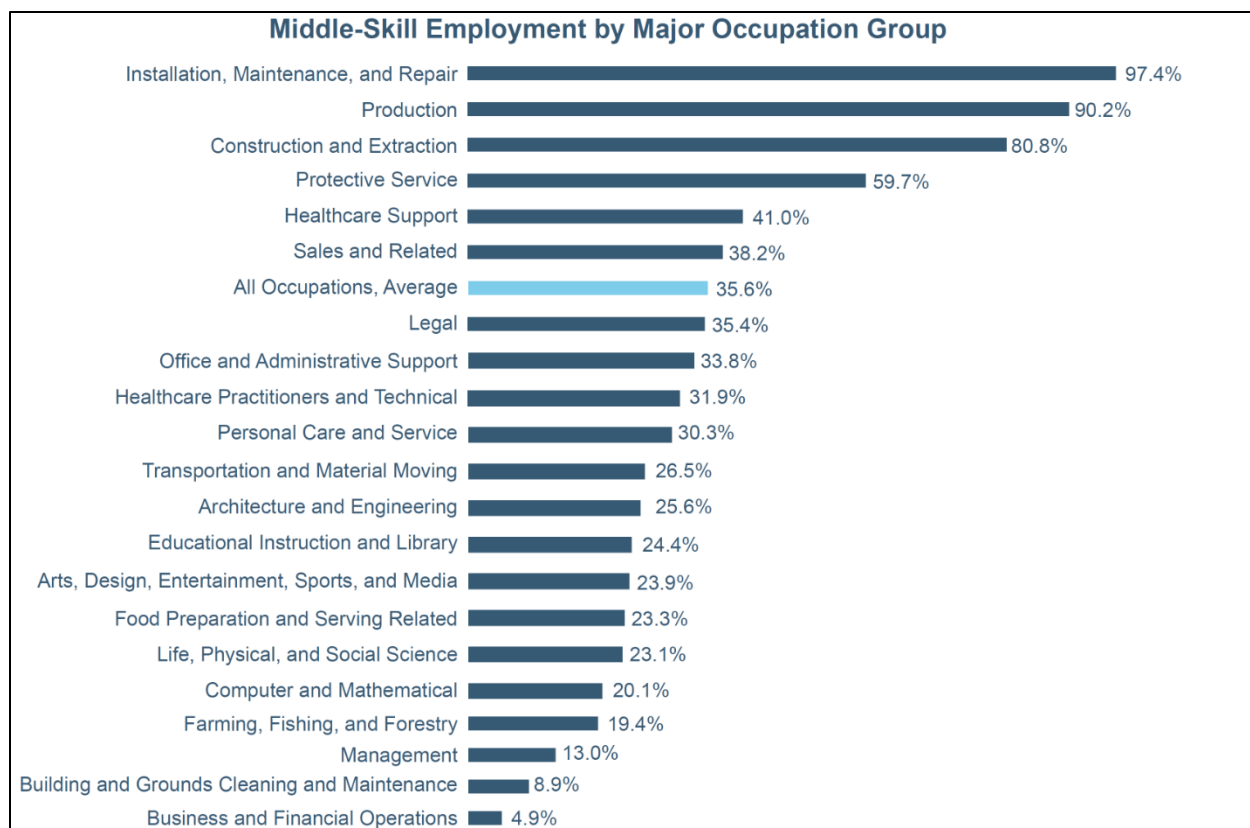
While the average annual wage for all middle-skill occupations was \$53,603 in 2023, some middle-skill occupations earn considerably more. The middle-skill occupation with the highest average annual wage is *Commercial Pilots*, followed by *Air Traffic Controllers*. Although these occupations have higher than average wages, they do not make up a large portion of Missouri's total and projected employment.

Top Middle-Skill Occupations by Average Wage					
Occupations	2022 Estimated Employment	2032 Projected Employment	Net Change	Annual Total Openings	2023 Average Wage
Commercial Pilots	1,122	1,187	65	135	\$128,830
Air Traffic Controllers	248	271	23	24	\$112,360
Power Distributors and Dispatchers	97	98	1	8	\$108,180
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	2,444	2,636	192	218	\$98,630
Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Powerhouse, Substation, and Relay	442	435	-7	36	\$94,650
First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers	5,609	5,542	-67	442	\$92,940
Petroleum Pump System Operators, Refinery Operators, and Gaugers	930	935	5	85	\$92,680
Fire Inspectors and Investigators	196	207	11	18	\$90,970
Nuclear Technicians	157	160	3	16	\$89,090
Postmasters and Mail Superintendents	289	272	-17	19	\$88,900

All but one of the 22 major occupation groups have middle-skill jobs. The *Installation, Maintenance and Repair* occupation group has the highest percentage of middle-skill employment, followed by *Production*.



Six major occupation groups have higher middle-skill employment percentages than the state average of 35.6 percent for all occupations. Some occupation groups with above average middle-skill employment percentages, such as *Healthcare Support* and *Production*, are heavily concentrated in certain industries, such as the *Health Care and Social Assistance* industry and *Manufacturing* industry, respectively. Two of the exceptions include *Installation, Maintenance, and Repair* and *Office and Administrative Support* occupations, which are more evenly distributed among a variety of industries.



Ozark Region Middle Skills Occupations

In the Ozark Region, middle skill jobs made up nearly 36 percent of employment in 2022. The occupational groups with the largest amount of middle skill employment were *Production Occupations*; *Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations*; and *Office and Administrative Support Occupations*.

Top Outlook Middle Skill (NEXT) Occupations - Ozark Region <i>NEXT jobs typically require moderate/long-term training or experience or education beyond high school</i>			
Grade	Occupation Title	Annual Openings	Average Annual Wage 2024
B+	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	878	\$56,616
B+	Cooks, Restaurant	561	\$33,125
B	Nursing Assistants	438	\$36,065
B	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	353	\$40,996
B+	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	341	\$47,366
B	Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	279	\$42,221
B	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	268	\$45,288
B	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	259	\$47,128
B+	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	236	\$59,962
B	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	218	\$32,426
B+	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	193	\$65,385
B	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	186	\$50,095
B	Medical Assistants	182	\$38,952
B	Carpenters	154	\$55,895
B	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	154	\$39,520
B	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	145	\$37,521
B	Travel Agents	141	\$43,060
B	Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	140	\$57,244
B	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	128	\$50,788
B	Psychiatric Technicians	119	\$42,396

Source: MERIC Long-Term Projections 2022-2032

9. Workforce Development, Education, and Training Activities Analysis

Describe the workforce development services and activities, including education and training in the LWDA, to address the education and skills needs of the workforce. Include education and training activities of the core programs and mandatory and optional One-Stop Delivery System partners.

The Ozark Region MJC's are a comprehensive one-stop network for adult job training, youth training programs, career and business services. Through core programs and mandatory and optional One-Stop Delivery System partners, a variety of activities, community referrals, services, and educational opportunities are available to those who are out of work, those who are just entering the workforce, those who are in the workforce, and to employers at no cost. Participants may need to meet defined guidelines to qualify for certain programs and opportunities.

The WIOA programs, overseen by the ORWDB offer the following opportunities:

Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs:

- Career Counseling: Provide one-on-one counseling to assess individual skills and interests.
- Training Coordination: Facilitate access to approved training programs based on individual career goals.
- Support Services: Offer support services such as transportation assistance, childcare, and housing support.

Youth Program:

- Work Readiness Training: Deliver training to enhance soft skills and workplace readiness.
- Tutoring and Mentoring: Provide educational support through tutoring and mentoring programs.
- Summer Employment Opportunities: Facilitate placements in summer jobs to gain hands-on experience.
- Education and Training Opportunities: Connect youth with education and training programs leading to industry-recognized credentials.

Career Services:

- Workshops: Conduct workshops on resume writing, interview skills, and job search strategies.
- Job Search and Resume Assistance

Business Services:

- Job Fairs: Organize job fairs to bring employers and job seekers together for networking and hiring opportunities.
- Recruitment Events: Collaborate with businesses for targeted recruitment events.
- Employer engagement, hiring events, and roundtables.

Other opportunities available at the Ozark Region MJC's can include:

Education and Training:

- Community Colleges: Through collaboration with local community colleges to increase access to academic and technical training.
- Vocational Training Centers: Partnerships with vocational training centers to allow for specialized skills development.
- Apprenticeship Programs: Assist with entry into apprenticeship programs.

Employment Services:

- Initial intake and orientation of Job Center Services.
- Job Matching: Use of the job matching system to connect job seekers with relevant employment opportunities.
- Employer and Community engagement and outreach.

Support Services:

- Social Services Agencies: Partnerships with social services agencies to address barriers such as housing and childcare.
- Disability Services: Through collaboration with organizations, provide services to individuals with disabilities.
- Veteran Support: Specialized services and priority access for veterans through partnerships with veterans' organizations.

Economic Development Agency Collaboration:

- Industry-Specific Training: Aligning workforce training programs with the needs of leading industries identified by economic development agencies.

- Incumbent Worker Training: Training opportunities for existing employees to enhance skills and productivity.

Workforce Training Initiatives:

- Sector-Specific Training Programs: Development of training programs tailored to meet the needs of specific industries.
- Technology and Innovation Training: Introduce programs to upskill the workforce in emerging technologies.

Agricultural Employment Services (AES):

- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Programs: Address unique needs of agricultural workers through training and support services.
- Collaboration with NFJP: Partner with the National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) for specialized services.

Skill-Building Workshops:

- General workshops on digital literacy, soft skills, and essential workplace competencies.
- Financial literacy workshops to enhance economic well-being.

By offering these services and activities, the Ozark Region MJC aims to create a comprehensive and flexible system that addresses the diverse education and skills needs of the workforce, fostering career advancement and economic growth in the region.

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

A. Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce developments services and activities identified above.

Strengths

- One of the greatest strengths in the Ozark Region is the expansive network of community partnerships and the capacity for several partners to be co-located within the MJCs.
- Another strength includes the referral networks with various community partners and strong connections with the business community. These connections are built through the facilitation of numerous hiring and informational events such as industry roundtables, employer lunch and learns, and youth roundtables through the City of Springfield.
- The ORWDB is recognized as a 501c3 which allows it the ability to apply for additional state and federal grants to braid with WIOA formula funding and programs to assist the needs of the seven-county region, communities, citizens, and businesses.

Weaknesses

- The ORWDB recognizes the need for greater visibility of the programs offered amongst elected officials, employers, partners, and the community. Efforts will continue to attend neighborhood night-outs, community events, and to engage with local businesses.

- v. Continued improvement is needed to face recruitment issues utilizing modern technology.

Local Workforce Development Capacity

B. *Provide an analysis of the capacity of local entities to provide the workforce development services and activities to address the identified education and skills needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the LWDA.*

The Ozark Region has a robust network of entities, both on-site at the MJC's, as well as off-site, that provide a myriad of workforce development services and activities for the job seekers and businesses of the area. The Springfield Job Center is unique in the State of Missouri, as it is rare for a Center to have the capacity to house the number and variety of integrated partners. They include organizations offering educational and occupational training which provide the skills and certifications required to secure employment in in-demand and emerging occupations, as well as entities that provide a variety of job search assistance, including completion of employment applications, preparation for interviews, and referrals to job openings.

The City of Springfield, Finance Development, serves as the fiscal agent as appointed by the Council of Local Elected Officials. The City of Springfield, Department of Workforce Development and Economic Vitality functions as the WIOA program operator for the ORWDB. The City demonstrates capacity in programmatic, administration, and fiscal functions through their historical and current delivery of federally funded programs including WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers, and Youth. The city has also operated many successful federal, state, and local grants, with a consortium of partners. The ORWDB also has the ability to draw upon the resources of the City of Springfield such as access to the city's fiscal management team, public relations staff, human resources, economic development, and community engagement staff.

Additionally, the Ozark Region partnerships include entities which provide supportive services to help individuals obtain and maintain jobs, including assistance with transportation, childcare, clothing, housing, substance abuse, and health services.

Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Profile

Describe the geographical workforce development area, including the LWDA's major communities, major employers, training and educational institutions (technical and community colleges, universities, etc.), population, diversity of the population, and relevant growth trends.

A. Major Communities

The Ozark Region consists of the counties of Christian, Dallas, Greene, Polk, Stone, Taney, and Webster. The major communities are the City of Springfield in Greene County, the City of Branson in Taney and Stone counties, and the cities of Nixa and Ozark which are both located in Christian County. The Ozark Region is connected by Interstate 44, US Hwy 60, US Hwy 160, and US Highway 65.

B. Major Employers

The top five employment sectors are healthcare, education, government, retail, and manufacturing. Additionally, there is significant employment in the tourism industry including occupations in hospitality, entertainment, and recreation. Top employers in the Ozark Region include:

- a. CoxHealth
- b. Mercy Hospital
- c. Wal-Mart
- d. Springfield Public Schools
- e. Amazon
- f. O'Reily Auto Parts
- g. Bass Pro Shops
- h. Missouri State University

C. Training and Educational Institutions

There are 14 institutes of higher learning that include both public and private institutions, as well as two-year and four-year colleges and universities.

- a. Public institutions
 - i. Missouri State University
 - ii. Ozarks Technical Community College.
- b. Private colleges and universities include
 - i. Drury University
 - ii. Evangel University
 - iii. College of the Ozarks
 - iv. Southwest Baptist University
 - v. Columbia College
 - vi. Mission University
 - vii. Ozark Christian College
- c. Specialized technical colleges include
 - i. Bolivar Technical College
 - ii. Cox College of Nursing
 - iii. Bryan University
 - iv. Midwest Technical Institute
- d. Additionally, the Ozark Region has several alternative training institutions that provide recognized workforce development programs and certifications. These Alternative Training Institutions include
 - ~~i. C1 Truck Driver Training~~
 - ~~ii. 160 Training Center~~
 - ~~iii. Truck Dynasty Driving Academy~~
 - ~~iv. Wilson Logistics Clement Truck Driving Academy~~

D. Population – Diversity and Growth Trends

The population of the Ozark Region is ~~559,036~~580,486 according to MERIC data. The Ozark Region workforce has more than 274,~~500~~460 employees, making up ~~9.2~~ percent of Missouri's

employment. In ~~2022~~2024, 49.17 percent of the workforce was female, and 50.93 percent was male, which is about same percentage as Missouri. – The regional average unemployment rate for ~~2022-2024~~ was 2.43.6 percent. The workforce is getting older in the Ozark Region, a trend continuing throughout Missouri and the U.S. In 2024, 22.3 percent of the workforce was age 55 or older, up from 19 percent a decade earlier. For the region, 9.68 percent of the workforce was non-white and 4.79 percent was Hispanic or Latino, this compares to the state averages of 18.1 percent non-white and 4.95.1 percent Hispanic or Latino. In the Ozark Region, 5.49 percent of the region’s population (ages 18 to 64) speaks a language other than English at home. By comparison, Missouri was at 7.14 percent and the U.S. was at 23.78 percent. The Ozark Region has a slightly higher percentage of the population with a disability compared to the state and nation. For the Ozark Region, 12.67 percent of the population has a disability compared to 12.36 percent in Missouri and 10.37 percent in the U.S

1. *Identify the local comprehensive One-Stop Center(s), including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in Attachment 1 to the Plan.*
2. *Identify the local affiliate sites, including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in Attachment 1 to the Plan.*
3. *Identify the local specialized sites, including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in Attachment 1 to the Plan.*
4. *If your LWDA has any other additional service sites and the LWDA refers to them as anything other than comprehensive, affiliate or specialized centers, please list the service sites by the title your LWDA uses and describe the services provided in Attachment 1. Also, list the one-stop partners providing services at those locations.*

12. Local One-Stop Partner/MOU/IFA Information

a. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)

Include in Attachment 2 a copy of each MOU between the Board and each of the One-Stop partners (or one “umbrella” MOU for the same purpose) concerning the operation of the One-Stop Delivery System in the LWDA. The MOU must be up-to-date, signed and dated. Include the MOU(s) as Attachment 3. Missouri Job Centers must ensure that equal access to employment and training services are provided to the farm workers and agricultural employers in their LWDAs

b. Cost Sharing Agreement/Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA)

Include as part of the MOU in Attachment 2 the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and negotiated cost-sharing worksheet/workbook for each Missouri Job Center that includes the line items, dollar amounts and percentage rates for One-stop partners, OWD and the Board. Indicate the number of FTEs present and/or the amount of space (sq. footage) utilized by the partner.

Integration of One-Stop Service Delivery

13. Local Workforce Development System

Describe the workforce development system in the LWDA.

- a. *Describe how the Local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with rapid response activities.*

The ORWDB is fortunate to have a member of the OWD Business Support Unit team member housed within the Springfield MJC. This allows for the coordination between the OWD team member and staff on any rapid response activities to ensure a smooth and helpful process for those affected. The Ozark Region will aid the OWD team member to carry out any rapid response activities and pass along any information regarding the potential need of rapid response activities to the OWD team member.

- b. *Describe how the Board will ensure the expenditure of funds for training providers are selected from both the Eligible Training Provider List/System approved for use by the State of Missouri as well as approved from the State list by the local workforce development board.*

The Board has approved a local ETPL policy that staff follow. A supervisory-level staff member has been assigned to initiate and monitor approval of local ETPL providers. For WIOA programs that require an Individual Training Account (ITA), staff will be required to utilize the ETPL system when seeking approval for training. Staff must print a copy of the ETPL reflecting that the training has been approved by the State and locally. If the program of study has not been approved locally, staff must notify the approver to determine if the program can be approved. When monitoring is conducted, the Compliance Coordinator(s) will examine the files to determine if the ETPL listing is in the file, determine if it is approved, and if it is within any timeframes allowable.

14. Accessibility

Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and one-stop partners will comply with WIOA section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and service, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. (See current OWD Issuance and the State of Missouri Non-discrimination Plan)

In compliance with WIOA, the ORWDB will certify the Job Center locations to ensure they promote both physical and programmatic accessibility. With respect to the physical check, the ORWDB plans to include a review of the facilities for ADA compliance, the use of signage, and

the ability for a customer to self-direct. The ORWDB also plans to check programmatic accessibility to determine how information is presented to potential customers, the extent of service integration between partners, the referral process between on-site and off-site programs, and the use of technology to promote ease of access. Equal Opportunity staff will conduct monitoring to ensure this process is promoted throughout the One-Stop Delivery System including the One-Stop Operator and One-Stop Partners.

Front-line personnel will be provided with access to periodic customer service training. Specific topics for customer service training may be identified by the responses received to the customer service surveys.

The service area is committed to ensure all services, programs and activities are delivered in a nondiscriminatory way to job seekers, employees, and the general public. This includes providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities and making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures to ensure programs, services and activities are offered in the most integrated setting appropriate. The service area is committed to comply with the physical accessibility requirements under Section 188 and the ADA Standards for Accessible Design by conducting an assessment on our facilities every 2-3 years.

15. Assessment of One-Stop Program and Partners

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

The process includes a quantitative and qualitative review of services provided, the customer satisfaction levels related to the identified services, and the performance outcomes for the services. In accordance with WIOA, the One-Stop Certification process will occur at least once every two years. It is also ensured that partners align with the ORWDB's mission and vision so it's a reciprocal value add for both organizations and partners.

The Ozark Region operates through open communication and transparency with partners. The Ozark Region is continuously assessing workshops, conducting research, monitoring elements, conducting surveys, and engaging employers. Employer Roundtables will continue to assist the ORWDB in guiding the Ozark Region for training needs. The flexibility of monitoring technical aspects, data elements, and utilization of the ETPL system adds to the continuous improvement process.

- b. ***Describe the actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performance WDB.***

The ORWDB will continue its work toward being a high-performance Workforce Development Board by engaging with the communities of the Ozark Region. They will make efforts to be visible throughout the Ozark Region and will continue to support workforce development through efforts such as innovative programming and events, oversight, and strengthening partnerships.

Local Administration

16. Chief Elected Official (CEO)

Please identify the CEO. List the name, title, address, phone number and email address. Place it on a cover sheet in Attachment 3.

17. CEO Consortium Agreement and Bylaws

If the LWDA includes more than one unit of local government, the Chief Elected Officials (CEO) may develop a CEO agreement; however, it is not mandatory under WIOA law. If the LWDA is including a CEO agreement, please specify the respective roles of the individual CEOs and include the CEO Consortium Agreement as Attachment 3 including any CEO Bylaws that are in effect.

NOTE: (The CEO membership should be reviewed after each county and/or municipal election. If there are changes in the CEO membership, or leadership, a new CEO agreement will need to be signed and submitted to OWD by the first day of June following the election.) OWD must be notified with the contact information as soon as the CEO takes office.

18. Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Membership

Please list the LWDB members in Attachment 4. Identify the members of the Board, the organization or business they represent, and the category (i.e., business, labor, adult education and literacy, vocational rehabilitation, Wagner-Peyser/OWD, higher education, economic development, TANF, Other) The LWDB Certification Form may be used. See current OWD Issuance Local Workforce Development Board Membership Requirements and Recertification Procedures under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

a. LWDB Standing Committees

List of all standing committees on a separate page in Attachment 4.

b. LWDB Certification Letter (most recent)

Include in Attachment 4 a copy of the current LWDB certification letter.

19. LWDB Bylaws

The Board must review its by-laws annually and complete the “Local Workforce Development Board’s ATTESTATION FOR REVIEW OF BY-LAWS” form included near the end of this document. Include the Board’s current by-laws and the completed attestation form (copy is included in this guidance) as Attachment 5 to the Plan.

Local Planning & Fiscal Oversight

20. Local Fiscal Agent

Identify the Local Fiscal Agent. Include contact information. Include the information as Attachment 6. See current OWD Issuance Policy on Designation of a Local Fiscal Agent by the Chief Elected Official.

21. Competitive Procurement

Describe the competitive (procurement) process used to award the grants and contracts in the LWDA for activities carried out under Title I of WIOA, including the process to procure training services for Youth and any that are made as exceptions to the ITA process. Include the information on the following processes: advertisement/notification to prospective bidders, time period bidders have to respond to the solicitation, evaluation and award/non-award notification. This may include those pages from the Board's procurement guidelines that describe the competitive-procurement process and the process to procure Youth training providers. Include the Financial Procurement Policy as Attachment 9.

Per an agreement and as allowed by law, Youth Services were assigned to the City of Springfield Department of Workforce Development, currently known as the Department of Workforce and Economic Vitality, as the agent of the Workforce Development Board. In addition, WIOA services of Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Career Services have been assigned to the City of Springfield Department of Workforce Development as approved by the ORWDB. The One Stop Operator was competitively procured by the ORWDB utilizing an outside contractor and another region to ensure all regulations were followed. Attached is the procurement policy prepared for and utilized by the City of Springfield. The ORWDB utilizes this City of Springfield's policy when necessary.

22. Duplicative Costs and Services

a. Eliminating Duplicative Administrative Costs

Describe how the Board is working toward eliminating duplicative administrative costs to enable increased training investments.

The Ozark Region understands the importance of maximizing its funding investments. The Ozark Region reviews its administrative system for ways to streamline processes to eliminate duplicative costs and redirect administrative funds to training activities. A Cost Allocation Plan has been utilized to reflect the sharing of costs among partners. As part of its standard monthly processes, staff monitors administrative expenditures to determine how funding is being expended and at what rate it is being expended.

As examples of efforts made, the Ozark Region has combined the office supply orders and postage usage with the State. It has also implemented a printer network to reduce the number of units required for staff. Additionally, it has eliminated duplicative costs at the service provider level by implementing an integrated services model. And, because the City of Springfield provided in-kind contributions, the Ozark Region has minimized administrative costs associated with legal, personnel, purchasing, utility, and financial services.

b. Eliminating Duplicative Services

Identify how the Board ensures that services are not duplicated.

To ensure non-duplication of services, the Ozark Region has always provided universal services to customers using a team approach comprised of both local and State personnel. The Partner Service Guide provides a basic overview of all services offered by each partner, including eligibility requirements and referral instructions. This allows staff to easily co-enroll and make customer referrals to appropriate services.

Quarterly partner meetings allow for the opportunity of interagency communication that further supports non-duplication of services.

23. Planning Budget Summaries (PBSs)

Include the Planning Budget Summaries for the upcoming Program Year and Fiscal Year in Attachment 7 to the Plan. (Instruction for this planning item will be sent after the locally negotiated performance goals are finalized.)

24. Complaint and Grievance Policy / EEO Policy

Establish and define the local policy and procedure for Complaint and Grievance Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of WIOA. Both policies should be incorporated into the MOU and disseminated throughout the LWDA for all workforce development professionals to understand and implement. This should adhere to federal and state complaint and grievance guidance and policy. Include either a statement that the Board will follow the state policy or develop a local policy and include a copy as Attachment 10 to the Plan. (See the State of Missouri Non-discrimination Plan.)

25. Planning Process and Partners

The expectation is that the Board will involve business, organized labor, local public officials, community-based organizations, WIOA service providers, and other stakeholders in the development and review of this Plan. Describe the local plan development process, including how input for the Local Plan was obtained by all the partners involved in the MOU. Also, see Attachment 57 - Statement of Assurances.

A draft of the Plan is presented to the Planning & Oversight Committee at their meeting and once approved is presented to the full OWRDB and Council of Local Elected Officials for

approval. It is also provided to WIOA partners as part of a regular partner meeting for input prior to posting for public comment.

To inform the general public about the WIOA Plan of Service, a public notice is posted on the webpage and a notice posted with the City of Springfield and the Council of Local Elected Officials. It advises interested parties of the program services, service levels, and funding levels included in the Plan. It also advises on how to provide comments and feedback about the Plan.

26. Performance Negotiations

Identify the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO to be used to measure the performance of the Board and to be used by the Board for measuring the performance of the Local Fiscal Agent (where appropriate), eligible providers, and the One-Stop Delivery System in the LWDA.

Attachment not yet available. Performance negotiations are expected to occur in the fall of 2024.

27. Public Comment

Describe the process used by the Board to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and labor organizations, and input into the development of the Plan, prior to submission of the Plan. Provide an affidavit of proof of this public announcement for comment. See Attachment 57 - Statement of Assurances.

Once the draft is completed, the Ozark Region will post an invitation for public review, input, and comment on its website. Moreover, this same notice will be directly mailed to each of the Region's Council of Local Elected Officials for posting.

This public comment process will afford ample opportunity for the public, business community, partner agencies, labor organizations, and other interested parties to have input into the Plan.

28. Assurances

Complete and sign the "Statement of Assurances Certification" form located in this guidance and include this as Attachment 57 to the Plan.

Program Elements

Service Delivery

29. One-Stop Service Delivery

Describe how the LWDA is assisting customers in making informed choices based on quality workforce information and accessing quality training providers. Provide a list of one-stop partner products and services available at each Missouri Job Center.

Through the MJC's, events, and various meetings the Ozark Region provides customers with current labor market information to make informed decisions. The Ozark Region aims to assist all customers in making informed decisions by utilizing MERIC and ONET, career exploration tools, assessment testing, and one-on-one guidance with a Workforce Development Specialist.

The MJC is open to the general public. Individuals have the opportunity to meet with a Skills Team member to determine possible eligibility for training and to learn more about training providers through the ETPL system located in MOJobs—the internal case management system. Tools such as the NCRC and Talify are available to assess customers' abilities and career interests.

Missouri Job Center Products and Services:

- A. *Staff-Assisted Job Search Services*: MJC staff assist customers with registering on Jobs.mo.gov, specify employment goals, identify skill sets, on-line job applications, and how to use Jobs.mo.gov and other job matching websites to connect with employment opportunities.
- B. *Assessments*: Staff assesses job seekers' skills, knowledge, abilities, interests, and aptitudes using the following tools:
 - a. *National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)*: A work-related skills credential that provides documentation of an employee's skills in Applied Mathematics, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents. Receipt of the NCRC certification is one of the requirements in the Work-Ready Community initiative.
 - b. *Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE)*: An assessment that gauges reading, math, language, language mechanics, vocabulary, and spelling levels.
 - c. *O*Net*: This resource of assessments includes:
 - i. Ability Profiler (AP): helps customers plan their work lives,
 - ii. Interest Profiler (IP): helps customers discover the occupations that fit their interests,
 - iii. and Work Importance Locator (WIL): helps customers pinpoint what is important to them in a job.
 - d. *Talify*: This assessment is offered to customers as a tool regarding their personality and personality traits. It is another tool for a customer to self-evaluate where they might be a good fit for a career.
 - e. *Workshops*: The Ozark Region hosts a variety of job readiness and job search workshops on a regular basis at the MJC to help customers prepare for and secure employment. Typically, workshops include basic computer skills career exploration activities, how to prepare a resume and complete a job application, and how to interview for a job.
 - f. *Training Programs*: Customers who are program-eligible and identified as in need of skills improvement may be enrolled into a variety of training programs. Training programs can include occupational skills training, OJT, customized training, work experiences, and others to prepare them for in-demand occupations in the area.

- C. *Handouts*: All partners within the Ozark Region are encouraged to provide contact information and handouts regarding their products, services, and upcoming events (for a complete list of services please see the MOU).
- D. *Referral Guide*: Direct linkage is encouraged to ensure customers receive services from all partners. A referral guide has been prepared for staff to assist in the referral process.

Adult and Dislocated Workers

30. Title I - Employment and Training Products and Services

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of all Adult and Dislocated Worker employment and training activities in the LWDA. Please include how the Board uses products and services, such as workshops, assessment products (Key Train, WorkKeys /National Career Readiness Certificate [NCRC], Talify, etc.) and jobseeker products (such as Résumé Builder, etc.), to engage customers and assist with their re-employment efforts.

In the Ozark Region, each job seeker is directly referred to the services that best meet their particular needs. Referrals may include partner organizations within the Job Center as well as resources available in the local community.

In addition to the products and services available at the MJC, mentioned in the previous section, employment and training activities are provided under the categories of Career Services and Training Services to prepare job seekers for work.

Available Training Services:

- A. Occupational skills training using an ITA
- B. On the Job Training (OJT)
- C. Job readiness training
- D. Workplace training/co-op programs
- E. Skills upgrading and retraining
- F. Transitional jobs
- G. Incumbent worker training
- H. Apprenticeship programs

The Ozark Region requires that persons enrolled into training using an ITA must be both eligible for WIOA funding as well as suitable for the occupation for which they are being trained. The assessment process supports the individual's suitability by documenting his or her educational levels, interests, aptitudes, and abilities. WorkKeys and Talify are both used as assessments to test the participants level of appropriateness for their chosen occupational skills training.

Three primary tools are used to assist clients in identifying in-demand or emerging sectors and the skills, training, and certifications required to secure occupations within them:

- A. Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC)

- B. O*Net
- C. Education Training Provider List (ETPL)

Both MERIC and O*Net provide a wealth of labor market information. ETPL provides a listing of approved training providers along with a description of the programs offered by each.

31. Unemployment Insurance Claimant Services (UI)

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs. Provide a description of how Unemployment Insurance claimants will be provided reemployment services. Include how Worker Profiling and Re-employment Services (WPRS) will be delivered on a weekly basis between the Office of Workforce Development and partner staff.

The Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program is delivered to approximately 25 to 30 Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants each week by Wagner-Peyser and WIOA staff members in both the Springfield and Branson Job Centers. These individuals are selected by Employment Security's UInteract system based on pre-defined criteria to receive the following services following their RESEA meeting with a Workforce Development Specialists:

- A. A courtesy call reminding them of their RESEA appointment.
- B. Wagner-Peyser registration and program enrollment.
- C. Missouri Job Center orientation.
- D. Labor market information.
- E. Review of continued eligibility and referral to adjudication, as appropriate.
- F. Objective assessment of barriers and skills, leading to the development of an individual employment plan.
- G. Referral to reemployment services.
- H. Job search assistance and referral.
- I. Work search verification.
- J. Resume development in MoJobs.

Based on their particular circumstances, customers designated for the RESEA program may be referred to additional services and resources, including job search workshops and training services.

32. On-the-Job Training (OJT)

Describe the Board's on-going strategies for promoting and increasing the number of participants in work-based learning and On-the-Job Training (OJT). Provide a summary of the results.

Staff work with both participants and businesses to establish OJT opportunities.

OJT strategies include:

- A. Targeting high-growth industries for potential OJT opportunities,
- B. Educating employers about how an OJT can enhance their business(es) by decreasing turnover and improving productivity,
- C. Assisting businesses by streamlining OJT paperwork requirements,
- D. Assessing job candidates for potential OJT eligibility and suitability,
- E. and Promoting OJTs.

33. Credential Attainment / WorkKeys Assessment

Explain the Board's strategies for increasing the attainment of credentials, degrees, and certificates by participants in your LWDA and any accommodations you have made to make attainment easier (i.e., collocation of AEL centers, extended hours, etc.). In addition, please describe the Board's approach to ensuring every Missouri Job Center customer has the opportunity to take the WorkKeys assessments and obtain a NCRC. This should include how the Board collaborates with the local community college(s) in the LWDA to provide space and/or proctoring services for WorkKeys assessments on an as-needed basis.

The Ozark Region carefully assesses each training candidate to gauge their education, skill levels, interests, and aptitudes.

If it is determined that remediation is required, staff refer the individual to AEL services. This allows the individual to achieve the necessary requirements for enrollment. AEL classes help students who are studying for their HiSet or brushing up on subjects needed for entrance into college level coursework.

The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) assessment is discussed when the basic services are explained to job seekers, including the benefits of taking it. All job seekers are recommended to participate in the assessment. The NCRC is offered throughout the Ozark Region by trained staff and is available for any interested participant. Job Center staff maintain contact with local high schools to proctor the NCRC for their junior and senior students.

Participants seeking additional occupational skills training meet with staff to discuss labor market information, potential growth opportunities, and wage earnings. Staff and participants work together to review available approved trainings through the ETPL training providers. Staff continue to offer support to participants enrolled into training by providing supportive services as needed, referrals, and regular contact throughout the duration of training. Staff provide participants with information related to job growth opportunities based on the training-related credential attainment. Participants receive credentials based on the sectors approved by the ORWDB.

34. ETT Services / Layoff Aversion

Describe how the Board coordinates with the OWD's Community Development Team to ensure that information and services are delivered in a seamless fashion, including how pre-layoff services are coordinated and provided. In addition, please provide a description of the proactive measures that are taken to identify potential layoffs in the LWDA, how information

is shared, and how layoff aversion strategies are coordinated. See current OWD Issuance Statewide Employment Transition Team Policy. Include as Attachment 29 the DW Employment Transition Team Policy.

The Ozark Region is fortunate to have a OWD Business Support Unit team member based in the Springfield MJC. Because of the close working proximity staff are in regular communication and work closely with the OWD team member. Though they work together, the Ozark Region recognizes that the OWD's Business Support Team member is the primary contact to avoid duplication and confusion. Local staff members do not initiate contact with an employer regarding a layoff without first speaking with the OWD team member.

The overarching goal of the collaboration between the OWD team member and the Ozark Region is to transition dislocated workers into new employment with as little disruption as possible. Throughout this process, the OWD team member provides valuable information to the Region of the situation and the outcome. In the event a claim has been made regarding a real or potential layoff, staff will relay the information to the OWD's Business Support Unit team member who will then investigate the claim. The OWD's Business Support Unit team member then will coordinate with MJC staff to offer available services to dislocated workers, such as scheduling a time for staff to speak with the dislocated workers.

Youth

35. Youth Standing Committee Requirements

WIOA allows for a Youth Standing Committee if its membership and expertise meets the WIOA requirements [(WIOA sec. 107(b)(4)(C)]. Please document whether the Board will designate a Youth Standing Committee. If a Youth Standing Committee is not designated, then the Plan needs to state that the Board is not using a Youth Standing Committee. Whether the Board retains responsibility and oversight of Youth services or a Standing Committee is established, the Board should describe how the Board or Youth Standing Committee will meet the requirements of 20 CFR §681.100 and §681.120.

As provided in the Board By-Laws, the Youth Committee is a standing committee of the ORWDB. According to the Bylaws, the Youth Committee has primary responsibility of WIOA-funded youth activities operating within the Ozark Region. At least one committee member shall be from a Community Based organization serving youth in the region. The Youth Committee regularly receives program updates and reviews monitoring and performance. They are responsible for approving the Youth and policies for the operation of the Youth program.

36. YSC Composition / Services / Procurement of Providers / Meeting Schedule & Agenda items

a. Describe the composition of the Youth Standing Committee (if designated) and its participation in the design of Youth services in the LWDA

The Youth Committee's membership includes representatives from a variety of community organizations that are dedicated to serving disadvantaged young people. Currently, the Chair of the Committee is an active ORWDB member and as chair also serves as member of the ORWDB Executive Committee. In addition, there are also members who represent Job Corp, VR, DSS, the public school system, labor, and Community Partnership of the Ozarks. WDB business members represent healthcare. This diverse selection allows the Committee to bring forth suggestions on program operations.

The Committee has primary responsibility for the development and oversight of WIOA-funded youth activities operating within the Ozark Region. The Committee receives reports at their bi-monthly meetings on the operation and makes recommendations on proposed changes to the program. The Committee has expressed the benefit of having a success story at Committee meetings. The Chair of the committee provides a report to the Executive Committee at their bi-monthly meeting and makes any recommendations necessary to carry forth to the full ORWDB. The Committee is also responsible for completing any other duties that may be determined to be appropriate by the Chair of the Board.

The Youth Committee oversees the work of the youth program including a review of performance outcomes and program activities.

b. Describe the development of the Plan relating to Youth services.

The Youth portion of the plan was developed through a collaborative effort of research, innovative thinking, and planning for the future. The youth portion of the plan was presented to the Youth Committee for review, input, and approval. The Board will ensure that at least 75% of funds (as based on current waiver which is subject to change) are expended on Out-of-School Youth activities. The Board will also ensure that at least 20% of funds are expended on work-based elements, such as paid and unpaid work experiences, internships, summer jobs, and permanent employment.

c. Provide an explanation of the YSC role in the procurement of Youth service providers, and recommending eligible Youth providers to the Board, ensuring the 14 elements are a part of the services planned and conducting oversight with respect to eligible Youth providers of Youth activities and the procurement of Youth service providers. See current OWD Issuance WIOA Standing Youth Committees Requirements.

Currently, the Youth Program is operated by the City of Springfield Department of Workforce Development and Economic Vitality as the appointed agent for the ORWDB. The Youth Committee provides oversight to the City for the operation of the Youth program and makes recommendations on program operations and policy development and revision to ensure accountability of the program. The chair of the Youth Committee provides reports at the Executive Committee meetings. Performance is monitored internally by the Compliance Coordinator. Rosters are generated and provided to the Youth Supervisor to address any issues.

If in the future the ORWDB decided to procure youth service providers, the Youth Committee would be responsible for the initial review of providers of youth services. A competitive procurement process would be followed. The Youth Committee would evaluate the proposals received in response to the announcement of competitive procurements for youth services and activities. The Youth Committee would ensure that the 14 elements had been properly addressed in any proposal. Using the results of their collective evaluations, they would make recommendations to the full Board regarding the providers and proposals to be funded.

- d. *Also, provide information regarding the Youth Standing Committee meetings, such as any core agenda items that would be included, and the planned meeting schedule (i.e., the first Tuesday of every quarter, etc.).*

Typically, meetings of the Youth Committee are held bi-monthly on the third Wednesday of the month, with additional meetings set by the Youth Committee Chair as deemed appropriate and necessary. A standard agenda allows for a performance report, program report, and a report of any recent or upcoming outreach events, meetings, or special workshops.

37. Youth Activities

Provide a description and assessment of the types and availability of Youth activities in the LWDA, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. This description should include:

- a. *How the Youth activities in the LWDA are developed to ensure the 14 program elements are available within the LWDA;*

The Ozark Region Workforce Development Board designated the operation of the youth services to the City of Springfield, Department of Workforce ~~Development~~and Economic Vitality. As part of that responsibility, the City must incorporate the following 14 programmatic elements:

- A. Tutoring, Study Skills, Instruction, Dropout Prevention/Recovery
- B. Alternative Secondary School Services or Dropout Recovery
- C. Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences that Include Academic and Occupational Education
- D. Occupational Skills Training
- E. Leadership Development
- F. Supportive Services
- G. Adult Mentoring
- H. Guidance and Counseling
- I. Transition to Postsecondary Education and Training
- J. Follow Up Services
- K. Workforce Preparation Activities for a Specific Occupation or Cluster
- L. Financial Literacy Education
- M. Entrepreneurial Skills Training
- N. Labor Market and Employment Information, Including Career Exploration

The City currently utilizes Pathful Explorer to provide the workshops and assignments to incorporate many of the programmatic elements. The remainder, such as work experience opportunities, is facilitated by City staff.

b. *The actual services provided by the LWDA for Youth, the element they represent, and how they fit within DOL's themes (see TEGL 05-12) for the emphasis on serving Youth within a comprehensive Youth development approach;*

Services Provided for Youth

- A. Tutoring, Study Skills, Instruction, Dropout Prevention/Recovery: Provision of on-line coursework, one-on-one instruction, peer-to-peer interaction, or in a group setting.
- B. Alternative Secondary School Services or Dropout Recovery: Referral to suitable alternative schools or dropout recovery programs.
- C. Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences that Include Academic and Occupational Education: Work opportunities with an emphasis on jobs in in-demand and emerging industries.
- D. Occupational Skills Training: Enrollment into programs that provide recognized degrees, certifications, or marketable skills for in-demand and emerging occupations.
- E. Leadership Development: Participation in community service-learning projects, peer-centered activities, teambuilding, life-skills training, healthy lifestyle choices, etc.
- F. Supportive Services: Assistance with transportation, childcare, clothing, housing, school supplies, and related needs.
- G. Adult Mentoring: Referral to community-, faith-based, and/or other organizations to provide one-on-one encouragement and direction.
- H. Guidance and Counseling: Coaching, helping, and problem-solving.
- I. Transition to Postsecondary Education and Training: Preparation for higher education programs and/or occupational skills training.
- J. Follow Up Services: Frequent interaction, including guidance and counseling, support services, and other assistance for at least 12 months after exit.
- K. Workforce Preparation Activities for a Specific Occupation or Cluster: Workshops and other services that prepare youth for careers in in-demand and/or emerging occupations.
- L. Financial Literacy Education: Instruction on how to be wise with money, including maintaining a positive credit rating and avoiding the pitfalls of debt.
- M. Entrepreneurial Skills Training: Information about the risks and rewards of self-employment or business ownership.
- N. Labor Market and Employment Information, Including Career Exploration: Data about in-demand and emerging occupations in the region, along with related education and training requirements.

c. *The process for identification of Youth service providers;*

The ORWDB has appointed the City of Springfield Department of Workforce ~~Development and~~ Economic Vitality as the program operator and provider of WIOA Youth Services. In the event that the ORWDB decided to procure the Youth service provider, all procurement policies would

be followed. Potential service providers would be notified to respond to this competitive procurement.

d. *The evaluation of service providers for performance and impact (please provide details on frequency and criteria)*

The Youth Committee has the primary responsibility to evaluate the WIOA Youth service provider for performance and impact. They evaluate themselves through information received from the monitoring reviews that are conducted annually by Compliance Coordinators.

Elements included in the monitoring reviews:

- A. youth eligibility documentation
- B. compliance with programmatic requirements
- C. record keeping
- D. performance outcomes

Reviews are reported to the ORWDB Executive Committee through the Youth Committee Chair. In addition, they are provided to the full ORWDB through the annual sub-state monitoring report.

e. *The providers of the Youth services in the LWDA, including the areas and elements they provide;*

The ORWDB Youth Committee actively seeks out and engages youth service providers in the Ozark Region. They are invited to participate in committee meetings, as well as to respond to competitive procurements the ORWDB may release for WIOA Youth services.

The Ozark Region also works with the following organizations to collaboratively provide youth services in the region:

- A. Ashley House: A partnership which allows youth in custody to participate in work readiness coaching, mentorship, paid work experience, and HiSET preparation assistance.
- B. Great Circle: A partnership which allows youth in their custody to participate in a paid work experience component.
- C. I Pour Life: A program which provides additional mentoring support to assist youth who need tutorial assistance and/or teen parents in need of mentoring and a job coach.
- D. Boys and Girls Club: A national program that provides support and guidance to at-risk youth.
- E. Big Brothers/Sisters: A program that provides job shadowing and subsidized work experiences for youth.
- F. CHAFEE Foster Care Independence Program: A program that assists youth between the ages of 15-21 who are experiencing out-of-home placement, providing work readiness seminars, work experience, and HiSET preparation assistance.
- G. Planned Parenthood, Pregnancy Care Center and Building Blocks: Programs that address the needs of youth who are pregnant/parenting.
- H. Parole Officers: Referrals of youth who are involved in the justice system.
- I. Rare Breed: A group that works with homeless youth and assists them in finding transitional living and assists with HiSet preparation and achievement.

- J. Job Corps: An education and training program that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or HiSet, and find and keep a good job.
- K. The Y Gardens: An apartment complex built to house former foster children as they begin their journey into adulthood. The Y Gardens provides them a safe place to live with wrap-around services, connecting them to education and employment resources to help them thrive.

f. *How year-round services are provided to Youth 14–24 years of age that are still in high school or out of school;*

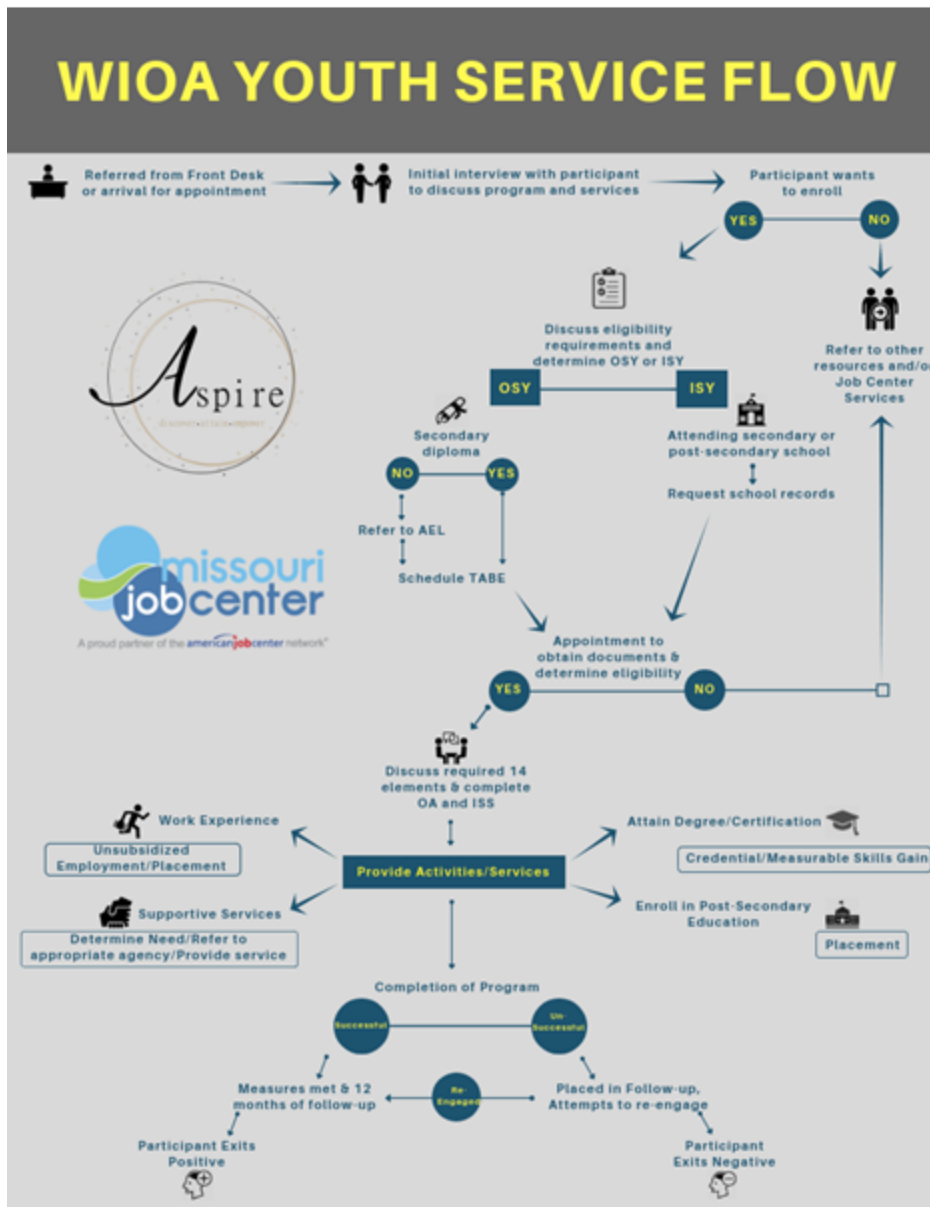
Year-round services are provided to eligible Youth ages 14-24 in the Ozark Region. With respect to younger youth, summer jobs may still occur as part of the work experience component, but such activities will be in conjunction with services occurring during the school year. Additionally, older youth may be enrolled into WIOA Adult programs concurrently or sequentially with their Youth services, as appropriate for the individual.

Youth are exposed to various career exploration and leadership development activities. They are provided with tools, such as the Pathful Explorer, an online software designed to provide several of the required WIOA elements, and information to make informed decisions about their future. Other examples include staff providing additional presentations on the importance of appropriate social media posts, email and texting etiquette, dressing for success, and various job readiness activities.

The WIOA Youth service provider avoids duplication of services by maintaining contact with any other organizations providing concurrent services external to the workforce system. This is accomplished by including details of specific services and a clear understanding of each organization's financial responsibilities to the Youth at the time of enrollment and within the service plan.

g. *An example of the flow of services for a Youth in the LWDA (please include all aspects, including intake, objective assessment process, assessment, coordination of services, follow-up, etc.).*

The following chart depicts the typical flow of services for Youth in the Ozark Region.



h. *The procedures for serving Youth that are most in need (homeless, disabled, offenders, etc.);*

The ORWDB seeks partners who will contribute to a shared vision of providing opportunities and eliminating barriers for Youth participants. Regular communication is made with partners with periodic on-site visits to determine the details of the referral process and to determine how services will be provided. This knowledge of referral processes supports working with those most in need because individuals who are the hardest to serve can be directed to the partner who can provide the best service and is a subject matter expert.

Youth staff members work with a variety of community groups and programs. Youth staff meet with VR staff when a client has been identified as having a need to coordinate services.

Connections have also been established with the juvenile justice system to identify youth coming out of the juvenile system and the resources available to these youth. Staff also work with the Housing Authority, Homeless Coalition, Resources and Re-entry, and others to outreach to potential participants.

In compliance of all WIOA Youth requirements, once a client has been found eligible for services; they are enrolled into WIOA Youth, provided an objective assessment to determine areas of need and appropriate services, assess occupational skills levels, and identify potential career pathways.

Once the objective assessment has been complete, an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) is developed with the Youth to identify an appropriate career pathway which includes both education and employment goals. Informed directly from the objective assessment, the ISS includes achievable goals, and services for the youth that are linked to performance indicators.

The following steps are involved during the initial meeting with a staff member:

- A. Identify areas of need.
- B. Evaluate their desired training/work experience program.
- C. Determining if the program aligns with Board's strategic plan.
- D. Evaluate data from state and local sources.
- E. Enrollment.

The ORWDB has directed a priority of youth services shall be given to those who are in the most need and who can most benefit from available services by improving their abilities or skills in one or more of the identified barriers.

Service levels include giving first priority to low-income veterans, followed by:

- A. Low-income youth in need of Post-Secondary Education assistance.
- B. Youth having the ability to enter unsubsidized employment following completion of participation as documented on the ISS.
- C. Skills deficient youth; and other youth, including Out-of-School Youth, those at risk of dropping out of school, youth in foster care, those aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, homeless youth, and seasonal farm worker youth.

Eligible youth must be determined by the youth service provider(s) as appropriate for program participation.

i. *The identification of the partnerships and describe the coordination of services with other agencies within the LWDA.*

In addition to the partnerships mentioned. above, the Ozark Region works with other WIOA partners as well including:

- A. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR): Youth staff currently coordinates with the young adult client, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, and the service provider administering VR funded placement services to ensure client's needs are met and services are administered seamlessly among agencies. WIOA Youth also fills gaps that may fall outside of the VR scope of support, or compliments services administered through VR.

- B. Job Corp: As a WIOA partner, we have reciprocal referrals. Referrals are received from Job Corps for individuals who were ineligible for their services, as well as participants who have completed Job Corp programming. These individuals are reviewed for eligibility or referral to partner agencies. Referrals are also made to Job Corp for individuals who have expressed interest and who are suitable for Job Corp assessment and enrollment.
- C. Missouri Work Assistance (MWA)-TANF: Youth staff members refer participants to MWA staff to engage young TANF parents on possible co-enrollment and sharing of resources.
- D. Adult Education and Literacy: Referrals to AEL classes are offered throughout the Ozark Region
- E. Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC): Youth who express interest in training and attendance to OTC are provided information and career guidance to enable them to make an informed decision.

38. Innovative Service-Delivery Projects for OSY

Provide a description of any innovative service-delivery projects for OSY currently operating in the LWDA or a project the Board is planning to implement. Describe the Board's involvement in the projects, and the Board's efforts to continue involvement and funding for the continuation of these projects.

The Ozark Region's youth priorities will be centered on:

- A. Recruitment of youth based on modern technological strategies.
- B. Increased focus on participant engagement.
- C. Establishing career pathways that complement or support occupations and opportunities which will create defined means to self-sufficiency.

The approach consists of utilizing work experience, tuition, supportive service, and incentive funding to provide Individualized training programs. Based on funding availability, these programs contain the capacity to offer services such as:

- A. Leadership Academy, which includes an intensive soft skills course.
- B. Tours of local facilities to gain exposure.
- C. Exploration of continuing education through the community's post-secondary opportunities.
- D. Classroom learning leading to an industry recognized credential.
- E. Work Experience offers paid wages throughout the program based on employer placement. The industries targeted for the work experience programs demonstrate a reflection of the ORWDB's sector initiatives.

In January of 2024 the Youth program piloted the first "Aspire to Change" Leadership Academy. The training targeted individuals ages 14-24 years of age in the Ozark Region. The program was designed to meet community employers' expectations for young adults entering the workforce. The training allowed participants to explore future careers while addressing barriers to employment, soft skills, career exploration, labor market information, resume building, and the interview process. To wrap up the training local employers gave presentations, participants

received certificates for completion, and most had applied for training, pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and immediate employment opportunities.

Historically, Youth staff gained information from the local partner agencies, employers, and educational institutes during industry focused roundtable discussions and surveys. The roundtables are regularly scheduled events for those in the region to share insights to the current workforce difficulties faced, solutions, and innovative projects. This knowledge was used to shape the structure, soft skills course, and classroom curriculum. The ORWDB State of the Workforce Committee recently voted to host these events with a focus on expanding them to be offered throughout the region.

Agricultural Employment Services (AES)

39. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers / Agricultural Employment Services

WIOA section 167 provides the framework for agricultural services delivery. National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) services and grants are implemented at 20 CFR Part 685, as proposed. The current Section 167 Grantee, UMOS—United Migrant Opportunity Services, must be included in the MOU as the NFJP partner. The Plan should address how the LWDB will cooperate with UMOS and the State Agricultural Employment Services office to provide employment and training services to this population.

The Ozark Region cooperates with United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS) and the State Agricultural Employment Services office to assist migrant seasonal farm workers by providing referral to their services. UMOS provides annual training to staff to ensure the understanding of the programs offered, eligibility, and the referral process. Staff provide and receive referrals directly to and from the UMOS provider to evaluate eligibility for co-enrolled participants.

Business Services

40. Employer Engagement

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the LWDA facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The Ozark Region uses an integrated approach when serving business customers. The staff will continue to strengthen relationships with current employers through strategies and services that include:

Industry Collaboration and Partnerships

- Staff often establishes partnerships with industry associations, chambers of commerce, and business networks to understand the needs and priorities of local employers.
- Collaboration with sector-specific organizations helps tailor workforce development programs to meet the demands of in-demand industries.

Customized Training Programs

- Developing and offering training programs that are tailored to the needs of specific industries or occupations.
- Providing flexibility in training delivery to accommodate the schedules and requirements of small employers.

Apprenticeship and Internship Programs

- Facilitating apprenticeship and internship programs to provide hands-on experience for individuals seeking employment while meeting the skill needs of employers.
- Informing employers about available financial support or tax incentives.

Job Fairs Roundtables, and Networking Events

- Organizing job fairs, industry-specific events, and networking opportunities where employers can connect with potential candidates.
- Providing a platform for employers to showcase their organizations and discuss their workforce needs and best practices.

Technology Platforms

- Utilize MOJobs to connect jobseekers with employers in real-time.
- Assist employers with job orders making it easier for small businesses to participate.

Marketing and Outreach

- Implementing targeted marketing campaigns to raise awareness among employers about available workforce development programs.
- Providing clear and concise information about the benefits of participating in these programs.
- Utilize social media to share services and upcoming events to benefit both jobseekers and employers.

41. Services to Meet the Workforce Needs of Employers

Describe how the Board coordinates and provides comprehensive and integrated workforce system services to businesses, including the development and delivery of innovative workforce

services and strategies to meet the needs of area employers. Explain the collaboration with Missouri Job Center Jobs Teams to facilitate recruitment and meet business demand.

Staff are knowledgeable of the programs available through the MJC, whether it is through the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) or other specialized grants that provide training to upskill workers for employers. They also assist in the recruitment of employers for On-the-Job training, Incumbent Worker training, and apprenticeships.

Staff deliver business services to local employers in the form of recruiting, candidate assessment, job orders, labor market information, and information on tax credits, etc. Staff also work to match potential employees with employers.

Historically, approaches such as hosting Town Hall meetings and Roundtables were used to bring industries together to discuss issues facing local employers. Recently the ORWDB's State of the Workforce Committee has investigated revitalizing these approaches.

The Ozark Region maintains a relationship with local area chambers of commerce so that we serve as a lead partner when new business prospects are introduced to the area. There is also an established communication protocol on addressing sensitive employer-related issues such as layoffs, closures, and confidential new business and expansions.

42. Economic Development

Describe how the Board will better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development including how the LWDB will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce is a well-known local economic development agency. We work very closely with the Chamber and are a lead partner when new business prospects are introduced to the area. This allows the ORWDB and MJC to provide a proposal backed with data including pool of applicants, possible funding, and training opportunities.

The City of Springfield has developed a new Economic Vitality Department. The Director of Workforce Development and the Director of Economic Vitality meet monthly to discuss economic development events and issues and collaborate on potential new funding to support the community.

Staff participate in regular meetings at the Springfield chamber for regional partnerships economic development in the Ozark Region. Staff attend TCP (Taney County Partnership) meetings in Branson. Staff also regularly attend a SMCOG (Southwest Council of Governments) meeting that includes 10 counties, which includes the seven county Ozark Region. SMCOG is made up of city and county administrators and economic developers.

The Ozark Region is very fortunate to have a spirit of entrepreneurship and micro enterprises. Entities such as the efactory are available to assist those who are seeking to venture into starting their own business. Staff meet regularly with representatives of the efactory to discuss potential partnerships and grant opportunities specifically to support both missions and visions of the organizations. The Staff continues to stay abreast of the opportunities for all types of training

that would benefit any new company, whether it be a start-up company, a relocated company, or a long-standing community company. MJC staff are aware of the skill training that is available to those who are considering entrepreneurship or a microenterprise and the variety of training options available.

43. Sector Strategy Initiative / Career Pathways

Describe the Board's sector-strategy initiative. Describe how the Board will be collaborating and aligning resources of all partners, public and private, toward developing a talent pipeline, and how that alignment will create meaningful career pathways for workers possessing skill levels serving important regional industries. Indicate how system services will be framed by industry sectors that are data driven, regionally designed, and guided by employers and how these strategies will be sustained. Include the methods the Board will be using to inform and engage key public and private stakeholders in the development of sector-strategies and career pathways.

The Ozark Region Workforce Development Board narrowed their focus to include the five key industry sectors:

- A. Healthcare
- B. IT
- C. Construction
- D. Transportation and Logistics
- E. Manufacturing

Training and career pathways shall be focused toward these sectors.

ORWDB will inform and engage key public and private stakeholders of its progress through events planned by the State of the Workforce Committee. ORWDB will also expand its partnership with local industry associations to assist with outreach efforts and planning for the sector strategies initiatives.

ORWDB will partner with the chambers of commerce to share information and will work closely with them on business retention and expansion efforts. ORWDB will also participate in several projects to identify and develop career pathways that lead to better jobs as well as addressing any skills gaps for the identified careers. Finally, it will work on a series of roundtables, discussions, and summits to promote and advocate for a skilled and prepared workforce.

The Ozark Region is closely aligned with area chambers. The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce has been instrumental in our industry roundtables, which has led to initiatives such as apprenticeship opportunities, collaborations with hands-on career initiatives, and career exploration for K-12.

The Springfield Public School system is also aligned with the Job Center and the Springfield Chamber of Commerce to develop experiential learning opportunities for junior and senior high school students. Staff refer students to the program and provides support services when needed and applicable.

ORWDB will continue to work with our partners and seek new partners that will assist in fulfilling the vision and mission of WIOA. ORWDB will also continue to seek additional funding opportunities to support capacity-building activities and proposals which will continue to support the mission.

44. Business Services Plan

Boards shall maintain a Business Services Plan, outlining team members, including WIOA core and combined partners, and the marketing and outreach roles and expectations of team members. The Business Services Plan also should outline the team's purpose, goals, and policies and procedures to ensure seamless delivery of services, avoid duplication, and ensure feedback to the Board's Job centers. The plan should explain how the services provided by business service staff will be recorded in the client case management system for the calculation of two types of Effectiveness in Serving Employers Measure. (1-number of businesses served and 2-market penetration of businesses in the area). Include the Business Services Plan as Attachment 30.

Innovative Service Delivery Strategies

45. Missouri Re-entry Process /Ex-offender Initiative

Describe how the LWDB will support the Missouri re-entry process / ex-offender initiative. Include the services to be provided for ex-offenders and the process to be used to identify employers willing to hire ex-offenders.

Based on their individual needs, each ex-offender will be provided with job readiness assistance, job development services, referrals to job openings, supportive services, and/or training opportunities.

The MJC draws upon partners and community resources to aid in the challenges faced by individuals transitioning to society and looking for a job among other resources.

It is important to note that through the staff outreach efforts, the Ozark Region has knowledge of employers who are agreeable to working with ex-offenders. Additionally, the Job Center staff work closely with probation and parole employees to help ex-offender clients in obtaining gainful employment and becoming self-sufficient. The local DVOPs assist in this process by working with veterans who fall within this category.

46. Work-based Learning / Transitional Jobs

Describe the Board's innovative strategies for promoting and increasing enrollments in the work-based learning programs, such as Registered Apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Work Experience, Internships, Incumbent Worker Training, Transitional Jobs, and Customized Training. Include processes to target and encourage employer participation.

The Ozark Region has an established track history of focusing on pre-apprenticeship and Registered apprenticeships On-the-Job Training (OJT), and Work Experience.

The Ozark Region promotes On-the-Job training (OJT) opportunities as a resource for employers, as well as a work-based learning opportunity for job seekers. Staff work with employers to promote OJTs.

The WIOA Youth program utilizes work-based learning opportunities by placing young adults in work experience positions. Youth staff target employers who are willing to provide guidance and mentorship to young adults, allowing them to gain meaningful insight to the workforce. The Ozark Region anticipates expanding this opportunity to Adult and Dislocated Worker participants as well.

Up to 10% of the WIOA Dislocated Worker funding can be used to support Incumbent Worker Training to provide upskilling which provides opportunities for employers to prevent layoffs, advancement within the company, and to grow skilled labor.

47. Trade Adjustment Assistance

Describe the Board's strategies for ensuring customers are aware of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program and are co-enrolled into both WIOA Dislocated Worker and TAA, except in extenuating circumstances? (Integration of Services or Co-enrollment Policy should be Attachment 24)

Although the program is in the status of termination, Staff will be ready to assist those that qualify.

Upon being enrolled into Trade program, the customer will be referred to meet with a Skills Team member to be co-enrolled into the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program. This process is followed except in the rare event that a Trade program participant is pursuing training which does not fall within one of the five sectors identified to be in-demand industries in the Ozark Region: manufacturing, transportation, healthcare, construction, and IT. In these rare instances, co-enrollment into the DWP does not occur.

48. Missouri Community Colleges

Describe how the Board will coordinate with the local community colleges. Please describe in depth the referral process of participants between the Community Colleges and Job Centers.

Please include the MOU (cooperative agreement) between the Board and Community Colleges if your LWDA has any as Attachment 31 to the Plan.

Currently, the ORWDB works primarily with Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC) to provide occupational skills training services to eligible job seekers. Should other community college training providers become available the Ozark Region open to working with all institutes of higher learning. A cross-referral system shall be used whereby OTC will refer job seekers to the MJC for job search assistance, and the job center will refer individuals to OTC for education and training. Keeping in line with the intent of WIOA, clients are encouraged to choose the training provider that best meets their individual needs. OTC provides Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) courses in several locations throughout the region, including a co-location in the Job Center.

49. Incumbent Worker Policy

If the LWDB has an Incumbent Worker Policy, please include it as Attachment 32. If not, please include a statement that the LWDB does not have an Incumbent Worker Policy.

Strategies for Faith-based and Community-based Organizations

50. Faith-based Strategies

Describe those activities to be undertaken to:

- (1) Increase the opportunities for participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the One-Stop Delivery System; and*
- (2) Expand the access of faith-based and community-based organizations' customers to the services offered by the One-Stops in the LWDA.*

Outline efforts for conducting outreach campaigns to educate faith-based and community organizations about the attributes and objectives of the demand-driven workforce development system. Indicate how these resources can be strategically and effectively leveraged in the LWDA to help meet the objectives of WIOA.

The Ozark Region adopted President Bush's Executive Order 13279, implemented in 2001, as local policy guidance to ensure that faith-based and community-based organizations can apply and compete equally for federal financial assistance for employment and training activities. All of this is achieved while ensuring customer choice.

As a result of the local policy, over the last several years the Ozark Region has developed strong relationships with many faith-based and community-based organizations. The Job Center works in conjunction with many organizations including but not limited to:

- A. AARP
- B. Boys and Girls Club
- C. Community Partnership of the Ozarks
- D. Harmony House
- E. Jesus was Homeless
- F. OACAC
- G. Salvation Army
- H. The Kitchen/Rare Breed
- I. Victory Mission

ORWDB also have relationships with United Way and their network of nonprofit agencies, along with New Pathways for Good Dads which is an organization designed to help low-income fathers make changes to be a good dad who is actively engaged with his children.

Regional Plans

Regional Planning Guidance

51. Regional Plans

Missouri has designated 13 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). In accordance with WIOA sec. 106(c)(2), each of the LWDAs establish a Plan; however, collaboration must exist among the Kansas City and St. Louis Economic Regions for the creation of Regional Plans composed of the following:

- 1) For the Kansas City Region, one Regional Plan for the local planning areas of Kansas City and Vicinity Region and the East Jackson County Region; and*
- 2) For the St. Louis Region, one Regional Plan for the local planning areas of: The City of St. Louis Region, the County of Saint Louis Region, the County of St. Charles Region, and the Jefferson/Franklin County Consortium Region.*

While this establishes 13 Boards that are encouraged to collaborate, cooperate, and plan across common needs, they will not explicitly submit a Regional Plan. This establishes two Boards within the Kansas City Region that must contribute to a Regional Economic Plan for the Kansas City regional economy and four Boards within the St. Louis Region that must contribute to a Regional Economic Plan for the St. Louis regional economy.

Boards within the Kansas City and St. Louis regional economic planning areas must complete a regional planning requirement by including within each original LWDB Plan a Regional Economic Plan that is identically shared by all Boards in each economic region.

Include the Regional Plan as Attachment 33. Copies of Local Plans from other LWDBs in the region are not required for your Local Plan. Please submit the combined portion of the Regional Plan with signatures of the CEOs, Chairs and LWDB Directors.

NOTE:

Following approval of the Local Plan and Regional Plan, plans will be required to be posted on the LWDB website. Any updates or plan modifications will be required to be posted by the LWDB after approval. Please keep a current Local Plan and Regional Plan, if applicable, available on your website at all times.

REQUIRED POLICIES AND ATTACHMENTS

All local policies relating to WIOA are required to be approved by OWD and listed as part of the required attachments to the local plan regardless of whether or not they are required by the LWDB, state or federal guidelines. The below list is not an all-inclusive list of federal regulations. At any time the LWDB, state, or federal guidelines may require additional policies beyond the list below.

1. List of Comprehensive, Affiliate, Specialized and Other Centers and One Stop Operators
2. Memorandum of Understanding with IFA and Cost Sharing Budgets with All Partner Signatures
3. Chief Elected Officials Consortium Agreement and Bylaws
4. Local Workforce Development Board Membership List, Standing Committees, & Certification Letter
5. Local Workforce Development Board By-Laws and Attestation Form - Form provided
6. Local Fiscal Agent
7. Planning Budget Summaries (PBS)
8. Conflict of Interest Policy - Local Workforce Development Board, Staff, and Contracted Staff
9. Financial Procurement Policy / Financial (General) Policy
10. Complaints and Grievance Policy – Nondiscrimination, Programmatic
11. Sub-state Monitoring Plan and Policy
12. Supportive Services Policy – General, Needs Related Payments Policy for ADLT and DW
13. Adult Priority of Service Policy
14. Expenditure Rates Policy
15. Training Criteria Policy (AD & DW)

16. Youth Barriers Eligibility Policy – OSY ISY additional assistance barrier
17. Youth Incentive Payment Policy
18. Veterans Priority of Service Policy
19. Basic Skills Assessments (Testing) Policy
20. Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy
21. Eligibility Policy (Individualized Career Services)
22. Accessibility Policy – Persons with Disabilities
23. Accessibility Policy - Persons with Limited English Proficiency
24. Co-enrollment Policy
25. Adult Education and Literacy Policy (AEL Policy)
26. VR/RSB Coordination Policy
27. Youth Apprenticeships Policy
28. ETPL Policy
29. Employment Transition Team Policy
30. Business Services Plan and Policy
31. MOU (Cooperative Agreement) between the Community College & LWDB
32. Incumbent Worker Policy
33. Regional Plans (St. Louis / KC)
34. Accommodation Policy
35. Confidentiality Policy
36. Customized Training Policy (if applicable)
37. Facilities
38. Cost Allocation Policy
39. Cost Accounting Policy
40. Financial Reporting/Cash Draw Request Deadlines
41. Fraud, Waste, Abuse, and Criminal Activity Policy
42. Internal Accounting Policy
43. Local Bonding Policy
44. Payments to Employers Policy
45. Follow-up Policy Adults and Dislocated Workers
46. Follow-up Policy Youth
47. Harassment and discrimination Policy
48. Nondiscrimination Policy
49. On-the-Job Training Policy (including employer disputes, nepotism, and modifications)
50. Personnel Policies (leave, travel, facilities closing)
51. Records Policy (access, Sunshine, retention, and destruction)
52. Transitional Jobs Policy (if applicable)
53. Work Experience Policy – Adult
54. Work Experience Policy – Youth
55. Apprenticeship Policy
56. Selective Service Policy
57. Statement of Assurances - Form provided



PERFORMANCE

PY 2024 Q4

Program Year 24/25

A Program year runs from July 1 to June 30. Program Year 25/256 started on July 1, 2025 and will end on June 30, 2026.

Quarters. Since the program year starts at July 1, the following are the quarters for performance:

July – September Quarter 1

October – December
Quarter 2

January – March Quarter 3

April – June
Quarter 4

PROGRAM YEAR

MEASURES

- **THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT OUTLINES THE PERFORMANCE MEASURES THAT MUST BE FOLLOWED. THEY INCLUDE:**
 - **EMPLOYMENT QUARTER 2-EXITERS**
 - **EMPLOYMENT QUARTER 4-EXITERS**
 - **CREDENTIAL-EXITERS**
 - **SKILL GAINS-ENROLLED IN TRAINING FOR THE CURRENT YEAR**
 - **MEDIAN EARNINGS-EXITERS**

**Obtained by matching the
MOJobs system and the UI
System**



Median Earnings

The median earnings value is the wage in the middle of the rank order list. Median = the middle value of a set of ordered data. If the list rank order of earnings contains an even number of values, sum the two middle values and divide by two.

EMPLOYMENT & MEDIAN EARNINGS

EXITERS

**PARTICIPANTS WHO WERE
ENROLLED AND EXITED OUT OF
THE PROGRAM AFTER 90 DAYS
OF NO SERVICES.**

Data status



Current year: PY25



Current Quarter: PY25-Q2

Current month: PY25-Nov

Most recent registration: 12/16/2025

Most recent exiter date: 09/25/2025

Date site updated: 12/18/2025

Date file created: 12/17/2025

PERFORMANCE PY 2025-2026 Q1

Green Meeting 100% or more in performance

Yellow Meeting 90% of goal

Red Not meeting performance

Adult

Performance	Contribution				
Indicator	Actual	LWDB Plan	% Achieved	num	den
Employment Q2	71.11%	71.50%	99.46%	64	90
Employment Q4	61.11%	71.00%	86.07%	66	108
Credential	81.25%	76.00%	106.91%	13	16
Skill Gains	76.92%	65.00%	118.34%	10	13
Median Earnings	\$5,495.49	\$6,600.00	83.27%	64	0

Dislocated Worker

Performance		Contribution				
Indicator		Actual	LWDB Plan	% Achieved	num	den
Employment Q2		80.00%	76.50%	104.58%	8	10
Employment Q4		84.62%	75.50%	112.07%	11	13
Credential		80.00%	79.00%	101.27%	8	10
Skill Gains		50.00%	55.00%	90.91%	1	2
Median Earnings		\$11,058.67	\$8,100.00	136.53%	8	0

Youth

Performance	Contribution				
Indicator	Actual	LWDB Plan	% Achieved	num	den
Employment Q2	87.50%	77.50%	112.90%	14	16
Employment Q4	77.78%	72.00%	108.02%	14	18
Credential	88.89%	64.00%	138.89%	8	9
Skill Gains	26.09%	47.00%	55.50%	6	23
Median Earnings	\$4,196.85	\$4,400.00	95.38%	14	0

Wagner-Peyser

Performance	Contribution				
Indicator	Actual	LWDB Plan	% Achieved	num	den
Employment Q2	70.85%	73.00%	97.05%	853	1,204
Employment Q4	73.28%	69.00%	106.21%	1,270	1,733
Credential	0%	0%	0%	0	0
Skill Gains	0%	0%	0%	0	0
Median Earnings	\$8,092.09	\$7,000.00	115.60%	853	0

We do not negotiate Wagner-Peyser numbers.

COMPARISON

Program	Measure	Goal	Quarter 1	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 2
			24/25	25/26	24/25	25/26
Adult	Employment Quarter 2	71.50%	71.43%	70.73%	64.71%	71.11%
	Employment Quarter 4	71%	58.52%	47.83%	60.00%	61.11%
	Credential	76%	83.33%	100%	66.67%	81.25%
	Skill Gains	54%	18.18%	81.82%	53.85%	76.92%
	Median Earnings	\$6,600	\$6,482.21	\$4,725	\$6,255	\$5,495
DW	Employment Quarter 2	76.50%	75%	100%	85.71%	80%
	Employment Quarter 4	75.50%	72.22%	100%	73.68%	84.62%
	Credential	79%	25%	66.67%	25.00%	80.00%
	Skill Gains	60%	22.22%	0%	55%	50%
	Median Earnings	\$8,100	N/A	N/A	12,417.70	\$11,058.67
Youth	Employment Quarter 2	77.50%	100%*	87.50%	85.71%	87.50%
	Employment Quarter 4	70%	100%*	71.43%	75.00%	77.78%
	Credential	64%	0**	100%	0%	88.89%
	Skill Gains	55%	0	27.78%	15.38%	26.09%
	Median Earnings	\$4,400	N/A	\$4,123.68	\$5,536.30	\$4,196.85



WHAT'S BEING DONE

TRAINING

- **30 INDIVIDUALS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN TRAINING**
 - **13 ADULT**
 - **3 DISLOCATED WORKER**
 - **14 YOUTH**
- **TIED TO CREDENTIALS & SKILL GAINS**
- **FUNDED THROUGH WIOA SINCE JULY 1, 2025**
 - **13 ADULT AVERAGE COST \$2,980.64**
 - **3 DISLOCATED WORKER COST \$2,039.42**
 - **8 YOUTH, AVERAGE COST \$7,230.62**

WHAT'S NOT FULLY COUNTED

Work Experience

Supportive Services

Intensive Case Management

***Visits to the Job Center**

***Those enrolled in services counted in Employment
Quarter 2 & Employment Quarter 4**

WORK EXPERIENCE

- 25 YOUTH HAVE PARTICIPATED IN WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PY25/26 PROGRAM YEAR. PARTICIPANTS RECEIVED AT LEAST MINIMUM WAGE, \$13.75 PER HOUR (NOW \$15). PARTICIPANTS CAN HAVE UP TO 400 HOURS OF WORK EXPERIENCE. PENMAC SERVES AS THE EMPLOYER OF RECORD AND COVERS PAYROLL AND WORKMAN'S COMPENSATION.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

- **9 INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN ASSISTED WITH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES WITH A TOTAL OF 30 SUPPORTIVE SERVICES.**
 - **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES INCLUDED TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE (GAS CARDS AND BUS PASSES) AND WORK-RELATED ASSISTANCE SUCH AS APPAREL FOR WORK.**
 - **SEVEN YOUTH RECEIVED INCENTIVE PAYMENTS.**

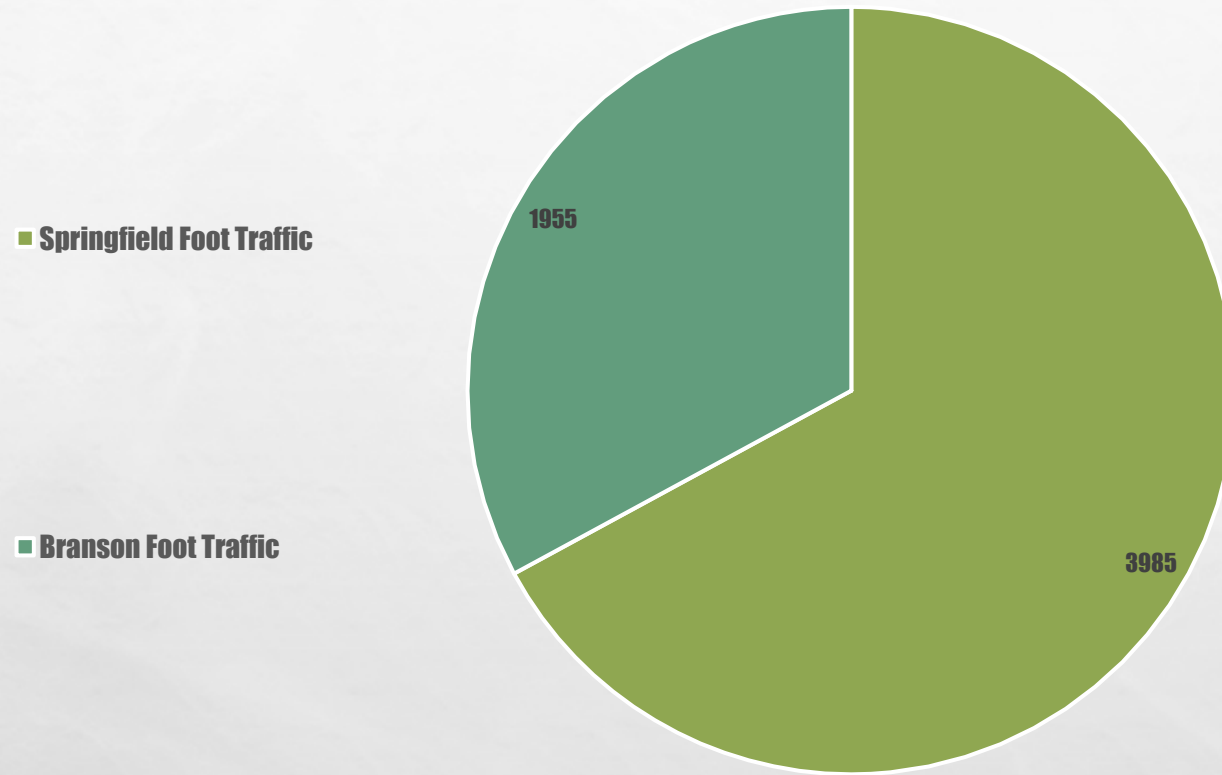
INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT

- **WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS ON THEIR BARRIERS**
- **CONSISTENT CONTACT AND FOLLOW-UP**

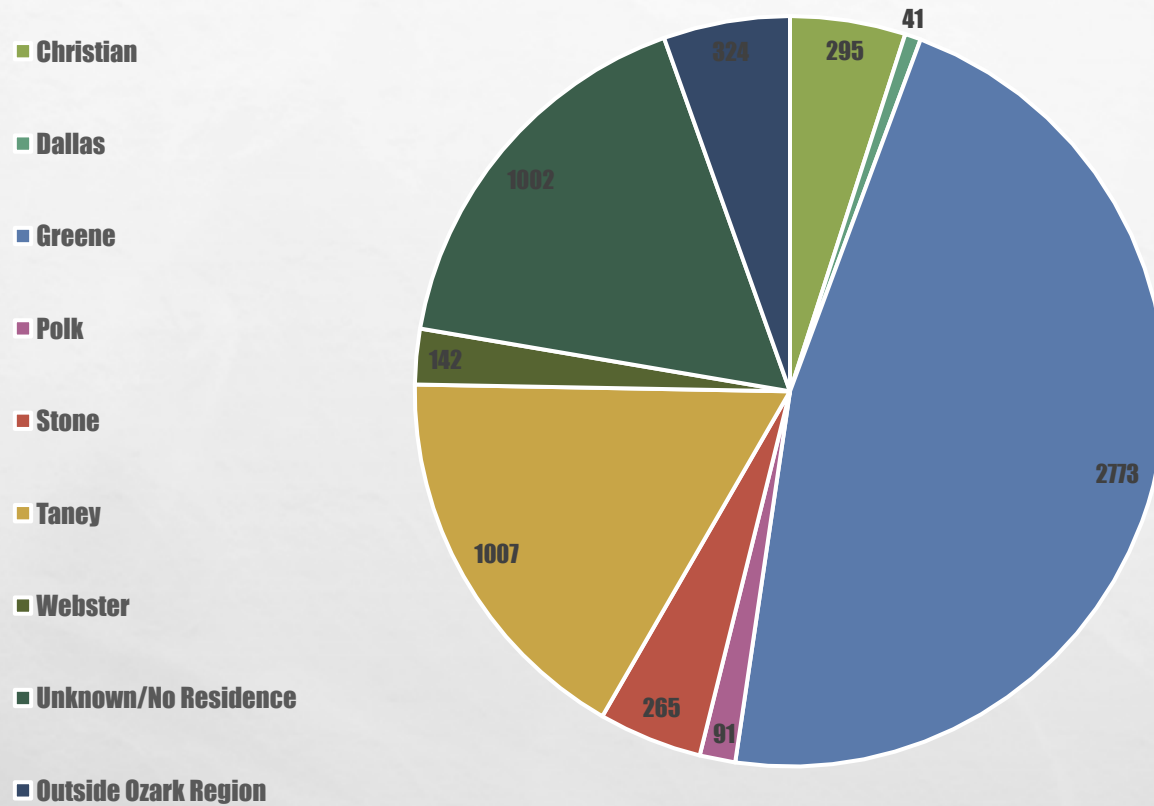
VISITS TO THE JOB CENTER JULY – DECEMBER, 2025

- **3985 HAVE BEEN ASSISTED BY STAFF IN SPRINGFIELD WITH 7,093 SERVICES**
- **1955 HAVE BEEN ASSISTED BY STAFF IN BRANSON WITH 3,089 SERVICES**
- **TOTAL OF 5,940 INDIVIDUALS AND 10,182 SERVICES**

Total Foot Traffic

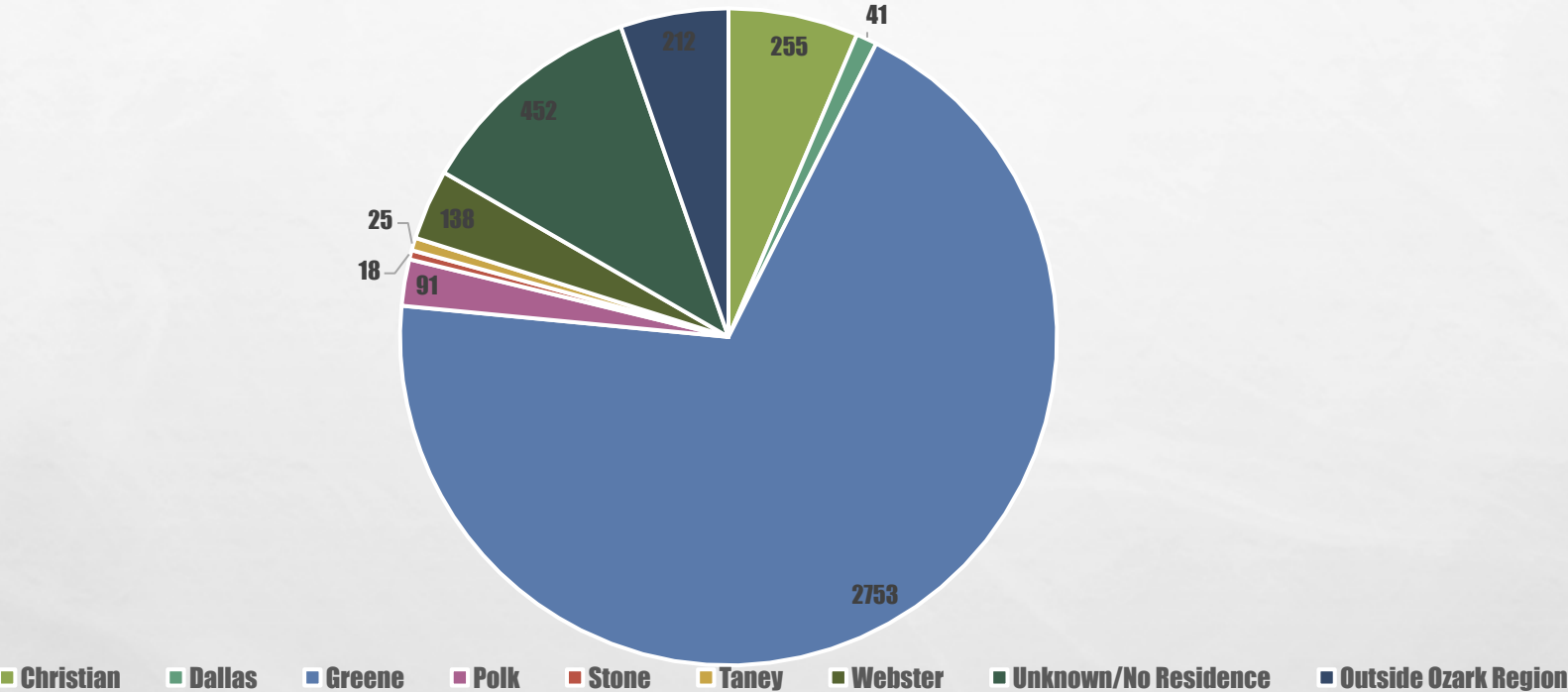


Foot Traffic by County

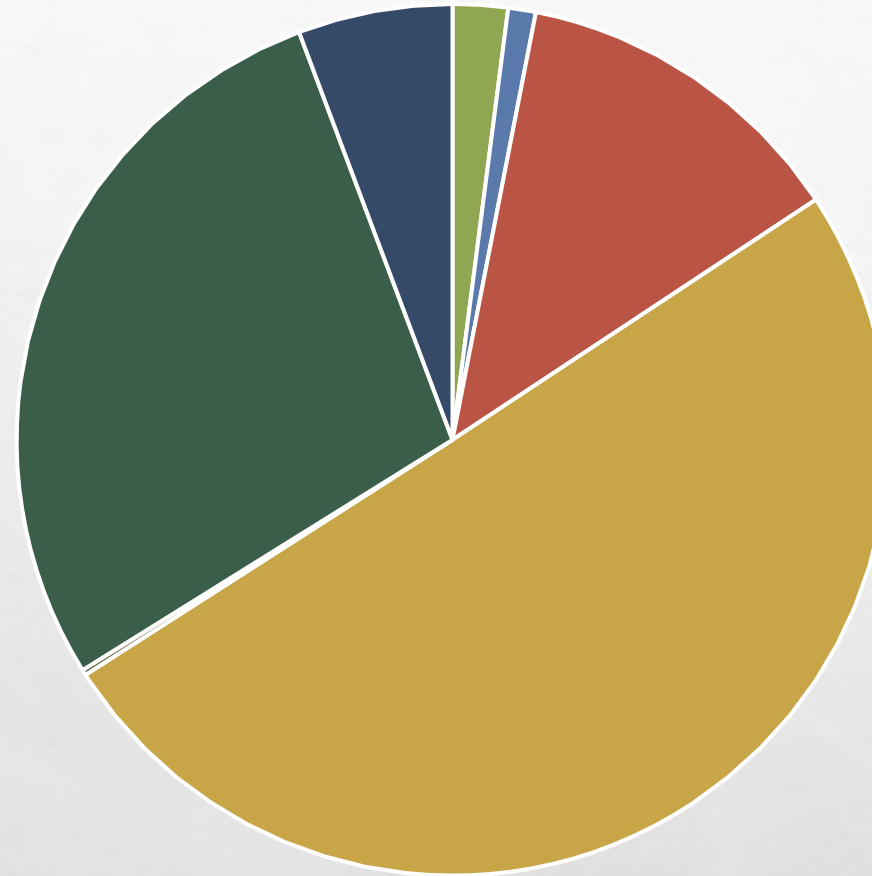


Counties Total	
Christian	295
Dallas	41
Greene	2,773
Polk	91
Stone	265
Taney	1,007
Webster	142
Unknown/No Residence	1,002
Outside Ozark Region	324

Springfield Foot Traffic by County



Branson Foot Traffic by County



Christian Dallas Greene Polk Stone Taney Webster Unknown/No Residence Outside Ozark Region

JOB ORDERS

Job Order Report - by County					
County	State	Country	Total Job Orders	Total Job Openings	Total Job Referrals
<u>Taney County</u>	MO	US	103	1,149	367
<u>Christian County</u>	MO	US	38	426	72
<u>Stone County</u>	MO	US	13	27	12
<u>Webster County</u>	MO	US	7	15	90
<u>Greene County</u>	MO	US	313	4,778	4,676
<u>Dallas County</u>	MO	US	5	57	19
<u>Polk County</u>	MO	US	8	19	169
County	State	Country	Total Job Orders	Total Job Openings	Total Job Referrals
Report Totals			487	6,471	5,405

TYPES

Industry Sector Description	Total Job Orders	Total Job Openings	Total Job Referrals
Transportation and Warehousing (48 & 49)	1	1	4
Construction	35	110	56
Professional Scientific & Technical Svc	17	19	23
Wholesale Trade	24	73	141
Education Services	16	26	5
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	4	134	3
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1	3	0
Admin., Support, Waste Mgmt., Remediation	94	743	198
Manufacturing (31-33)	10	14	34
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2	6	5
Information	24	24	84
Health Care and Social Assistance	44	1,301	57
Retail Trade (44 & 45)	15	164	94
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	9	53	0
Accommodation and Food Services	54	749	61
Local Government, Exc., Education, Hospitals	18	217	59
Finance and Insurance	14	16	17
Total Government	5	5	20
Manufacturing (31-33)	1	2	0
Transportation and Warehousing (48 & 49)	11	26	18
Utilities	20	20	23
Manufacturing (31-33)	12	27	54
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	27	37	47
Public Administration	9	10	20
Retail Trade (44 & 45)	9	15	20

WIOA Training

2025 Quarter 2 Review

Scope

A review of the Occupational Skills Training began utilizing participants chosen from October 2025 through December 2025. Three selections were made based on data retrieved from MO-JOBS.

A local monitoring tool was used. The Region uploads documents; there were no hard files to review.

Eligibility

One was made eligible as a Dislocated Worker and two were made eligible through Adult. One was made eligible through receiving SNAP benefits, but Skill Up funds were not available. Eligibility was found in all.

Item	Results
Completed WP Enrollment	3 of 3
Social Security Verification	3 Of 3
DOB documented	3 of 3
Selective Service	1 of 1
Citizenship	3 of 3
Veteran	No Veterans
EO Complaint/Grievance	3 of 3
Employment at participation	0 employed
Low Income documented	1 homeless, 1 Snap
Proof of dislocation	1
Pell Grant	N/A
ETPS	3 of 3
Referral to WIOA	2 of 3
Services posted correctly	3 of 3 (1 missing case notes)
Certificate posted/in file	None received certificates before monitoring
Training aligned with sectors	All



Ozark Region

Employment Plan

Item	Results
Long/Short Term Goals	3 of 3
Objectives	3 of 3
Justification	3 of 3
Goals Supported	All
Appropriate Case Notes	All

Appropriateness

Appropriateness was found in all files.

ITAs

ITAs were found in all files.

Supportive Services

No supportive services through WIOA.

Performance

Preliminary PY 25 Q2 performance Indicated that Adult was not meeting Employment Q4 and Median Earnings. Dislocated Worker was meeting all performance with one being at the 90%.

Issues

- Documents not uploaded
- Referral not being done
- Case notes were not found for activities in one file but were later added

Recommendations

- Upload documents timely
- Ensure that case notes are entered for every activity/service

Summary

There were very few errors in the files reviewed. The reviews were discussed with staff during one-on-one sessions. Timelines were provided for completing corrections.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Dowdy, Compliance Coordinator, January 15, 2026

Scope of Work

A review of the second quarter of 2025-2026 was conducted for files found beginning October 2025. There were seven new enrollments in Quarter 2, October 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025. The State MOJOBS database system was used, which also contained uploaded documentation.

Results

The following information was determined:

Eligibility	
Wagner-Peyser Application	7 of 7
SS #	7 of 7
Citizenship	7 of 7
Age/Date	7 of 7
Selective Service	5 of 5
EO Compliant & Grievance	7 of 7, one needed updated
Income/Family Size	2 of 2
In School Met	2 of 2
Out of School Met	5 of 5
Employment Plan	
Objective Assessment	7 of 7
Basic Skills Tested	7 of 7
Basic Skills Deficient	0
Occupational Skills	7 of 7
Prior Work Experience	7 of 7
Employability	7 of 7
Interests	7 of 7
Aptitudes	7 of 7
Supportive Service Needs	7 of 7
Developmental Needs	7 of 7
ISS Completed	7 of 7
Career pathway	7 of 7
Barriers addressed	7 of 7
Appropriate Casenote	7 of 7
Youth progress noted	3 too early, 4 needed noted
Services Provided	
400 Summer Youth Employment	0
401 Education For Workplace Preparation	0
406 Tutoring	0
408 Internship-Unpaid	0
409 Job Shadowing	0
410 Leadership	0
411 Adult Mentoring	0



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Overall Review WIOA Youth Program Program Year 2025-2026

Ozark Region

415 Alternative Secondary School	0
416 Occupational Skills Training	1
417 Comprehensive Guidance	0
418 Adult Education	0
420 Scholars	0
421 Career Awareness/Exploration	0
425 Work Experience	6
426 Work Experience Unpaid	0
427 Internship Paid	0
428 OJT	0
431 Prepare Post-secondary	0
433 Pre-Apprenticeship	0
434 Financial Literacy	0
435 Entrepreneurial Skills	0
436 Labor market information	6
480-486 Supportive Services	1
Incentive	0
Incentive according to policy	N/A
Follow Up Services	0
Service closed appropriately	All
Services not supposed to be posted	0
Corresponding casenotes	4 of 7
Services provided not posted	0
Work Experience	
Work Experience	6
Detailed Plan	6
Complaint and Grievance	5
Occupational component	6
Academic Goal	6
Supportive Services	
In allowable activity	1 of 1
Reasonable and necessary	1 of 1
Unable to obtain through other programs	1 of 1
Documented under activities	1 of 1
Case noted	0
Follow-local plan	1 of 1
Performance Review	
MSG	NA
Attainment of certificate Credential Tab	NA
In File?	NA
Follow-up provided	NA

MISSOURI JOB CENTER is an equal Employer/Program.

Auxiliary aides and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Missouri Relay 1-800-735-2966

Notes:

- No employment history
- Missing documentation
- Missing case notes
- Late notes

Observations/Areas of Concern

There were delays in uploading documentation and some missing documentation. Late notes continue. A few did not have contact case notes reflecting progress.

Preliminary reports show Youth meeting all performance measures with the exception of Skill Gains. This is not unexpected as the semester had not ended.

Summary

The Compliance Coordinator met one-on-one with staff to review individual monitoring sheets. Staff were provided a copy and given a deadline for correcting and returning the monitoring sheets.

Staff should be encouraged to ensure that all documentation is uploaded prior to the Youth beginning their activity. It is continued recommended that the elements be reviewed to determine if other elements are actually being utilized.

Completed January 15, 2026
Karen Dowdy, Compliance Coordinator