

West Tennessee

Transitional Regional Plan

Local Workforce Development Areas 11, 12, and 13



Open for Public Comment January 23, 2017 – February 21, 2017

Submit comments or questions in writing to:

Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board

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Any comments received in relation to the content of the draft transitional regional plan will be addressed within the plan prior to submission to the TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD). Development of local transitional plans will begin following the approval of the transitional regional plan.

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Index of Key Acronyms

ACRONYM	MEANING
AJC	American Job Center
ECD	Economic & Community Development
EMSI	Economic Modeling Systems, Inc. (Labor Market Information Database)
IWT	Incumbent Worker Training
LWDA	Local Workforce Development Area
LWDB	Local Workforce Development Board
NCRC	National Career Readiness Certificate
OJT	On-the-Job Training
RESEA	Re-Employment Services Eligibility Assessment
SCSEP	Senior Community Service Employment Program
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program
SNAP E&T	Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program Employment & Training
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TAA	Trade Adjustment Act
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TDLWD	Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development
VOS	Virtual One-Stop (i.e. Jobs4TN)
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

West Tennessee Planning Region

The West Tennessee (TN) planning region is comprised of Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) 11, 12, and 13 serving the following counties:

LWDA 11: Chester, Decatur, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and McNairy.

LWDA 12: Benton, Carroll, Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Lauderdale, Obion, Tipton, and Weakley.

LWDA 13: Fayette and Shelby.

The Regional Planning Council for West TN is comprised of representatives of the core partner programs of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), as well as representatives from the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), career and technical education, and economic development. The following individuals have been selected to serve on the Council:

LWDA 11

Jimmy Bell, Title I
April Brown, Title I
Stewart Stanfill, Title II*
Kristie Bennett, Title III*
Linda Randolph, Title IV*
Marla Rye, TANF**
Tracey Exum, ECD
Craig Butler, LWDB Chair
Horace Chase, Career and
Technical Education

**Also serving LWDA 12.*

LWDA 12

Margaret Prater, Title I
Jennifer Bane, Title I
David Parrish, Title IV
Blake Swaggart, ECD
Jimmy Williamson, LWDB
Chair
David Brewer, Career and
Technical Education

***Also serving LWDAs 12 and 13.*

LWDA 13

Kevin Woods, Title I
Melanie Winfield, Title I
Ron Wade, Title II*
Darryl Causey, Title III
LaTroyal Williamson, Title IV
Eva Mosby, TANF
Gwyn Fisher, ECD*
Desi Franklin, LWDB Chair
Roland Rayner, Career and
Technical Education

During the planning process, each LWDA in the planning region conducted a local planning session with key stakeholders in the local and regional area. Prior to the local planning session, stakeholders were asked to complete a brief survey regarding the perceived mission, vision, priorities, and goals for the LWDBs. The information was gathered by Thomas P. Miller & Associates, convener of the local and regional planning sessions, to shape the discussions of the sessions. During each local planning session, participants explored the role of the LWDB in strategic planning, reviewed demographic and labor market information for the area, developed draft mission and vision statements, identified strategic priorities, and discussed next steps and future goal development.

After each local session, the three LWDAs in the West TN region participated in a regional planning session on August 9, 2016. During this session, participants reviewed the draft mission and vision statements and strategic priorities from the local planning sessions, conducted an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), identified regional strategic priorities, discussed next steps and future goal development, and developed a regional vision statement for the region:

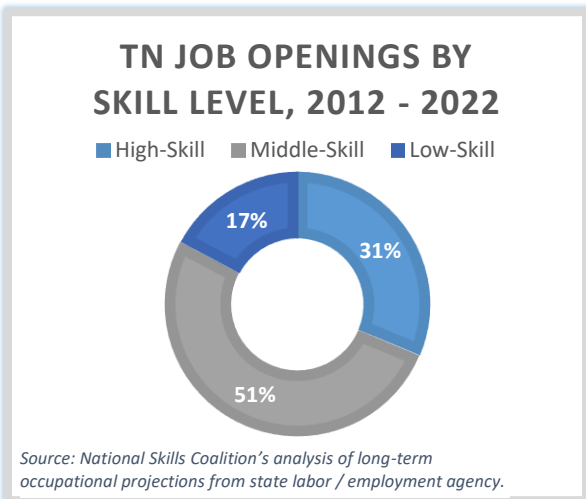
The Vision of the workforce boards in West Tennessee is to foster a region where skilled workers contribute to thriving businesses, economic growth, and a high quality of life.

Local Elected Officials, LWDB members, core and required partner programs, private business, postsecondary institutions, and economic development agencies, including Small Business Development Centers, Chambers, and Development Districts were invited to participate in the meetings. The information gathered during the local and regional planning sessions guided the Regional Planning council throughout the remainder of the regional planning process. The leadership of LWDAs 11, 12, and 13 met on November 2, 2016 to review the Transitional Regional Planning policy and develop a course of action to ensure the identified regional council met all requirements by the given deadlines. During the transitional regional planning process, stakeholders and the regional planning council met as listed below to develop the transitional regional plan:

Date	Meeting Description
7/26/2016	LWDA 12 Local Strategic Planning Session
7/28/2016	LWDA 11 Local Strategic Planning Session
7/29/2016	LWDA 13 Local Strategic Planning Session
8/9/2016	West TN Regional Strategic Planning Session
10/14/2016	Regional LWDA Directors met to discuss Policy 22 and next steps
11/2/2016	LWDAs 11, 12, and 13 Regional Planning Preparation Meeting
11/15/2016	Update LWDA 12 Board on Status of Region Plan Process and review progress to date
11/26/2016	Update LWDA 13 Board on Status of Region Plan Process and review progress to date
11/29/2016	Regional Planning Council Meeting
1/10/2017	Regional Planning Council Meeting
1/23/2017	Draft Regional Plan Published for 30 Day Public Comment Period (through 2/21/17)
1/25/2017	Update LWDA 13 Board on Status of Region Plan Process and review progress to date
1/26/2017	Update LWDA 11 Board on Status of Region Plan Process and review progress to date
2/21/2017	Regional Planning Council Meeting; End of 30 Day Public Comment Period
2/28/2017	Update LWDA 12 Board on Status of Region Plan Process and review progress to date

Labor Market and Economic Analysis

According to the National Skills Coalition, middle-skill jobs are key to TN’s health, its infrastructure and its economic growth. Many of these jobs cannot be outsourced: from the care of our sick and elderly, to the repair of our computerized cars, to the running and maintenance of our factories’ advanced machinery, to the construction of our nation’s bridges and buildings. Middle-skill jobs can provide good wages and career paths for TN’s, and specifically West TN’s, workers, yet the National Skills Coalition’s analysis of May 2012 Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational



Employment Statistics by State and 2012 American Community Survey data revealed that while middle-skills jobs accounted for 58% of TN’s labor market in 2012, only 47% of workers were trained to the middle-skill level. The role of middle-skill jobs in the TN labor market is expected to continue through 2022 as 51% of job openings are projected to be for middle-skill jobs.

To maintain a strong economy, TN must address its middle-skills gap by investing in a skilled workforce. To do this, West TN has prioritized its training resources to address the skills gaps in key industries in alignment with the TN Department of Economic & Community Development’s strategy, which focuses business development efforts on ten key clusters in which the state has a competitive advantage:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Aerospace & Defense
- Automotive
- Business Services
- Chemicals, Plastics, & Rubber
- Energy Technology
- Film, Music, and Entertainment
- Food & Agribusiness
- Healthcare & Medical Devices
- Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics

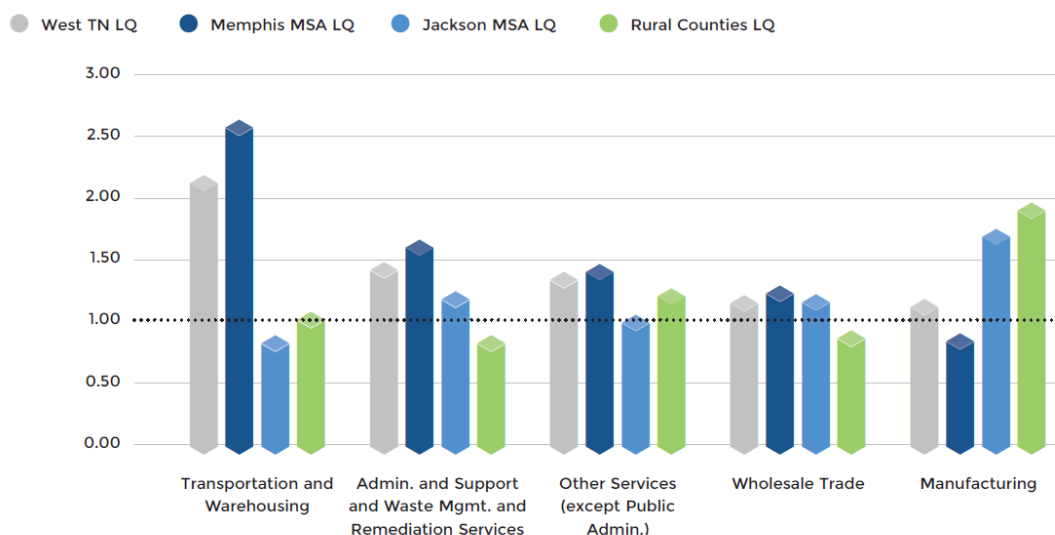
To follow the guiding principles of Demand Driven and Workforce Development = Economic Opportunity, the West TN region uses Labor Market Information (LMI) and other available data to drive decision making and to invest in initiatives that provide in-demand training and meet employers’ needs. TDLWD recognizes that local economic situations may be different from statewide trends, and that the industry composition in a particular area determines the jobs in demand. Therefore, TDLWD supports the use of state and localized data to target jobs in demand and those declining.

The [Economic Analysis of West TN](#), published in June 2015 by Economic Modeling Systems, Inc. (EMSI), outlines the economy of the twenty-one counties in the West TN region with geographic breakouts of specific metropolitan areas within the region, and comparisons with the two other Grand Divisions of TN. A thorough review of the regional economy and discussions with key stakeholders in both the public and private sectors resulted in the determination that the three largest industry sectors in West TN, with a combined 315,069 jobs, are Government, Health Care & Social Assistance, and Retail Trade. Together these sectors constituted 34% of the total regional employment in 2014. While significant growth is also expected in the industries of Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services (+24,244 jobs), Other Services (+14,888 jobs), and Finance & Insurance (+8,708 jobs), the majority of these jobs are in low wage industries.

Location quotients (LQs) comparing the concentration of employment in a given industry in a region against the concentration across the nation are high in West TN in the sectors of Transportation & Warehousing (2.16), Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services (1.44), Other Services, Except Public Administration (1.36), and Wholesale Trade (1.17), making these sectors also key to the region’s economy. However, most of the region’s strengths in terms of LQs, outside of Transportation & Warehousing, are in fields that are relatively low-skill and low wage. While the Manufacturing LQ is relatively low in the Memphis MSA (0.86), it is high in both the Jackson MSA and All Other Rural Counties (1.72 and 1.93, respectively).

Despite the fact that many manufacturing jobs have been lost in the region, the [Economic Analysis of West TN](#) revealed that 11% of the regional economy is still comprised of manufacturing related jobs and should be promoted as a legitimate career pathway. While not high in the ranking of jobs in Memphis, manufacturing ranks in the top three for both the Jackson MSA as well as the non-metropolitan counties of West TN. The tendency for Manufacturing and Transportation & Distribution sectors to co-locate within metropolitan areas, due to production industries requiring transportation industries to store and ship their products to wholesalers and retailers, also adds to the value of the industry in West TN. An undersupply of workers to support this industry has been revealed by both employers in the field and EMSI’s gap analysis, indicating a need to educate the labor force and overcome the stigma of manufacturing as a dirty, dangerous career choice. One such tactic to be considered as a best practice for replication throughout the region includes encouraging high schools and local employers to participate in “Manufacturing Days” in order to expose young people to careers in manufacturing.

Location Quotient Comparisons in West TN



Source: EMSI Complete Data 2014.4

In looking at key occupation groups in West TN for 2014 to 2024, the analysis indicated the largest occupation group in the region to be office and administrative support occupations with 120,319 jobs. Sales and related occupations ranked second with 109,938 jobs while transportation and material moving ranked third with 92,941 jobs. Unfortunately, none

of the top three occupation groups are the highest paying. Healthcare practitioners and technical workers, management, and business and financial operations are the highest paying industries that offer 500 or more annual openings in the region. Across all sectors, 73% of the jobs are found in the Memphis MSA, with higher concentrations in transportation and material moving, and computers and mathematical. The Jackson MSA comprises 9% of all jobs in the region with more concentration in healthcare and technical occupations and production occupations. The rural regions comprise 18% of all regional jobs with heavy concentration in manufacturing at 25% of all regional employment.

Thorough analysis of the labor market data and discussions with key stakeholders have resulted in the identification of in-demand sectors in the region on which to focus workforce development efforts in order to address the middle-skills gap and meet the needs of employers: (1) Healthcare; (2) Transportation and Logistics; (3) Advanced Manufacturing; and (4) Business Services, with a particular emphasis on Information Technology. Emerging industries within these sectors to receive special attention include internet-based small businesses, call centers, food manufacturing, medical device manufacturing, and manufacturing technology such as lasers and robotics. Additionally, in much of the region agriculture is considered a mature yet relevant and in-demand field. The LWDA in West TN strive to engage businesses within these industry sectors in workforce development efforts to fill the in-demand occupations as listed below.

Top Three In-Demand, Middle-Skill Level* Occupations in West TN by Industry Sector

Sector	Occupation	2016 Jobs	2021 Jobs	Change	Typical Entry Level Education	Median Hourly Wage
Healthcare	Registered Nurses	12,281	13,480	1,199	Bachelor's Degree	\$28.21
	Nursing Assistants	6,501	7,118	617	Postsecondary (PS) Non-Degree Award	\$11.03
	Licensed Practical and Vocational Nurses	4,319	4,647	328	PS Non-Degree Award	\$18.06
Transportation & Warehousing	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	13,881	14,107	226	PS Non-Degree Award	\$18.73
	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	106	113	7	Bachelor's Degree	\$28.60
	Logisticians	99	103	4	Bachelor's Degree	\$28.53
Manufacturing	Biomedical Engineers	63	91	28	Bachelor's Degree	\$37.89
	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	169	185	16	Bachelor's Degree	\$25.19
	Sales Representatives (Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical & Scientific Products)	311	317	6	Bachelor's Degree	\$32.32
Business Services – Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Civil Engineers	1,013	1,290	277	Bachelor's Degree	\$39.90
	Accountants and Auditors	2,405	2,567	162	Bachelor's Degree	\$26.61
	Software Developers, Applications	482	552	70	Bachelor's Degree	\$36.55

*Occupations include those requiring no work experience and a minimum of a postsecondary non-degree award and a maximum of a Bachelor's degree. Source: Economic Modeling Systems, Inc. (EMSI)

Workforce Analysis

Data profiles for each LWDA in West TN, from Economic Modeling Systems, Inc.'s (EMSI's) 2016 Q1 dataset, were analyzed during each of the local planning sessions. Over the next decade, the populations of LWDA 11 and 12 are expected to see a 1% decrease while LWDA 13 is expected to see a 1% increase, and both the State and nation are expected to see a 4% growth during the same time period.

Area	2015 Population	2026 Population	2015-2026 Population Change	2015-2026 % Change
LWDA 11	252,614	250,747	-1,867	-1%
LWDA 12	340,663	337,920	-2,713	-1%
LWDA 13	977,262	987,779	10,517	1%
West TN	1,570,539	1,576,446	5,907	0.4%
TN	6,596,884	6,862,202	265,318	4%
United States	321,252,743	334,302,476	13,049,733	4%

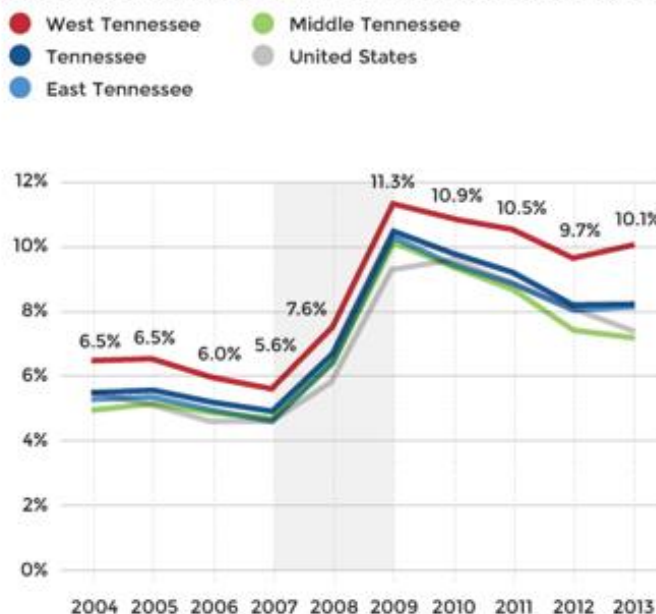
While the overall population of LWDA 11 and 12 is expected to decline, both areas, along with LWDA 13, are expected to see a growth in the number of individuals within or nearing retirement age (age 60+), while key working aged adults, those between the ages of 15 and 59 are expected to decline.

Area	Age Range	2015 Population	2015 – 2026 # Change	2015 – 2026 % Change
LWDA 11	60 and Up	59,992	11,339	19%
	40 – 59	66,417	-7,970	-11%
	15 – 39	78,067	-4,821	-6%
LWDA 12	60 and Up	80,516	12,809	16%
	40 – 59	91,247	-10,775	-12%
	15 – 39	105,291	-4,093	-4%
LWDA 13	60 and Up	178,145	41,932	24%
	40 – 59	255,943	-23,821	-10%
	15 – 39	338,522	-10,573	-3%

Since 2011, LWDA 11 has seen a 6% growth in jobs, LWDA 12 has seen a 5.7% growth, and LWDA 13 has seen a 5.4% growth. West TN lags behind both the state and the nation in growth; TN saw a 10.5% growth and the nation saw a 9.4% growth rate. As of 2016, there are 134,551 jobs in LWDA 11 consisting of full-time, part-time, and self-employed positions, 131,284 in LWDA 12, and 163,530 in LWDA 13. As stated in the [Economic Analysis for West TN](#), the region has lagged behind both Middle and East TN in job creation for the previous ten years. While Middle TN is expected to continue to see the highest growth over the next ten years, West TN is expected to surpass East TN during that time. West TN has also seen higher unemployment rates each year during the previous ten years than both Middle and East TN and the nation.

Despite the growth in jobs, the region continues to see the highest unemployment rates in the state. According to the TDLWD’s September 2016 County Unemployment Rates, released October 27, 2016, LWDA 12, with a labor force of 146,840, individuals, saw the highest unemployment rate at 6.5%, with 137,340 employed and 9,530 unemployed, an average of unemployed 866 per county. Four of LWDA 12’s eleven counties were among the top ten highest unemployment rates in the State with each county having a rate above 7%. LWDA 11, with a labor force of 110,190, saw the second highest unemployment rate at 6.0% with 103,650 employed and 6,560 unemployed in the area, an average of 820 unemployed per county. Rounding out the top three, LWDA 13,

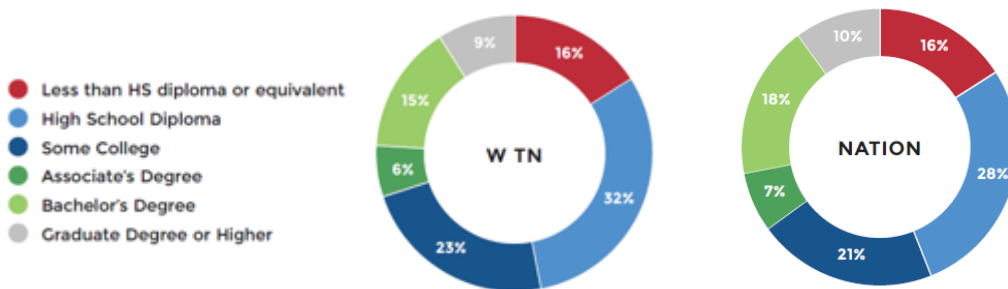
Annual Unemployment Rates across TN Grand Divisions, 2004-2013



with a labor force of 456,770, had an unemployment rate of 5.8% with 430,360 employed and 26,410 unemployed, with 96%, or 25,370, residing in Shelby County. With a total of 41,460 unemployed individuals in the region, a substantial workforce is available for existing and emerging business and industry in the region. While 12% of the unemployed individuals in the labor force in West TN have a disability, individuals with a disability constitute 33.5% of the individuals no longer in the labor force in West TN per the TN WIOA Combined State Plan for 2016-2020.

In addition to high unemployment rates, West TN serves a population with multiple barriers to employment, such as low post-secondary educational attainment, low income and underemployed individuals, recipients of public assistance, ex-offenders, single parents, individuals with transportation and substance abuse issues, and those lacking necessary soft skills and work ethic. The [Economic Analysis for West TN](#) indicates that while Middle TN sees 10.7 graduates per 1,000 people and East TN 10.4, West TN sees only 10 graduates per 1,000 people, with the biggest lags at the associate’s and bachelor’s degree levels. For adults aged 25 years and older, 32% of the West TN population have a high school diploma or equivalent, while 16% have less than a high school diploma or equivalent. In total, 737,253 individuals, or 71% of the region’s adult population fall into the “less than high school diploma,” “high school diploma,” or “some college” categories. Between 2009 and 2014, West TN saw a decrease of 1.1 percentage points in those with “less than a high school diploma” while adults with between an associate’s and master’s degree increased by 1.3 percentage points. By supporting strategies under the Governor’s Drive to 55 initiative to align education and training with the needs of business and industry and assisting West Tennesseans in accessing training opportunities, West TN is working towards achieving the initiative’s goal of 55% of Tennesseans earning a postsecondary credential by 2025.

Educational Attainment of Adult Population in West TN



With the implementation of WIOA on July 1, 2015, West TN has already seen a significant increase in targeted populations, including individuals with barriers to employment, being served in the AJCS. Per the TN WIOA Combined State Plan for 2016 – 2020, the West TN Region also has the highest percentage of individuals living in poverty among the three grand divisions of the state. Furthermore, per the Governor’s [Rural Task Force Report](#) the West TN region has five counties classified as distressed – Lake, Lauderdale, Haywood, Hardeman, and McNairy, and an additional nine counties classified as at-risk – Obion, Weakley, Gibson, Carroll, Benton, Henderson, Decatur, Chester, and Hardin. These classifications, made using the Appalachian Regional Commission’s standard based on comparisons of a county’s poverty rate, three-year average unemployment rate, and per capita market income to national average, indicate that a county ranks either in the bottom 10% of the nation as a distressed county, or between the bottom 10% and 25% as an at-risk county.

Eliminating the barriers to employment, particularly those created by poverty, requires addressing numerous factors such as transportation, childcare, healthcare, education, and work ethic. Given the large percentage of the population of West TN living in poverty, it is critical for the workforce system to address these barriers in order to not only assist individuals in becoming self-sufficient, but also to ensure the

Poverty Rates for West TN, State, & Nation

Area	Poverty Estimate, All Ages	Population, All Ages	% of Population in Poverty
LWDA 11*	52,045	251,519	20.7%
LWDA 12*	65,830	340,744	19.3%
LWDA 13*	217,183	977,814	22.2%
West TN*	335,058	1,570,077	21.34%
State*	1,165,247	6,549,352	18.25%
Nation**	47,755,606	306,226,394	15.6%

*Source: TN WIOA Combined State Plan for 2016-2020 / Economic and Workforce Analysis
 **Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

employment needs of employers in the region are met. As part of this effort, the Regional Planning Council supports the TN Department of ECD's goal of improving the economy in all rural communities thereby eliminating distressed counties and reducing the number of at-risk counties in TN.

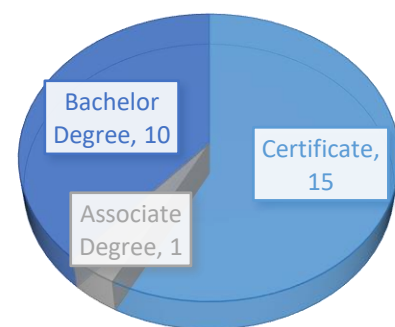
Skills Gap Analysis

In following the Governor's Jobs and Economic Development Goal and Objectives, employers are considered the primary customer of the workforce system. Understanding and meeting the needs of employers is given the utmost importance and is achieved through a collaboration of partners serving on the Business Services Team. Team members represent various AJC partners such as Labor Exchange, Veterans Programs, Trade Act, Re-Employment Services, Unemployment Insurance, Economic Development, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and staff to the LWDBs. The Business Services Team is responsible for connecting with companies in targeted industry sectors and occupations, and other employers that have hiring needs, in order to understand and meet their needs through a variety of employer-driven initiatives and services, such as the National Career Readiness Certificate™ (NCRC), WorkKeys® Job Profiling, Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-Job Training opportunities, Employer/Education partnerships, apprenticeships, job order placement through Jobs4TN online, applicant screening, and facilitation of job fairs.

To understand and meet the needs of employers, Business Services Team members connect with area employers by participating in regional economic development groups comprised of training providers, Chambers of Commerce, plant managers, and economic developers to determine high-growth jobs and industries that are adding substantial jobs to the local economy. Business Services Team members and other AJC partner staff also utilize labor market information to identify and meet employer needs. For instance, according to the [Economic Analysis of West TN](#) there were 55,783 unemployed workers in West TN as of February 2015 and only 25,921 unique job postings. The simultaneous existence of both high unemployment and high job vacancies indicates the presence of a mismatch between the jobs available and the skills demanded in the region. Recognizing that data lags, Business Services Team members throughout the local areas in the West TN region utilize formal and / or informal employer surveys in order to better identify and meet the immediate and upcoming needs of area employers. It is the goal of the Regional Planning Council to develop a common survey to be used region-wide.

Careful consideration must also be given to both the education and skills needed for key occupations to ensure the workforce is prepared to meet the needs of area employers. The gap in the number of annual openings and the number of annual completers of corresponding training programs must be analyzed to determine if educational programs are producing too few, or too many, graduates to fill the openings for related occupations. In total, 26 occupations were found to have significant gaps of 10 or more, as noted in the [Economic Analysis of West TN](#) and displayed in the diagram to the right, with the most number of gaps occurring at the postsecondary certificate level, typically among high turnover, low wage positions. In coordination with the Business Services Team, the Career Development Services Team strives to fill these gaps by ensuring participants' fields of study are in high growth mode according to research using current labor market information. Potential candidates for training must also show interest and aptitude aligned with targeted occupations and industries through the use of formal and informal assessments and evaluations of need.

NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT POSTSECONDARY SKILL LEVEL GAPS



While each position require a unique skillset, several skills are commonly needed across occupations. The TN WIOA Combined State Plan for 2016 – 2020 highlights the importance of the specific soft skills of active listening, speaking, reading comprehension, critical thinking, and social perceptiveness. Combined, these skills are expected to relate to nearly two million employment opportunities.

Soft Skills by Employment Opportunities per WIOA Combined State Plan for 2016 – 2020

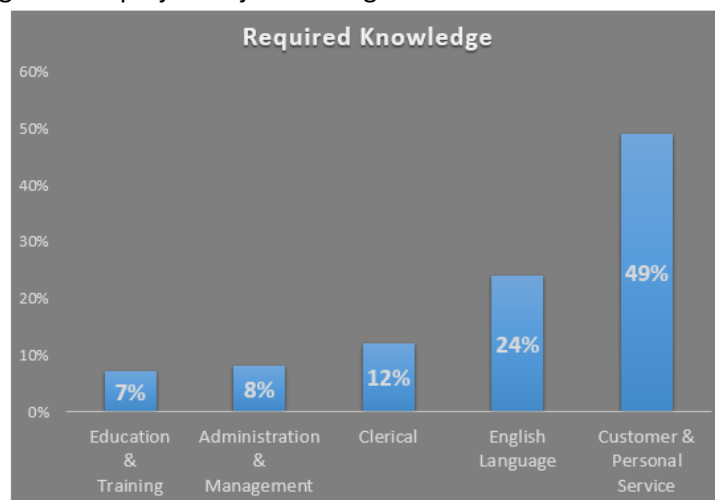
Skill Category	Projected Year Employment	Openings Due to Growth	Replacements
Active Listening	620,506	19,396	1,1748
Speaking	615,215	20,001	1,1490
Reading Comprehension	358,712	11,393	6,465
Critical Thinking	221,946	7,597	4,204
Social Perceptiveness	179,595	6,177	3,754

Furthermore, customer and personal service, English language, clerical, administration and management, and education and training were cited as the top five required knowledge categories for projected jobs through 2022.

Among the 95 critical occupations in the region cited in the [Economic Analysis of West TN](#), the table below indicates the top skills, classified as either soft, business, technical, or other skills, required as found in job postings for these occupations nationwide. In order to address the soft-skills gap, the LWDA's in West TN will partner with various postsecondary and community agencies to ensure appropriate skills training is available, preferably at the AJC via workshops, electronic courses, etc. Each LWDA will also continue to utilize mentoring and work experience opportunities to engage customers in real-world soft-skills training.

Top Skills Among 95 Critical Occupations

SKILL	% OF POSTINGS WITH SKILL	CATEGORY
Business	20%	Business
Sales	16%	Business
Driving	15%	Technical
Communication	14%	Soft
Commercial Driver's License	13%	Technical
Customer Service	13%	Business
Finance	12%	Business
Retail	10%	Other
Health	10%	Technical
Projects	9%	Other
Transportation	9%	Technical
Training	9%	Other
Planning	8%	Business
Trucking	8%	Technical
Technology	8%	Technical
Medical	8%	Technical
Nursing	7%	Technical
Marketing	7%	Business
Truck Driving	7%	Technical
Accounting	6%	Technical
Healthcare	6%	Technical
Documentation	6%	Other



Source: TN WIOA Combined State Plan for 2016 – 2020

Workforce Development Activities

Being in the business of workforce development and involved directly with training partners, the AJCs and LWDBs must be ever mindful of employment trends in local areas and the region. During the planning process, administrative leadership in the region works with local education providers including TN Colleges of Applied Technology, Community Colleges, Universities, and private providers, economic developers, and key employers in those regional sectors that align with the Governor's Jobs4TN Sector Strategies plan. Through labor market data, strategy meetings, and other data gathering methods, West TN determines the regional jobs/occupations that fit into the high-growth, high-skill category, and then focuses training initiatives on those in-demand occupations. Based on this data, West TN focuses education and training on these sectors: Healthcare and Social Assistance, Business Services, including Information Technology, Transportation and Logistics, and Advanced Manufacturing. These

sectors are shown to have positive job growth through labor market information provided by local employers, the TDLWD, and an economic analysis tool from EMSI.

In support of the Governor's Drive to 55 initiative to have 55% of Tennesseans earn a postsecondary credential by 2025, West TN's strategies to prepare workers for in-demand industry sectors and occupations include:

- (1) Approving in-demand training opportunities to be included on the statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as WIOA fundable programs;
- (2) Encouraging all job seekers to consider these programs as career options by offering assessments, opportunities, and materials noting local employment opportunities;

- (3) Partnering with employers and high schools on career pathway opportunities in employer-driven training programs;
- (4) Considering options to partner with training providers and neighboring local workforce development areas to “buy” classes offered by training providers so that dislocated workers, adults, and disadvantaged youth have an opportunity to train in the high-demand occupation without a delay due to a waiting list;
- (5) Leveraging assets such as TN Promise, TN LEAP, and TN ReConnect in order to increase capacity and provide integrated services to increase skill development and educational attainment of area residents.

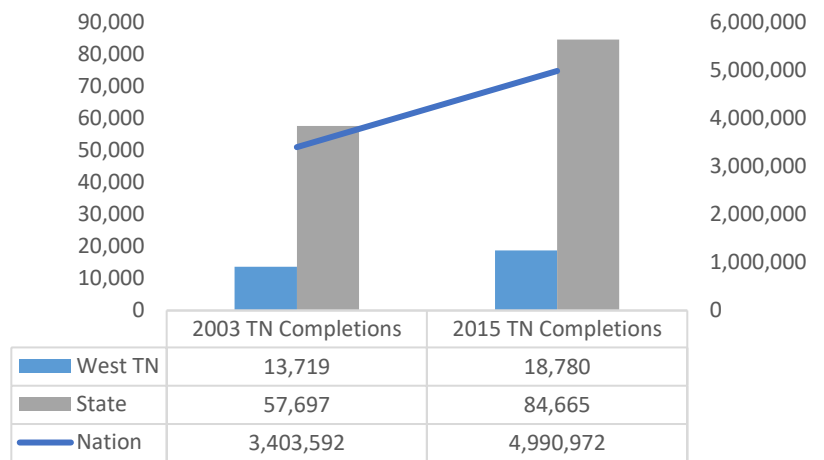
Education and training services offered throughout the region may include:

- Needs-Based Scholarships for Postsecondary Training
- Transportation Stipends for Postsecondary Training and Work Experience
- On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training Grants
- Apprenticeship Programs
- Job Profiling and National Career Readiness Certificate Testing

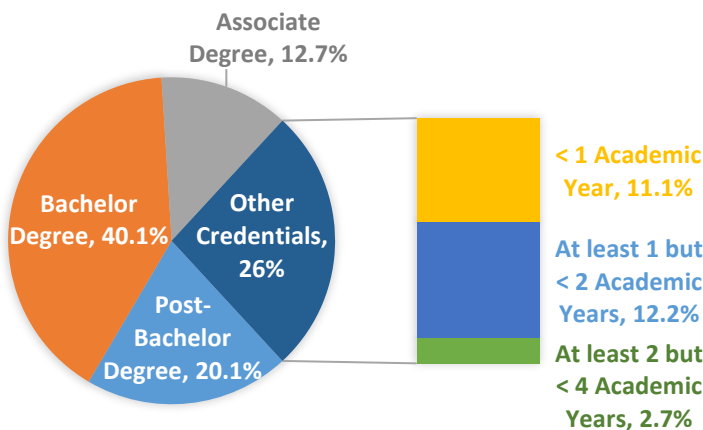
Needs-Based Scholarships, issued through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for postsecondary training, are managed in the AJCs by members of the Career Development Services Team. After a thorough assessment and verification that the training plan will lead to employability in an in-demand occupation, staff obligate funds, which is documented in Jobs4TN to allow fiscal staff and the LWDBs to have a clearer picture of funds available and projected expenditures for the program year. A priority of service policy is in place in each local area to ensure the most in need receive services first.

Per EMSI, throughout West TN, 69 institutions are offering a combined total of 1,720 programs. In 2015, there were 18,780 completions in the area, while there were 29,218 annual openings that year. While the number of completions in West TN increased by 36.9% between 2003 and 2015, the State saw an increase of 46.7% while the Nation saw an increase of 46.6%.

2003 - 2015 Completions Trends



AWARD LEVEL BY TYPE



Of the completions in 2015, the majority, or 40.1% earned a Bachelor degree. A Master degree was awarded to 14.5%, while an Associate degree was awarded to 12.7%. Other academic credentials were awarded to 26.5%.

West TN is sensitive to the needs of employers and makes every effort to eliminate skills gaps of job applicants. When ITAs are not appropriate or do not fully address the skills needs of a specific employer, Business Services Team members may authorize On-the-Job Training reimbursement for new hires with experience below the O*Net Specific Vocational

Preparation level. Additionally, if a lack of sufficient providers or programs to meet training needs is identified (i.e. a

large layoff resulting in extensive waiting lists for training), a “buy-out” class may be authorized. In order to maximize efficiency and effectiveness in addressing the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers, West TN utilizes groups of subject matter experts (SMEs), such as standing and / or ad hoc committees of the LWDBs, or employer-driven councils, boards, and / or groups. Such groups may include the Greater Memphis Medical Device Council, Steel Fabricators Council, Process Technology Talent Council, Commercial Driver’s License Talent Council, Public Service Technician / Blue Path Pathway Program, and various industrial boards. These groups of SMEs, comprised of board members, as well as community members, with expertise in the subject matter, provide vital information and guidance to the LWDB and its staff.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of workforce development activities in the region were analyzed by staff and partners of LWDA 11, 12, and 13 on August 9, 2016 as part of the regional planning process. After review by the Regional Planning Council, the below items have been identified as the top five priorities for each category. The SWOT Analysis is the primary basis of the planning process and enables all partners to visually review how the organization and region can grow and improve. Additionally, all partners are creating action plans to address key weaknesses and to take advantage of opportunities.

SWOT Analysis for West TN, January 2017

Strengths	Weakness
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abundance of training institutions within the region 2. Strong work ethic of the region 3. Willingness of partners to work together 4. Diversified pool of labor 5. Multiple industrial sites available including the centrally located Memphis Regional Megasite 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of soft skills among job seekers 2. Lack of skills among a portion of the workforce 3. Perceived reputation of workforce development services 4. Education challenges such as inconsistent quality of secondary education across the area 5. Internal/external awareness and knowledge of workforce services
Opportunities	Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Postsecondary educational expansions / investments 2. Employer investments in workforce training 3. State education initiatives such as TN Promise, TN ReConnect, and LEAP 4. Projection of future in-demand industries (new opportunities from technology-driven skills) 5. TN Dept. of Economic & Community Development’s Rural Programs 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of jobs 2. Relevance – Can the AJC supply what employers need / want? 3. Lack of funding for workforce services 4. Lack of alignment of training to employer needs due to continuous changes in technology and processes 5. Loss of jobs to automation and globalization

Geographic Factors and Access to Services

The Mississippi River, which runs along the entire western border of the region, is advantageous for employers requiring transportation of products by barge. The Port of Memphis on the Mississippi River serves as an asset to both regional employers as well as outside employers doing business in the region. Likewise, the new Port of Cates Landing in Lake County, the farthest northwest county in the region, offers the same advantages in the northern section of the region. However, the lack of a bridge to cross the river in Lake County creates a burden for workers to commute into or out of the area. While transportation has improved in the rural areas, for instance the enhancement of Highway 412 between Dyersburg and Jackson to a four-lane highway, new projects such as the creation of the I-69 corridor in West TN, will further enhance transportation, and therefore the regional economy, in the region. The I-69/385 corridor between Memphis and northern Mississippi allows for improved commuting between the areas. Highway 64, running between Memphis, Somerville, Whiteville, and Bolivar also allows for individuals to easily commute for work or school.

In addition to commuting between areas in the region, due to the proximity of the neighboring states of Kentucky, Missouri, Arkansas, and Mississippi, many individuals in the region commute out of the area for training and / or work, while individuals living in the neighboring states may also commute into the region for training and / or work. Many

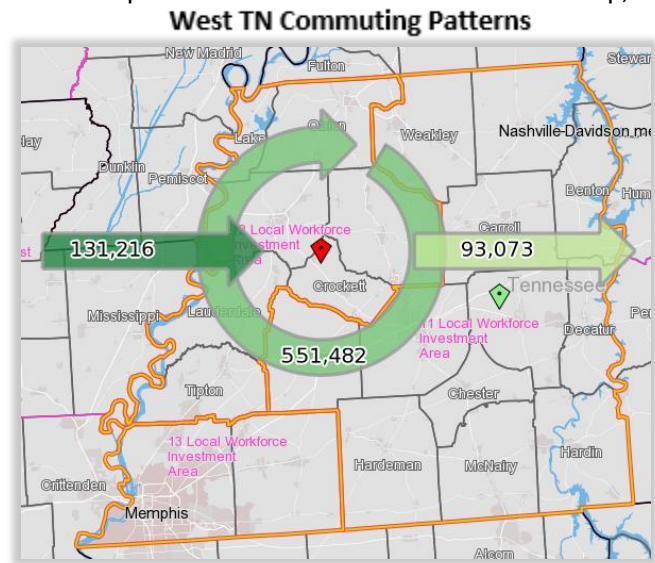
training institutions along the state line offer out-of-state tuition waivers for individuals living along the border in another state. Of the 682,698 individuals employed in West TN in 2014 per the U.S. Census Bureau's On-the-Map, 551,482 individuals, or 80.8% both live and work in the region, while 93,073 individuals, or 13.6% live in the area but commute out of the area for work. Additionally, another 131,216, or 19.2% live outside the area but commute into the area for work.

Due to state tax differences, the commuting patterns of workers may create additional burdens for regional employers. Improved coordination amongst neighboring states is needed in order to maximize geographic advantages and workforce development activities in the region. Coordination amongst the LWDAs in West TN is also vital as many workers commute between areas as well, and employers are often interacting with multiple LWDAs. For instance, the Memphis Regional Megasite is strategically located to be advantageous for both

employers and employees throughout all of West TN. West TN will strive to take innovative approaches to maximize access to both work and training opportunities by seeking grant funding, partnering with employers and agencies offering transportation services to enhance workers access to training opportunities, and establishing training sites at strategic locations, such as secondary schools and near the Megasite.

Each LWDA in West TN strives to ensure workforce development services are available to all area residents by maintaining an AJC in each county throughout the region. In order to manage administrative costs, competitive leases are negotiated, partners co-locate in the AJCs when possible, and the LWDAs seek additional funding through grant opportunities. While brick-and-mortar AJCs are valued for cost effectiveness, availability of resources to customers, and visibility in the community, West TN also recognizes the need to bring the services to the customers who may not be able to visit the established AJC given the large service areas and transportation barriers. In order to bring the services to the people, the TDLWD's Career Coach, a mobile center with services customers typically found in a traditional AJC, is utilized to serve remote areas and individuals who are unable to commute to one of the AJCs in the region. These mobile centers provide a computer lab with up to 10 computers with internet access, a fax machine, and copier. Staff are available to offer workshops on resumes and interviewing skills, administer the HiSet exam, provide instruction on basic computer hardware and software using a large monitor and SMART board, and offer assistance with job searching, resume development, interviewing, as well as providing information about training/education opportunities. The mobile Career Coach can also serve as a recruitment center for companies moving into the area.

To further enhance access to services, the implementation of "street teams" in LWDA 13 is a promising practice to be considered for replication throughout the region. These teams are charged with coordinating with community programs and agencies to provide AJC services via access points. Customers who visit an access point administered by a "street team" are able to receive the same Career Services offered in a traditional AJC, including job search assistance, resume development, workshops, etc. Possible replications of LWDA 12's use of Skype for "face-to-face" interactions with various one-stop partners and / or employers would allow customers in affiliate sites and access points to virtually receive one-stop services typically only offered onsite at the comprehensive centers. Jobs4TN, a Virtual One-Stop system developed by Geographic Solutions, Inc., also allows both job seeker and employer customers to remotely access secure, web-based AJC services such as labor market information, unemployment insurance, and mediated labor exchange. The system's ability to integrate seemingly different program designs, such as Title I, WP, TAA, Unemployment Insurance, and Adult Education programs also maximizes customer service and efficiency as it provides a common intake and case management information system.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau – On-the-Map

Education, Training, and Workforce Alignment

In order to address the skill gaps revealed through labor market data and discussions with key stakeholders as described above in the *Skills Gap Analysis* section, the West TN region focuses on enhancing training opportunities and providing individuals with the knowledge and resources needed to take advantage of them. Data from the [Economic Analysis of West TN](#) is used as a foundation to begin discussions and develop partnerships with educational institutions such as TN Colleges of Applied Technology (TCAT), Community Colleges, and Universities to address educational needs in the area, and achieve the goal of the Drive to 55 initiative, by ensuring the availability of needed training opportunities.

In order to meet the needs of employers and align education and training opportunities with targeted industries and occupations, West TN also takes advantages of initiatives and opportunities such as Pathways TN and the Labor and Education and Alignment Program (LEAP) when possible to partner with workforce, education, training, and employer partners. The Pathways TN initiative, part of a multi-state consortium, the Pathways to Prosperity Network, aims to address the “skills gap” that threatens the preparedness of young Americans entering the workforce. The mission of Pathways TN is to provide TN students rigorous academic/career pathways, which are linked to economic and labor market needs and trends. To yield a pipeline of skilled entry-level workers to address the current and projected skilled worker shortage, West TN will also:

- Research labor market information and assist in the engagement of employers in the region to determine current and future hiring needs.
- Coordinate with middle school personnel to understand, develop, and/or enhance career exploration activities for students, beginning in the 7th grade, to assure programs align with industry needs.
- Facilitate interaction between employers and middle/high school teachers, counselors, and/or administration to provide “real world” workforce expectations of business and industry, including career pathways, work ethic and soft skills.
- Coordinate with secondary schools and postsecondary institutions to develop career pathways for students that meet the needs of the students and employers.

Through a LEAP grant, a manufacturing pathway is currently in place in several high schools in West TN. A collaboration between industry, secondary schools, and postsecondary schools, including Community Colleges and TCATs, has allowed high school students the opportunity to earn nationally recognized manufacturing credentials through the Manufacturing Skills Standard Council (MSSC)’s Certified Production Technician (CPT) training. Students are able to earn national certifications in Safety, Quality, Manufacturing Processes, and / or Maintenance Awareness, and those attaining all credentials achieve Certified Production Technician status. Participating students are also given opportunities to demonstrate the skills they are learning to local employers through internship opportunities. For those interested in continuing their education, the MSSC credentials may be used to request up to 12 hours of college credit at Dyersburg State Community College toward an Associate Degree in Advanced Integrated Industrial Technology, or advanced standing at local TCATs. Dual enrolment agreements between the TCATs and participating school districts will allow students who complete the training to earn credit hours towards a diploma at a TCAT.

Employer Engagement

In addition to education and workforce alignment initiatives, the Business Services Team assists in identifying and meeting the needs of employers in existing and emerging industries and occupations by building relationships through local and regional initiatives, identifying means of addressing human resources needs, promoting and facilitating the use of AJC services such as the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), Job Profiling, On-the-Job Training grants, customized training opportunities, and the availability of Incumbent Worker Training grants. The NCRC credential has been utilized as part of efforts to increase training opportunities with employers. The NCRC and job profiling provide a two-part program that benefits both business/industry and job seekers. Other services provided to new and prospective companies by the Business Services Team and American Job Center Partners include:

- Pre-screening Applicants – Analyzing job applications and pre-screening applicants based on minimum requirements, then referring qualified candidates to various pre-employment assessments.
- Job Fairs – Facilitating, organizing, planning and finding qualified labor for open positions, including joint job fairs across LWDAs.
- Labor Market Information – Labor Market FAQs can be found on www.Jobs4TN.gov - an online resource that provides access to a wide variety of information about jobs in the local area, such as the average wages for jobs in an area, the occupations predicted to have the most future job openings, the salary expectations for specific occupations, and county unemployment rates.
- Virtual Career Center – Using the Jobs4TN online website to connect employers to job seekers by listing job orders and making coordinated referrals based on job descriptions.
- On-the-Job and Incumbent Worker Training – Educating employers about the availability of OJT and IWT funds to assist in upgrading skills of new and existing employees.
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) Services – Using Jobs4TN to report layoffs and closures, workers to file claims, job search, and complete weekly certifications, and connect to programs for UI recipients including Re-Employment Services Eligibility Assessment (RESEA).
- Starting Your Own Business Workshop – Attendees learn the skills and information they need to get started, including successful business ownership traits, assessment of the business idea, and the “mechanics” of starting a business – forms of ownership, insurance, financing, and more. Offered in partnership with the TN Small Business Development Centers.

In West TN, several staff members serve as authorized WorkKeys Job Profilers and are available to profile entry-level or high turn-over jobs within local companies throughout West TN. The companies can then require job applicants to earn the specific level on the NCRC exam that the profiler recommended for the job. This win-win situation creates a “best-fit” for both the employer and job seeker. To date, jobs have been profiled in various industries from food packaging to automotive steering systems to heating and air conditioning unit manufacturing. The program is growing and employers in the healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and business service industries are seeking applicants that have earned this work-based credential. Given the value of these services, the West TN region will continue to collaborate and make coordinated efforts to seek and obtain grant funding, as a region when possible, in order to sustain and enhance employer services.

Additionally, the abundance of job seekers earning a NCRC also serves as an economic development tool for the local area and the TDLWD. Since the NCRC system is being utilized in most states, prospective industries can compare one state to another with a standardized measurement tool. The Northwest Economic Development District uses the NCRC as a positive economic development tool in competing for jobs on a national stage. In addition to administering the NCRC assessment, members of the Business Services Team also coordinate with economic development partners to provide labor marker information to prospective industries. This data helps to further advocate the northwest TN workforce for potential employers.

Economic Development Coordination

In addition to engaging employers in workforce development programs and services, West TN strives to coordinate efforts with regional economic development services and providers by aligning services with the job base camps, participating in the Workforce 360^o program, and ensuring residents have the skills and knowledge needed to meet the current and future needs of employers. Economic development representatives, including individuals from the State of TN’s Department of Economic Development, and various Chambers of Commerce in the region have been invited to, and have participated in, both local and regional planning sessions. Representatives from economic development also serve on the LWDBs, standing committees, and the Regional Planning Council, and are actively engaged in the planning process. Training providers in the region, including Dyersburg State Community College, Jackson State Community College, and various TCATs, supply Chambers of Commerce with education and training data, including current program offerings and completion information, which is used to market the region to prospective industries. Both established

and prospective employers can utilize trainings designed with their unique needs in mind. Small Business Development Centers in the region also provide valuable training to existing and potential small businesses.

Private business representatives constitute 51% of the LWDBs, which are charged with coordinating with economic development organizations. Representatives from businesses within the below industries currently serve on a LWDB in West TN:

- Manufacturing
- Education
- Social Assistance
- Finance, Insurance, and Banking
- Healthcare
- Staffing Services
- Electric Power Distribution
- Electrical Contracting
- Recycling
- Food Service
- Security Services
- Legal Services
- Non-Profits
- Distribution, Transportation & Logistics
- Small Businesses including Pest Control, Marketing / Advertising / Public Relations, Agricultural Technology, Plumbing, Construction, Landscaping, Real Estate, Facilities Maintenance, and Retail

Regional Workforce Development Service Strategies

Representatives from each of the core partner programs of Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, Title II Adult Education, Title III Wagner Peyser, Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, and TANF, as well as representatives from economic development, career and technical education, and LWDB members serve on the Regional Planning Council and guide the development of regional service strategies. During the transitional regional planning process, the Regional Planning Council met monthly and after the completion of the regional planning process, the Council will continue to meet quarterly. Core partners will also play a vital role in the certification process for the AJCs as effective and efficient service delivery is key to the success of the region's AJCs.

Additionally, Regional Council members will continue to ensure the sharing of best practices for the purposes of identifying service delivery strategies to be expanded throughout the region. For instance, service delivery strategies to offenders in LWDA 11, transportation stipend delivery in LWDA 12, and "street teams" to deliver career services via access points and other methods in LWDA 13, are best practices identified by the Council for consideration of expansion throughout the region. When possible, procurement of services such as gas cards utilized in LWDA 12, will also be expanded throughout all of West TN. New service strategies to address regional education and training needs will also be developed by the Regional Council. To date, the Council has identified the following as possible service strategies to be given further consideration:

- A common application in order streamline services for both job seeker and employer customers.
- Align support service policies to ensure all customers receive similar services.
- Develop a process to jointly offer OJT contracts to employers in the region.
- Seek and utilize grant funding as a region to enhance and expand service offerings.
- Enhance methods of addressing soft-skill gaps.
- Coordinate with employers to utilize resources and / or funding saved through OJT and IWT grants for other training needs.
- Maximize services through coordination with, and referral to, core and other partners including K – 12, postsecondary, SNAP E&T, RESEA, TANF, and others, as described in the TN WIOA Combined State Plan for 2016 – 2020 as well as the Service Integration Policy.

The Regional Planning Council will also work to identify additional strategies for maximizing geographic advantages such as the Memphis Regional Megasite, the Port of Cates Landing, and the Port of Memphis. While these opportunities are attractive to prospective industries, the workforce system must be able to supply the workers needed to fulfill the needs of employers. In order to meet these needs, West TN has taken advantage of the ACT® Work Ready Communities (ACT WRC) program to market the region to potential business and industry. ACT WRC is a workforce system designed to

assist sites and regions in developing their workforce pipeline to provide skilled workers for employers. The WRC framework allows each participating community to quantify and improve the skill levels of its workforce through a standardized workforce skill credential, the NCRC, and a robust data infrastructure that help measure, identify, and close existing skill gaps. The key components of certification are: (1) Encouraging residents to earn a NCRC; and (2) Building employer recognition and support for the initiative by encouraging new hires, incumbent workers, and the emerging workforce to earn the NCRC. An article entitled, "Make it Less Murky-Workforce Credentials are the New Currency of Site Location Success," published in the January 2016 edition of *Site Selection Magazine*, listed the NCRC as one of three measures in ranking states on preparing their workforce for current and future employment. While LWDA 12 is nearing completion of its WRC initiative, LWDA 13 and Haywood County in LWDA 11 are beginning the process of becoming WRCs. This certification will allow the region to demonstrate to prospective industries that the West TN workforce is prepared to meet employers' needs.

Furthermore, together, the Business Services and Career Development Services Teams fulfill the needs of both the employer and the job seeker through work-based learning opportunities such as apprenticeships, paid work experience, and On-the-Job Training (OJT). These opportunities, providing unemployed customers with both employment and training simultaneously, make training possible to individuals who would not be capable of supporting themselves and their families without an income. In order to connect unemployed individuals with these opportunities, members of the Business Services Team focus on developing job placement opportunities with regional employers while members of the Career Development Services Team focus on preparing job seekers for these opportunities through resume assistance, interviewing skills training, and addressing soft skills deficiencies.

Transportation and Other Support Services

As a Basic Career Service, the provision of referrals to, and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including those within the one-stop delivery system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs is available to all customers of the AJCs. Based on customers' needs, staff serving in the Welcome Function make referrals to appropriate agencies for support and other services. For example, customers may be referred to the Department of Human Services or a Head Start program to apply for childcare services, to Access from AT&T for discounted home internet service, or to various community agencies regarding assistance for commodities, electric bills, and telephone access. Each AJC maintains appropriate contact and other information in order to facilitate referrals for services. Telephones and computers are also available for customers to access offsite partners.

Given the large numbers of individuals with barriers to employment in the region, transportation and other support services are of the utmost importance to ensuring successful outcomes for customers. While a range of support services is available to help customers overcome barriers to successfully complete training and / or gain employment, West TN must be ever mindful of emerging and changing needs in determining support services needed in the region. For instance, many customers struggle to access a computer and / or internet, prompting consideration of offering support services to provide internet access. Examples of support services currently offered in West TN include:

- Test fee stipends to customers seeking to earn a high school equivalency program.
- A one-time payment for work-related expenses such as appropriate work attire, uniforms, tools, medical physicals, background checks, drug screens, industry certifications, driver's license fees, or other employment-related needs are available to Youth Work Experience participants.
- Childcare support in the form of a weekly stipend paid to a licensed daycare facility is available.
- Transportation stipends.

Special attention to transportation support services is needed as this is perhaps the greatest barrier for many AJC customers, and as discussed in the *Geographic Factors and Access to Services* section above, thousands of individuals commute into and out of the region for employment. While mass public transportation is available in Jackson in LWDA 11 and Memphis in LWDA 13, it is not available in LWDA 12 or other rural areas of the region. Therefore, individuals needing transportation assistance may utilize transportation services available through various community agencies

such as Northwest TN Human Resource Agency, Southwest Human Resource Agency, and Delta Human Resource Agency, which provide transportation service for the citizens of the region to ensure access to medical and educational facilities, employment sites, shopping centers, and various other businesses and services. Transportation stipends for eligible participants attending an approved training provider and program for occupational skills training is currently available in LWDA 12 and 13 through a stipend payment paid at intervals consistent with the training provider terms. Youth participating in work experience through LWDA 12 may also receive a travel stipend for the first 30 days of work experience to offset their gas expenses until they have received one month of pay.

Staff coordinate with partner programs, such as Workforce Essentials, administrator of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, or Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), for participants receiving transportation assistance from another partner organization. For example, participants receiving transportation assistance through Workforce Essentials or TAA may have the total amount anticipated to be received in transportation assistance deducted from the transportation assistance amount Title I staff expects to pay. In the event that the partner program covers the full expense, Title I staff will coordinate to provide other needed services such as case management and job search assistance, in order to maximize services for the customer.

In order to enhance the provision of transportation and other supportive services, the Regional Planning Council will ensure the sharing of best practices for possible replication, such as the use of gas cards for the payment of transportation stipends. Additionally, West TN will continue to maximize funding available for supportive services by coordinating services through programs such as TN Promise and TN ReConnect, as well as forms of financial aid such as Lottery scholarships and Pell grants, allowing Title I funding to be awarded to customers for supportive services instead of training services. Through collaboration with programs offering supportive services West TN will also maximize customers' access to services not available through the AJC. For example, West TN will consider partnering with agencies offering transportation services on behalf of customers who lack means of transportation to coordinate schedules, arrange services, or to potentially fund such services for both individuals and groups. Coaching and mentoring services available through the AJCs and partner programs, such as TN ReConnect, will also be utilized to assist customers in obtaining needed services.

Target Populations

Under WIOA, the workforce system is emphasizing serving those who are most in need. In order to reach out to members of such target populations, staff conduct outreach activities, to discuss services, distribute and / or post marketing materials, schedule outreach efforts such as group presentations or a table of information materials, and develop plans for additional outreach, at various community locations, including those specifically serving target populations. Such organizations may include Adult Education classes, libraries, Department of Human Services, Health Department, Housing Authorities, churches, Boys & Girls Clubs, schools, postsecondary institutions, and Head Start programs. Outreach efforts strive to connect regional target populations to occupational demands by engaging them in utilizing services such as Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for postsecondary training, as managed in the AJCs by members of the Career Development Services Team. While many job seekers choose to attend postsecondary training to gain necessary job skills, others find that "hands on" work-based learning, such as apprenticeships and On-the-Job Training (OJT), are a better fit as they provide an income to sustain them while learning skills. OJT is available to companies with full-time job opportunities, with a focus on employment sectors identified in the Governor's Economic and Community Development Jobs4TN Plan. The obligation of training funds is documented in Jobs4TN allowing fiscal staff and the LWDBs to have a clearer picture of funds available and projected expenditures for the program year. "Priority of service" policies are also in place to ensure individuals with barriers to employment, the most in need, receive training services such as these first.

When possible, each LWDA in West TN strives to incorporate programs designed to serve particular target populations within the AJCs. In addition to TANF and Youth programs being offered through the AJCs, the Re-Employment Services Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program, designed to assist individuals receiving unemployment insurance with appropriate reemployment services that will lead to successful employment outcomes, strives to assist participants in

overcoming barriers so that they can make a successful transition to gainful employment. Similarly, the Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), a partnership between the Department of Human Services (DHS) and TDLWD, allows eligible SNAP recipients to receive job readiness services such as job search assistance, training or educational placement assistance and scholarships, high school equivalency test fees, and books and transportation assistance for Adult Education classes through AJCs in the region. These funds offset the need for ITA funds to be applied towards tuition and fee costs, allowing ITAs to cover other costs such as books, supplies, tool, uniforms, and transportation stipends. Aligning services such as SNAP E&T and ITAs allows customers to receive all the help they need, but also provides a way for LWDA's to maximize the funds available and to serve more customers. A YouthBuild program is also available in LWDA 13 to provide participants with academic or construction training, work experience, and leadership development. Vocational Rehabilitation's and LWDA 13's Ticket to Work Programs strive to provide re-employment services to individuals with disabilities in order to facilitate a successful transition into the workplace. LWDA 12 has made application to become a Disability Network in order to expand the Ticket to Work program. The Disabled Veterans Outreach Program is also available to provide services to disabled veterans.

In addition to engaging target populations in the use of AJC services, programs are developed to serve customers with special needs, such as offender and re-entry programs. As unemployment rates have continued to decline in the region, preparing individuals with criminal backgrounds to return to work has become an even greater priority as employers seek skilled applicants to fill vacancies. West TN has incorporated several programs for currently incarcerated individuals to help prepare them for re-entry into society and the workforce. For instance, a partnership with the Memphis Shelby County Office of Re-Entry (MSCOR) has enabled their clientele to receive training and job placement services. The Jail2Job program has established a "specialized" AJC at the Dyer County Correctional Work Center to offer career services, National Career Readiness Certificate testing, Certified Production Training, and work experience to selected inmates with the goal of participating inmates owing no fines, having a valid driver's license, being drug free, and having a job by the time they are released. Similarly, the Inside-Out Dad program provides incarcerated fathers with basic needs to prosper upon re-entry into society. The program includes instruction on being a better father and husband, adult education classes, resume and interviewing guidance, and information on services available through various agencies. After completing a pilot program in McNairy County in May 2015, the program was expanded to five other counties and a similar program for incarcerated women, How to Be A Responsible Mother, was introduced.

Administrative Cost Arrangements

Resource Sharing Agreements (RSAs) are developed with onsite partners at the AJCs in order to establish methods of cost sharing. RSAs are updated quarterly and reviewed by partner leadership for accuracy and monitoring of shared costs and expenditures. The fiscal staff for the LWDB invoices partners monthly to ensure timely payment of shared costs. WIOA program funds are also braided with other Federal and State programs, such as Trade Adjustment Act, TN Promise, TN ReConnect, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T), TANF, Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP), Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs, and Re-Employment Services Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) in order to eliminate duplication and leverage dollars to maximize resources and services. AJC partners also enter into Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in order to leverage resources, eliminate duplication of services, and improve effectiveness, thereby decreasing administrative and program costs.

Current MOUs and RSAs will be updated to reflect new WIOA partners and the sharing of infrastructure costs among partner programs, based on proportionate use of the AJCs and relative benefit received, prior to the beginning of program year (PY) 2017 on July 1, 2017. A variety of methods to allocate costs will be evaluated during the process for establishing infrastructure cost sharing agreements, possibly including: the proportion of a partner program's occupancy percentage of the AJC (square footage); the proportion of a partner program's customers compared to all customers served by the AJC; the proportion of partner program's staff compared to all staff at the AJC; or a partner program's use of equipment or other items that support the local AJC delivery system. Under the guidance of the Regional Planning Council, the LWDA's in West TN will also consider utilizing cost sharing arrangements when appropriate, for administrative costs such as the development of the regional plan, processing OJT contracts, developing marketing

materials and a regional Annual Report, seeking and applying for grant funding, processing payroll for work experience, and the selection of a one-stop operator.


Performance Accountability Measures

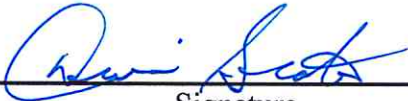
Each LWDA's success in providing the services outlined in the regional plan is measured by Performance Standards developed by the US Department of Labor, which are broken out by the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funding streams. These standards are then negotiated with each of the states, including TN. TDLWD then negotiates with the thirteen LWDA's across the State. On a local level, the LWDA holds subcontractors to the same performance levels. Performance levels are measured across the areas of employment rates for 2nd and 4th quarters after exit and credential attainment within four quarters after exit for all programs, as well as median earnings for 2nd quarter after exit for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The LWDA's in West TN have achieved performance at a level to be awarded incentive grants for the most recent award for Program Year (PY) 14. In order to be successful as a region, it is vital that each LWDA achieve the local performance goals, as well as performance dashboards to be developed by the TDLWD for pre and post-program outcomes. To accomplish this goal, the West TN region will ensure open communication regarding best practices that promote efficiency and effectiveness in delivering workforce services.

LWDA 11 SIGNATURE PAGE

This Program Year 2016 Transitional Regional Plan for the West Tennessee region represents the Local Workforce Development Area #11 Workforce Development Board's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs in this local workforce development area and throughout the West Tennessee region.

This Program Year 2016 Transitional Regional Plan for the West Tennessee region is submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. We further certify that we will operate our Workforce Development Act Program in accordance with this plan and applicable federal and state laws and regulations.


<p>Workforce Development Board Chair</p>  <hr/> <p>Signature</p> <p><i>Craig Butler</i> Chair</p> <hr/> <p><i>2/20/17</i> Date</p>


<p>Chief Local Elected Official</p>  <hr/> <p>Signature</p> <p><i>Dwain Seaton</i> Chief Local Elected Official</p> <hr/> <p><i>2/21/2017</i> Date</p>
--

LWDA 12 SIGNATURE PAGE

This Program Year 2016 Transitional Regional Plan for the West Tennessee region represents the Local Workforce Development Area #12 Workforce Development Board's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs in this local workforce development area and throughout the West Tennessee region.

This Program Year 2016 Transitional Regional Plan for the West Tennessee region is submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. We further certify that we will operate our Workforce Development Act Program in accordance with this plan and applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

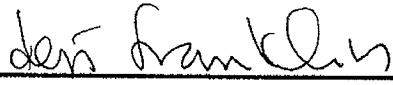
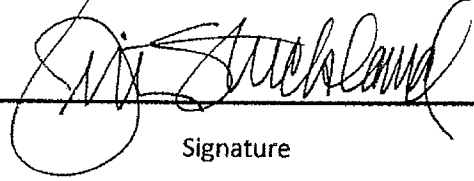
<p>Workforce Development Board Chair</p> <p> Signature</p> <p><i>Jimmy Williamson</i> Chair</p> <p><u>2/22/17</u> Date</p>

<p>Chief Local Elected Official</p> <p> Signature</p> <p><i>Mayor Gary Reasons</i> Chief Local Elected Official</p> <p><u>2-22-17</u> Date</p>
--

LWDA 13 SIGNATURE PAGE

This Program Year 2016 Transitional Regional Plan for the West Tennessee region represents the Local Workforce Development Area #13 Workforce Development Board's efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and to coordinate these resources with other state and local programs in this local workforce development area and throughout the West Tennessee region.

This Program Year 2016 Transitional Regional Plan for the West Tennessee region is submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. We further certify that we will operate our Workforce Development Act Program in accordance with this plan and applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

<p>Workforce Development Board Chair</p> <p></p> <hr/> <p>Signature</p> <p><i>Desi Franklin</i></p> <p>Chair</p> <p><i>February 25, 2017</i></p> <hr/> <p>Date</p>	<p>Chief Local Elected Official</p> <p></p> <hr/> <p>Signature</p> <p><i>Jim Strickland</i></p> <p>Chief Local Elected Official</p> <p><i>2/25/17</i></p> <hr/> <p>Date</p>
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Notification of the posting of the regional plan to regional / local stakeholders

Bane, Jennifer

From: Bane, Jennifer
Sent: Friday, January 13, 2017 3:08 PM
To: aprilb@swhra.org; elocke@swhra.org; Stanfill, Stewart; Kristie Bennett; linda.m.randolph@tn.gov; Rye, Marla; tracey.exum@tn.gov; cbutler@blueribbonmgmt.com; hchase@jscc.edu; David Parrish; Blake Swaggart; jimmy_williamson@att.net; david.l.brewer@tn.gov; Kevin.woods1@memphistn.gov; Winfield, Melanie; rwade@whyhopeworks.org; jshock@whyhopeworks.org; Gwyn Fisher; darryl.causey@tn.gov; latroyal.williamson@tn.gov; evaemosby@maximus.com; dfranklin@firsthorizon.com; roland.rayner@tcatmemphis.edu; andrew.helms@tcatmemphis.edu; nathan.garrett@tcatmemphis.edu; Lewis, Henry; chandler.mark@att.net; Adam Miller (amiller@cscsugar.com); Allen Hester (ahester@dychamber.com); Alvin Smothers (hubbsrd@yahoo.com); Bedford Dunavant (bdunavant@westaninsurance.com); Ben Marks 'benmarks@bellsouth.net'; Blake A. Swaggart (blake.swaggart@tn.gov); Brad Hurley (cchamber@earthlink.net); Carlton, Edith; Charlie Moore (cmoore@crockettchamber.com); Cynthia Whitaker; David Parrish; Doug Clark; Dr. Karen Bowyer (kbowyer@dsc.edu); Ellen Wynn; Gayanne Williams (gcwilliams3@bellsouth.net); Glad Castellaw (johncastellaw@comcast.net); Gwyn Fisher (gwyn.fisher@tn.gov); Ian Cochran (iancochran37@yahoo.com); jennifer.starks@nobelautomotive.com; Jimmy Williamson (jimmy_williamson@att.net); jkillen@carrollbank.com; John Penn Ridgeway (john.ridgeway@tcatmckenzie.edu); john.bucy@nwtd.org; 'Jon Dougherty'; Karla Carpenter (kcarpenter@tea.nea.org); Kristy Mercer (kmercerc@cecodoor.com); Landy Fuqua (lfuqua@utm.edu); Lindsay Frilling (lfrilling@obioncounty.org); Mary Jones (cfscoving@comcast.net); Rita Alexander (ralexander@gibsonemc.com); Sandra Woods (sbw2@bellsouth.net); Ted Piazza (tpiazza@advancetabco.com); Will Douglas (will@alliedreprocessing.com); Yvette Dixon; Susan Newbill; McLimore, Natalie; Dillard, Andrea; melaniekeller@meritan.org; Casondra Amos; tom.mcwherter@tnca.com; robin.last@tnca.com; Nwthra; brad.white@tcatparis.edu; Donna Hastings; Youlanda Jones; Lofton, Judy; Poston, Terry; dridgeway@nwtncap.org; adriennemcgarity@deltahra.com; sherry.fowler@tnopportunity.org; jacksonjob1@bellsouth.net; Turia, Enloe; Sara Kilgore; cchamber@earthlink.net; Julie Allen Burke; Lee Williams; Libby Wickersham; dhamilton@henrycountyttn.gov; mjohnson@paristnchamber.com; info@reelfootareachamber.com; sworlds@lauderdalecountyttn.gov; twincitieschamber@bellsouth.net; johnstonlee@comcast.net; chamber@southtipton.com; wcassistant@weakleycountychnamber.com; WIA Staff
Cc: workforce.board@tn.gov; Sterling.VanDerSpuy@tn.gov; Jimmy Bell; Prater, Margaret; Woods, Kevin (WIN
Subject: West TN Transitional Regional Plan Public Comment Period

West TN Stakeholders:

The Local Workforce Development Boards for Areas 11, 12, and 13 of Tennessee serving Chester, Decatur, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McNairy, Benton, Carroll, Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Lauderdale, Obion, Tipton, Weakley, Fayette, and Shelby Counties have prepared a Transitional Regional Plan for the West TN Region for the 2016 program year. The plan will be open for public comment January 23 – February 21, 2017 and will be available at any American Job Center or online at www.northwesttncareercenter.org during this time. Public notices will be published in local newspapers on or before 1/23/17. Please submit comments or questions in writing to Jennifer Bane at 313 West Cedar Street Dyersburg, TN 38024.

Thank you!

Jennifer Bane
Director of Outreach & Advancement

Example of printed public notice to the general public

Public Notice

The Local Workforce Development Boards for Areas 11, 12, and 13 of Tennessee serving Chester, Decatur, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McNairy, Benton, Carroll, Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Lauderdale, Obion, Tipton, Weakley, Fayette, and Shelby Counties have prepared a Transitional Regional Plan for the West TN Region for the 2016 program year.

THE PLAN IS OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

January 23 – February 21, 2017

and will be available at any American Job Center or online at www.northwesttncarecenter.org during this time.

Submit comments or questions in writing to Jennifer Bane at 313 West Cedar Street Dyersburg, TN 38024

A proud partner of the American Job Center network

This project is funded under an agreement with the TN Department of Labor & Workforce Development. Dyersburg State Community College serves as fiscal agent and administrative entity. BOE, Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request. TDD# (731) 286-8383.

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