

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD OF SOLANO COUNTY



## WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

# LOCAL PLAN MODIFICATIONS

Program Years 2021-2024

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## Local Overview

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### Strategic Vision

Solano’s vision for the future of workforce development for the Two-Year Modifications of the *Local Plan Program Year 2021 – 2024* continues to be focused on post-COVID economic recovery, while connecting to the vision and objectives outlined in the California Unified Strategic Workforce Plan and the North Bay Regional Workforce Plan. The Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Solano County seeks to address workforce and talent challenges that arose as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, improve the workforce service delivery system in the county for future resiliency, and take a lead in supporting inclusive economic recovery and growth.

### Key Workforce Strategies

Solano’s economy has made strides since the height of the COVID pandemic, as is evidenced by the reduction in unemployment and the number of businesses seeking employees. However, research and data analysis show that the negative economic impacts of the pandemic have not been experienced equitably, and that Solano’s more vulnerable populations and businesses continue to experience immediate crises, as well as reduced long-term economic opportunities.

In 2022, the Solano County Board of Supervisors allocated \$5.6 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds into equitable workforce recovery strategies under the stewardship of the WDB. Of the allocated funds, almost half, or \$2.6 million will be passed through to other entities conducting workforce services in the county. ARPA funding allows the WDB to lift up the local workforce network, invest in the identified workforce strategies for the county, and provide the flexibility to implement innovative and evidenced-based workforce practices beyond the strict parameters of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

The WDB received feedback from over twenty (20) stakeholders representing local community-based organizations, businesses, labor organizations, and government entities on the relevance of Solano’s workforce recovery strategies, and on effective partnerships and community needs. Through stakeholder engagement sessions, individual partner discussions, a board retreat, and engagement with board members and staff; a mid-plan review of the strategic vision substantiated the continued need for many of the COVID recovery workforce strategies. Based on feedback received, Solano’s modified recovery and resiliency Workforce Strategies are as follows:

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### KEY RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY WORKFORCE STRATEGIES

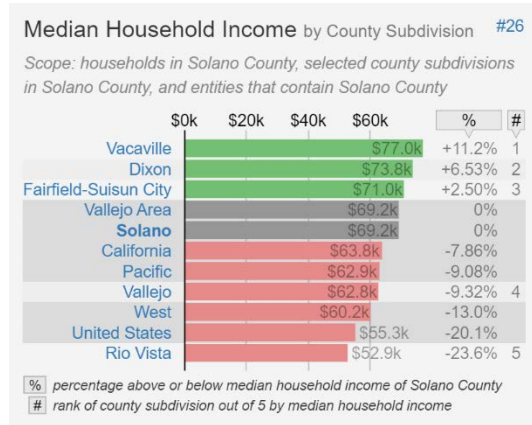
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1. Target services and investments in geographic areas and populations most vulnerable to disparate economic impacts.
2. Prepare businesses and residents for increased workplace digitization.
3. Enhance career pathways and talent pipeline solutions in key industries.
4. Build awareness and partnerships around workforce equity and job quality to encourage a sustainable inclusive economic recovery.

**1** *Target services and investments in geographic areas and populations most vulnerable to disparate economic impacts.*

Prior to and throughout the pandemic, Vallejo, Suisun City, and Rio Vista have consistently had the highest unemployment rates in the county. Vallejo and Fairfield have consistently had the highest volume of unemployed individuals. Vallejo constituted 31% of total COVID unemployed in the county. These geographic areas have also historically struggled with higher poverty rates, which further exacerbated the impacts of COVID on these communities. Median household incomes by county subdivision, from the Statistical Atlas, are shown to the right.

COVID unemployment hit certain demographic populations and businesses harder than others as well. Younger workers and lower-skilled workers had the highest and longest unemployment of any cross-section of residents. Small businesses and businesses in the hospitality, retail, arts and entertainment, and personal service sectors bore additional financial and operational strains. ARPA final guidance from the Department of Treasury validates that certain communities, either geographic or demographic, faced disparate economic impacts as a result of the COVID pandemic.



The North Bay Employment Connection (NBEC), also known as the North Bay Workforce Regional Planning Unit (RPU), commissioned a report conducted by Economic Forensics & Analytics, Inc. (EFA) on the economic impacts of the pandemic on the NBEC counties. Released in May 2022, EFA identified the populations most impacted by COVID and most vulnerable to disparate economic impacts. EFA defined vulnerable households as households with one of the following characteristics:

- Female head of household; or
  - Household that has at least one dependent (child under 18 or adult over 65); or
  - Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) person as the head of household;
- Household income of less than 200% of the federal poverty level; or
- At least one person in the household has no health insurance.

Based on this definition of vulnerability, Solano County has the highest percentage of vulnerable populations in the North Bay RPU. In particular, Solano County has the highest percentage by far of any NBEC county of BIPOC head of household family structures. The vulnerability of North Bay RPU counties (as a weighted average of criteria, 2019) can be seen in the chart below:

	<b>BIPOC HH</b>	<b>Female HH</b>	<b>At least 1 Dependent</b>	<b>In Poverty</b>	<b>Uninsured HH</b>	<b>Vulnerable Population</b>
<b>NBEC</b>	21.8%	9.3%	64.3%	3.1%	17.2%	10.9%
<b>Solano</b>	37.8%	11.2%	71.4%	2.7%	15.2%	14.6%
<b>Lake</b>	19.1%	10.8%	59.9%	2.5%	24.4%	13.2%
<b>Mendocino</b>	19.1%	10.8%	59.9%	2.5%	24.4%	13.2%
<b>Napa</b>	18.3%	7.9%	64.1%	5.3%	19.2%	11.1%

Source: ACS 5-Year PUMS, NEED, EFA via EFA NBEC Report, 2022

Through the Regional Plan Implementation 4.0 initiative, NBEC has worked to identify target populations that represent these vulnerable households. NBEC identified single parents, individuals with disabilities, and CalFresh participants as priority. NBEC is currently finalizing a regional dashboard to track disaggregated WIOA outcomes by each of these populations compared to the MIT Living Wage Calculator’s standard for living wages.

In addition, the continued regional threat of natural disasters (such as fires, flooding, and drought) has led to a increased focus on climate transitions and their impact on communities, as well as their opportunities for new career pathways. Solano’s rural communities and industries such as agriculture have especially been impacted by natural disasters, most recently with the Lake-Napa Unit Fire in 2020.

Entrepreneurship saw a significant rise during COVID. In 2020, Americans filed paperwork to start 4.3 million businesses, by far the most business applications on record. The years since 2020 have maintained a high level of new business starts. The WDB’s close partnership with the Solano-Napa Small Business Development Center (SBDC) has also led to the identification of needs, as well as gaps in services to the small business community, particularly among Solano’s sole proprietors and microbusinesses.

**Strategies include:**

- Targeting outreach, workforce initiatives, and barrier reduction efforts in communities – both geographic and demographic – that are the most vulnerable to negative economic impacts.
- Clearly defining priority communities targeted for workforce investments in Solano County.
- Partnering with culturally-competent community organizations to effectively target workforce investments in prioritized geographic and demographic communities.
- Enhancing common referral and case management systems across the America’s Job Center of California (AJCC) local partners and larger workforce system partners to leverage customer-centric supports.
- Bringing more effective trainings to the small business community to help them thrive as businesses and employers.
- Strengthening investments and resources in small businesses and entrepreneurs through partnership with Solano-Napa’s Small Business Development Center.



2

*Prepare businesses and residents for increased workplace*

The necessity and urgency of remote work due to the pandemic launched a new era of increased workplace digitization. It also highlighted the growing digital divide in our communities. Eight (8) out of 10 middle-skill jobs now require competence in digital literacy (or basic understanding of computers and technology), yet over 50% of adults state they are “relatively hesitant” with new technology and digital skills. Additional skills are needed for our workforce and small businesses to succeed in this new digital workplace reality.

Early analysis of remote work trends showed workers have been looking for remote work opportunities, whereas local businesses have predominantly been posting for on-site employment. According to the 2021 American Community Survey, Solano had the highest commute time for workers of any North Bay County at 31.4 minutes average commute and the lowest rate of remote workers in the North Bay at 37.8%. Solano’s large outbound labor force and the potential post-COVID changes in remote work connects Solano County more to regional opportunities that will be explored over the next few years.

New initiatives have been launched at the County and City levels using ARPA funding around broadband infrastructure and equitable digital access since the beginning of the planning period. The Cities of Fairfield and Vallejo have invested funds into new public-private partnerships to enhance their broadband networks and the County is launching digital literacy and broadband access initiatives. The WDB is an active partner where feasible in local efforts to coordinate broadband and digital access.

**Strategies include:**

- Further developing a hybrid service delivery model of in-person and virtual services for participants.
- Providing training for front-line staff in delivering virtual services.
- Exploring use of new virtual tools to augment customer experiences.
- Gaining a better understanding of the digital access gaps in Solano County and engaging in collaborative projects related to improving digital access.
- Developing solutions to assessing digital literacy skills for participants within the AJCC network.
- Utilizing Incumbent Worker Training funds and employer seminars to improve digital literacy skills in the workplace, as appropriate.
- Improving digital literacy skills of Solano’s talent base through basic digital literacy skills instruction.
- Analyzing and responding to trends in remote work and its impact on employment opportunities.

3

*Enhance career pathways and talent pipeline solutions in key industries.*

The North Bay Regional Plan Two-Year Modifications identified healthcare and social assistance, manufacturing, construction, and hospitality industries as the North Bay RPU’s priority industries. Solano County’s local plan added transportation as a sub-regional priority industry. Rebuilding and supporting growth of talent pipelines in these industries will be key to a successful and inclusive economic recovery.

The WDB also recognizes emerging industry efforts in entrepreneurship and climate transition. The WDB defines the local climate transition sector as including alternative energy, natural and working lands, and natural disaster mitigation.

In the North Bay COVID Impact report, EFA identified the top (5) five occupational groups forecasted to have the most demand in the next (5) five years as:

1. Healthcare Support
2. Community and Social Work
3. Management
4. Business and Financial Operations
5. Transportation and Material Moving

The WDB is developing career pathways in these occupational groups that align with Solano’s priority industries.

### Priority Industries



Healthcare and Social Assistance



Manufacturing



Construction



Hospitality



Transportation and Logistics

According to Dr. Eyler in the EFA report, “The literature on skills, occupations and employment in the wake of the pandemic suggests that, through the 2020s, more workers will be needed with STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and soft skills. Problem solving and critical thinking, as well as time and project management, are skills specifically mentioned in forecasts up to 2025.”

The report identifies STEM literacy skills as analytical thinking and innovation oriented, complex problem solving, technology design and programming, and technology use and monitoring. The report further defines in-demand soft skills as including critical thinking, problem solving, self-management, and working in teams. During the mid-year planning process, WDB’s Board identified career pathway elements should include, where possible, apprenticeships or other work and learn strategies, life skills, industry certifications, and STEM literacy skills. These skills and elements will be embedded in career pathway initiatives where feasible.

### Strategies include:

- Concentrating on Industry Sector Partnerships and Career Pathways initiatives within prioritized industries and occupational groups.
- Building entrepreneurship pathways in partnership with Solano-Napa SBDC.
- Utilizing earn and learn strategies to build experience and skills in key industries.
- Exploring and identifying ways to improve underrepresentation of diverse talent within key industries.
- Tracking WIOA training investments and employment outcomes in priority industries.
- Utilizing Incumbent Worker Training funds to facilitate career advancement and increased job quality in key industries.
- Partnering with stakeholders to help stabilize and support the childcare industry.

4

*Build awareness and partnerships around workforce equity and job quality to encourage a sustainable inclusive economic recovery.*

The WDB has conducted focus groups, participated in planning councils, and become more engaged in the conversations around workforce equity and job quality in the community during the first half of the planning period. Modifications to this strategy are informed by recent research and experience, as well as stakeholder insight.

The EFA report stated that prior to the pandemic, the top (5) five fastest growing occupations in the region were:

- Home Health and Personal Care Aids
- Fast Food and Counter Workers
- Registered Nurses
- Stockers
- Office Clerk

However, the top 5 regional occupational losses between December 2019 and December 2021 were:

- Waiters and Waitresses
- Fast Food and Counter Workers
- Retail Salespersons
- Cooks, Restaurants
- Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
- Cashiers
- Home Health and Personal Care Aides
- Childcare Workers
- Secretaries and Administrative Assistants
- Office Clerks

Most of the fastest growing occupations pre-pandemic and all of the occupational losses due to the pandemic have been low-wage jobs held by the most economically vulnerable residents in our community. Workers with relatively high pre-pandemic wages and education fared generally well throughout the pandemic, while families and communities with high pre-pandemic unemployment and poverty have faced potential deep and enduring challenges. The average wage of occupations with the largest volume of layoffs during the pandemic was \$31,982, a wage less than the federal lower living standards for Solano County.

The North Bay Regional Plan Modification identifies, using Lightcast data, that the North Bay has more lower-skilled jobs than there are lower-skilled workers. Nine (9) out of the top ten (10) occupations in the region have wages less than the MIT self-sufficiency wage for Solano County of \$20.11 for a one-person household, or \$40.49 for a head of household with one dependent.

Based on the COVID unemployment data, the WDB identified seven workforce populations disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. These identified populations align both with the vulnerable populations identified in the EFA report, as well as populations defined by the ARPA guidelines as most likely to be vulnerable to disproportionate economic impacts. These prioritized populations are:

- Households & populations residing in ARPA-designated census areas within Fairfield or Vallejo;
- Individuals under 35 years of age;
- Individuals unemployed more than 26 weeks;
- Individuals whose current or last employment was considered low-wage;



- Individuals with low levels of education;
- Low-Income households & communities; and
- Members of a minority group

Additional details on Solano WDB’s prioritized ARPA populations can be found in the *ARPA Eligibility and Enrollment* policy.

**Strategies include:**

- Working with North Bay RPU partners to finalize an equity dashboard of WIOA services and outcomes for the key populations of CalFresh, single parents, and individuals with disabilities.
- Ensuring workforce equity and focus on job quality is continuously infused in job seeker service delivery.
- Providing professional development for WDB and AJCC staff in culturally competent services and trauma-impacted populations.
- Partnering with businesses and stakeholders to pilot job quality upskilling projects in key industries.
- Collaborating with industry and community partners to develop a job quality framework.
- Supporting Solano-Napa SBDC’s equity initiatives to accelerate creation and growth of minority-owned businesses.
- Developing employer education and technical assistance initiatives around workforce equity and job quality.

The WDB and local workforce and small business partners will leverage WIOA, ARPA, state regional funding, and other discretionary grant funding as available, to invest in the identified workforce recovery and resiliency strategies.

## WIOA Partner Coordination

Solano County workforce partners have made significant strides in recent years in aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services for individuals in Solano County, yet continuous improvement is needed to reach the vision of an integrated and collaborative workforce system that is customer centered.

The WDB also sees the local workforce system as larger than the federal and state identified partners. Solano’s non-profit community provides substantial intensive assistance to Solano’s most vulnerable populations and is a key element to the local workforce system. Where applicable, the local plan identifies additional partnerships and system coordination efforts beyond the core and required WIOA partners.

## AJCC System Coordination

The America’s Job Centers of California (AJCC) system in Solano includes the following WIOA Core and Required partners:

Mandated Partner	Local Partner Agency
WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs	Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Solano County, Inc.
WIOA Title I Youth Program	First Place for Youth (FPFY)

WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Benicia Unified School District, Title II Adult Education</li> <li>- Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District, Title II Adult Education</li> <li>- Vacaville Unified School District, Title II Adult Education</li> <li>- Vallejo City Unified School, Title II Adult Education</li> </ul>
WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Programs	State of California Employment Development Department (EDD) – Workforce Services Division
WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation Programs	State of California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
Carl Perkins Career Technical Education (CTE)	Solano County Carl Perkins CTE Consortium
Title V Older Americans Act	SER Jobs for Progress
Job Corps	Job Corps (Treasure Island, San Francisco, CA)
Native American Programs (Section 166)	California Indian Manpower Consortium (CIMC)
Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (Section 167)	California Human Development (CHD)
Veterans	State of California Employment Development Department – Veterans Services
Youth Build	<i>No Youth Build operator in Solano County</i>
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Act	State of California Employment Development Department – TAA Services
Community Services Block Grant	CAPSolano JPA
Housing & Urban Development (HUD)	<i>No HUD-sponsored/funded workforce development program in Solano County</i>
Unemployment Compensation	State of California Employment Development Department – Unemployment Insurance Division
Second Chance	<i>No Second Chance program operators in Solano County</i>
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/CalWORKs	County of Solano Health and Social Services Agency (H&SS)

### *AJCC Memorandum of Understanding*

All core and required WIOA partners are included in the AJCC system with services and infrastructure funding commitments identified in the federally-required Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The system is brought together through One-Stop Operator monthly meetings and targeted partnerships to meet community needs. The current MOU is in effect from 2022 to 2025 and utilizes a two-tier approach:

An overarching Master MOU which makes the basic commitment of all agencies to support the AJCC and work together. The document was approved and signed off upon by the WDB and the Solano County Board of Supervisors. WDB staff is authorized therein to negotiate and sign off on individual Partner Agency MOUs.

A set of accompanying Partner Agency MOUs memorialize the individual commitment of each agency and commits to specific, negotiated cost-sharing arrangements.

A full range of services are provided in the AJCCs, as outlined in the MOU:

Service provided in AJCC Centers (Fairfield and Vallejo)

1. Basic Career Services
2. Individualized Career Services
3. Follow-up Services
4. Training Services
5. Business Services

Under the current MOU, the WDB, the Employment Development Department (EDD), and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) are co-located in the comprehensive AJCC located in Vallejo and the WDB fully staffs the affiliate AJCC located in Fairfield.

The Vallejo AJCC was closed during the pandemic and has yet to see a return to pre-pandemic traffic levels in the center. Public understanding of the AJCCs during COVID was focused on the connection to employment-related public benefits, such as Unemployment Insurance (UI) and state disability benefits. The WDB and EDD recognize that reintroduction of the AJCCs to the community is needed and will work to advance that in the coming years.

The WDB and EDD during mid-plan discussions expressed a desire to reimagine the partnerships in the AJCCs. The move to virtual services as a key delivery method for EDD workshops has impacted the cohesiveness of the co-located partners, as well as connection of individuals to additional workforce services. Job Center partnerships will be reviewed during the remainder of the local plan period to improve cohesiveness and collaborative service delivery.

*Co-Enrollment and Common Case Management*

The WDB continues to make strides towards effective co-enrollment and common case management strategies. The WDB utilizes co-enrollment strategies between WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs as appropriate to leverage the strengths of the adult and youth systems. New discretionary grant programs launched using state governor's discretionary WIOA funding and California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) state funding led to lessons learned and identification of promising practices for conducting co-enrollment and common case management strategies.

AJCC partners expressed an interest in improving inter-partnership referrals, system navigation assistance, and possible co-enrollments among partners. To reach this goal, AJCC partners plan to review and strengthen the inter-agency referral process, given recent staffing and service delivery changes across partners.

The WDB will also support and facilitate inclusion of smaller, emerging non-profits conducting workforce-related services in Solano into the larger workforce system. The WDB awarded Community Workforce Grants as part of Solano's ARPA investment in improving access to workforce services in vulnerable communities. The WDB will continue to leverage co-enrollment and common case management strategies as part of this initiative.

## Access to Services

The WDB recognizes that fostering job quality and workforce equity requires systemic change in Solano’s workforce system, and the Workforce Board of Directors has prioritized Equity and Economic Justice as a key priority for the current workforce plan. Improving access to services for all populations is an important component of workforce equity. During the remainder of the plan, the AJCC partners will focus on employing better branding and public education of Solano’s workforce system both through digital and grassroots means. These efforts will lead to a more equitable access and awareness of AJCC and the larger system’s workforce services.

### *Effective Geographic Representation*

Prior to the pandemic, the WDB provided basic services in the community through Road to Employment sites. Road to Employment is an initiative that brings AJCC services into the community in order to increase the accessibility of WIOA services. At the beginning of 2020, the WDB hosted Road to Employment services at the following locations:

#### **Vallejo**

- H&SS Building
- Springstowne Library
- John F. Kennedy Library
- First 5 Solano

#### **Vacaville**

- Vacaville Public Library – Cultural Center

#### **Dixon**

- Living Hope Church of Dixon

The WDB is working to reopen these Road to Employment locations post-pandemic. In addition, the County of Solano invested ARPA funds to improve access to services through career awareness campaigns and community navigation services. These will be conducted during the remainder of the plan period.

### *Use of Technology*

At the midpoint of the local plan, the WDB and its workforce partners acknowledged a need to reevaluate the use of technology in the AJCC system to better engage with customers in a more strategic way.

During the pandemic, the WDB and many AJCC partners enhanced services through their websites. The WDB made use of the CalJOBS WIOA Pre-Application to aid in WIOA eligibility and enrollment and is making progress towards a fully digital case management system. The WDB undertook additional enhancements to its website through regional funds to allow more user-friendly navigation and engagement that is smartphone compatible.

In stakeholder engagement sessions, AJCC partners agreed to coordinate better access to workshops and training sessions by sharing virtual workshop opportunities and pre-recorded sessions across the workforce system. This will allow each AJCC partner and the larger workforce system to utilize a wide range of workforce content and resources for their participants.

The pandemic also highlighted needed improvements in job seeker access at the comprehensive AJCC in Vallejo. Job seekers need up-to-date technology to effectively apply for jobs, conduct virtual interviews, gain computer skills, and complete resume documents. Upgrades to technology and tools for job seeker usage, allocated through County ARPA funding, will allow job seekers access to up-to-date technology, which is necessary for in-demand digital literacy skills and new virtual hiring practices.

### *Accessibility of Services for Individuals with Disabilities*

The AJCCs and WIOA Title I services comply with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities. The WDB's *Accommodations and Accessibility Policy* outlines the requirements and guidance for accessibility and the WDB's Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer ensures compliance with WIOA Section 188 and ADA provisions in AJCC and WIOA Career Service delivery. In addition, the WDB conducts internal monitoring of AJCC and WIOA Title I providers to ensure compliance with WIOA Section 188 and the applicable provisions of ADA.

Solano County's two AJCCs are ADA compliant and equipped with auxiliary aids and accommodations, including a list of currently available assistive technology devices and services within the centers available for individuals with disabilities. Information on accommodations and rights of all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, is included in orientations of WIOA services, and additional services and accommodations for individuals with disabilities are provided as needed. The WDB also ensures that compliance with ADA requirements is included in occupational and work-based training contracts.

Proper signage of ADA compliance is also posted in the AJCCs in visible locations. Signage includes "Equal Opportunity is the Law," as well as notice of the availability and right to receive reasonable accommodations. Both AJCC facilities include accessible counters, automatic and power-assisted doors, accessible restrooms, accessible workstations, and wheelchair-accessible paths.

### *Coordinating Activities with Supportive Services*

COVID-19 increased the vulnerability of many of Solano's residents. As identified in the Solano County Community Health Assessment Report of 2020, the highest prioritized community health need pre-pandemic was Economic Security. In the report, community-identified barriers to economic security included:

- Difficulty to manage work, household, and education;
- Lack of affordable childcare;
- Salaries below living wage; and
- Lack of employment and job training programs.

The pandemic and related economic shutdowns exacerbated each of these identified barriers to economic security. Difficulty in managing work and household led to a disproportionate drop of women, especially Latina women, from the labor force. Further reductions in available childcare during the pandemic hindered parents' ability to return to the workforce. A desire to not return to salaries below living wages has led to a critical talent shortage and change in worker priorities. This trend is exacerbated by the fact that low-wage occupations have had the highest deduction in number of jobs as a result of the pandemic. To support these strategies, the WDB and its workforce partners will focus on intersections of workforce services with community services and needs, such as housing, childcare, and transportation barriers.

Participants in the ARPA Planning Workforce Roundtable, co-hosted by the WDB and Solano Community Foundation on December 16, 2021, observed that the more vulnerable individuals were pre-pandemic, the more intense the challenges of returning to work and gaining self-sufficiency became for them in COVID recovery. To address the "perfect storm" of workforce issues our community and businesses face



in recovery, a community-coordinated recovery response is necessary to mitigate the immediate and long-term economic impacts of COVID-19 on the workforce and employer community.

Post-COVID workforce recovery and resiliency strategies must include a robust and coordinated supportive service delivery. The AJCC partners will work together, along with community stakeholders, to mitigate barriers to returning to, and sustaining, employment post-pandemic through the following interventions:

- **Housing Insecurity** – The County of Solano and individual Cities within Solano have focused more intensively on supporting the county’s homeless population during the pandemic and in improving affordable housing options for working families. AJCC partners will coordinate workforce and education services with these supportive services where appropriate.
- **Criminal Records** – The AJCCs will continue to partner with Legal Services of Northern California’s Clean Slate events to reduce the impact of criminal records on employment. The AJCC also continues to attend the monthly PACT meetings for individuals on state parole to provide workforce services for justice-involved individuals. For the WDB’s upcoming Prison to Employment 2.0 initiative, Solano will focus on funding work-based learning opportunities through community-based organizations, as well as helping coordinate activities across the county to mitigate the barriers of a criminal record on employment.
- **Digital Access and Literacy** – AJCC partners have identified digital access as a barrier to the new virtual work and training environments. The WDB has been an active partner in broadband and digital access partnerships across the county to ensure equity in reducing this barrier to employment. The WDB provides digital assessments and basic digital literacy instruction through the NorthStar platform. AJCC partners will work to expand the use of this digital literacy tool.
- **Transportation** – Accessing transportation outside of one’s local community can be challenging in Solano County. A bus route from transit-dependent neighborhoods in Vallejo to the Solano College campus in Vacaville, for example, can take over three hours on public transportation. The AJCC partners will improve their knowledge of transportation gaps and resources in the area to better support participants.
- **Mental Health** – Mental health and wellness has become a growing concern among partners as a result of the pandemic. AJCC partners will leverage the Wellness Centers at the Adult Schools and the expertise of H&SS’s Behavioral Health unit to further develop mental health interventions for AJCC customers. In addition, the WDB has prioritized employer education and advocacy for work-based mental health and wellness programs through local ARPA investments over the next two years.
- **Childcare** – The WDB and AJCC partners will identify opportunities to expand and resource childcare options for working parents. The WDB also plans to reexamine its childcare supportive services investments during the current plan period to provide better access to childcare supportive services through WIOA. In addition, the WDB is sponsoring ARPA-funded Childcare Entrepreneurship bootcamps in English and Spanish through the Solano Family and Children Services to increase the number of family childcare providers in the County.

## State Strategic Partner Coordination

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The WDB has continued to advance the four state strategic workforce partnerships in Solano. The plan modification provides updates on each partnership below.

### CalFresh Partnerships

Individuals receiving public assistance are a priority population under WIOA. Of the 312 individuals served by the WDB through WIOA Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) in FY2021-22, 79 individuals (or 25% of participants) received CalFresh assistance. This is a slight increase over recent years.

Although many CalFresh recipients were working pre-pandemic, the economic landscape in Solano County creates barriers to livable wage jobs for many in the county. Access to technical skills attainment is imperative for our county's CalFresh population, coupled with wrap-around supports to help recipients address basic needs as they increase their earning potential.

The WDB utilized its Road to Employment initiative to bring basic job search and workforce assistance to the general CalFresh population in March 2020. The WDB will partner H&SS to bring Road to Employment back to the H&SS location in Vallejo during times of CalFresh orientations post-pandemic. Through Road to Employment, CalFresh recipients can receive assistance filling out applications, receive job leads, gain information on other workforce and supportive services, and receive general guidance that can support their employment success.

Based on information provided by H&SS, only about 40% of CalFresh eligible individuals receive benefits. Therefore, the WDB and its AJCC partners will review current enrollments to identify CalFresh-eligible individuals and host application events on site in partnership with H&SS. In addition, the WDB will explore provision of employer education on CalFresh and MediCal benefits for employees, and inclusion of CalFresh information in Rapid Response activities.

The WDB will also work with CalFresh Employment and Training (E&T) programs within the county, currently operated by Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) and Fresh Success, where feasible, to coordinate workforce activities.

### Child Support Service Partnerships

The Solano County Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) and the WDB have been partnering organically since the fall of 2017. The existing partnership has focused on providing AJCC comprehensive service delivery for parents paying support to facilitate successful labor market outcomes. In addition, the partners made progress pre-pandemic towards enhancing the "seek work" order, where the courts require parents paying support who are unemployed to visit the WDB. The WDB began this process by tracking parents paying support from AJCC services through Title I services and expanding intensive WIOA services to parents paying support.

Due to COVID-impacted changes in staff and service delivery methods, the WDB and DCSS are in the process of reevaluating and reinvigorating the partnership. The partners will review the intended plans for coordination and make changes as needed to strengthen the partnership for the benefit of parents paying support.

## Disability and Competitive Integrated Employment Partnerships

In FY2021-22, 762 individuals with disabilities (equating to 5.3% of individuals) accessed the AJCC system in Solano County, representing a steady increase in access over the past five years. Of the 312 individuals receiving WIOA Title I services (Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth), 86 individuals had a disability (equating to 28% of enrolled individuals). This is a significant improvement from the 4% enrollment of individuals with disabilities into WIOA Title I services five years prior.

Through increased coordination with the North Bay Regional Center (NBRC) and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), staff have built partnerships with contractors that serve individuals with disabilities, particularly those with Intellectual Disabilities/Developmental Disabilities, to improve access and utilization of the AJCC system and WIOA intensive services. Through this work, the WDB has become closer partners with SCOE, DOR, and the NBRC and is a community partner on Solano's Local Partnership Agreement (LPA).

The partners have come together as part of multiple past discretionary grant initiatives: two Disability Employment Accelerator (DEA) grants funded through EDD and a Breaking Barriers to Employment grant focused on mental health funded through the CWDB. Although two of these grants were primarily operated during the COVID pandemic, which impacted activities and outcomes, the WDB gained considerable knowledge and experience that will serve as a foundation for future service delivery of Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) and engagement with individuals with Intellectual Disabilities/Developmental Disabilities.

The WDB hired a Disability Resource Specialist as a result of these initiatives that has been key in implementing accessible and effective workforce services for individuals with disabilities. The Disability Resource Specialist has built strong relationships with disability partners in the community and established co-enrollment and common case management practices with partners. In addition, the Disability Resource Specialist is a certified benefits counselor and can provide financial guidance to individuals receiving disabilities benefits on the impact of work on their benefits.

The WDB plans to complete the application process to become an Employment Network site under the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program, which will further provide safety nets for individuals receiving social security benefits while engaging in workforce programs. This process was delayed due to COVID activities but will be finalized during the current planning period.

## English Language Learner and Foreign-Born Partnerships

Less than 15% of Solano County's population is considered as Limited English Proficient (LEP). Therefore, Solano is not required to have a Local Plan provision on English Language Learners (ELL), the Foreign Born, and Refugees. However, the WDB continues to recognize a growing LEP population in the county and considers it important to address the needs of its English Language Learners and Foreign-Born residents.

According to the 2021 American Community Survey, Solano has 51,955 individuals (equating to 12.2% of the population) who self-identify as speaking English "less than well." Although Solano has a large Spanish-speaking population who speaks English less than well, the larger percentage of individuals who speak English less than well in Solano are individuals who speak languages other than Spanish. Solano's non-Spanish speaking ELL population is double that of any other North Bay area county. A key factor in this make-up is the prevalence of Asian languages, including Tagalog, Chinese, and Farsi.

The Fairfield AJCC has been staffed with a Spanish-speaking, bi-lingual resource specialist. This greatly enhanced services for Spanish-speaking individuals needing Unemployment Insurance and job search assistance. As a result, the WDB better understands the needs, strengths, and barriers of the Spanish-speaking community in Solano County and will use these lessons to make continuous improvement in services. WDB staff will continue to work with the One-Stop Operator, currently California Human Development (CHD), and the AJCC partners to identify and implement ways to better serve the ELL population.

More ELL supports, however, continue to be needed in WIOA enrolled services. In FY2021-22, only 11 out of 312 individuals (4%) who self-identified as ELL were active in Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth programs. This is a significant decline over the past five years. The WDB will explore additional options for serving ELL and foreign born individuals more effectively over the next two years.

WDB staff have experience aiding foreign-born individuals in translating their home country licenses and degrees into credentials in the United States. The WDB will continue to work with its training partners to explore strategies for high-level credentialing transfer for Solano's highly skilled foreign-born population over the remaining plan years.

## WIOA Title I Coordination

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Solano shares in California's commitment to developing a workforce system that enables economic growth and shared prosperity for employers and employees by investing in industry strategies, job quality, and meaningful skills attainment.

### Professional Development

The WDB is committed to professional development of staff as well as cross-training of partners to ensure that front-line staff skills remain relevant to the current labor market and community. Part of this effort will be to use the network of AJCC partners to strengthen knowledge of all access points to the workforce system and provide cross-training opportunities for all levels of staff. With funding from the CWDB's Regional Plan Implementation 5.0 funds, the WDB will prioritize digital fluency, cultural competence, and understanding of the changing economic landscape for professional development opportunities.

#### Digital Fluency and Distance Learning

COVID-19 and the subsequent flood of virtual service options required the WDB and AJCC partners to build new skills in digital fluency. The WDB converted all WIOA intensive services to a virtual format with many of the staff working remotely due to the pandemic. This required staff to learn how to use virtual tools, such as video conferencing, digital forms and signatures, and virtual document sharing.

As a result of the pandemic, informal and formal professional development of staff have included:

- Facilitating Virtual Training
- Effective Use of Zoom
- CalJOBS training on the WIOA Pre-Application for digital intake
- Use of DocuSign and Adobe Fill and Sign
- Peer Learning Sessions on Digital Literacy

The WDB and AJCC partners will continue to identify trainings to support staff in providing virtual services. In addition, training on digital literacy and distance learning methods is planned to ensure that staff and partners can best support job seekers with the current labor market needs of remote work and virtual service delivery.

Additional digital fluency training identified by partners include use of specific job and work tools; shifts in resume and employer recruitment methods as a result of increase digitization, and new digital skills needed in the workplace.

#### Cultural Competencies

The WDB has recently prioritized workforce equity and cultural competency as a professional development need and partnered with Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) and H&SS to provide “Advancing Racial Equity” training to WDB staff. In March 2021, the WDB launched an “Equity Brown Bag Lunch Series” for staff to explore topics related to equity.

As the WDB and its partners move forward in their equity and inclusion journey, the WDB has developed a two-year professional development plan around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) topics. Planned training topics include avoiding microaggressions and stereotypes, honoring multi-cultural workplaces, recognizing unconscious bias, practicing intentional inclusion and bystander intervention, and understanding cultural diversity. The WDB will also include the larger workforce system in professional development opportunities focused on better understanding the populations who have historically faced employment discrimination.

Additional trainings will be identified and held to ensure staff and partners understand the population in Solano County and can provide the best inclusive and culturally competent services to all Solano County demographics. Such training may include mental health and suicide awareness and respectful de-escalation techniques.

#### **Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities**

Rapid Response activities and services are provided to employers and workers who has been affected by lay-offs, plant closures, and down-sizing, and are carried out in conjunction with EDD and other stakeholders.

The WDB’s Rapid Response Coordinator, who is the Senior Manager of Business Services, ensures affected employers are contacted in a timely manner upon Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notice (WARN) notification. They also coordinate with EDD Workforce Services staff to schedule a planning meeting, orientations, and any other services requested by the affected employer and employees at times and dates convenient to them. Collectively, the WDB and EDD provide information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs, comprehensive one-stop delivery system services, available career and training activities, as well as information on the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) program, the GI Bill, and other resources.

In the first few months of COVID, the WDB received over 80 WARN notices from Solano County employers. However, the WDB and EDD received little response from employers, or found employers had already laid individuals off by the time the notice was received. In the year 2022, the WDB received only four (4) WARN notices, similar to pre-pandemic levels. Most employers in Solano County are small enough that they are not required to submit WARN notices. As such, Solano’s Rapid Response activities cannot rely solely on



the WARN system. The WDB and EDD plan to explore a more generic approach to Rapid Response activities in the county moving forward to better reach individuals who have been laid off from their employer.

Rapid response activities are reported quarterly to EDD and are included on the EDD Rapid Response 121 Report. Layoff aversion activities are reported to EDD quarterly and are included on the Layoff Aversion 122 Report. Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion activities are outlined in detail and guided by the WDB's *Rapid Response Policy*.

The WDB also put considerable effort during COVID-19 into layoff aversion strategies through grants to small businesses. This initiative was launched on April 1, 2020 with WIOA Rapid Response funds. The fund grew as a result of community investment from the City of Benicia, WellsFargo, and Genentech, Inc. for a total \$207,000 investment in 49 businesses. The WDB, in partnership with the Solano-Napa SBDC, continued this investment in small business grants throughout COVID, facilitating grants through CARES Act, ARPA, and CalOSBA microenterprise small business funding. Collectively, the WDB has administered over \$3.3 million in grant funds to Solano small businesses, disseminating grants to over 500 small businesses during the pandemic. The WDB will continue to partner with the SBDC to identify additional layoff aversion and small business investment opportunities where appropriate.

## Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Services are based out of the two AJCCs in Solano, located in Fairfield and Vallejo. Adult and Dislocated Worker services are provided to eligible individuals and businesses, including the following services:

Basic Career Services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility for AJCC Partner Services</li> <li>• Outreach</li> <li>• Intake</li> <li>• Orientation</li> <li>• Initial Assessment</li> <li>• Labor Market Information</li> <li>• Resume Preparation</li> <li>• Job Search Workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CalJOBS Registration</li> <li>• Resource Center for Self-Services</li> <li>• Supportive Service Information</li> <li>• Unemployment Insurance (UI) Information</li> <li>• Financial Aid Information</li> <li>• Referrals to Programs</li> </ul>
Individual Career Services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive Assessments</li> <li>• Objective Assessments</li> <li>• Individual Employment Plan Development</li> <li>• Career Exploration</li> <li>• Career Planning and Counseling</li> <li>• Case Management</li> <li>• Barrier Mitigation</li> <li>• Supportive Service Funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce Preparation</li> <li>• One-on-One Resume and Interview Assistance</li> <li>• Work Experience</li> <li>• Referral to Basic Skills Development</li> <li>• Pre-Vocational Training</li> <li>• Financial Literacy</li> <li>• Job Development and Matching</li> <li>• Follow-Up Services</li> </ul>
Training Services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupational Skills Training</li> <li>• Career Pathway Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transitional Jobs</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial Training</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-the-Job Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incumbent Worker Training</li> </ul>
<b>Business Services</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Career Fairs</li> <li>• Recruitment Events</li> <li>• Pre-Screening of Candidates</li> <li>• Talent Pipeline Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talent Retention Strategies</li> <li>• Business Seminars and Workshops</li> <li>• Labor Market Information</li> <li>• Technical Assistance and Consultation</li> </ul>

Through its efforts to avoid layoffs and support Solano’s smaller employers during COVID, the WDB gained experience serving microbusinesses. In addition, the AJCC gained significant experience during COVID assisting individuals accessing Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits. These experiences have led the WDB to further invest in entrepreneurship and assistance to microbusinesses.

Over the next two years, through County ARPA investments, the WDB will implement strategies the workforce system can use to help individuals create their own employment opportunities. The WDB is currently investing in two entrepreneurship initiatives:

- **Childcare Provider Start-Ups:** The WDB is working with Solano Family and Children Services and the Solano-Napa SBDC to provide Childcare Entrepreneurship Bootcamps. This training includes childcare business practices and marketing, infant and toddler development, and access to childcare provider resources. Entrepreneurs will be given a full business start-up kit that includes business management tools, tools for screening children, sample curriculum, professional development opportunities, and COVID-related Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supplies.
- **Entrepreneurship Career Pathways:** The WDB is partnering with BuildEd, a national leader in entrepreneurship training, to provide basic entrepreneurship training for individuals seeking to start a business or sole proprietorship. The Entrepreneurship pathway includes mini stackable credentials from NAEBL (National Association of Entrepreneurship and Business Leadership) and are intended to be an on-ramp into SBDC services.

In addition, the WDB is implementing two initiatives in the next two years to influence job quality and economic mobility:

- **Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Upskilling Program:** Home health and personal care aides are considered a middle skilled, but a low-wage job, and yet home health and personal care aides are projected to grow in demand seven (7) times more than any other occupation. In the North Bay RPU, there are 40,655 jobs at an average wage of \$15.99. The next highest volume occupation is Fast Food Workers, who on average make \$1.17 more than a certified home health worker.

To influence job quality for this important, but undervalued occupation, the WDB is leading a regional Accelerator 10.0 grant to use microcredentials as a path to increased incumbent worker wages and job quality for the region’s fastest growing occupational group.

- **Employer Resource Network (ERN):** An ERN is a promising national practice that assists low-income incumbent workers with navigating access to social systems through the use of Success Coaches. ERNs are an employer-driven model that have been particularly successful with small

and mid-size firms in increasing their employee retention and productivity. The WDB is currently working to bring this model to California in partnership with ERN USA.

The Solano Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), commissioned by Solano County’s Public Health, is a long-term effort to systematically and collaboratively focus on improving upstream drivers of community health inequities in the County. The plan builds on the 2020 Community Health Needs Assessment, which identified Economic Security as “intrinsically related to all health issues” and that “economic security is a strong determinant of an individual’s health outcomes.” The CHIP action plan identifies workforce as a key strategy. The WDB, as part of the CHIP Steering Committee, will leverage the public workforce system to improve equitable pathways towards healing-centered careers, as well as focus on expanding a bilingual and bicultural workforce in the healthcare and social assistance industry.

#### Priority of Service

Per WIOA regulations and policies, the WDB provides priority of service to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient when providing individualized career services and training services funded with WIOA adult funds. Veterans and eligible spouses also receive priority of service; however, the WDB ensures that they meet WIOA adult program eligibility and other WIOA criteria. Priority of service criteria and guidance is outlined in the WDB’s *Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility and Enrollment Policy*.

Priority of service is provided in the following order:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.
2. Individuals who are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.
3. Veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA’s priority groups.
4. Other individuals not included in WIOA’s priority groups.

Priority of service status is established at the time of eligibility determination and does not change during the period of participation. As such, the WDB implements priority of service through priority of intake and enrollment.

New shifts in federal WIOA guidance places a stronger emphasis on serving priority populations with WIOA Adult funds. Department of Labor envisions that at least 75% of a state’s enrolled WIOA Adult participants will be a member of a priority group and expects rates not lower than 50.1%. The WDB will place emphasis in coming years on connecting with a higher rate of WIOA identified priority populations.

#### **Youth Workforce Services**

The WDB focuses WIOA Youth investments on serving disconnected and out-of-school youth between the ages of 16 and 24. Youth services are outlined in the *WIOA Youth Service Delivery Policy* and are designed to assist eligible youth in achieving academic and employment success, integrate strategies for career pathway approaches, implement work-based training strategies and employment approaches, and provide continued wrap-around services to help participants succeed in work investment and training activities.

The WDB changed contractors of WIOA Youth Services during the plan period. At the mid-plan review, the current WIOA Youth Services contractor is First Place for Youth (FPFY), serving transition-age foster youth in Solano County.

Contracted youth services include:

- Eligibility Determination and Objective Assessment
- Assessment and Addressing of Barriers
- Career Coaching Services
- Individual Service Strategy (ISS) Development
- Work Experience and Work-Based Learning
- Job Placement Services

The WDB and its WIOA Youth Services provider also ensure that all WIOA 14 Youth Program Elements are available to youth participants.

To address the specific needs of youth who are individuals with disabilities, the WDB is strengthening ties with the local California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) programs and other youth-serving organizations within Solano County. The WDB has also resumed its partnership with the Laborer's Training Center post-pandemic to provide an annual preapprenticeship program for youth entering the trades. The WDB will continue to explore innovative strategies to engage and prepare young adults in the workforce through WIOA.

The WDB recognizes the importance of building digital fluency among Solano's out-of-school youth population and is currently identifying ways to move forward to address this employment barrier. The WDB will leverage the use of NorthStar digital assessments and literacy program to build digital fluency among Solano's young adults.

The City of Vallejo built equity into their 2022 Broadband Master Plan and Digital Equity Strategy in May 2022. Their vision is to narrow the digital divide, increase competition in the broadband market, and maximize the use of the existing city-owned dark fiber network. In addition, the intended infrastructure will allow the City to provide free Wi-Fi access to underserved communities. Through the ARPA Community Workforce Grants initiative, the WDB is partnering with Club Stride to develop a digital literacy program for youth in Vallejo.

## Grant Administration

### Disbursement of Grant Funds

The County of Solano is the legal recipient for all WIOA funds and is the entity responsible for all WIOA expenditures in the Solano County Service Area. The County disburses WIOA grant funds in the manner prescribed by the state and federal government and provides administrative and technical assistance to the WDB to assist in proper management of WIOA funds as needed. The WDB and the County of Solano have a standing Agreement that outlines each's roles and responsibilities relating to WIOA, WIOA fiscal agent duties, and the disbursement of WIOA grant funds.

### Competitive Procurement Process

Procurement transactions for WIOA sub-awards and contracts maximize open and free competition consistent with federal and state standards and regulations. The WDB's competitive process is outlined in

the WDB's *Procurement Policy*. In procuring WIOA Title I services, the WDB works to assure that minority and women-owned businesses are used when possible and makes effort to ensure local businesses and organizations are included in solicitation dissemination. The WDB also implements parameters to avoid conflict of interest.

The WDB uses Micro-Purchases, Small Purchases, Sealed Bids, Competitive Proposals, and Non-Competitive Negotiation to procure goods and services. The WDB also allows for cooperative procurement processes to avoid acquisition of unnecessary or duplicative items and promote cost-effective use of shared services where appropriate as encouraged in 20 CFR Section 200.318(e). The County of Solano Purchasing Department is considered a central government purchasing agency which meets the requirements of WIOA regulations for competitive purchasing. For each method of procurement, the WDB has procedures for procurement transactions that ensure all solicitations or quotes incorporate required components.

An overview of procurement method, current cost limits, and minimum bids/quotes needed can be found in the following table:

Procurement Method	Cost Limits	Minimum Bids/Quotes Needed
Micro Purchases	Less than \$3,500	One quote at a reasonable cost
Small Purchases	\$3,500-\$150,000	Two quotes; written, verbal or from a catalog
Sealed Bids	No limits	Three written bids in response to an IFB
Competitive Proposals	No limits	Three written competitive proposals in response to an RFP
Noncompetitive Proposals	No limits	All bids and quotes obtained

The WDB is currently reviewing its procurement processes to reflect changes in federal procurement guidelines, namely that all federal contractors and subrecipients maintain SAM registration.

On recent federal procurement and contracting projects, the WDB has been piloting new and innovative approaches to improve the equitable access to federal funds. The WDB conducted funder and nonprofit listening sessions to hear how government procurement could be more accessible. As a result, the WDB has improved language in procurement solicitations, experimented with contractor versus subrecipient contracting for nonprofits newer to federal services, and have provided more robust technical assistance and guidance to entities responding to federal procurement.

#### *AJCC Operator and Career Service Providers*

The WDB was approved by the state and the Chief Locally Elected Official to be the Title I Career Services Provider in Solano County. The WDB competitively procures One Stop Operator and WIOA Out-of-School Youth services. The current One-Stop Operator is California Human Development and the current WIOA Youth service provider is First Place for Youth, with a contractual focus on work experience.



## Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

In accordance with the State of California directive for stakeholder and community engagement for the Local Plan PY 22-25 modifications, the Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Solano County engaged a number of partners to gain feedback and insight on needed revisions to the Local Workforce Plan.

The WDB is committed to fostering a community and collaborative approach to workforce development in Solano County and engaged with various entities, including employers, labor organizations, education partners, human services and housing partners, and community-based organizations that provide services to targeted workforce populations.

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
WDB Board and Committee Meetings	Solano Workforce Board Members	12 board members were in attendance	The Board reviewed and revised key strategic priorities to guide local plan modifications.
One-Stop Operator Monthly Meeting	AJCC partners	15 AJCC partner organizations were in attendance	Partners reviewed local plan strategies and target populations, discussed employment barriers, evaluated coordination and referrals between programs, and identified professional development needs
EDD Virtual Meeting	Local EDD partners	2 EDD managers and the One-Stop Operator were in attendance	Partners discussed ways to reset the partnership post-COVID, the impact of virtual service delivery, Rapid Response coordination, and professional development needs
H&SS Quarterly Virtual Meeting	H&SS representatives	3 H&SS staff were in attendance	H&SS partners identified the importance of increasing participation in CalFresh services and improved cross-over of services between CalWORKS and WIOA

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
Qualitative research conducted by researcher	Industry and educational partners	Interviews were conducted with businesses in healthcare, construction, leisure and hospitality, agriculture/viticulture, manufacturing, and Other services; as well as post-secondary educational partners	Interviews were conducted over a three month period reviewing the impact of COVID on the industry, training and hiring challenges, and challenges to address, and perspectives on the local labor market shifts.

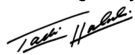
**PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION DESIGNEE AND PLAN SIGNATURES**

This local plan represents the County of Solano Workforce Development Board's efforts to maximize and coordinate resources available under Title I of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*.

This local plan modification is submitted for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025 in accordance with the provisions of the WIOA.

**Local Workforce Development Board Chair**

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Signature

Fadi Halabi

Name

Board Chair

Title

5/5/2023

Date

**Chief Elected Official**

Signature

John Vasquez

Name

Chair – Solano County Board of Supervisors

Title

4/25/23

Date