

**LOCAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT**

VCW Alexandria/Arlington

SUBMITTED BY

Alexandria/Arlington

Regional Workforce Council

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Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Please try to answer the questions in Section 1 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. The Virginia Employment Commission’s labor market information website, <https://virginiaworks.com>, contains information that may help you address elements 1.1 through 1.7.

1.1 A descriptive analysis of the regional economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)]

The Alexandria/Arlington region, part of the Washington, D.C. MSA, is one of the most diverse and, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, economically healthy regions in the United States. The combined area has a population of approximately 396,270 residents and 287,929 jobs as of Quarter 1 2020.¹ A chart highlighting the demographic diversity of the Alexandria-Arlington combined region is listed below, with a comparison to the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States.

Demographic Variable	Alexandria-Arlington	Virginia	United States
Population, Age 25-34	24.2%	13.9%	13.8%
Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate	78.1%	65.3%	63.2%
Education Attainment, Associate Degree or Higher	75.4%	48.3%	42.0%
Foreign Born Population	25.3%	12.3%	13.5%
Median Household Income	\$109,106	\$71,564	\$60,293

Between Quarter 1, 2016 and Quarter 1, 2020, the region added 6,640 new jobs for a growth rate of approximately 0.59% per year. Most of the growth occurred in the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services Industry, which makes up 23.2% of total employment in the region. Other important sectors with positive job growth since 2016 included transportation and warehousing, healthcare and social assistance, and educational services. Each of these industries added more than 1,000 net new jobs each since 2016. However, a few industries experienced employment losses over the same time period, with three industries experiencing job losses of more than 500 net jobs or more: Public Administration,

¹ Economic data in this report provided from JobsEQ by Chmura Economics and Labor Insight from Burning Glass Technologies. Contact: Alex Cooley, Northern Virginia Community College, acooley@nvcc.edu

Retail Trade, and Construction. A table of current industry data and net job gains/losses over the last 4 years is detailed in the chart below.²

Industry	Current Employment	Average Annual Wages	Location Quotient	Net Employment Change, Q1 2016 to Q1 2020
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	66,571	\$120,633	3.44	4,863
Public Administration	42,207	\$122,001	3.13	-1,555
Accommodation and Food Services	24,636	\$28,616	0.95	-348
Other Services	23,680	\$75,989	1.85	-473
Health Care and Social Assistance	19,817	\$59,697	0.48	1,487
Educational Services	18,772	\$60,548	0.80	1,432
Retail Trade	17,614	\$35,296	0.60	-595
Administrative and Support and Waste Management	17,300	\$58,067	0.94	-382
Transportation and Warehousing	15,503	\$76,521	1.17	2,030
Information	7,619	\$130,798	1.35	455
Finance and Insurance	6,836	\$151,079	0.60	-215
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,644	\$30,918	0.98	543
Real Estate and Leasing	5,303	\$69,839	1.06	-123
Construction	5,271	\$73,157	0.32	-608
Management of Companies and Enterprises	4,080	\$210,822	0.94	467
Wholesale Trade	2,708	\$111,969	0.25	-42
Manufacturing	2,625	\$64,066	0.11	56
Utilities	665	\$278,148	0.45	-70
Unclassified and All Other	512	N/A	N/A	271

² Data in this report does not include preliminary data; the full effects of COVID-19 on the region's economy is not currently reflected in the data but will likely impact the industries of accommodation and food service, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, and arts and entertainment significantly.

The region anticipates employment challenges in the coming years as a result of COVID-19 which are not yet reflected in the labor market data; particularly, the decline in business and personal travel will heavily impact the region, which has numerous hotels and a major airport. However, the growth in the professional services and health care industries is positive and is projected to continue to grow. Public administration, which saw job losses of more than 1,500 over the previous 4 years, has remained relatively flat in employment in recent years; the 1,500 losses mostly occurred in 2016 due to remnants of the federal base realignment and closure strategy, which moved many federal civilian jobs out of Arlington County. For example, in 2010, there were nearly 50,000 public administration jobs in the region.

The region had several development projects and job creation announcements in recent years, including the Nestle corporate headquarters relocation to Arlington in 2017 and the announcement of Amazon HQ2 in 2018, which will bring 25,000 jobs to the region by 2030. The region's highly skilled workforce and proximity to the nation's capital will continue to make it an attractive place for corporate relocation and expansion over the next 4 years.

Most of the job growth over the past 4 years occurred in professional occupations, such as IT and business and finance, and projections for the next 4 years predict a continuation of that trend. The table below highlights the top 10 occupations at the 5-digit SOC level that had the largest and smallest gains in employment numbers for the region between Q1 2016 and Q1 2020.

<u>SOC Code</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Net New Jobs</u>	<u>SOC Code</u>	<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Net New Jobs</u>
13-1160	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	676	37-2010	Building Cleaning Workers	-1,548
41-3090	Sales Representatives, Services	646	43-6010	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	-644
11-1020	General and Operations Managers	623	41-2030	Retail Salespersons	-582
43-4050	Customer Service Representatives	568	33-9030	Security Guards	-303
53-7060	Laborers and Material Movers	565	35-3030	Waiters and Waitresses	-234

15-1210	Computer and Information Analysts	479	41-1010	Sales Supervisors	-162
15-1250	Software and Web Developers, Programmers, and Testers	468	41-9040	Telemarketers	-146
53-3030	Driver/Sales Workers and Truck Drivers	451	47-2030	Carpenters	-134
25-2020	Elementary and Middle School Teachers	450	37-1010	Building and Grounds Cleaning Supervisors	-121
13-2010	Accountants and Auditors	449	41-4010	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	-117

Looking ahead to the next 4 years, the region will continue to require a disproportionate number of college-educated professionals to fill jobs in the local region. The region will also look to re-train individuals whose jobs were negatively impacted by COVID-19, particularly in the entertainment, retail, and hospitality sectors. The projected new job growth in the region for jobs in information technology, healthcare, and business services will provide opportunity for these displaced workers, as well as new college graduates and individuals who choose to relocate to the northern Virginia area.

1.2 A descriptive analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)]

As appropriate, a local area may use an existing analysis, which is a timely current description of the regional economy, to meet the requirements of this section. Local areas are encouraged to utilize regional economic development strategic plans in the identification and prioritization of industry sectors.

The region boasts a highly educated workforce, and many jobs require a bachelor’s degree or higher. Due to the region’s proximity to the nation’s capital, the region is home to many agencies of the federal government, including the Pentagon, which employs more than 20,000 persons, as well as the Transportation Security Administration, the US Patent and Trademark Office, the Drug Enforcement Agency, and the National Science Foundation. Additionally, the region is also the headquarters for numerous industry associations, political organizations, and advocacy organizations, as well as several Fortune 1000 companies. The most competitive industries for the Alexandria/Arlington region at the NAICS 4-digit level are listed in the table below.

<u>NAICS Code</u>	<u>Industry Name</u>	<u>Job Growth, 2016-Present</u>	<u>Number Employed</u>	<u>Location Quotient</u>
9281	National Security and International Affairs	523	18,415	16.75
8139	Business, Professional, Labor, Political and Similar Organizations	558	9,463	11.66
9261	Administration of Economic Programs	-2,313	12,891	11.39
4811	Scheduled Air Transportation	892	7,493	9.38
5612	Facilities Support Services	979	2,662	8.17
5251	Social Advocacy Organizations	394	2,924	6.87
5416	Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services	2,950	21,541	6.64
5415	Computer Systems Design and Related Services	3,767	21,902	5.24
8132	Grantmaking and Giving Services	-302	1,099	3.97
5417	Scientific Research and Development Services	-13	4,598	3.26

Many employers in these competitive industries listed above require a bachelor’s degree or higher for their positions. Additionally, many of them require a security clearance and/or industry recognized credentials. The chart below details the top 15 industry certifications, specialized skills, and software skills requested by employers in the region over the last 12 months (November 2019 – October 2020). Of the 129,454 total job postings advertised in the region over the last 12 months, the most in-demand certifications and skills requested by employers in Alexandria/Arlington are in information technology, healthcare, and professional business services.

<u>Top Requested Certifications</u>	<u>Top Requested Specialized Skills</u>	<u>Top Requested Technical/Computer Skills</u>
Security Clearance	Customer Service	Microsoft Office
Driver’s License	Scheduling	SQL
Project Management Certification	Budgeting	Python
CompTIA Security+	Project Management	Java

Registered Nurse	Sales	JavaScript
Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	Software Development	Linux
IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL)	Customer Contact	Oracle
Certified Public Accountant	Information Systems	Agile Development
SANS/GIAC Certification	Staff Management	Scrum
Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA)	Business Process	Atlassian JIRA
Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)	Accounting	Salesforce
First Aid / CPR / AED	Business Development	UNIX
Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)	Administrative Support	SAP
Certified Information Security Manager (CISM)	Procurement	Git
Cisco Certified Network Professional (CCNP)	Systems Engineering	Microsoft C#

1.3 An analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)]

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the region’s unemployment rate had continued a downward trend since the 2008-10 recession. Over the past 3 years, the region’s highest monthly unemployment rate was 3.0% in January 2017; the unemployment rate was 1.9% in February 2020. Since March 2020, the unemployment rate has continued to decline each month since April 2020, with the most current unemployment rate estimate at 5.1% for September 2020, which is lower than the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the US. The latest estimates (2014-2018) from the American Community Survey (ACS) indicate a high labor force participation rate of 78.1% and the number of employed persons for the region at 249,450. Based on the most recent unemployment rate estimates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there are approximately 12,000 to 13,000 unemployed persons in the region currently.

While the region boasts a high rate of higher education attainment, there are still gaps in the skill levels of workers. According to ACS data, 5.9% of residents have less than a high school diploma, 8.8% have only a high school diploma, and 9.9% have attended college but do not have a degree. This represents about 61,580 residents in the region between the ages of 25-64 with less than an associate’s degree. While the poverty level in the region is much lower than the national average, 8.5% of all residents are living below the poverty line, and 3.7% of households are receiving supplemental nutrition assistance. The demographic makeup of the region creates a gap between high- and low-income families, and the jobs likely most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic are typically filled by lower wage workers. The chart below illustrates key demographic data for the region and its comparison to the Commonwealth of Virginia and United States averages. Additionally, the number of residents who are foreign born or speak English less than very well is higher in the region than the national average, which presents unique barriers to these individuals seeking employment.

Demographic Variable	Alexandria-Arlington	Virginia	United States
Poverty Level	8.5%	10.9%	14.1%
Households Receiving Food stamps / SNAP	3.7%	8.7%	12.2%
Uninsured	8.9%	9.2%	9.4%
Speak English less than very well	9.5%	5.9%	8.5%
Foreign Born	25.3%	12.3%	13.5%

1.4 An analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D)]

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1.5 An analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce development activities identified in 1.4 and the capacity to provide these services [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D)]

Alexandria/Arlington has a deep talent base due to its ability to attract many young, educated workers. First and foremost, quality career opportunities attract these workers to the region, while its high quality of life and numerous amenities retains them. However, the region’s relatively high cost of living—especially housing—forces many of these younger workers to look elsewhere in the metro area and beyond once they get older and look to buy homes and/or start families. These factors have contributed to several years of net domestic out-migration in Alexandria/Arlington.

Opportunities to expand the region’s talent base can occur through the continued attraction of international immigrants, by creating opportunities for veterans leaving the military, and by establishing career pathways for existing workers that may not have a four-year degree. Another potential source of expanding labor supply lies with an underutilized workforce among the region’s lower-income residents. The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council and its two VCW Centers continue to outreach to community organizations to support these residents.

The Alexandria/Arlington region’s educational institutions are clear strengths that contribute to the region’s workforce in many ways. Some of the region’s high schools, such as Yorktown and Washington-Lee in Arlington, are viewed as some of the region and nation’s best. However, a big regional challenge remains the achievement gap for Hispanic students relative to other racial and ethnic groups. Whether through bilingual education or other types of programs, closing this achievement gap will be important for the region to more fully integrate these students into the community and prepare them for either the post-secondary education or the world of work.

A new secondary education asset in the region includes the Governor's Health Sciences Academy at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria City. As noted in the data analysis, high employment demand exists in the region for healthcare-related occupations; the program at T.C. Williams is building the talent pipeline for these jobs. The academy has been designed through a collaborative effort between Alexandria City Public Schools and The George Washington University. Through this collaboration, students will have the ability to receive up to 18 college credits from The GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Students will have the opportunity to start a career pathway that leads to an associate's and/or bachelor's degree and career-related industry certifications. Students who successfully complete an academy pathway will be offered guaranteed admissions to the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences. The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council is a proud partner of this tremendous community asset.

Public and private post-secondary institutions that offer an array of programs, particularly for adult learners and continuing education for incumbent workers, serve the region well. Within the region, students can access law schools, graduate schools, university research centers, undergraduate programs and community college and technical training programs. However, many of these institutions are satellite campuses of larger institutions that primarily serve students that are already in the world of work. An economic slowdown could potentially diminish the resources that workers can afford to devote towards professional education. Depressed enrollments would in turn limit the number of available programs.

The region's transit system is important to workers and employers alike. Residents of Alexandria/Arlington commute a relatively shorter commute than other locations in the Washington metro area, and nearly 1 in 4 residents take public transportation³. The range of transit options represents one of the region's real competitive advantages in attracting new workers, particularly millennial workers. Nevertheless, the public transit infrastructure, particularly Metrorail, are experiencing significant strains due to declining ridership because of maintenance concerns and diminishing reliability.

A lack of a dedicated funding mechanism for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) has contributed to these issues and local jurisdictions only have marginal influence in addressing these concerns. Also, the economic slowdown caused by the COVID-19 Emergency has reduced metro ridership and revenues⁴. Public transportation is particularly important to federal employees. Encouraged in part by federal transit benefits, 37 percent of the government workers living in Alexandria/Arlington use public transportation³. As public transportation becomes a less attractive option,

³ Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Commuter Connections 2019 State of the Commute Survey Report. <https://www.mwcog.org/file.aspx?&A=1AAuS26tuk0qvTVF52Q7%20D87I582VWw4yNkHhrl8JrM=>.

⁴ <https://www.wmata.com/initiatives/budget/>.

more workers will take to the roads, thereby causing further congestion and longer commute times and making the region a less attractive place to live.

To maintain and strengthen its existing base, the region must ensure that the business environment allows its existing employers to grow and is attractive to potential new employers. This is not only important for creating jobs, but also for building the region's tax base so that it can fund things like broadband expansion, education, workforce training, mental health or other key government services. Despite strong levels of visitor spending, the region's tax base has been hurt by rising office vacancy rates due to base closure and realignment, workforce cuts from federal budget sequestration, and General Services Administration (GSA) rent caps that forced many federal agencies to reduce their footprint in Arlington and Alexandria or find less expensive office space elsewhere. For private sector employers, the opening of Metro's Silver line and a desire to be in Washington, DC has created more options and increased competition for business within the metro area. Office vacancy rates are 16 percent in Arlington and 23 percent in Alexandria⁵.

Alexandria City and Arlington County continue to pursue companies from several new and emerging private sector industries, which should help to diversify the economy and reduce office vacancy rates. As noted earlier in this plan, the region recently met with great success by attracting Amazon to our area. Due to the region's largely developed area, almost all development must be redevelopment. This provides opportunities to convert existing space into real estate products more suited to the target industries or the changing nature of demand. Nevertheless, if the level of federal government activity and contracting slows down, trends in office vacancy will be difficult to reverse in the short- and medium-term.

⁵ https://www.insidenova.com/news/business/arlinton-office-vacancy-rate-declines-in-1st-quarter/article_183dbbe2-95df-11ea-9273-df9812d7a64c.html and <https://alexandrialivingmagazine.com/home-and-garden/real-estate-assessments-up-alexandria-2020/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CBased%20on%20%5Bthe%20Office%20of,%2C%22%20according%20to%20the%20report.>

The Washington metro area has a reputation as being a ‘Federal City’ and thereby lacking an entrepreneurial culture. This represents a real regional weakness, as changes in federal spending would affect the region less if area businesses served a wider array of markets. Moreover, the region must also do a better job of retaining the innovative companies started in the region. The region, however, has many assets from which to build. It is home to key research organizations such as Defense Advanced Research Projects Administration (DARPA), the Office of Naval Research (ONR), the Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR), the National Science Foundation, and major research institutions (University of Virginia (UVA), George Mason University (GMU), Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)). The region can create opportunities by not only better leveraging these assets, but also by better connecting small businesses and entrepreneurs to business incubators and accelerators to service providers like small business development centers.

The region’s polarized labor market contains many high-wage, high-skill jobs at one end, many low-wage, low skill jobs at the other end, and fewer jobs in the middle. However, employers must be able to find workers for all three segments of the workforce to ensure the success of their business and by extension the region’s continued prosperity. Many issues will influence the availability of ready and qualified workers. Some, but not all, of these issues are beyond local influence and action. As a result, the region can act to enhance its ability to attract and retain talent, prepare future workers and provide continuing education, improve transit systems, develop and diversify its economic base, and support small businesses and entrepreneurs.

In regions like Alexandria/Arlington, where the labor market and economic activity is so fluid between multiple states and jurisdictions, trying to estimate a specific gap between labor force supply and labor force demand is often not a useful exercise. Rather, it is perhaps more useful to consider several key scenarios that might shape the region’s economic trajectory and by extension the nature of labor demand and supply.

1.6 Describe and assess the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area including activities for youth with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities. Please include:

- Local area’s strategy for ensuring the availability of comprehensive services for all youth
- How the area will identify and select successful providers of youth activities and delivery of the fourteen youth program elements required under WIOA
- Strategies to ensure that all eligible WIOA youth receive access to the required program elements and activities during their enrollment in the WIOA youth program
- How the required program design elements will be addressed as part of the development of youth service strategies
- Strategies to identify, recruit, and retain out-of-school youth, and efforts to ensure the required percent of WIOA youth funds are expended
- Policy regarding serving youth who do not meeting income eligibility guidelines, including appropriate referrals
- Efforts to coordinate with Job Corps, youth opportunity grants where applicable, registered apprenticeship programs, local offices on youth, and other youth services, including those administered through community colleges and other higher education institutions and local human services agencies
- Efforts taken to ensure compliance with applicable child labor and safety regulations
- Pay-for-performance policy as applicable

VCW Alexandria Center and VCW Arlington Center performs the “framework services” for VCW Alexandria/Arlington Region’s WIOA Title I Youth program with Arlington County serving as the grant recipient and fiscal agent. Both VCW Centers support Out-Of-School Youth, only, and youth of all abilities are targeted for outreach and program inclusion. The Centers promote their youth programs throughout their respective social services departments, their Ticket-to-Work Employment Networks, their networks of community-based organizations, their public schools’ adult education programs, DC’s and Northern Virginia’s Job Corps agencies, and local restorative justice networks.

The framework services that the Centers provide include intake, objective assessments, development of individual service strategies, case management, supportive services, and follow-up services. Framework services are funded by WIOA Youth funds. Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council provides both Centers with a WIOA Youth budget at the beginning of each program year and itemizes the funding to be spent on personnel and program expenses. It is through this budget that the Council presents the funding allotment to meet the 20 percent work experience requirement. The

Council then reviews WIOA Youth expenditures monthly and communicates with program staff to ensure that 20 percent of WIOA Youth funds are spent on work experience, each program year.

Additionally, both Centers partner with the following local government and nonprofit partners to provide free services to their youth customers for the following 14 WIOA Youth program elements:

Youth Program Element	Provider
1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandria City Public School, GED Program • Arlington Public School, GED Program
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandria City Public School, GED Program • Alexandria City Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy • Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria City • Alexandria City Court Service Unit • Arlington Public School, GED Program
3. Paid and unpaid work experience that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include –	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Employer Referrals from the Centers’ Business Services Teams • Project Discovery: Empowerment and College Preparation

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; • Pre-apprenticeship programs; • Internships and job shadowing, and • On-the-job training opportunities 	
<p>4. Occupational skills training which may include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council’s Eligible Training Providers List
<p>5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council’s Eligible Training Providers List • Skill-Up City of Alexandria and Arlington County (http://alexandriarlington.skillupamerica.org/)

<p>6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors during non-school hours, as appropriate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Discovery: Empowerment and College Preparation • Alexandria Mentoring Partnership • Alexandria Court Services Unit
<p>7. Supportive Services (<i>Linkages to community services</i>)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transportation 2. Childcare 3. Housing and Accommodation for youth with disabilities 4. Uniforms 5. Referrals to Healthcare 6. Educational Testing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandria City Department of Community and Human Services • Arlington Department of Human Services • Legal Services of Northern Virginia
<p>8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various Partnerships with local and regional mentorship-focused CBOs
<p>9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCW Alexandria Center • VCW Arlington Center

<p>10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various Partnerships with local and regional counseling-focused CBOs
<p>11. Financial literacy education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Community Federal Credit Union
<p>12. Entrepreneurial skills training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Development Assistant Group
<p>13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council • Virginia Employment Commission • Career Concourse (https://alexandriaarlington.careerconcourse.com/)
<p>14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexandria City Public School • Arlington Public School • Project Discovery: Empowerment and College Preparation • Volunteer Alexandria

When the Centers cannot obtain free services to perform the 14-youth program elements they will follow local government procurement procedures to purchase services for their youth customers.

Each participant receiving services from the WIOA Youth Program through the VCW Centers work with program staff to create an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for their program participation. ISS is a collaboratively built document that details participant’s needs for training, education and support services assistance. ISS details the goals for the participant’s time in the program and anticipated needs

throughout, based on objective assessments completed. ISS plan is updated when any changes occur and reflect the needs of the participant as they meet the needs of the workforce. ISS identifies and documents:

- The educational goal(s) of the participant;
- The employment goal(s) of the participant including non-traditional employment goals, if applicable;
- Appropriate achievement objectives for the participant;
- Appropriate services to be delivered and justification for the services to be provided;
- Any referral(s) to other services/programs and justification for such services needed, but not available in the Alexandria/Arlington’s VCW Centers.

All services delivered to WIOA Youth are detailed in the ISS, along with justifications and resources needed. All expenditures are tied to the goals in the ISS. WIOA Youth program supervisors meet with staff weekly to ensure that all eligible WIOA youth receive access to the 14 program elements. It is important to note, while the Regional Workforce Council maintains an active [5% WIOA Youth Policy](#), youth referrals predominantly meet WIOA Youth income eligibility guidelines. For youth who do not meet WIOA Youth eligibility guidelines, staff refer these individuals to other relevant programs that the Centers implement.

Finally, all Youth Work Experience Agreements are reviewed annually to ensure that required federal, state, and local regulation language are included. This includes all relevant child labor and safety regulations.

1.7 Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area, including:

- Access to and delivery of career services (basic, individualized, and follow-up)
- The area’s definition of self-sufficiency to be used when determining eligibility for intensive and training services for employed individuals
- The area’s definition of hard-to-serve populations with additional barriers to employment

Basic Career services are universally available at the two VCW Centers. All staff located at the Centers, including reception staff, are trained and knowledgeable about providing universal services. Alexandria/Arlington’s VCW Centers offer a variety of services and programs for both job seekers and

employers, including for job seekers with multiple barriers to employment. Job seekers with barriers to employment may include:

- Adult and youth ex- offenders;
- Basic skills deficient individuals;
- Homeless individuals;
- Individuals lacking educational and/or occupational skills attainment;
- Individuals with a disability;
- Long-term unemployed individuals;
- Low-income workers earning wages below self-sufficiency;
- Older workers;
- Individuals with poor work history and/or lack of work experience;
- Pregnant and parenting youth;
- Public assistance recipients (TANF, SNAP, SSI, Medicaid, etc.);
- Runaway youth;
- Youth in, or previously in, foster care.

The Council, along with the two VCW Centers, are also part of Alexandria City’s and Arlington County’s Continuums of Care. The Centers provide various resources and services for populations with multiple barriers, including:

- Resources to support the workforce development needs of these populations with services including a variety of skill-development workshops (interviewing, resume writing, federal job application assistance, social media, and basic computer skills), WIOA/VIEW/TANF/SNAPET programs, refugee services, referrals to public school adult education/ESL programs, Social Security Employment Networks, Skill-Up City of Alexandria and Arlington County, and staffed Resource Centers (computer labs).

- Direct referrals to each jurisdiction’s Department of Social Services to receive housing, financial, medical, and crisis assistance services. The Departments of Social Services also refer job seekers to the two VCW Centers.
- Direct referrals to community-based organizations that provide food, shelter, job-training, and re-entry support services. The community-based organizations also refer job seekers to the two VCW Centers.

While the communities of Alexandria and Arlington provide a wealth of resources to support these populations, the region’s primary need is for employers to provide work experience/internships and to hire individuals facing multiple barriers. The region’s Business Services representatives reach out to area employers to create hiring events and work experience opportunities accessible to all job seeker populations.

VCW Center Basic Career Services include, but are not limited to:

- Resource Centers (computer labs) – Fully equipped with over 20 computers, all with high speed internet access; 4 printers; software packages include Microsoft Office Suite and resume preparation; tutorials include those for typing, [Skill-up City of Alexandria/Arlington County](#) distance learning platform; Pesco Vocational Assessment; copiers, telephones, and fax machines.
- Business Services - Pre-screening of qualified job applicants; space for interviewing with private interview rooms; assistance with specialized recruitments; on-site and virtual job fairs; customized workshops and information on financial incentives (conducted in-person and virtually), including Work Opportunity Tax Credits.
- Specialized Services to Individuals with Disabilities – Adaptive technology includes computers for the visually impaired equipped with CC TV (text enlarger), JAWS, Zoom text Xtra, Aladdin (reads text documents), Magnifier, Naturally Speaking Deluxe, Jaws 3.7, SnagIt 32, WYNN wizard, and IBM via voice. The Centers also provide specialized services to customers with disabilities and both are Ticket to Work Employment Networks.

- Services to the Foreign-Born Population – Customized services are made available to newly arrived refugees through the Virginia Refugee Resettlement Program; locally funded ESOL services provided by the public schools’ Adult Education programs; and bi-lingual staff who speak a variety of languages including Spanish, Amharic, Arabic, Tigrinya, French and Bengali.
- Employability Workshops – Designed to assist customers in their job search and to improve on their skills. Workshops include resume preparation, interviewing, money management, and basic professionalism skills and are in both in-person and virtual formats.
- Referrals to Adult and Dislocated Worker Individual Career Services – Designed to assist the individual who needs guidance and support beyond core services available in the Resource Centers. Intensive Services include comprehensive assessment of education and skill levels, short term pre-vocational services, development of individual employment plan, career assessment and planning, job placement and retention assistance.
- Career Training and Credentialing – Occupational skills training is offered on a limited basis through WIOA Title I and other federal, state, and local funding. Customers may select from a variety of approved training providers that include the public schools, Northern Virginia Community College, and other for- and non-profit workforce training entities. All WIOA Title I training leads to the attainment of an in-demand industry certification or license.
- Follow-up Services – Follow-up counselling for participants in youth, adult, or dislocated worker WIOA Title I activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment.

Finally, the region’s definition of self-sufficiency and the process to be used when determining eligibility for individual career services for employed individuals is included in the Council’s [“Local Policies for WIOA-Funded Programs”](#) on pages 13, 15, and 17.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Please try to answer the questions in Section 2 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. Section 2 responses should be greatly influenced by the members of the local workforce development board and other community stakeholders.

2.1 Describe the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). The goals should relate to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance (found here: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/performance-indicators>) to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council’s 2020-2024 mission, vision, and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) are:

2020-2024 Mission

We help drive equitable economic growth in Alexandria and Arlington County by implementing an effective, efficient, and inclusive workforce ecosystem that delivers equal access to innovative, integrated, data-driven products and services designed and aligned to meet the needs of businesses and all job seekers. We hold ourselves accountable to the system’s goals and support high-impact outcomes.

2020-2024 Vision

The Alexandria/Arlington Workforce System envisions a region where every business has access to a qualified, job-ready workforce and every resident has the skills needed to connect with meaningful employment and advance in a career.

Goal 1: Build Better Employer Relationships

Build better relationships so that we can deliver value to customers by filling in-demand jobs that are strategic to our diverse economy.

Goal 2: Skill People Up!

Develop a proactive, confident, and qualified workforce with the essential workforce readiness competencies and credentials that meet current and anticipated business needs.

Goal 3: Connect People to Jobs

Connect people to job opportunities that pay a living wage with benefits and that provide equitable opportunities for launching sustainable career pathways for work that is in demand.

Goal 4: Ensure We Are Accessible to Everyone

Increase equitable access to the local workforce system and its services through collaborative partnerships and coordinated, innovative solutions.

Goal 5: Better Promote What We Do

Promote the workforce system and its services through focused communication with employers, schools, and potential employees to meet the needs of all.

These goals will help the VCW Alexandria/Arlington region better serve employers, maximize our outreach to job seekers, and support our measurable skills gains, credential attainment, employment, and median earnings WIOA Title I performance accountability measures over the next four years.

2.2 Describe how the local board’s strategic vision and goals will support the strategies identified in the Virginia Combined State Plan (found here: <https://virginiacareerworks.com>).

The Combined State Plan will be posted in fall 2020.

The vision and goals of the VCW Alexandria/Arlington region support the strategies identified in the Virginia Combined State Plan as follows:

<u>Virginia Combined State Plan Goals</u>	<u>VCW Alexandria/Arlington Plan Goals</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 1: Help individuals gain access to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages and provide opportunities for career progression by providing equitable and universal service delivery • Goal 2: Increase business engagement and deliver value to our business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All five goals will help more Alexandria/Arlington residents gain access to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages and provide opportunities for career progression by providing equitable and universal service delivery • Goal 1 supports the Virginia Combined State Plan’s second goal.

<p>customers by filling jobs in high-demand occupations that are strategic to Virginia’s economy and strengthen Virginia’s regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 3: Develop a qualified and desirable workforce with the skills, competencies, and credentials that meets the current and anticipated business needs of Virginia • Goal 4: Strengthen outreach and recruitment efforts to make available services more well-known and stimulate career awareness • Goal 5: Reduce workforce system barriers through collaborative integration and innovative solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals 2 and 3 focus on helping residents build their soft and hard skills to maximize their competitiveness in the region’s labor market. • All goals, and particularly Goal 5, focus on improving the quality and frequency of outreach activities. • All goals support the Virginia Combined State Plan’s fifth goal.
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2.3 Describe how the local board’s vision and goals align with and/or supports the vision of the Virginia Board of Workforce Development (VBWD) (found here: <https://viriniacareerworks.com>).

The VBWD approved their 2020-2023 Strategic Plan in September 2020.

<u>VBWD Goals</u>	<u>VCW Alexandria/Arlington Plan Goals</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 1: Identify short and long-term workforce strategies for businesses and workers in response to changing economic conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All five goals will help more Alexandria/Arlington employers and job seekers in response to changing economic conditions.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 2: Expand equitable access to education and training programs. • Goal 3: Increase access to the technology needed for the education, training, and career pathway development for Virginia’s workforce of the future. • Goal 4: Address systemic barriers to workforce success through innovative strategies, policy changes, and investments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 4 supports the VBWD’s second goal. • Goals 1, 2, and 4 support increasing access to the technology needed for the education, training, and career pathway development for Alexandria/Arlington’s workforce of the future. • All goals, and particularly Goal 4, focus on improving the access to and fostering the success of the VCW Alexandria/Arlington workforce system.
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2.4 Taking into account the analyses described in 1.1 through 2.3, describe a strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local areas to achieve the local board’s strategic vision and goals. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

VCW Alexandria/Arlington strives for continual improvement of its partner relationships, coordination of services, and resource sharing. Specific roles and resource contributions are detailed in the [One-Stop Memorandum of Understanding](#). Partner staff have regularly scheduled One-Stop Operations Committee meetings to discuss options for additional resource sharing opportunities that support stronger integrated service delivery for jobseeker and employer customers. The programs included in the system are:

<p>Mandatory Federal and/or State One Stop Partner Program</p>	<p>Administrative Agency</p>	<p>Operational Agency</p>
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WIOA Title I Adult, Youth & Dislocated Workers	Virginia Community College System	Alexandria City Department of Community and Human Services & Arlington Department of Human Services
Virginia Initiative For Employment not Welfare (VIEW); Supplemental Nutrient Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAPET)	Virginia Department of Social Services	Alexandria City Department of Community and Human Services & Arlington Department of Human Services
HUD Community Development Block Grant; HHS Community Services Block Grant	Arlington Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development	Arlington Department of Human Services
WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser; Unemployment Compensation; Veterans Employment and Training; Trade Adjustment Assistance	Virginia Employment Commission	Virginia Employment Commission (Co-located at both Centers)
WIOA IV – Rehabilitation Act, as amended	Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services; Virginia	Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (Co-located at both Centers)

	Department for the Blind & Vision Impaired	
Title V of the Older Americans Act	National Council on Aging	National Council on Aging, Washington (Co-located at both Centers)
WIOA Title II – Adult Education	Virginia Department of Education	Alexandria City Public Schools & Arlington County Public Schools (Virtual presence at both Centers)
Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Programs & Rapid Response	Virginia Community College System	Northern Virginia Community College (Virtual presence at the Alexandria Center/Physical presence at the Arlington Center) Alexandria City Public Schools & Arlington County Public Schools (Virtual presence at both Centers)
Registered Apprenticeship	Virginia Department of Labor and Industry	Regional Registered Apprenticeship Consultant (Virtual presence at both Centers)
Business Services	Regional Business Services Team	Regional Business Services Team (Co-located at both Centers)

All partners participated in Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council’s strategic planning process and provided input. The following strategies will be used to carry out the core programs and alignment of resources to achieve the vision and goals over the next four years:

<u>Goals</u>	<u>Strategies</u>
<p>1. Build Better Employer Relationships: Build better employer relationships so that we can deliver value to customers by filling their in-demand jobs that are strategic to our diverse economy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new business partnerships with those who have not used or have underutilized the workforce system • Build relationships with employers so that matches between their needs and job seekers can be facilitated • Increase quality and frequency of communication and collaboration with employers • Use data to help develop employer engagement targets • Provide a rapid response to businesses that have layoffs, and assist affected employees • Provide assessment tools, for example, Career Scope, to align participant interests and skills with job opportunities • Ensure that students and other job seekers are considering the full range of job opportunities and careers, not just those that require higher education
<p>2. Skill People Up!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve internal collaboration among workforce system partners to ensure that

	<p>development opportunities for job seekers are maximized</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that job seekers are prepared for a more virtual, technologically driven workforce environment • Increase/develop a case coordination style of customer service, following up when training/education referrals are made and getting feedback from customers about the effectiveness of our efforts to help them develop • Provide education and training opportunities for job seekers • Provide work-based learning opportunities for job seekers • Provide cross-cultural orientation to new immigrants so that their job seeking expectations are appropriate and efforts to find work are successful
<p>3. Connect People to Jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase coordination and partnerships with other regional workforce systems to maximize job seekers' employment opportunities • Elevate work-based learning experiences to become a priority service of our region

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post relevant job opportunities produce and/or participate in virtual or in person hiring events • Provide connections for job seekers to work-based learning opportunities • Monitor and analyze labor market information so that the system is aware of current business needs • Keep school systems informed of labor market information • Provide ongoing training to staff ensuring their up-to-date awareness of all the resources for job seeker preparation
<p>4. Ensure We Are Accessible to Everyone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide all communication about and from the workforce system in the languages most often spoken/read in our community • Improve case coordination and follow along, ensuring that there is support for job seekers who encounter barriers • Communicate with community-based agencies (for example, social services) to ensure that their customers know about and can access workforce resources • Communicate with students and their counselors about workforce system services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that individuals with disabilities have equitable access to workforce system services
<p>5. Better Promote What We Do</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement targeted outreach activities about the workforce system for schools that would encourage students to use the workforce system for summer and post-graduation jobs • Develop and implement a broad public relations campaign for the community and our regional system about our activities and needs • Develop and implement targeted outreach activities about the workforce system for employers, especially those who do not utilize or underutilize the workforce system, and promote work-based learning to all employers • Communicate to other regional systems about our activities and our needs • Actively educate local elected officials and others who can support the workforce system

2.5 Describe the local board strategic plan designed to combine public and private resources to support sector strategies, career pathways, and career readiness skills development. Such initiatives shall include or address:

- Regional vision for workforce development
- Protocols for planning workforce strategies that anticipate industry needs
- Needs of incumbent and underemployed workers in the region
- Development of partners and guidelines for various forms of on-the-job training, such as registered apprenticeships
- Setting of standards and metrics for operational delivery

- Alignment of monetary and other resources, including private funds and in-kind contributions, to support the workforce development system
- Generation of new sources of funding to support workforce development in the region

Adherence to this guidance will satisfy the LWDB's responsibility to prepare a demand plan for the initial year of this local plan, as required in the Code of Virginia Title 2.2 Chapter 24 Section 2.2-2472(E).

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council and its two VCW Centers are part of two jurisdictional governments. The activities implemented through these agencies are primarily funded by multiple, and many times braided, local, state and federal public funds. Public funding will continue to be used to provide career readiness skills development locally. The Council engages other government and community-based agencies to support sector strategies and career pathways activities. As an example, Northern Virginia Community College provides career pathways education tools to system partners. Additionally, it is important to note that all system partners engage local employers to provide guidance on job training and employment activities, to develop work experience opportunities, and to refer the system's job seekers for employment consideration. All VCW Alexandria/Arlington system partners provided input into the regional vision for workforce development and the same partners meet regularly during One-Stop Operations Committee Meetings to discuss amongst other topics, protocols for planning workforce strategies that anticipate industry needs, the needs of incumbent and underemployed workers in the region, development of partners and guidelines for various forms of on-the-job training, such as registered apprenticeships, and the setting of standards and metrics for operational delivery. The system's work is not static and continuous improvement is always considered. Early in 2021, the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council will work with system partners to develop an action plan to implement VCW Alexandria/Arlington's strategic plan. Through this action plan the Council will strive to deliver favorable outcomes for all system stakeholders.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Please try to answer the questions in Section 3 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. Many of the responses below, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners.

3.1 Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies:

- The programs that are included in that system
- How the local board will work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006
- How the local board coordinates and interacts with Chief Elected Officials (CEO)

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]

VCW Alexandria/Arlington Region offers a wide variety of integrated resources and programs that provide conveniently accessed quality services to our customers. The region is home to two high-performing comprehensive VCW Centers, both of which reside within their jurisdiction's Department of Social Services.

Both Centers have partner agencies and their programs and services co-located as required by WIOA. In some cases, partners have a virtual presence wherein their physical operations are within five miles of a Center and are accessible by public transportation and the internet. In these cases, virtual partners will hold regularly scheduled meetings and events at the two VCW Centers.

The two VCW Centers and partner agencies comply with WIOA sec. 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Both Centers participate in the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work Employment Network as well. These Centers, in partnership with the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, have increased opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWD) to obtain training, employment, vocational rehabilitation, and other support services. Each Center employs a certified Disability Employment Counselor to support the employment and training activities of PWD.

Disability Employment staff, along with each jurisdiction’s ADA Compliance staff work with the VCW Centers to ensure that physical space and programing comply with federal, state, and local laws. When a PWD requests an accommodation to access all Center programs, staff work with Disability Employment/ADA Compliance staff to secure the resource. If the resource cannot be secured internally, the Center will procure the resource from an approved third-party vendor.

The Centers are intended to serve, but are not limited to, residents and businesses located in Alexandria City and Arlington County. VCW Alexandria/Arlington Region system partners include:

Mandatory Federal and/or State VCW Center Partner Program	Administrative Agency	Operational Agency
WIOA Title I Adult, Youth & Dislocated Workers	Virginia Community College System	Alexandria City Department of Community and Human Services & Arlington Department of Human Services (Co-located at both Centers)
Virginia Initiative For Employment Not Welfare (VIEW); Supplemental Nutrient Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAPET)	Virginia Department of Social Services	Alexandria City Department of Community and Human Services & Arlington Department of Human Services (Co-located at both Centers)
HUD Community Development Block Grant;	Arlington Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development	Arlington Department of Human Services

HHS Community Services Block Grant		(Co-located at VCW Arlington Center)
WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser; Rapid Response; Unemployment Compensation; Veterans Employment and Training; Trade Adjustment Assistance	Virginia Employment Commission	Virginia Employment Commission (Co-located at both Centers)
WIOA IV – Rehabilitation Act	Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services; Virginia Department for the Blind & Vision Impaired	Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (Virtual presence at VCW Alexandria Center/Physical presence at the VCW Arlington Center)
Title V of the Older Americans Act	National Council on Aging	National Council on Aging, Washington (Virtual presence at VCW Alexandria Center/Physical presence at VCW Arlington Center)
WIOA Title II – Adult Education	Virginia Department of Education	Alexandria City Public Schools & Arlington County Public Schools (Virtual presence at both Centers)

Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Programs	Virginia Community College System	Northern Virginia Community College (Virtual presence at both Centers) Alexandria City Public Schools & Arlington County Public Schools (Virtual presence at both Centers)
Registered Apprenticeship	Virginia Department of Labor and Industry	Regional Registered Apprenticeship Consultant (Virtual presence at both Centers)
Business Services	Regional Business Services Team	Regional Business Services Team (Co-located at both Centers)

In June 2015, the local elected officials of Alexandria City and Arlington County agreed to continue their 15-year partnership by renewing their Workforce Development Consortium Agreement⁶. This Agreement delineates the workforce responsibilities of the Chief Elected Officials and the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council, the local workforce development board serving VCW Alexandria/Arlington Region. In summary, the Consortium of Chief Elected Officials is required to:

- In collaboration with the Regional Workforce Council, establish the local vision, select the One-Stop Operator, and oversee WIOA activities and funding;
- Appoint the Regional Workforce Council membership, identify key roles and responsibilities of all parties, including the operation and function of the Council, and provisions regarding conflict of interest, and approve the budget;
- Negotiate and reach agreement on local performance measures with the Commonwealth of Virginia;

⁶ <https://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us/policies/>

- Conduct oversight of all WIOA Title I programs.

The Regional Workforce Council must develop a local Talent Development Plan every four years, coordinate and conduct oversight of the local one-stop delivery system, and provide oversight of the WIOA Title I activities in partnership with the Consortium. A One-Stop Operator is competitively procured annually to coordinate the service delivery of the region’s workforce system partners at the two VCW Centers. The One-Stop Operator reports to the Regional Workforce Council quarterly.

The One-Stop Operator has responsibility for organizing and delivering access to all required customer services through coordinated solutions as part of a fully integrated, partner-based, partner-led VCW system as follows:

- Maintain effective working relationships with all system partners and career services provider leadership across the region;
- Coordinate exclusively with system partner and career services provider leadership for the management of service delivery of operations and service providers across the entire Alexandria/Arlington Region, as described in the workforce system partners’ Memorandum of Understanding;
- Facilitate the VCW Center Certification Process in accordance with US Department of Labor and Virginia Community College Systems requirements, as well as conduct the annual WIOA Title I local programmatic, financial, and administrative audit.

Finally, the leaders of Alexandria City’s and Arlington County’s Adult Basic Education and Career and Technical Education either serve on or attend the meetings of the Regional Workforce Council. The Council’s Executive Director is an appointed member of both jurisdiction’s Career Technical Education Advisory Commissions, serving as Chair of both commissions. These additional volunteer roles further solidify regional workforce collaboration.

3.2 Describe strategies and services that will be used in the local area to:

- Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand sectors

and occupations, in workforce development programs

- Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area
- Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development
- Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs

These strategies and services may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies, designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the strategy described in 2.1.

The local board generally services as the “regional convener” and each regional convener shall develop, in collaboration with other workforce development entities in the region, a local plan for employer engagement. VBWD Policy No.13-01 Business Service Requirements for Local Workforce Investment Areas outlines the role and requirements of Local Workforce Areas and Virginia Workforce Centers in providing services to business customers, and presents required actions by the LWDA in regard to implementation of business services to enhance the business customer’s outcomes and satisfaction with the workforce system through Business Services Teams.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4), Code of Virginia 2.2. Chapter 24 Section 2.2-2472.1]

In the VCW Alexandria/Arlington Region, most of the system partners employ their own business services staff (ex. VEC, DARS, and NVCC). These staff members communicate regularly with each other, in-person and virtually, for the benefit of the region’s businesses and job seekers. To support continuous improvement for how these staff members support the region on behalf of their agencies, the Business Services supervisors from VCW Alexandria Center and VCW Arlington Center convene quarterly physical or virtual meetings with the relevant system partner staff to provide a formal setting to communicate information about upcoming hiring events and needs, to learn about the latest labor market data, to share promising practices, participate in staff development training, and to hear from employers directly about their specific talent needs (ex. skill needs, incumbent worker training, customized training, etc.). All staff take this information and disseminate it through their agencies.

Furthermore, these inter-agency collaborations are also facilitated through quarterly One-Stop Operations Committee meetings. Meeting agendas usually cover:

- Unifying the region’s workforce system partners under a common agenda and shared outcomes;
- Making relevant labor market information accessible and actionable;

- Supporting professional development for workforce system staff;
- Disseminating (quarterly) a list of high-demand occupations that support target sectors in the Alexandria/Arlington and Washington metropolitan regions;
- Delivering career pathway tools that are aligned with priority occupations that are specific to the Alexandria/Arlington and the Washington metropolitan regions, as developed by Northern Virginia Community College;
- Seeking opportunities for improving the referral process between workforce system partners;
- Seeking opportunities for continuous improvement process;
- Identifying additional funding needs that the Regional Workforce Council can support through participating in grant competitions.

Additionally, the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council provides the system’s business services staff with virtual tools, like JobsEQ, an online real-time labor market analysis tool, and Premier Virtual, a virtual job fair platform, to assist in their efforts to recruit employer prospects and support their recruitment activities. Finally, should a business contact the Regional Workforce Council, their contact information will be referred to the relevant system partner.

3.3 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with economic development activities carried out in the region in which the local area is located (or planning region) and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council has a strong history of collaboration with each jurisdiction’s economic development agencies, the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (<http://www.alexecon.org/>) and the Arlington Economic Development (<https://www.arlingtoneconomicdevelopment.com/>). Past evidence of this Partnership is found in its collaboration on the development of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

(<https://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us/alexandriaarlington-comprehensive-economic-development-strategy/>).

On September 19, 2011, the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration certified the Alexandria/Arlington Workforce Development Board’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). CEDS is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies. The CEDS analyzes the state of the workforce and economies of Alexandria City and Arlington County and establishes regional goals and objectives. The Council was the 38th Workforce Board in the United States to achieve this certification and the 1st in Virginia. This partnership is investigating the possibility of developing a second regional CEDS in 2021.

Additionally, leadership from both economic development agencies are members of the Regional Workforce Council and VCW Center staff attend economic development agency meetings regularly as well as participate on the economic development agency’s workforce & education taskforce. There is a formal process for referring clients of these agencies to the Centers’ staff. When the opportunity arises, business development representatives from the economic development agencies refer their clients to the VCW Center Directors to receive talent development support. The Directors, in turn, work through their staff to deliver business services ranging from customized job fairs to incumbent worker training.

The Regional Workforce Council, the two VCW Centers, and two economic development agencies regularly promote the providers of the region’s entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services through their networks. These providers are:

- The Alexandria Small Business Development Center (www.alexandriasbdc.org) provides free tools, resources, and confidential services to small businesses in the City of Alexandria.
- BizLaunch (<https://www.arlingtoneconomicdevelopment.com/business-services/start-and-grow-your-small-business-services/about-bizlaunch/>) is Arlington’s small business

and entrepreneurial assistance network, offering nearly 40 workshops and seminars every year, all aimed at helping local entrepreneurs and small business owners plan, develop and grow their businesses.

- Business Development Assistance Group, Inc. is an organization assisting recently arrived immigrants to start a business as their first entry to the American workforce. BDAG partners with a wide variety of small business organizations to provide them with information on writing a business plan, taxes, permits, licensing, marketing, financing and just about anything else they will need to know to start or grow their small business. In addition, the BDAG offers information, counseling, and research opportunities, all free of charge.

Finally, the Regional Workforce Council’s Executive Director chairs the Arlington Chamber of Commerce’s Education & Workforce Committee.

3.4 Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]

There is a strong history of collaboration between the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council, the VCW Centers, Northern Virginia Community College, and the region’s public school systems in Alexandria/Arlington. Alexandria City Public School and Arlington Public Schools run the WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs for the region. These programs support the development of the region’s workforce by providing foundational education necessary for employment. Services include adult literacy, workplace adult education and literacy, family literacy instruction, English language acquisition instruction, integrated English literacy and civics education and activities, workforce preparation activities, and integrated education and training. WIOA Title I Youth and Adult participants are often referred to WIOA Title II programs.

While there are tuition fees associated with these services, the school systems collaborate with the two VCW Centers, as well as their Departments of Social Services, to subsidize participation for youth and adults in need of financial support. The school systems, Northern Virginia Community College, the Departments of Social Services, and the VCW Centers have formalized points of contact to provide for a seamless referral processes and follow-up activities to ensure positive outcomes of co-enrolled participants. When appropriate, these partners also identify and coordinate outreach efforts to shared customers.

Alexandria City and Arlington Public Schools co-enroll their Career and Technical Education students into Northern Virginia Community College so that these individuals can graduate with a High School Diploma, an in-demand industry certification, and college course credits. There is regular communication between these institutions so that courses available in the public schools have a pathway to course available at the Community College. Additionally, T.C. Williams High School (Alexandria City) offers its students several healthcare related career pathways through the Governor's Health Sciences Academy. This academy includes on-ramps for students to attend George Washington University and Northern Virginia Community College.

Finally, the Council's Executive Director is an appointed member of both jurisdiction's Career and Technical Education Advisory Commissions, Alexandria City Superintendent's Business Advisory Council, Arlington Public School's Advisory Council on Learning & Instruction, and Northern Virginia Community College's Perkins Advisory Council. The Council's Executive Director presents labor market data, priorities, and industry information during these meetings so that all entities have access to a common set of information to support and better align their program development efforts. The Executive Director has regularly reviewed and provided input in local applications submitted under WIOA Title II and will continue to do so until provided further guidance from the state.

3.5 Describe how the local board will collaborate on local workforce investment activities with the community colleges in their area in the planning and delivery of workforce and training services.

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council enjoys a strong relationship with Northern Virginia Community College. The Community College provides a regional labor market update during all Council meetings and serves as an available resource for all labor market needs. The two VCW Centers use the College’s Career Pathways Guides for both Basic and Individual Career Services implementation as well.

Additionally, should a training class not be offered by the College on the State’s WIOA Eligible Training Provider List, the Council will request the College to consider adding the course. Should the College not offer the particular course, the Council will request that the College consider developing the course for the region. Finally, on occasions when the College requests input into its workforce and training activities, the Council provides its recommendations.

It is important to note that the Council’s Executive Director is a member of the College’s Perkins Advisory Council. It is through this role that that the Executive Director can provide additional recommendations for the College’s workforce and training activities.

3.6 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]

Supportive services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, and housing can enable individuals to participate in activities authorized under WIOA Title I. Supportive services are usually provided through a voucher system (e.g., transportation or food) or payments made directly to vendors (i.e., clothes, rent, or utilities) in the Alexandria/Arlington region. Staff responsible for approving supportive services adhere to the guidance and procedures set forth in local WIOA Title I policy. It is the Council’s policy that WIOA funds should only be used for supportive services after all other funding options have been exhausted.

Administered through the Centers’ staff, supportive services receive approval from a WIOA program supervisor and reviewed by the fiscal units before customer use. Provision of supportive services

is contingent upon funding availability and the customer’s satisfactory performance and adherence to program requirements while participating in and completing WIOA intensive or training activities.

WIOA staff must comply with local jurisdictional policies for procuring goods/services. All supportive services must be purchased from a local jurisdiction-authorized vendor. After service completion and invoice receipt, the fiscal units directly pay the vendors. For direct reimbursement, clients must submit detailed receipts.

WIOA staff must seek services from other community resources as appropriate, prior to authorizing supportive services using WIOA Title I funds. Staff make referrals and follow-up with agencies or resources for assistance, and they document any positive referrals or denials from service providers in customers’ case files.

As mentioned previously, supportive services are available to WIOA customers and range from childcare, transportation, dependent care, housing, to assistance with uniforms and other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye wear. Supportive services are available to WIOA customers while they are participating in and completing individualized career services or training activities.

3.7 Describe the plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12)]

Inter-agency collaborations between all WIOA Titles, including Title III/Wagner-Peyser are facilitated during quarterly One-Stop Operations Committee meetings. These meetings are used to:

- Unifying the region’s workforce system partners under a common agenda and shared outcomes;
- Making relevant labor market information accessible and actionable;
- Supporting professional development for workforce system staff;

- Disseminating (quarterly) a list of high-demand occupations that support target sectors in the Alexandria/Arlington and Washington metropolitan regions;
- Delivering career pathway tools that are aligned with priority occupations that are specific to the Alexandria/Arlington and the Washington metropolitan regions, as developed by Northern Virginia Community College;
- Seeking opportunities for improving the referral process between workforce system partners;
- Seeking opportunities for continuous improvement process;
- Identifying additional funding needs that the Regional Workforce Council can support through participating in grant competitions.

Additionally, WIOA Titles I and III refer participants to each program and use the Virginia Workforce Connection for labor market research and job search activities. Finally, the Virginia Employment Commission engages Alexandria/Arlington’s WIOA Title I providers to support the region’s Trade Act and WARN/Rapid Response activities.

3.8 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities, including a description of how the local board will carry out the review of local applications. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]

There is a strong history of collaboration between the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council, the VCW Centers, Northern Virginia Community College, and the region’s public school systems in Alexandria/Arlington. Alexandria City Public School and Arlington Public Schools run the WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs for the region. These programs support the development of the region’s workforce by providing foundational education necessary for employment. Services include adult literacy, workplace adult education and literacy, family literacy instruction, English language acquisition instruction, integrated English literacy and civics education and activities, workforce

preparation activities, and integrated education and training. WIOA Title I Youth and Adult participants are often referred to WIOA Title II programs.

While there are tuition fees associated with these services, the school systems collaborate with the two VCW Centers, as well as their Departments of Social Services, to subsidize participation for youth and adults in need of financial support. The school systems, Northern Virginia Community College, the Departments of Social Services, and the VCW Centers have formalized points of contact to provide for a seamless referral processes and follow-up activities to ensure positive outcomes of co-enrolled participants. When appropriate, these partners also identify and coordinate outreach efforts to shared customers.

Additionally, Alexandria City and Arlington Public Schools co-enroll their Career and Technical Education students into Northern Virginia Community College so that these individuals can graduate with a High School Diploma, an in-demand industry certification, and college course credits. There is regular communication between these institutions so that courses available in the public schools have a pathway to course available at the Community College. T.C. Williams High School (Alexandria City) now offers its students several healthcare related career pathways through the Governor's Health Sciences Academy which includes on-ramps for students to attend George Washington University and Northern Virginia Community College.

Finally, the Council's Executive Director is an appointed member of both jurisdiction's Career and Technical Education Advisory Commissions, Alexandria City Superintendent's Business Advisory Council, Alexandria's Governor's Health Sciences Academy, Arlington Public School's Advisory Council on Learning and Instruction, and Northern Virginia Community College's Perkins Advisory Council. The Council's Executive Director presents labor market data, priorities, and industry information during these meetings so that all entities have access to a common set of information to support and better align their program development efforts. The Executive Director has regularly reviewed and provided input in local

applications submitted under WIOA Title II and will continue to do so until provided further guidance from the state.

3.9 Describe how the local plan shall:

- Specify the policies and protocols to be followed by all the region’s workforce development entities when engaging the region’s employers
- Address how the region’s workforce entities will involve employers in the formation of new workforce development activities
- Identify what activities will be undertaken to address employers’ specific workforce needs

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council is responsible for ensuring the coordination of business service delivery to businesses in the local area according to the local plan and the combined state plan. Coordinated efforts are focused on creating a streamlined business process and preventing duplicative services and contacts to businesses. The Council will convene business teams, as needed, to coordinate in an orderly manner, the following activities:

- Building relationships with business and business-focused organizations;
- Integrating and streamlining business services;
- Providing informational resources to businesses;
- Assisting businesses in the recruiting process;
- Assisting businesses with training needs;
- Providing customized services to businesses.

Furthermore, the Regional Workforce Council utilizes the “single point of contact” methodology to maximize the opportunities for businesses to create a relationship with the VCW Centers. The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council’s Executive Director is listed on the Council’s website as the single point of contact and will refer a business to the appropriate Business Services Team (BST) member within one (1) business day. The BST member will have one (1) business day to contact the referred business and provide an initial consultation.

Finally, VCW Alexandria/Arlington Region is committed to following the standards set below:

- BSTs must include the VCW brand standards and other required EO and funding taglines on

all outreach materials.

- BST members must adhere to confidentiality and ethics as it relates to business needs and partner statutory requirements.
- The notion of shared business client ownership and accountability is institutionalized across agencies and programs. Partners buy into the notion that working collectively expands the breadth of services offered to business which is a positive for all.
- Business outreach representatives (across partners) share intelligence and coordinate and strategize follow-up.
- BST members regularly participate in local and state provided training, including cross-training.
- Coordinated business services represent “the whole” when in front of business and follow-up includes bringing in the partners/resources to address the solution.

All staff who received an inquiry from an employer for VCW Center services direct those individuals to the Council’s Executive Director.

3.10 Describe how the direction given by the Governor and the local board to the one-stop operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

The purpose of career and training services is to provide eligible customers with the means to obtain the necessary skills to become gainfully employed or re-employed. To further this purpose, WIOA establishes a priority order for funding services to eligible participants, and the Commonwealth and the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council have developed policy to further establish priority.

Priority for career and training services funded with WIOA Title I Adult funds shall be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as well as any covered person under the Veterans’ priority, in the local area. The following sequence of services priority will apply:

- First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA Title I Adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services provided with WIOA Title I Adult formula funds.
- Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA Title I Adult formula funds.
- Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA’s priority groups.
- Fourth, to non-covered persons who reside in Alexandria City or Arlington County, who are outside the groups given priority under the WIOA Title I Adult program, with total family income that does not exceed 150 percent of the lower living standard income level.
- Fifth, to non-covered persons who are outside the groups given priority under the WIOA Title I Adult program.

Total WIOA Title I Adult formula fund program year spending for the combined fourth and fifth groups must not exceed 49 percent of the total program year allocation of the Alexandria/Arlington region’s WIOA Title I Adult formula funds. Additionally, the term “covered person” includes anyone who is a veteran and includes spouses of veterans that fall into the following categories:

- Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability;
- Any member of the armed forces on active duty who, at the time of the spouse’s application, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for more than 90 days:
 - Missing in action;
 - Captured in the line of duty by a hostile force; or
 - Forcible detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power.
- Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability; or
- Any veteran who while a disability so evaluated was in existence.

When past income is an eligibility determinant for Federal employment or training programs, any amounts received as military pay or allowances by any person who served on active duty, and certain other specified benefits must be disregarded for the veteran and for other individuals for whom those amounts would normally be applied in making an eligibility determination. Military earnings are not to be included when calculating income for veterans or transitioning service members for this priority, in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4213.

The term “basic skills deficient” means that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society. The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council also encourages enrollment of Alexandria City and Arlington County residents as a priority.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

Please try to answer the questions in Section 4 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. Many of the responses below, such as career pathways and individual training accounts, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners.

4.1 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council and its VCW Centers are part of their jurisdictions Social Services Departments. All workforce and training services are promoted to a majority of the Social Services customers during the Departments' intake sessions. Additionally, social services workers refer their customers to the VCW Centers regularly. The Centers also contact these customers through the Departments' local systems of record.

The Council and its VCW Centers are also part of the local Continuum of Care Networks. All workforce and training services are promoted to a majority of the customers being served by the Networks' community-based organizations that support high-risk populations. Finally, the Centers promote their services directly to the staff of these organizations.

4.2 Describe how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways, consistent with the Career Pathways Definitions. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council and its VCW Centers use Northern Virginia Community College's Career Pathways tools (<https://www.nvcc.edu/workforce/research/career-ladders.html>) to support WIOA Title I participants. Along with the JobsEQ labor market analysis tool, these Community College-provided tools present the region's in-demand occupations and credentials overlaid with the College's non-credit course information and the Public Schools' Career and Technical Education/Adult Education curriculum.

4.3 Describe how the local board will utilize co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs to maximize efficiencies and use of resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

Criteria established under Federal, state, and local WIOA policy determine job seeker eligibility for training funds. WIOA requires the coordination of training costs with funds available under other grant assistance. WIOA limits training funding to participants who are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources, including PELL Grants, to pay the costs of their training or require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training. WIOA prescribes “braided funding” as a strategy to support job seekers’ training and placement needs. As such, the Centers’ staff co-enroll job seeker customers into all eligibility-appropriate publicly funded workforce training programs.

In VCW Alexandria/Arlington Region, the WIOA Title I service providers serve as the service provider for SNAPET, TANF/VIEW, CSBG, and CDBG programs. The WIOA Title I career counselors have the ability, under the direction and approval of their supervisors, to co-enroll customers into multiple job training and employment programs in order to maximize efficiencies and use of resources.

4.4 Describe one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:

- A. The local board’s efforts to 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 workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A)]

On a quarterly basis, the providers of WIOA Title I services, as well as the secondary and post-secondary education providers receive a labor market update from Northern Virginia Community College to help them guide their efforts. Additionally, all career counselors have access to real-time labor market information through JobsEQ that they use to advise their customers in the development of their Individual Employment Plans.

Additionally, in September of 2019 the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council approved “The Importance of Basic Professional Skills” position statement. The Council seeks to infuse its customers with basic professional skills that the region’s employers demand. As a result, the Council updated their Individual Training Account and Eligible Training Provider policies to require, when

possible, the use of training programs that have elements of basic professionalism skills incorporated into their curriculums. All new and recertified training providers are requested to provide examples of how they incorporate these skills into their curriculums prior to the Council voting on their inclusion in the WIOA Eligible Training Providers List.

Finally, all front-line staff have participated in Certified Workforce Development Professional training, as well as other state and local initiated training, over the past two years.

B. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B)]

For all WIOA Title I customers, WIOA and partner staff use the Virginia Workforce Connection, the Commonwealth's WIOA system of record, for all intake and case management activities, except for the storage of customers' medical records. All new WIOA Title I participants, as of October 2020, will have their case file information stored virtually on the Virginia Workforce Connection.

Each Virginia Career Works Center also has its own local system of record. The Alexandria Center uses *Harmony*, and the Arlington Center uses *Efforts to Outcomes*. Both local Departments of Social Services use these record and case management systems as well, which allows staff to view the various financial and housing assistance that jointly-managed customers receive. These systems provide staff a holistic view as they determine how to best serve the customer.

Both VCW Center's websites offer a variety of interactive resources, from live and pre-recorded workshops, to online job boards and virtual career fair platforms, to distance learning services. All of these resources are free to the job seeker and employer.

C. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C)]

The two VCW Centers comply with WIOA Sec. 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.*) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Both Centers participate in the Social Security Administration’s Ticket to Work Employment Network as well.

As two of the Commonwealth’s highly used Employment Networks, the Centers, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services, have increased opportunities for persons with disabilities (PWD) to obtain training, employment, vocational rehabilitation, and other support services. Each Center employs a certified Disability Employment Counselor to support the employment and training activities of PWD.

Disability Employment staff, along with each jurisdiction’s ADA Compliance staff work with the VCW Centers to ensure that physical space and programing comply with Federal, state, and local laws. When a PWD requests an accommodation to access all Center programs, staff work with Disability Employment/ADA Compliance staff to secure the resource. If the resource cannot be secured internally, the Center will procure the resource from an approved third-party vendor.

D. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D)]

The roles and resource contributions of the VCW Center partners can be found within the 2019-2022 One-Stop Center Memorandum of Understanding, found here: https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2020/03/AlexandriaArlingtonVCW_AJC-MOU_070119-to-063022.pdf.

E. Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology-enabled intake and case management information system for core programs and programs carried out by one-stop partners [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(21)]

All WIOA Title I services are captured in the Virginia Workforce Connection, as well as in each

jurisdiction’s local system of record. The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council and the VCW Centers promote the VCW Referral Portal as well as monitors its activity daily so that referrals can be forwarded to the appropriate parties.

As of October 1, 2020, all WIOA Title I case management files will be stored electronically on the Virginia Workforce Connection, except for customers’ medical records. New WIOA Title I participants will have all of their case files stored on the Virginia Workforce Connection and those participants who were enrolled prior to October 1, 2020 will have their new or modified case file items stored electronically.

F. Describe the services provided by each partner mandated by federal and state law, and other optional partners.

Alexandria City Department of Community and Human Services & Arlington County Department of Human Services

Alexandria Workforce Development Center and Arlington Employment Center are the region’s two Comprehensive VCW Centers. Both Centers are agencies within their respective jurisdiction’s Department of Social Services. Employment and training activities at the Centers include:

- *WIOA* –President Barack Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.
- *SNAP E&T*- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Program (SNAPET) is a multi-component employment and training program that provides job search, job search training, education, training and work experience to non-public assistance SNAP recipients. The program's role is to provide SNAP recipients with opportunities that will lead to paid employment and decrease dependency on assistance programs.

- *Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare* - The Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) program offers employment-related activities, education, training, and needed support services.
- *Employment Advancement for TANF Participants* - The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program provides temporary cash assistance and employment-related services to enable families with children to become self-supporting. Employment Advancement for TANF Participants supplements the VIEW program and is designed to prepare current and certain former TANF clients to enter, succeed and advance in the workforce through proven service approaches and strategies.
- *HUD Community Development Block Grant* - The Community Development Block Grant program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. Beginning in 1974, the CDBG program is one of the longest continuously run programs at HUD. The CDBG program provides annual grants on a formula basis to 1209 general units of local government and States.
- *HHS Community Services Block Grant* - The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) provides funds to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities.

Alexandria City Public Schools & Arlington County Public Schools

Alexandria City Public Schools and Arlington County Public Schools administer Title II of WIOA (Adult Education and Family Literacy) as well as activities funded through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. Additionally, these institutions administer:

- *Adult Basic Education (ABE)* - These programs consist of instruction that provides basic skills for over 150 adults who are performing below the ninth-grade level in reading, writing, mathematics, and other basic skills. Adult education is a key component in the workforce development continuum in our region. Services are delivered primarily as workforce preparation activities and integrated education and training.

- *Secondary Career Technical Education* – Career and technical education programs in Alexandria City and Arlington County public schools serve more than 6,500 students in grades 6-12. These programs are designed to prepare young people for productive futures while meeting the region's need for well-trained and industry-certified technical workers.

The leaders of Alexandria City's and Arlington County's Adult Basic Education and Secondary Career Technical Education either serve on or attend the meetings of the Regional Workforce Council. The Council's Executive Director is an appointed member of both jurisdiction's Career Technical Education Advisory Commissions, serving as Chair of both commissions. These additional volunteer roles further solidify our regional workforce collaboration.

Virginia Employment Commission

The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) administers Title III of WIOA (which amends the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933). The VEC provides system customers:

- *Employment Services (ES)* including job search assistance and recruiting and referral services to employers. Services available to job seekers include job referral and placement, referral to training, and job search activities. Services available to employers include finding qualified workers. There are no fees charged to the employer or applicant for workforce services. Center staff assist employers by screening and referring applicants to job openings, providing critical labor market intelligence for business and economic planning, and coordinating Northern Virginia Employer Advisory Committee activities.
- *Unemployment Insurance (UI)* - The unemployment insurance program has three broad objectives:
 1. Alleviate hardship for the unemployed;
 2. Promote reemployment;
 3. Provide economic support for communities facing significant job loss.

The program's principal aim is to alleviate hardship by providing transitional income support during periods of unemployment. This task is accomplished by partially replacing the loss of wages for unemployed individuals who have a demonstrated attachment to the workforce.

- *Jobs for Veterans State Grant* - The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) provides funds to the Commonwealth to serve eligible veterans, as defined in 38 U.S.C. 4101(4) and 4211(4),³ and other eligible spouses as defined in 38 U.S.C. 4101(5),⁴ and to perform outreach to employers. JVSG funds pay for two types of staff positions:
 - Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists – DVOPs provide intensive services and assist job seeking veterans to find employment, focusing on service to disabled veterans
 - Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) – LVERs assist employers in a locality in identifying qualified veterans for employment. LVERs conduct seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops; and they refer employers to employment, training, and job placement services. DVOP specialists and LVERs are included among the American Job Center partner staff.
- *Trade Adjustment Assistance Act* - The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is a federal program established under the Trade Act of 1974. The TAA Program provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced because of increased imports. The goal is to help such laid-off workers return to suitable employment as quickly as possible. TAA offers a variety of benefits and reemployment services including training, job search and relocation allowances, income support and other reemployment services. Employers may file a petition for certification as an affected employer or a petition may be filed by a group of three or more workers, by their union or other authorized representative. Workers on whose behalf a petition is filed must be, or must have been, employed regularly at the firm or subdivision identified in the petition. Workers employment must be, or must have been, related to the production of articles (products) described in the petition.

Department of Labor and Industry

Virginia’s Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI) administers several programs that directly and indirectly impact workforce development activities in the Commonwealth. The DOLI program included in this plan is one that simultaneously achieves many of the goals of WIOA, including business engagement through its strong Partnership with sponsors, credential attainment coupled with an “earn while you learn” approach to skills development, and career and wage progression for apprentices.

Through Registered Apprenticeship, DOLI provides workers with job training opportunities for lifelong skills and helps employers meet their needs for highly skilled workers through a proven, cost-effective system of registered apprenticeship. Our region’s Apprenticeship Consultant helps employers develop training programs and recruit qualified apprentices. Employers provide on-the-job training, and participants spend 4-6 hours per week in related classroom instruction.

The Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired

The Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) jointly administer vocational rehabilitation programs through Title IV of WIOA. Vocational rehabilitation employment services help individuals with disabilities prepare for, enter, engage in and retain employment. DARS also partners with a network of community rehabilitation providers, also known as Employment Services Organizations, which provide employment and vocational services throughout the region. For students with disabilities moving from high school to further education, work or independence, DARS collaborates with schools in providing transition services. DARS works with Alexandria City’s and Arlington County’s Virginia Career Works Centers to provide workforce services to persons with disabilities. DARS counselors are professionally trained (generally with a master’s degree, certified rehabilitation counselor or certified vocational evaluator). DARS is committed to participating in the cross-partner trainings as needed.

DARS is also committed to providing access through direct linkages via a variety of technologies (for example: email, telephone, text messaging and video teleconferencing), to customers who desire it. The current DARS VR business model meets consumers where they are by also developing partnerships with local school systems, community services boards, local departments of social services, and other local service providers to enhance referrals and collaborative outcomes for the individuals served.

DARS continues to emphasize the importance and necessity of cooperating with other community partners (federal, state and local agencies and programs) to assist in providing comprehensive and effective services for vocational rehabilitation customers. DARS provides employment services to help individuals with disabilities prepare for, enter, engage in, or retain employment. DARS staff are embedded in our region's two American Job Centers and provide the following scope of services:

- Vocational Evaluation/Counseling
- Career Exploration/Post-Secondary Education Planning
- Assessment/Training and Credentials
- Work Readiness and Support Services
- Job Development/Coaching/Placement
- Assistive Technology/Job Accommodation

DBVI has established and implemented standards for the prompt and equitable handling of referrals of individuals for vocational rehabilitation services, including referrals of individuals made through the American Job Centers. The standards include timelines for making good faith efforts to inform these individuals of application requirements and to gather information necessary to initiate an assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services. DBVI accepts referrals for vocational rehabilitation services for blind, deafblind, and visually impaired adults and transition-aged students who are interested in obtaining, regaining, or maintaining employment. The agency also accepts referrals from individuals, family members, friends, physicians, advocates, service providers and others interested stakeholders. The intake staff in the regional office is responsible for contacting individuals who have been referred to provide information regarding DBVI services and for referring individuals to the appropriate agency programs for special services and to other community agencies for supplemental services as needed.

Northern Virginia Community College

Northern Virginia Community College's Alexandria City Campus and its Workforce Development Office play a large role in preparing our region's job seekers for the in-demand training needs of our business community. The Workforce Development Office offers various non-credit courses that lead to in-demand industry recognized certifications. The Workforce Development Office is also a thought leader in the regional workforce conversation and publishes labor market and career pathway information for the benefit of the workforce system partners. The Workforce Development Office manages the College's Federal Carl D. Perkins funding and its associated Perkins Funding Advisory Board, which includes the Council's Executive Director as an appointed member.

Northern Virginia Community College's Alexandria City Campus is home to an industry recognized Cybersecurity program that provides a curriculum mapped to the US Department of Homeland Security's and the National Security Agency's cybersecurity education standards. Twenty-one percent of our region's open positions are information technology and cybersecurity related. Northern Virginia

Community College is a founding member of the National CyberWatch Center, a national consortium of colleges and universities focused on cybersecurity education.

Business Services

For 15 years, the Alexandria and Arlington VCW Centers have employed teams of business services representatives who meet regularly with employers to understand their staffing priorities. These business services representatives then return to the VCW Centers to educate customers and case managers on the opportunities and requirements, as well as facilitate with the pre-screening and recruitment processes. In detail, both Centers provide businesses with the following services:

- Pre-screen eligible candidates for open positions for all occupational categories;
- Provide interview rooms and resources to conduct interviewing off-site (i.e. virtual job fair platform);
- Provide outplacement services (career counseling, resume writing, interview workshops, etc.) for workers who have been or will be laid-off;
- Workplace and workstation accessibility guidance;
- Accessibility survey services;
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit information;
- Access to local labor market information.

G. Identify the Virginia Workforce Center Operator for each site in the local area.

In June 2020, the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council procured the services of RISE Global Talent to serve as the Virginia Workforce Center Operator for the region. RISE can be contacted at:

Alamelu Dev
 Co-founder and Principal Consultant
 RISE
 E: alamelu@riseglobaltalent.com
 O: +1 571 344 0981
www.riseglobaltalent.com
linkedin.com/company/riseglobaltalent

H. Identify the physical locations of each comprehensive Virginia Workforce Center in the local area, and the co-location strategy for each center (current and planned).

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council works in partnership with Alexandria City Department of Community and Human Services and Arlington County Department of Human Services to operate the two Comprehensive VCW Centers:

1) Alexandria Workforce Development Center

1900 N. Beauregard Street, Suite 300

Alexandria, VA 22311

2) Arlington Employment Center

2100 Washington Boulevard, 1st Floor

Arlington, Virginia 22204

I. If applicable, identify the locations of Virginia Workforce Network affiliated sites, partner sites, or specialized centers.

N/A

4.5 Describe the policy, process, and criteria for issuing individual training accounts (ITAs) including any limitations on ITA amounts. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

Criteria established under Federal, state, and local WIOA policy determine job seeker eligibility for training funds. WIOA requires the coordination of training costs with funds available under other grant assistance. WIOA limits training funding to participants who are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources, including PELL Grants, to pay the costs of their training or require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training. WIOA prescribes “braided funding” as a strategy to support job seekers’ training and placement needs. As such, Center staff co-enroll job seeker customers into all eligibility-appropriate publicly funded workforce training programs.

To achieve its purpose of providing eligible customers with the means to obtain the necessary skills to become gainfully employed or re-employed, WIOA-funded training targets occupations in

demand in the regional labor market and prioritized by the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council (<http://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us/data/>). Training will be provided for priority occupations only as determined by the Council by an institution or organization certified as meeting the criteria and having completed the procedures outlined in the Council’s Eligible Training Providers Policy. Training length varies according to the type of training and the requirements outlined in the vendor agreement. Training cannot exceed more than 24 calendar months and must lead to an industry-recognized certification and employment that earns a sustainable wage.

The Council will not provide funding for courses/programs previously funded but not successfully completed. The Council limits training and certification cost to no more than \$3,500 per participant within a 12-month period, except as approved as a waiver by the Council’s Executive Director prior to the expenditure of funds. Funding of training, certification, and supportive services payments may not exceed a total of \$3,500 in a 12-month period.

Waivers Available to WIOA Title I Customers

The Council’s Executive Director may approve exceptions to the cost limit based on the following:

- Up to \$8,000 maximum limit for hospitality training and certification;
- Up to \$9,500 maximum limit for computer & information systems training and certification;
- Up to \$9,500 maximum limit for healthcare training and certification;
- Up to \$9,000 maximum limit for manufacturing & processing training and certification.

4.6 If training contracts are used, describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]
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Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), the customer can choose the program and provider for the occupational skills training that meets the goals of their individual development plan. In order to use WIOA funds for training, the customer must choose a training program that has been certified by a Local Workforce Development Board in Virginia. The complete list can be

found at <https://www.vawc.virginia.gov/>. Customer Choice must be made in writing by using a “Customer Choice in Training” Form available through each VCW Center.

4.7 Describe process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii)]

The Council and the VCW Centers use real-time labor market information to prove that requested training is linked to in-demand occupations in the Washington DC Metro area. Evidence must be included with all requests for training and supervisors ensure that the training is relevant and in-demand prior to approving such training requests.

4.8 Describe how rapid response activities are coordinated and carried out in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council coordinates rapid response activities in partnership with the regional representative to the statewide rapid response team from the Virginia Employment Commission and our two VCW Centers. We participate in bi-annual rapid response planning meetings as well as discuss new cases during quarterly Rapid Response meetings.

When a WARN announcement is issued to the Alexandria/Arlington region, the Council waits for the regional rapid response representative to contact the employer first. The representative informs the employer of Rapid Responses’ and the VCW Centers’ services. If the employer needs rapid response services for their employees, then the regional representative will coordinate activities with the VCW Center staff.

Section 5: Compliance

Please try to answer the questions in Section 5 in approximately twelve (12) pages. You will not be penalized for going over the page limit. Most of the response should be staff-driven responses as each are focused on the organization's compliance with federal or state requirements.

5.1 Describe how the local board meets its responsibilities for oversight, monitoring, and corrective action for WIOA Title I programs.

The Mayor of Alexandria City and the Chair of the Arlington County Board, and their designees, have established clear lines of regular communication with the Regional Workforce Council, to include participation in developing the Council's annual strategic direction, goals, and benchmarks, attending Council meetings, and jointly attending workforce events. The Council Chair works with the Chief Elected Official (CLEO) to provide leadership and direction to Council members and staff.

The Council's Executive Committee is responsible for oversight, monitoring and corrective action of the WIOA Title I programs. The Committee reviews WIOA Title I operations, performance, and budgets. Additional fiscal oversight is conducted by the Arlington Department of Management and Finance following the County's budget, fiscal and accounting policies and procedures. The Council strictly follows the procurement and contract management guidelines of its fiscal agent, Arlington County Government, which can be found at: <https://departments.arlingtonva.us/dmf/>.

To ensure timely expenditure of WIOA funds, the fiscal agent prepares a preliminary annual budget for the regional allocation of WIOA Title I funds provided by the Virginia Community College System. The Regional Workforce Council Executive Director, in collaboration with the fiscal agent, then develops a final WIOA Funding Levels Memo for each VCW Center that presents the allowable carry-over funding limits and other Federal and state-imposed funding allocation limits (ex. 40 percent Adult/Dislocated Worker Expenditure on Training Requirement).

The WIOA Title I budget is reviewed and adopted by the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council. The Executive Director sends the approved WIOA Title I budget, along with links to relevant Federal, state, and local policies, to the VCW Center Directors, via the Funding Memo. The

Directors include the WIOA Title I budget within their operating budgets which are produced by their jurisdictional Departments of Human Services. These budgets are funded primarily through local tax revenue, as well as other state and Federal grant funds. WIOA Title I funds comprise less than 15 percent of the American Job Center operating budgets.

On the second Friday of each month, the Regional Workforce Council Executive Director, in collaboration with the fiscal agent, reviews WIOA Title I monthly expenditure/obligation and performance reports to monitor spending and output activity. The Executive Director then shares his analysis of year-to-date cash flow and program activity with the VCW Center Directors to ensure timely expenditure of WIOA Title I funds and compliance to negotiate performance goals. The Executive Director periodically updates the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council on year-to-date progress for its input.

All Council and Committee meetings are open to the public. All meeting dates and times are made available via <https://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us/events/>.

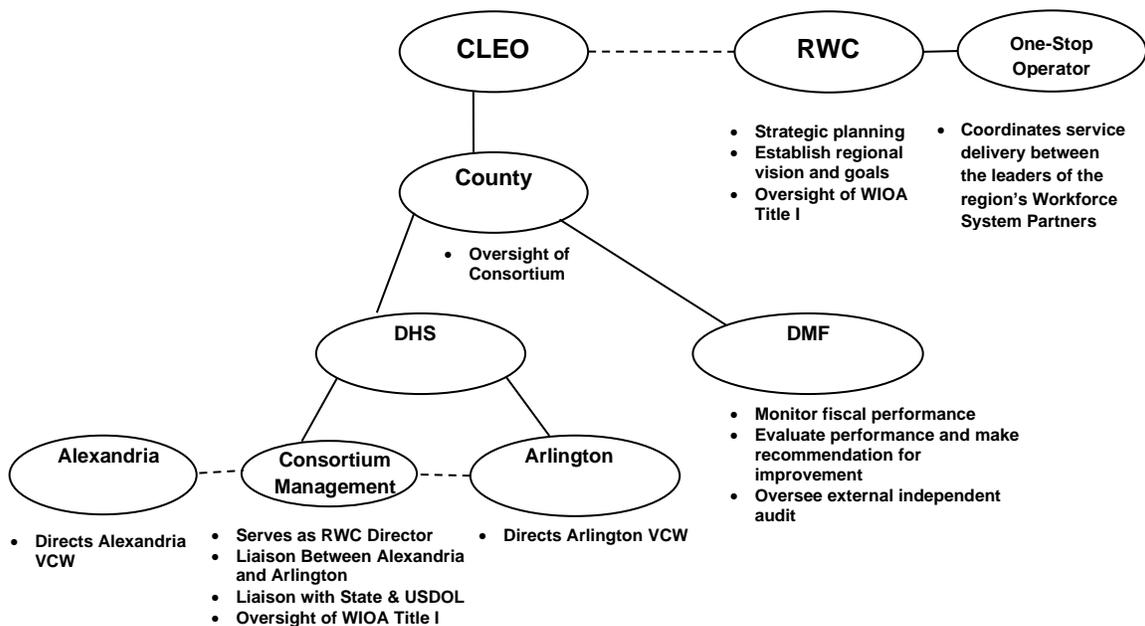
Staffing plans for WIOA Title I and the Regional Workforce Council

In Alexandria/Arlington, Arlington County serves as the grant recipient, fiscal agent, and administrative entity. The Arlington County Board has designated the Arlington County Manager and his staff to manage the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council and WIOA Title I operations. As governed by Arlington’s local government structure, the County Manager is the chief administrative officer and is responsible for managing the County government. The County Manager has designated two county government departments, the Department of Human Services and the Department of Management and Finance with separate and distinct responsibilities for WIOA.

Within the Arlington Department of Human Services there are separate and distinct positions for WIOA Title I management. The VCW Center Director has responsibility for WIOA Title I service delivery. The Council’s Executive Director has responsibility for managing the Alexandria/Arlington Consortium, staffing the Council and managing its oversight functions, as well as liaising with the City of

Alexandria’s VCW Center Director, state WIOA leadership, and US Department of Labor, and oversight of the competitively procured One-Stop Operator which coordinates service delivery among the leadership of the region’s workforce system partners. The One-Stop Operator reports directly to the Regional Workforce Council. Finally, the Arlington County Department of Management and Finance has fiscal monitoring responsibility with duties that include accepting, disbursing and managing of WIOA Title I funds, monitoring fiscal accountability, and overseeing external independent audits.

Local WIOA Staffing and Administrative Structure



From a policy development perspective, the Regional Workforce Council uses both quantitative and qualitative analysis to make strategic decisions. The Council uses JobsEQ, a real-time labor market analysis tool, to review the occupations, soft/hard skills, and certifications that regional employers demand in the short-term. This tool also provides a list of employers who are hiring for many positions based on in-demand occupation. This allows the Council to target specific companies to convene partnership discussions. The Council communicates with these companies to verify that the region’s in-demand information is accurate as well as to obtain additional information on their talent needs. The

Council also invites these companies to participate in hiring events hosted by the Regional Business Services Team.

The Council and the Regional Business Services Team possess relationships with thousands of employers. When grant opportunities or other talent development initiatives arise, the Council invites businesses to participate in discussions at the ground level to obtain advice and information from employers that shape proposals and plans in ways that quantitative data cannot. Additionally, building ongoing business relationships improves the hiring prospects for participants in our workforce programs and helps to build trust among the business community with the public workforce system.

Finally, the Council formalized its intention to continue to convene those stakeholders who serve and benefit from the region’s workforce system. On December 3, 2015, the Council unanimously approved the following declaration:

“As required by VA HB1986 section 2.2-2472.1, the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council designates itself as the “Regional Convener” serving Alexandria City and Arlington County, Virginia. The Council, serving as the local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Workforce Development Board, coordinates businesses, economic development agencies, labor, planning commissions, education institutions, and human services organizations in our region to focus on community workforce issues and develop solutions to current and prospective business needs for a skilled labor force.”

5.2 Describe how the local board conducts business in accordance with the Sunshine Provisions of WIOA staffing plans for the local board.

Please see https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2020/09/WIOA-Local-Policies-for-the-VCW-Alexandria-City_Arlington-County-Region.pdf, page 2.

5.3 Describe the methods and strategies used to ensure timely expenditure of WIOA funds.

Additional fiscal oversight is conducted by the Arlington Department of Management and Finance following the County’s budget, fiscal and accounting policies and procedures. The Council strictly

follows the procurement and contract management guidelines of its fiscal agent, Arlington County Government, which can be found at: <https://departments.arlingtonva.us/dmf/>.

To ensure timely expenditure of WIOA funds, the fiscal agent prepares a preliminary annual budget for the regional allocation of WIOA Title I funds provided by the Virginia Community College System. The Regional Workforce Council Executive Director, in collaboration with the fiscal agent, then develops a final WIOA Funding Levels Memo for each American Job Center that presents the allowable carry-over funding limits and other Federal and state-imposed funding allocation limits (ex. 40 percent Adult/Dislocated Worker Expenditure on Training Requirement).

The WIOA Title I budget is reviewed and adopted by the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council. The Executive Director sends the approved WIOA Title I budget, along with links to relevant Federal, state, and local policies, to the VCW Center Directors, via the Funding Memo. The Directors include the WIOA Title I budget within their operating budgets which are produced by their jurisdictional Departments of Human Services. These budgets are funded primarily through local tax revenue, as well as other state and Federal grant funds. WIOA Title I funds comprise less than 15 percent of the VCW Center operating budgets.

On the second Friday of each month, the Regional Workforce Council Executive Director, in collaboration with the fiscal agent, reviews WIOA Title I monthly expenditure/obligation and performance reports to monitor spending and output activity. The Executive Director then shares his analysis of year-to-date cash flow and program activity with the VCW Center Directors to ensure timely expenditure of WIOA Title I funds and compliance to negotiate performance goals. The Executive Director periodically updates the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council on year-to-date progress for its input.

All Council and Committee meetings are open to the public. All meeting dates and times are made available via <https://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us/events/>.

5.4 Describe the process for neutral brokerage of adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. Identify the competitive process and criteria (such as targeted services, leverage of funds, etc.) used to award funds to sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services, state the names of contracted organizations, and the duration of each contract. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16)]

Alexandria City and Arlington County Governments, with Arlington County serving as the local grant recipient, directly provides the WIOA Title I Services for Youth, Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Business Customers directly through our two VCW Centers. WIOA Title I Career Services staff will continue to be employed by the two local governments as they have for 20 years. Over the past 3 years Alexandria/Arlington’s WIOA Title I Career Services have met our performance goals and have maintained fiscal integrity. This approach for the delivery of WIOA Career Services will serve to build on the excellent programmatic performance outcomes and effective and efficient operational practices demonstrated to date and to provide for continuity of such delivery in the future.

Alexandria Workforce Development Center and Arlington Employment Center, the region’s VCW Centers, perform the “framework services” for the region’s WIOA Title I Youth program. These framework services include intake, objective assessments, development of individual service strategies, case management, supportive services, and follow-up services. Both Centers partner with local government and nonprofit partners to provide free services to their youth customers for the 14 WIOA Youth program elements. When the Centers cannot obtain free services to perform the 14-youth program elements they follow local government procurement procedures to purchase services for their youth customers.

The One-Stop Operator has responsibility for organizing and delivering access to all required customer services through coordinated solutions as part of a fully integrated, partner-based, partner-led Virginia Career Works system as follows:

- Maintain effective working relationships with all system partners and career services provider leadership across the region;
- Coordinate exclusively with system partner and career services provider leadership for the management of service delivery of operations and service providers across the entire

Alexandria/Arlington Region, as described in the workforce system partners’ Memorandum of Understanding;

- Staff the Council’s Regional Business Services Team and conduct regular meetings as necessary for coordinating the provision of WIOA Business Services through the System’s Partners;
- Facilitate the American Job Center Certification Process in accordance with US Department of Labor and Virginia Community College Systems requirements, as well as conduct the annual WIOA Title I local audit.

5.5 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

Arlington County Government serves as the fiscal/administrative agent and grant recipient on behalf of the Alexandria/Arlington Workforce Development Consortium and the Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council. As such, Arlington County Government is the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds to Alexandria City Government (sub-contractor) and to WIOA Title I eligible training providers.

5.6 Describe the strategy used by the local board to leverage WIOA funds with other federal, state, local, and philanthropic resources.

Criteria established under Federal, state, and local WIOA policy determine job seeker eligibility for training funds. WIOA requires the coordination of training costs with funds available under other grant assistance. WIOA limits training funding to participants who are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources, including PELL Grants, to pay the costs of their training or require assistance beyond that available under grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training. WIOA prescribes “braided funding” as a strategy to support job seekers’ training and placement needs. As such, the Centers’ staff co-enroll job seeker customers into all eligibility-appropriate publicly funded workforce training programs.

In VCW Alexandria/Arlington Region, the WIOA Title I service providers serve as the service provider for SNAPET, TANF/VIEW, CSBG, and CDBG programs. The WIOA Title I career counselors have the ability, under the direction and approval of their supervisors, to co-enroll customers into multiple job training and employment programs in order to maximize efficiencies and use of resources.

5.7 Indicate the negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council’s WIOA Title I Performance Goals for Program Years 2020 and 2021 are:

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	ADULT	DISLOCATED WORKER	YOUTH
<i>Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit</i>	79.00%	85.40%	72.00%
<i>Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit</i>	\$5,100	\$8,350	\$3,100
<i>Measurable Skill Gains</i>	84.60%	68.10%	80.50%
<i>Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit</i>	85.00%	90.00%	62.80%
<i>Credential Attainment Rate</i>	74.00%	70.00%	70.00%

5.8 Describe indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), contracted service providers and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

Fiscal oversight for the VCW Centers, American Job Center Operator, and WIOA Title I Eligible Training Providers is conducted by the Arlington Department of Management and Finance following the County’s budget, fiscal and accounting policies and procedures. The Council strictly follows the procurement and contract management guidelines of its fiscal agent, Arlington County Government, which can be found at: <https://departments.arlingtonva.us/dmf/>.

5.9 Provide a description of any replicated cooperative agreements with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)]

The two VCW Center’s staff have participated in multiple trainings on Section 188 facilitated by the LEAD Center and the Disability Employment Initiative’s Project Lead. Staff also attended a disability awareness event in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the ADA organized by the VCW Arlington Center’s Disability Resource Coordinator.

Additionally, the VCW Arlington Center’s Disability Resource Coordinator has attended numerous webinar trainings on topics such as the impact of COVID-19 on individuals with disabilities as it relates to employment, accessibility and accommodations and financial empowerment of individuals with disabilities. These webinars have been presented by organizations that include the National Disability Institute, the Job Accommodation Network, the LEAD Center, the Social Security Administration and Virginia’s Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services. The Disability Resource Coordinator also completed a “train the trainer” course for Windmills Training which is a tool designed to change attitudes and create new perspectives on the abilities of individuals with disabilities.

The Disability Resource Coordinator provides guidance to the Centers’ staff on how to most effectively work with individuals with disabilities. This includes tips on how to successfully build rapport as well as communication strategies. The Disability Resource Coordinator assists staff with accessing outside resources such as sign language interpreting services and a non-profit that serves individuals on the autism spectrum.

The Disability Resource Coordinator also attends several events with employers to discuss hiring individuals with disabilities, speaks at transition events to share information about VCW services with individuals with disabilities graduating from high school and gives presentations to local independent living centers.

5.10 Describe the actions the local board will take towards becoming or remaining a high-performing board

The following three criteria will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the

Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council continues to be a high-performing board:

1. **Compliance:** Successfully negotiate AJC MOUs and all infrastructure funding agreements with all required partners. Additionally, the WIOA funds managed by the Council will sustain fiscal integrity and have no funding recaptured by the state.
2. **Program Performance:** Exceed 90% of negotiated WIOA levels of local performance.
3. **Develop, implement, and sustain at least one (1) sector initiative each program year for in-demand occupations in the DC Metro region that results in the following:**
 - a. 10% (or greater) increased enrollment of WIOA participants in training for in-demand occupations versus previous year; and
 - b. 10% (or greater) increased placement of WIOA participants in employment in in-demand occupations versus previous year.

5.11 Describe the process for getting input into the development of the local plan and providing public comment opportunity prior to submission. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plans. If any comments received that represent disagreement with the plan were received, please include those comments here. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)]

These strategies were developed working in concert with the members of the Regional Workforce Council’s Executive and One-Stop Operations Committees, with a strategy framework provided by the Virginia Community College System. Members of these committees include:

Executive Committee:

- 1 Adult Basic Education and Secondary Career Technical Member;
- 3 Business Community/Economic Development Members;
- 1 Community Based Organization Member;
- 1 Laborers’ International Union of North America Local 11 Member.

One-Stop Operations Committee:

- 1 Alexandria City Department of Community and Human Services Member;

- 1 Alexandria City Public School - Adult Basic Education and Secondary Career Technical Education Member;
- 1 Arlington County Department of Human Services Member;
- 1 Arlington Public School - Adult Basic Education and Secondary Career Technical Education Member;
- 1 Northern Virginia Community College Member;
- 1 Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services/Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired Member;
- 1 Virginia Employment Commission Member.

They were further refined during facilitated discussions and online surveys that engaged over 75 stakeholders from inside and outside the partner programs listed in this plan. In summary, the following stakeholders provided input into the development of this talent development plan:

- *Adult education and literacy programs
- *Business representatives
- Chief Elected Officials
- Chamber of Commerce
- *Community based organizations
- *Economic development
- *Employment services under Wagner Peyser
- Frontline Staff
- *Higher education (including community colleges)
- *Labor organizations
- Parents and guardians
- *Registered apprenticeships
- *Social services

- *Vocational rehabilitation
- *Youth representatives

*Required Regional Partners

The Alexandria/Arlington Regional Workforce Council published a draft of this regional Strategic Plan for public comment on <https://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us/> from January 21, 2021 through February 11, 2021. The Council distributed the Public Comment URL widely via social media, and received one comment:

<u>Public Comment</u>
<p>“This is really well done. Exceptional plans not only for workforce development, but an example for any organization or industry to use as an example for best practice.” – Chris Rieley via LinkedIn</p>

5.12 Describe professional staff development strategies, including:

- Process used to ensure staff receive continuous training in workforce development practices
- Methods to ensure effective use of the Virginia Workforce Connection system of record and to adhere to timely data entry requirements for WIOA services
- Process to measure staff performance and delivery of high-quality customer service
- Process to meet and maintain staff certification and Virginia Workforce Center certification as required by Virginia Workforce Council Policy 300-06

All workforce system partners will work closely to ensure that the Centers are high-performance workplaces with staff that have a visible passion for quality of service. Each of the partners commits to staff certification, cross-training of staff (with-in the Centers) and other professional learning opportunities for staff that promote continuous quality improvement. When possible, invitations to local government-sponsored professional development activities will be extended to all partner staff. At least 75 percent of each Center’s front line staff earned a Workforce Development Professional Certification.

Statement of Compliance, Plan Signatures, & Fiscal Agent Designation

We hereby certify that this local plan was developed in accordance with the State guidelines, and that local board activities will be conducted in accordance with this plan and the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, its attendant regulations and the applicable state laws and policies. We further certify that the plan was developed by the local workforce development board in partnership with the Chief Elected Officials (CEO), and with the benefit of an open and inclusive plan development process and the required public comment period.

Local Area Name / #	Alexandria/Arlington (LWDA 12)
Local Plan Point of Contact:	David Remick
Address:	2100 Washington Blvd., Arlington, VA 22204
Phone/e-mail:	703.228.1412/dremick@arlingtonva.us

Alberto Marino	
Alberto Marino, Chair	February 11, 2021
Typed Name & Signature of WDB Chair	Date

Matt de Ferranti	
Matt de Ferranti, Arlington County Board Chair	February 25, 2021
Typed Name & Signature of CEO Consortium Chair	Date

Local Plan Required Attachments

Please provide the links to the documents listed below in the boxes marked “Click here to enter text.” If such links are not available, please include copies of the documents with your submission.

1. Current Chief Elected Official (CEO) Consortium Agreement:
https://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2015/11/AlexArlWKForceDevConsort_Agreement.pdf
2. Current CEO-Local WBD Agreement: https://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2015/11/AlexArlRegWKForceCouncil_Agreement.pdf
3. Current Local WBD organizational chart: Chart found on page 59 of this plan.
4. Copies of executed cooperative agreements between the Local WBD or other local entities and the local office of the Virginia agency/unit administering programs carried out under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination: https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2020/03/AlexandriaArlingtonVCW_AJC-MOU_070119-to-063022.pdf
5. Local WDB Policies:
https://workforcecouncil.arlingtonva.us/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2020/12/WIOA-Local-Policies-for-the-VCW-Alexandria-City_Arlington-County-Region.pdf

Signature: *Matt de Ferranti*
Matt de Ferranti (Feb 25, 2021 20:22 EST)

Email: mdeferranti@arlingtonva.us

Signature: *Alberto Marino*
Alberto Marino (Feb 25, 2021 22:53 EST)

Email: amarino@wmata.com

Request for signature: 2020_2024 Alexandria_Arlington Talent Development Plan

Final Audit Report

2021-02-26

Created:	2021-02-25
By:	David Remick (Dremick@arlingtonva.us)
Status:	Signed
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