



**WIOA Local 4-Year Plan
Template for Response**

Please use this document as a template, responding to each of the questions listed within the document. If information is contained in an attachment, please reference the document in the response space and label clearly to match the reference.

(a) Strategic Planning elements, including:

(1) A regional (local) analysis of:

- (i) Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
- (ii) Employment needs of businesses in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
- (iii) As appropriate, your local area may use an existing analysis, which is a timely current description of the regional economy, to meet the requirements of paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section;

Note: the local plan must identify the portions that the Governor has designated as appropriate for common response in the regional plan where there is a shared regional responsibility, as permitted by § 679.540(b). Local Boards and chief elected officials in a planning region may address any local plan requirements through the regional plan where there is a shared regional responsibility. You may incorporate anything from your Regional Plan content as appropriate.

Regional plan information may be used as applicable to the local area. However, local analysis that yields information that is not in the regional plan should be included in this response.

A regional analysis of economic conditions, existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and employment needs of businesses can be found in the Greater Boston Regional Planning Blueprint:

- https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/06/19/Greater%20Boston%20Workforce%20Planning%20Blueprint_Final%20-%20053118_clean.pdf

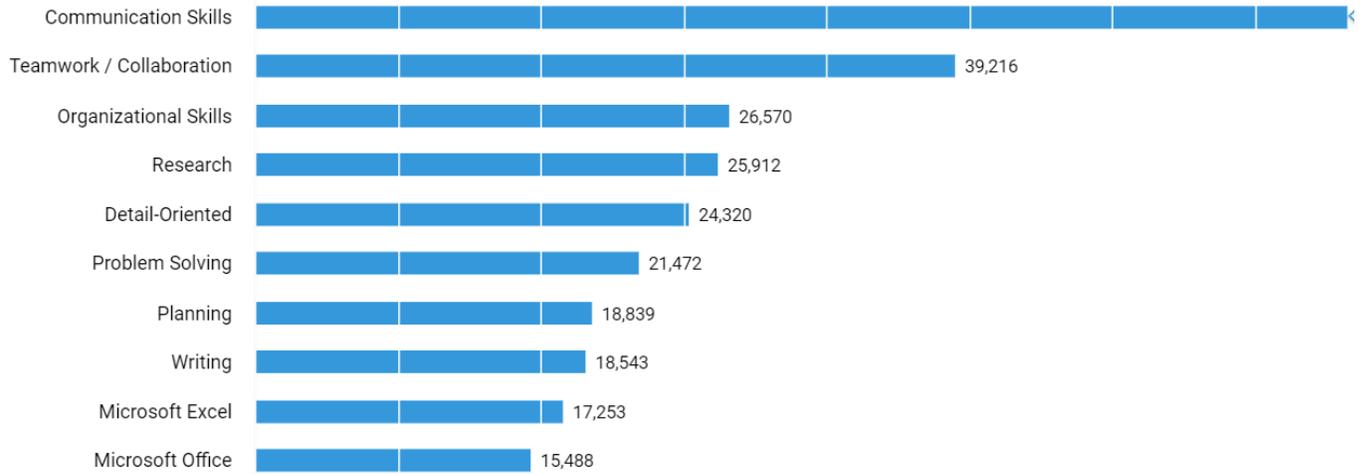
(2) Describe the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the businesses in your region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The following charts describe the most in-demand knowledge and skills of employers in the Metro North

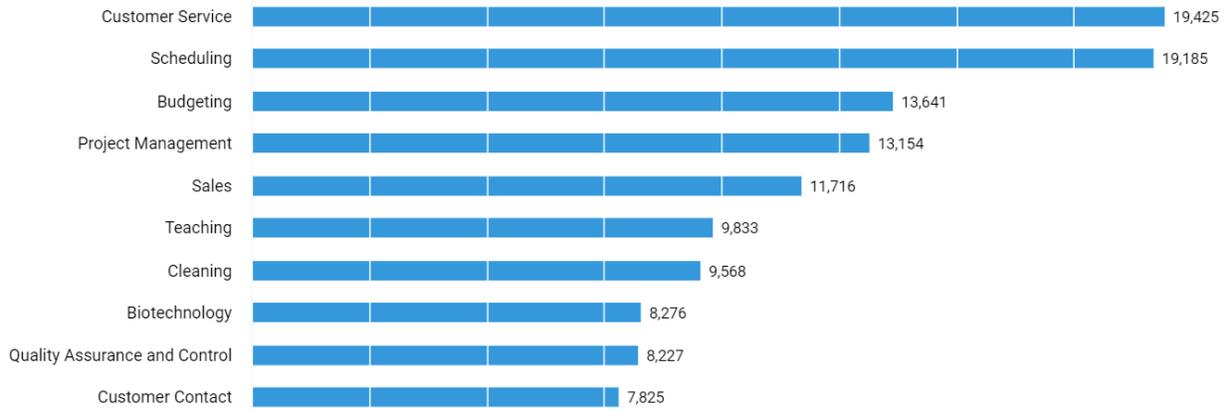
region according to Burning Glass Technologies’ Labor Insights/Jobs. Reports were run on **June 25, 2021** for the past twelve months in the twenty cities and towns that comprise the Metro North region. Data presented are the top ten most requested skills for all industries in Metro North and specific prioritized industries.

All Industries- 148,864 total job postings

“Baseline” Skills

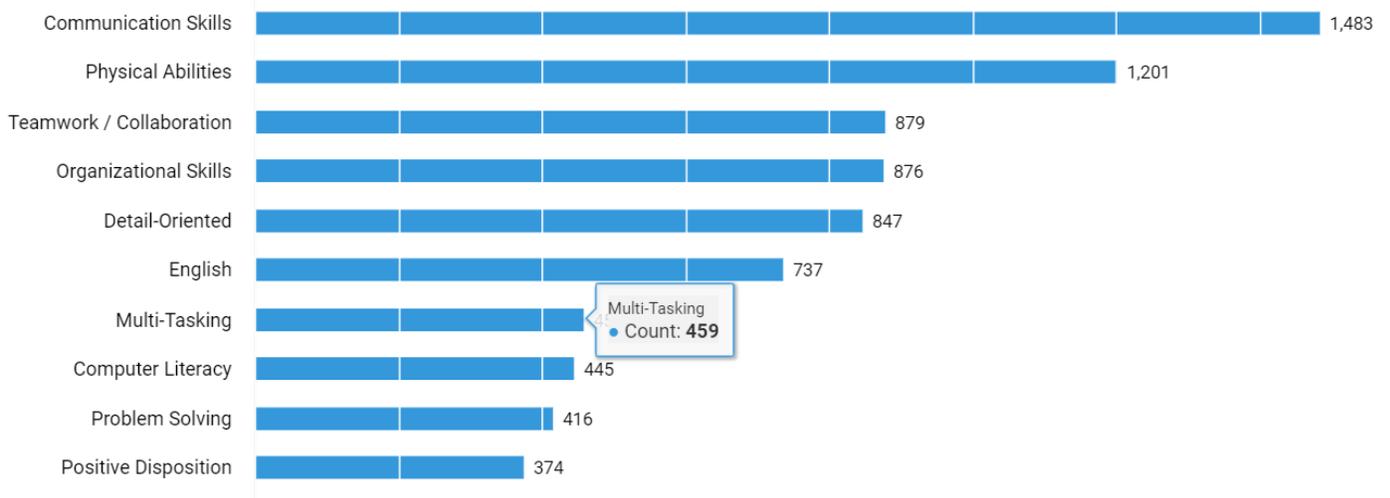


“Specialized” Skills

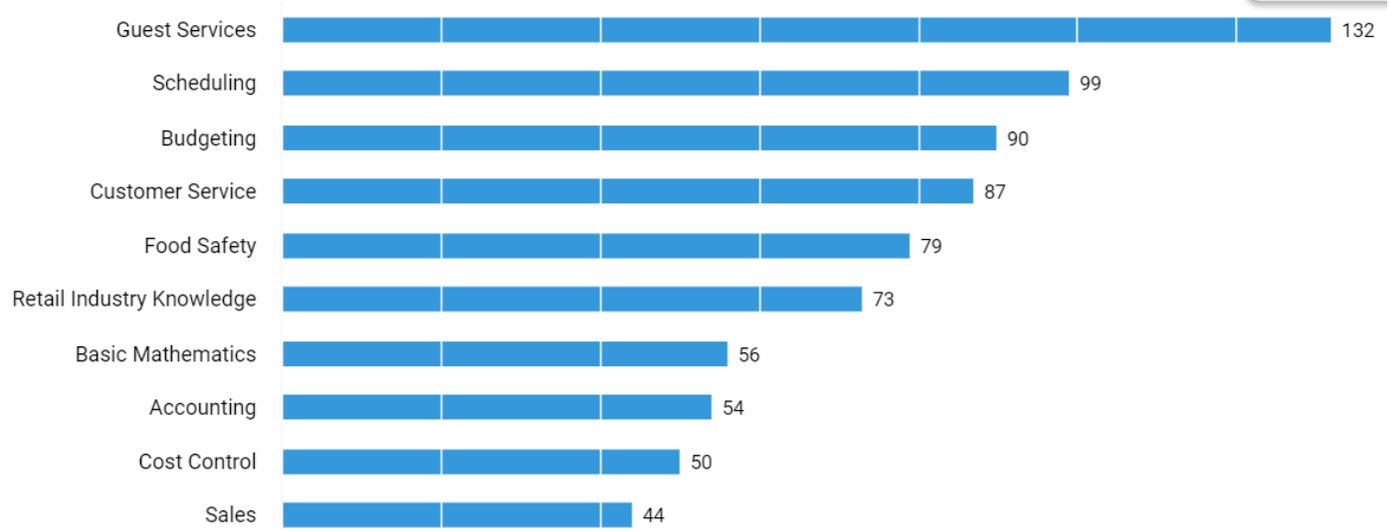


Accommodation and Food Service (Hospitality)- 5,804 total job postings

“Baseline” Skills

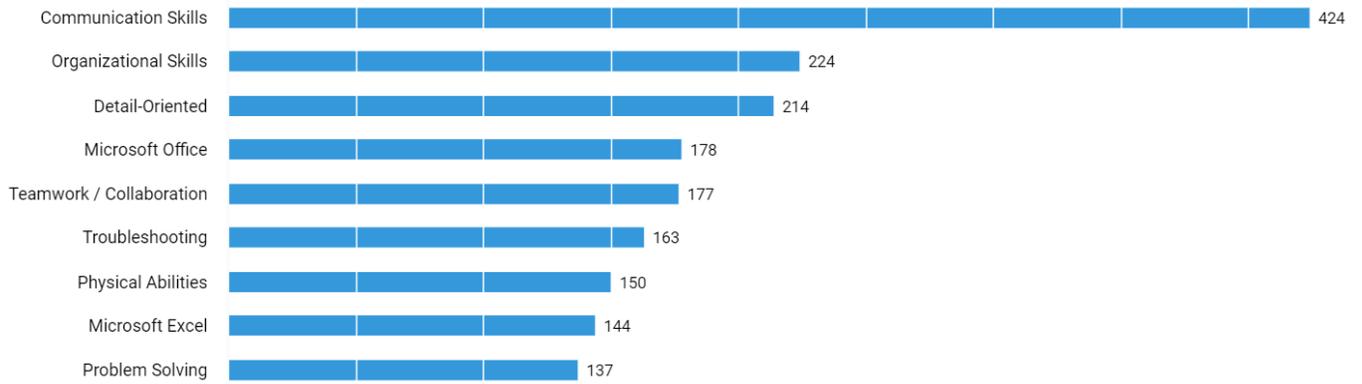


“Specialized” Skills

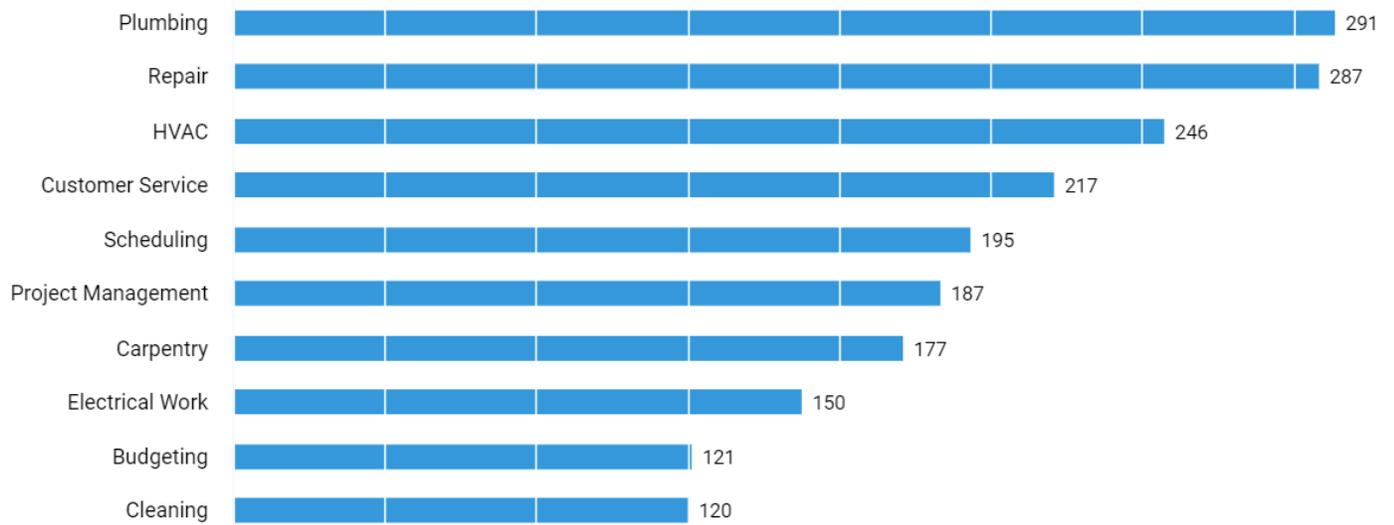


Construction- 1,361 total job postings

“Baseline” Skills

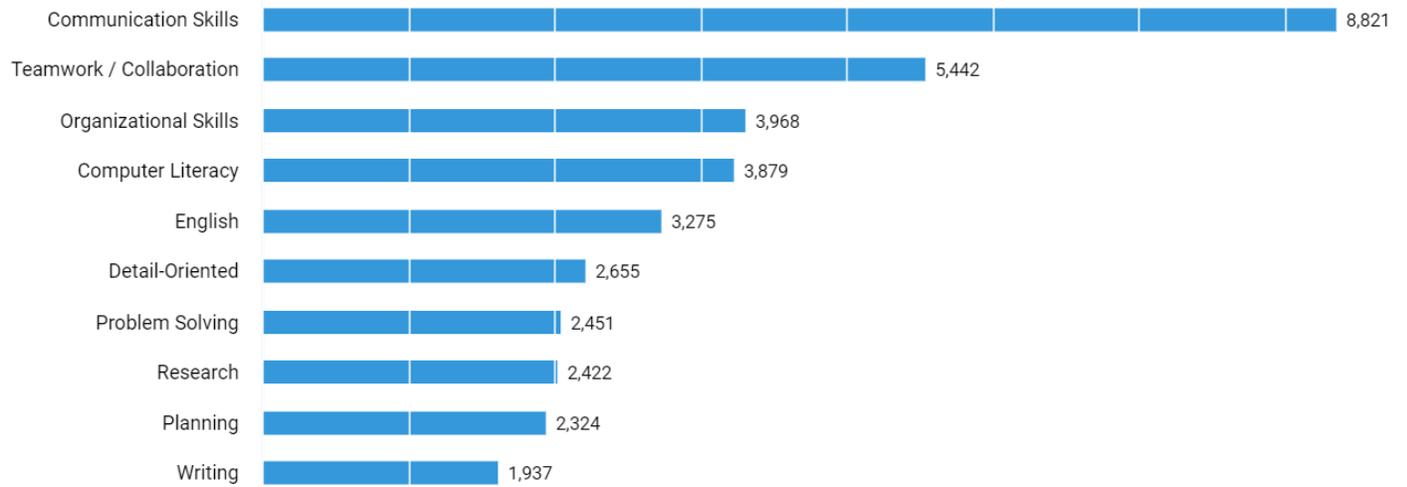


“Specialized” Skills

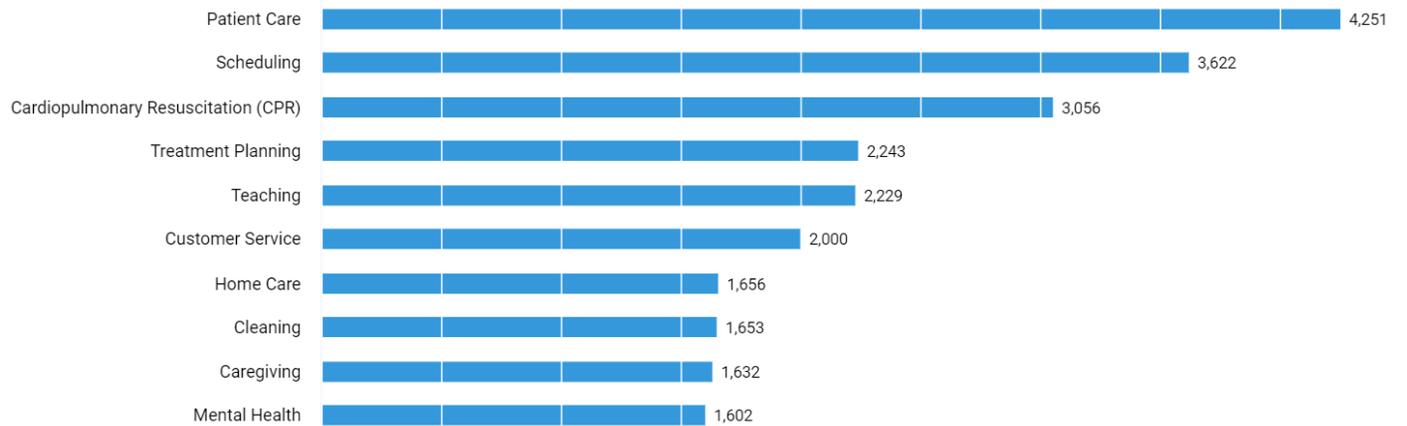


Healthcare and Social Assistance- 24,314 total job postings

“Baseline” Skills

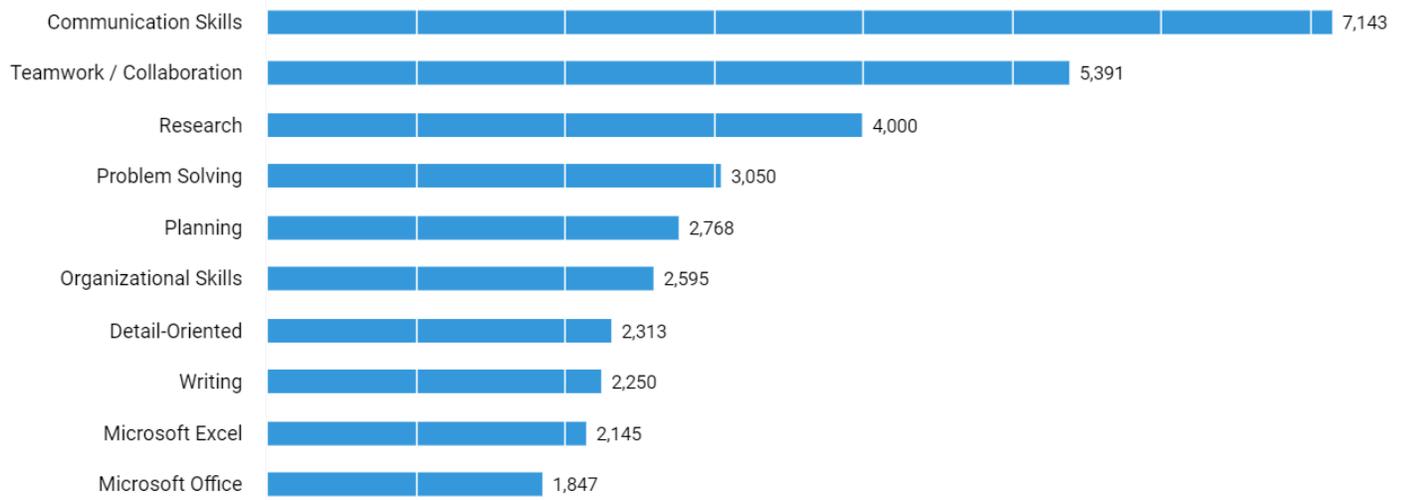


“Specialized” Skills

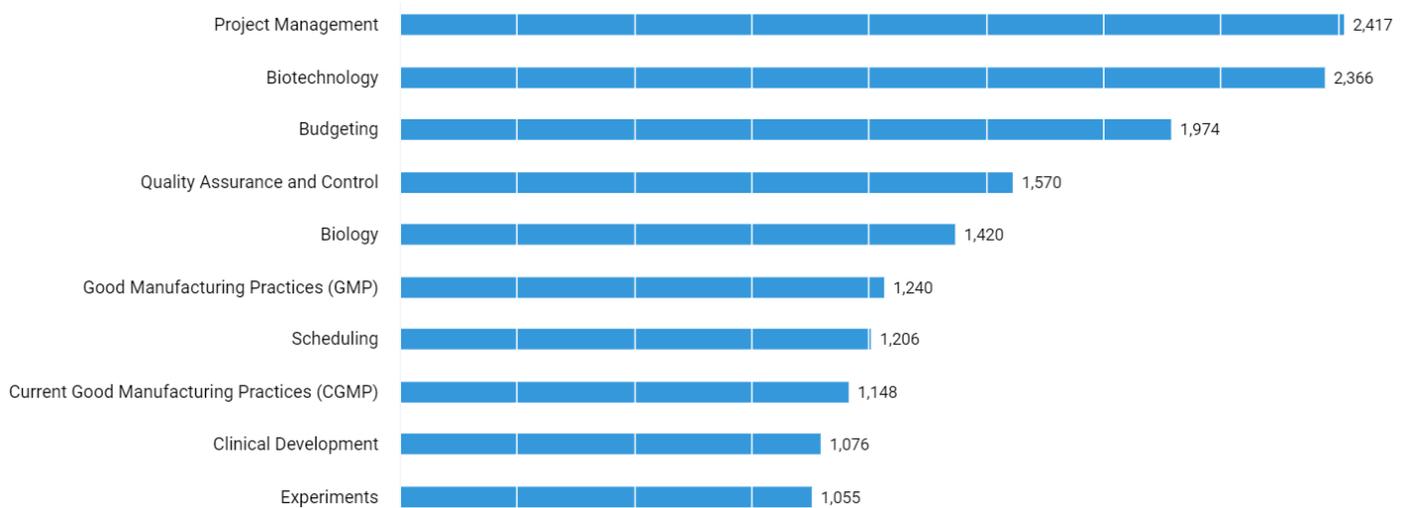


Manufacturing- 13,497 total job postings

“Baseline” Skills

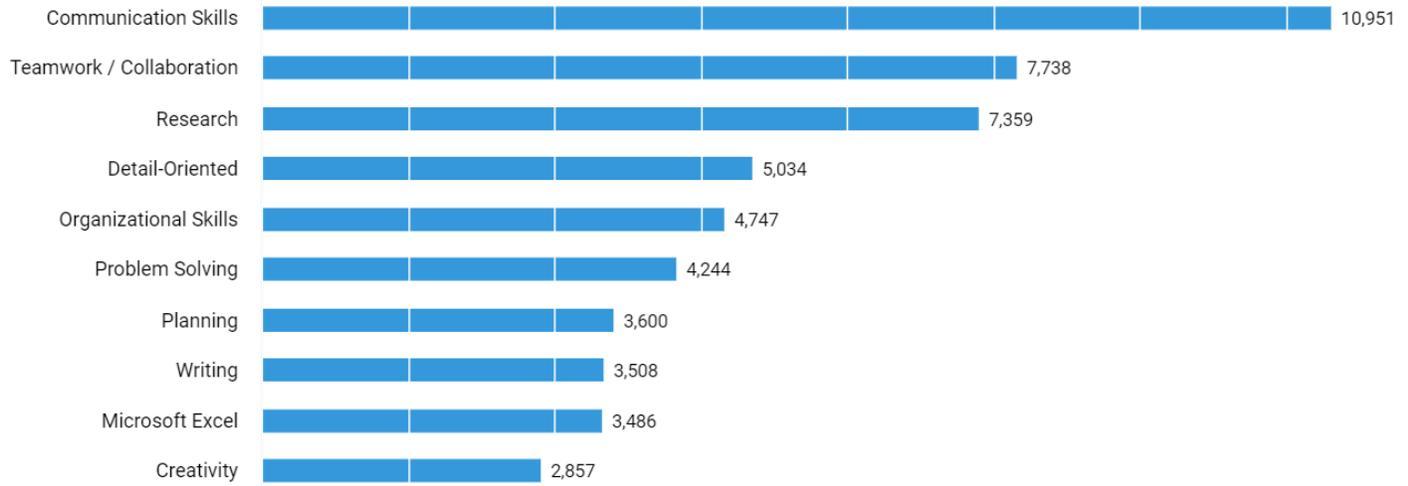


“Specialized” Skills

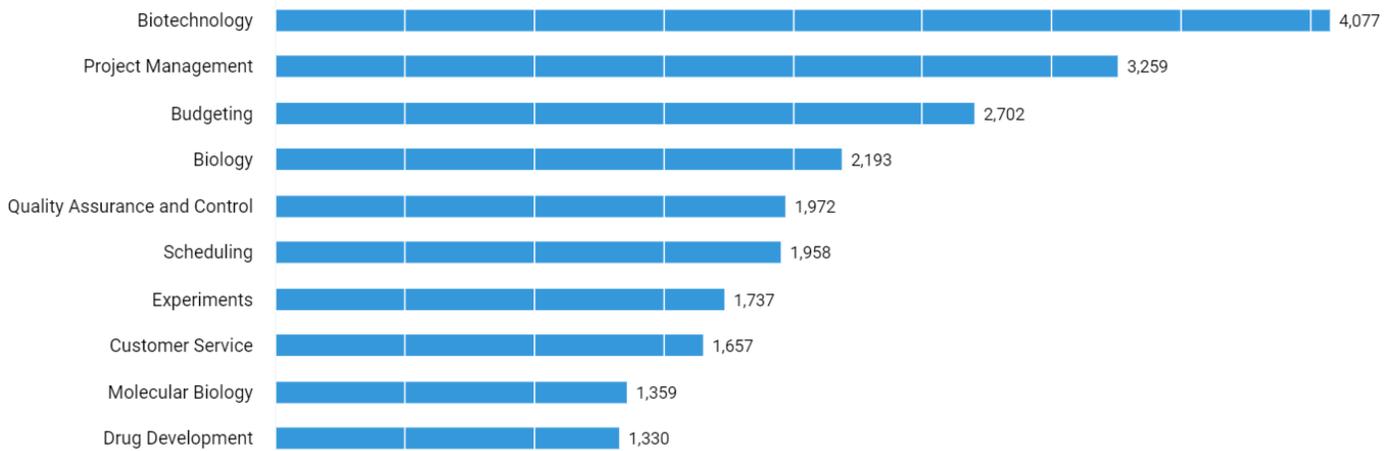


Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (IT, Life Sciences)- 20,159 total job postings

“Baseline” Skills

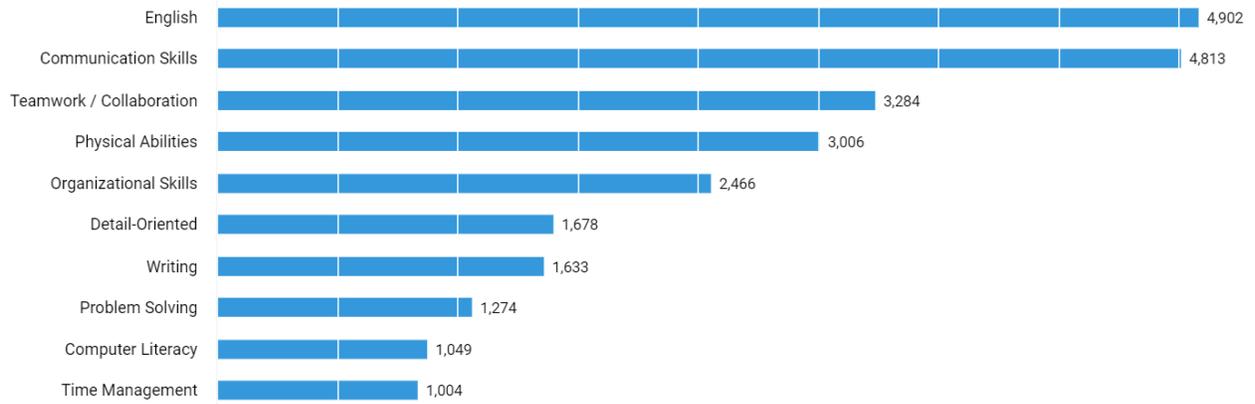


“Specialized” Skills

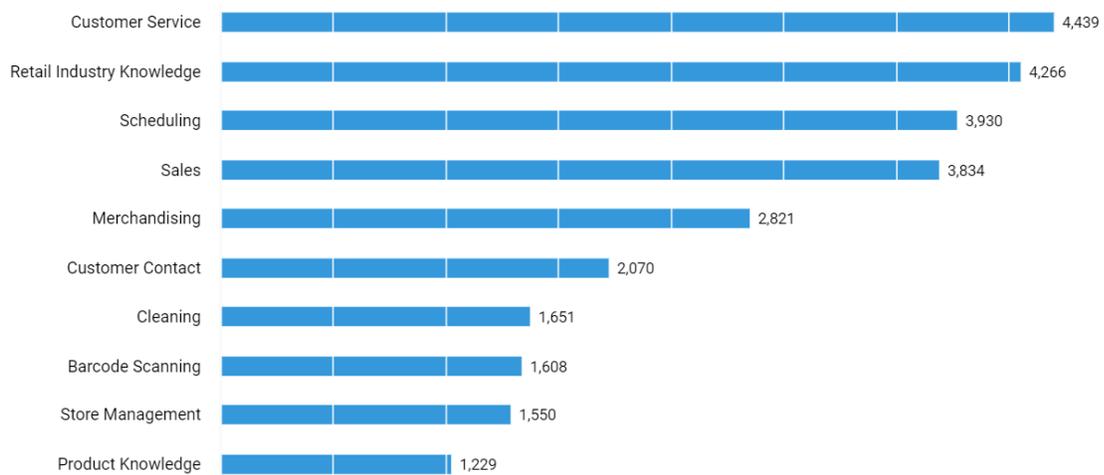


Retail Trade- 15,418 total job postings

“Baseline” Skills

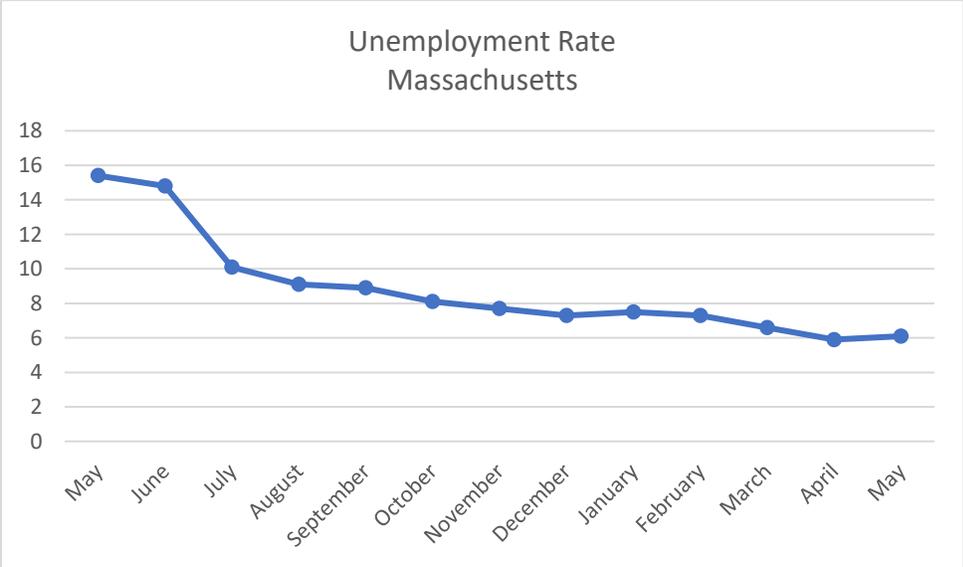
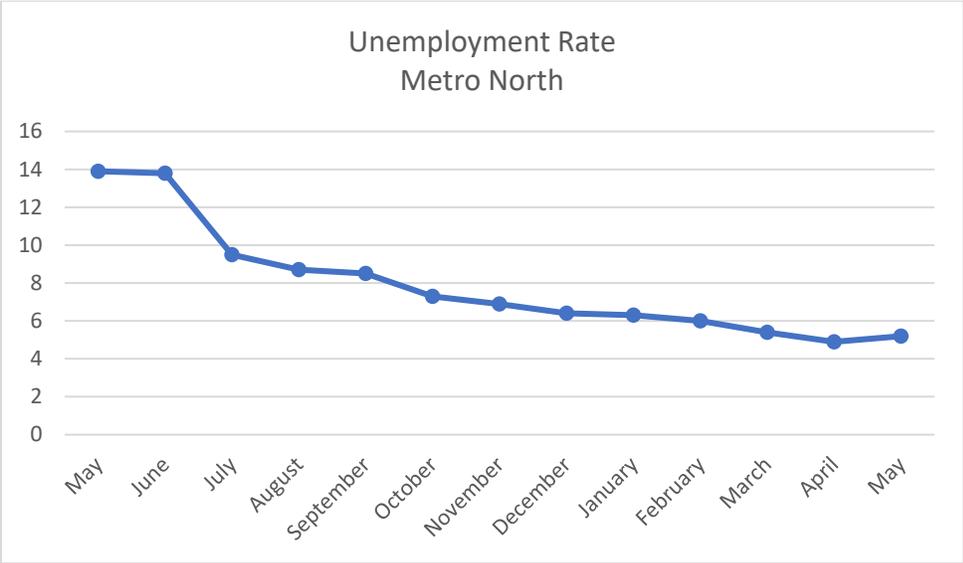


“Specialized” Skills

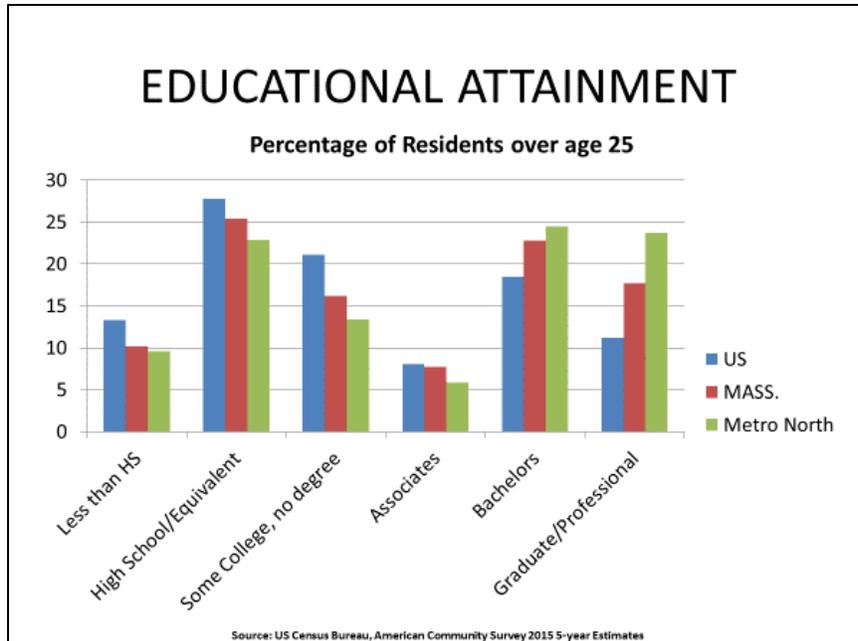


(3) Please provide an analysis of your regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment¹.

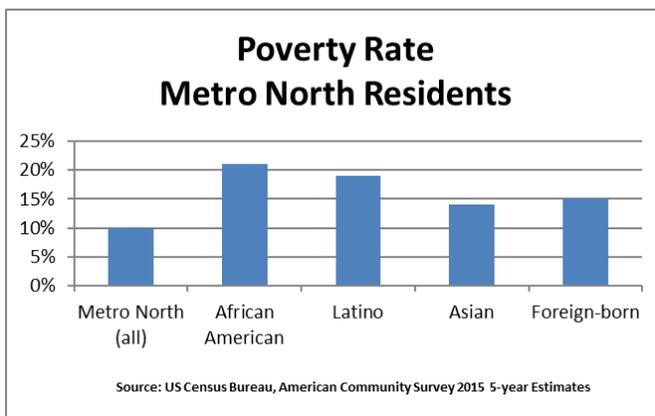
According to the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD), as of **June 2021**, the Metro North region had a labor force of **475,688** and an unemployment rate of **5.2%**, compared to **6.1%** statewide. The Metro North region’s unemployment rate has consistently been below the statewide rate:



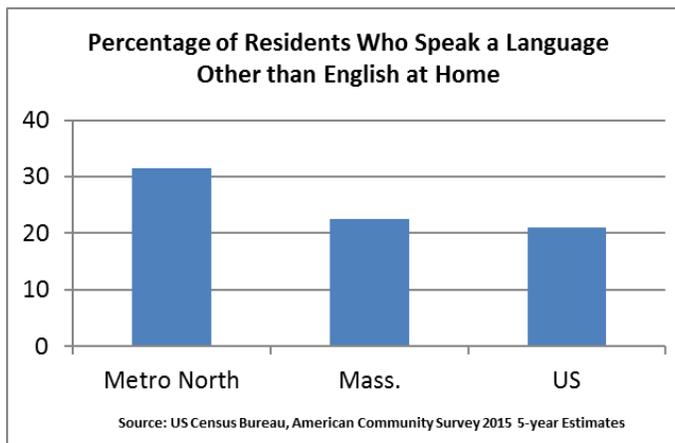
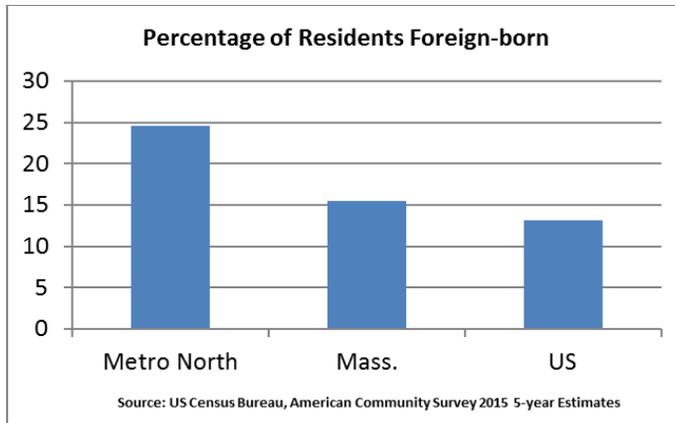
In terms of educational attainment, the Metro North region is a highly educated region. The area has higher rates of residents with Bachelors and Graduate-level degrees and lower rates of residents with less than a Bachelors as compared to the state and nation.



While the Metro North region appears to have strong economic and labor market indicators, too many people are being left out of the strong regional economy. The poverty rate for African Americans and Latinos in the region is double the regional rate. Communities including Chelsea, Malden, Revere, Everett, Somerville, and Cambridge all have poverty rates higher than the Massachusetts rate, which is just over **11%**. The median income in nearly half of Metro North’s communities would not meet the living wage for a family of four.



The Metro North region also has a significantly higher percentage of residents that are foreign-born and speak a language other than English at home.



- (4) Please provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the local area. This analysis must:
- a) include strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities.
 - b) address the capacity to provide the workforce development activities around:
 - i. education and skill needs of the workforce;
 - ii. individuals with barriers to employment;
 - iii. employment needs of businesses.

The strengths of the workforce development system in Metro North include:

- Extensive list of Eligible Training Providers for WIOA Title I training
- Adoption of goals for the percentage of WIOA Title I Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) going towards training in the two Greater Boston Regional Planning priority industries
- Sector-based training initiatives in advanced manufacturing, hospitality/culinary, and retail
- Several career and technical education (CTE) facilities in the region that can be used as job training sites
- Committed and involved Workforce Board membership
- Strong partnerships among training providers, community-based organizations, Career Centers, the Workforce Board, and businesses in targeted sector projects

The workforce development system in Metro North could be improved in the following areas:

- Additional job training capacity- many Metro North residents need to commute to Boston in order to participate in job training programs. While MNWB has supported some additional job training capacity in Metro North, i.e. in hospitality and culinary, further capacity is needed.
- Utilization of CTE facilities for job training- the Metro North region has CTE facilities in Medford, Somerville, Cambridge, and Wakefield (Northeast Metro Tech). While some job training has occurred in these facilities, mostly for NAMC manufacturing training, there is much more opportunity to fully utilize these great facilities for job training after school hours.
- Expansion of sector-based projects in priority industries- given the labor supply gaps described in the Greater Boston Regional Planning Blueprint, the region will need to significantly expand capacity to expand the pipeline of workers in IT/Tech and Healthcare.

MNWB continues to take a leadership role in implementing a workforce development system in Metro North that meets the needs of job seekers and businesses. MNWB has developed and strengthened partnerships with job training providers, community-based organizations, community colleges, and businesses to continually make improvements to the system. In recent years, new partnerships and initiatives in retail and hospitality/culinary, as well as the region's continued involvement in NAMC, have provided blueprints for how the region's workforce development system can successfully meet the needs of job seekers and employers. MNWB looks to continue expanding the system's capacity, particularly in the priority industries outlined in the Greater Boston Regional Planning Blueprint.

(5) Please describe the MassHire Board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. Include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in § 677.155(a)(1). The primary indicators of performance include:

- a. The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- b. The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
- c. Median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- ci. The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program.

The MassHire Metro North Workforce Board (MNWB), incorporated in 1995 as the Metro North

Regional Employment Board (REB), is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that serves as the Workforce Development Board (WDB) for the Metro North region of Massachusetts. As one of sixteen local Workforce Development Boards established in Massachusetts by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, MNWB was formed to set local workforce policy, determine how state and federal funds are best used for workforce development, align the needs of employers to the needs of area residents, leverage partnerships to meet the region's workforce needs, and oversee the MassHire Metro North Career Centers (MNCC) where both job search and employer services are provided.

MassHire Metro North Workforce Board's vision is a thriving, inclusive, and resilient regional economy where businesses and residents have equitable access to workforce development resources and to quality employment opportunities.

MassHire Metro North Workforce Board's mission is to develop partnerships, generate resources, and advocate for workforce solutions that result in a skilled workforce, prospering businesses, and equitable access to meaningful career pathways and quality employment for residents. Consistent with its vision, the MassHire Metro North Workforce Board (MNWB) Plan for Impact is its roadmap for addressing joblessness and creating quality career pathways in the Metro North region of greater Boston over the next five years.

This systemic approach requires breaking down the barriers both residents and businesses face in getting the workforce services they need. This means providing high-quality, results-oriented career services as well as addressing obstacles to accessing those services, such as transportation, childcare, technology, and language barriers. As part of its commitment to equity in access, MNWB will increase its focus on communities in greatest need and with some of the highest rates of joblessness.

MNWB will use its Plan for Impact to achieve the following six strategic goals necessary for its vision of a thriving, inclusive, and resilient regional economy where businesses and residents have equitable access to workforce development resources and to quality employment opportunities:

- Equitable access to MNWB resources
- Sufficient resources and funding are available
- Businesses can meet their hiring needs
- Residents can attain their employment objectives
- Strong partnerships exist to provide comprehensive workforce solutions
- Equitable workforce solutions are successfully advocated

(6) Taking into account analyses described in 1 through 4 above, please describe your strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and workforce system partners to align available resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in paragraph (a)(5) of this section.

Due to the range of services individuals need to be successful in achieving high quality employment, MNWB will partner with the MassHire Metro North Career Center (MNCC), community organizations, vocational schools, community colleges, and businesses to deliver the right combination of support, training, and job placement. Where successful programs exist, MNWB will serve as a funder and source

of information. In other cases, MNWB will convene and support coalitions of organizations in the workforce ecosystem. In all cases, MNWB will serve as a regional advocate, standing with its partners for policies and funding that support effective workforce solutions.

(b) Under WIOA, the plan must include a description of the following requirements(WIOA secs. 108(b)(2)–(21)):

(1) Identify the following elements of the workforce development system in your local area:

a. Programs that are included in your local workforce system (please list programs).

- Wagner Peysner
- WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker
- WIOA Title I Youth
- Veterans Programs
- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)
- Trade
- Rapid Response
- Unemployment Insurance Walk-in services
- Core Partner/MOU services- DTA, MCB, MRC, ACLS, SCSEP
- School to Career Connecting Activities
- YouthWorks- Year round and Summer
- National Dislocated Worker Grants
- Ticket to Work
- STEM Network
- Mass. Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development Advanced Manufacturing Program
- B2 LIFE occupational skills training program
- I-BEST model incumbent worker initiative via Walmart Foundation
- Mass. Gaming Commission Community Mitigation Fund Workforce Development Program
- Pre-apprenticeship training in construction trades and facilities maintenance via CommCorp

b. How your Board will support the strategies identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment.

MNWB will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs in the following ways:

- Oversight of the MOU with core partners- MNWB will continue to convene core partners and oversee the implementation of the MOU. MNWB convenes quarterly MOU partner meetings and works closely with the Metro North Career Centers to implement the strategies to effectively serve shared customers.
- Convene and facilitate industry consortia and Board subcommittees- MNWB will continue to play an active convener and facilitator role in the Metro North region. Industry consortia and Board subcommittees will continue to meet regularly and engage a variety of stakeholders in the region's workforce development system to support service alignment.
- Development of partnerships and collaborations- Partnership development is a key element of MNWB's strategy for meeting its mission, vision, and goals. MNWB will continue to build and develop partnerships to ensure a coordinated service delivery strategy in Metro North.
- Coordination and integration of youth programs, including Perkins-authorized programs- MNWB directly administers WIOA Youth Framework services, Connecting Activities, and YouthWorks programs. This structure allows MNWB to coordinate youth services across different grants. A key component of youth services includes supporting the region's Perkins-authorized programs, both existing and new.

(2) Please describe how your Board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:

- a. Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.
- b. Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and
- c. Improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

In addition to the activities described in the previous response, MNWB will launch local labor market information reports that will be circulated and distributed to key stakeholders within the Metro North workforce development system. MNWB will continue to support and develop workforce development initiatives that provide industry-recognized credentials. Across all workforce development investments, including WIOA Title I training investments and sector-based initiatives, MNWB will continue to require programs offer an industry-recognized credential. MNWB will also continue to strengthen partnerships with local community colleges to explore opportunities for connecting customers with postsecondary credential programs.

(3) Please describe the strategies and services that will be used in your local area:

- a. To facilitate engagement of businesses in workforce development programs, including small businesses and businesses in high- demand industry sectors and occupations.

Strategies and services to engage businesses in workforce development programs in Metro North will include:

- Workforce Board engagement- staff of MNWB will be tasked with engaging businesses, particularly in priority industries. MNWB also convenes business-led committees and industry advisory groups.
- Career Center Business Services engagement- Business Services staff at the Metro North Career Centers will be responsible for engaging employers and addressing their workforce needs.
- Utilization of Mass BizWorks- MNWB, Career Center, and core partners will utilize MassBizWorks as a framework for engaging businesses in the region.
- Regional Planning Implementation- engaging businesses in the Greater Boston Regional Planning priority industries will be critical in effectively addressing labor supply gaps in IT/Tech and healthcare. Leveraging the collaboration of the regional planning team will be a useful strategy to making progress on this front.

Coordination among partners who are engaging businesses in Metro North will be important. To that end, MNWB and the business services staff at the Metro North Career Centers have engaged in regular meetings to coordinate business engagement efforts and will continue to do so throughout this 4-Year Plan. In addition, MNWB has facilitated, and will continue to facilitate, opportunities for Career Center business services staff to engage the business-led Board membership to discuss and evaluate the business service strategy in the region.

As joint facilitators of the MOU partners committee, both MNWB and the Career Centers will ensure further coordination among core system partners. MNWB will continue to play a leadership role in ensuring coordinated and comprehensive efforts to engage Metro North businesses in workforce development efforts, particularly those in priority industries.

- b. To serve agricultural businesses including plans to improve those services.

Agriculture is not a critical/priority industry in the Metro North region.

- c. To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses.

In addition to response (3)(i), MNWB's local Strategic Plan clearly describes a shift to a more employer demand-driven system as a primary goal. To measure that progress, MNWB will work in partnership with the Career Centers to implement and track regional employer engagement goals. MNWB will continue to monitor progress towards this goal to ensure the system is truly demand driven and

meeting the needs of employers.

- d. To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.

MNWB will continue to take a leadership role in implementing the Greater Boston Regional Planning Blueprint, a process that includes key regional economic development partners. One of the goals of the Regional Planning process was to align workforce development, economic development, and education activities, a goal the MNWB will continue to work towards in collaboration with other Regional Planning partners. In addition, a representative of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council is a member of the MNWB, which allows MNWB to further coordinate its workforce development activities with regional economic development priorities.

On a municipal level, MNWB has developed partnerships with several municipal economic development offices in the Metro North region. In many of the municipalities in Metro North, workforce development activities are housed within economic development departments, if they exist at all. These local partnerships have been critical in aligning MNWB's regional workforce development efforts with local priorities. MNWB has also been able to serve in an advisory capacity for some municipalities as they develop and/or expand their workforce development and economic development initiatives. MNWB will continue to develop these linkages at the municipal level.

- e. To strengthen linkages between reemployment assistance and unemployment insurance programs.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment Insurance staff are co-located at the Metro North Career Centers, ensuring strong linkages between career center services and unemployment insurance programs. The Metro North region also has a robust RESEA service, which will continue through this Plan.

- f. Describe how your Board coordinates workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide Rapid Response activities.

MNWB will maintain regular contact with the state Rapid Response representative stationed at the Metro North Career Center. MNWB will implement regular check-ins with the Rapid Response representative and when notified of impending layoffs, will coordinate with state and local agencies. When appropriate, MNWB will also coordinate with the Rapid Response team on any National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs) that may be needed to address the needs of laid-off workers. As an example, MNWB and the Metro North Career Center collaborated with the Rapid Response team and other state and local officials to address the Signature Bread factory closing in Chelsea. The large, coordinated effort resulted in a plethora of needed services to help the laid-off workers obtain new jobs.

- g. Please describe procedures to offer MassHire Career Center Business Services and MassHire BizWorks programs to local businesses.

MNWB and the Career Centers meet regularly to coordinate businesses engagement activities. A local SOP for business services collaboration between MNWB and the Career Centers has been developed and is updated on a quarterly basis. Oftentimes, representatives from both the Workforce Board and Career Center will meet with an employer. Specifically regarding Mass BizWorks, MNWB and the Career Center coordinate joint trainings and have incorporated BizWorks materials in employer meetings.

- h. Describe implementation of any initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional businesses. These initiatives must support the strategy described in paragraph(b)(3) of this section.

MNWB and its partners work collaboratively to develop and implement initiatives that are tailored to employers' needs. All of the above-listed programs are part of the portfolio of options that can be used to meet those needs, many of which are already developed and implemented in the region as described in previous responses. MNWB and its partners will continue to evaluate, develop, and implement specific program models that are most effective at meeting employers' workforce needs.

(4) Please provide a description of how your Board:

- a. Coordinates local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities.

Please see response to question **(3)(iv)**.

- b. Promotes entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

Entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services has not been a priority for the Metro North region. However, this will be a topic of discussion and review in future Board and committee meetings.

(5) Please describe the MassHire Career Center system in your area, including:

- a. How the Board ensures the continuous improvement of eligible providers and that such providers will meet the

employment needs of local businesses, workers and job seekers.

In the past year, MNWB has implemented three new policies to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible training providers in the regional system:

- Implemented requirement that training provider obtain signed customer Release of Information allowing training provider, Metro North Workforce Board and Metro North Career Center staff to communicate freely around customer's progress
- Implemented requirement that each training provider complete a monthly progress report submitted to Metro North Workforce Board and Metro North Career Center staff monthly to document customer's progress in training program and identify any challenges or barriers that may arise during training
- Implemented monthly process where Metro North Workforce Board creates and shares monthly performance charts for each training provider documenting enrollment, completion, credential attainment and employment attainment from the provider over the course of the fiscal year
- The Metro North Workforce Board also continue to implement and follow up on previous policies developed including - Implemented specific performance measures providers must maintain in order to remain on Metro North's list of eligible training providers and a process by which a provider may be removed from the list for performance reasons and Set goals for the percentage of WIOA Title I Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) that are used for training in one of the two Greater Boston Regional Planning priority industries

These new policies are aimed at ensuring eligible training providers are meeting high performance standards and that the training programs the region invests in are for careers in high demand, high quality industries.

- b. How the Board facilitates access to services provided through the MassHire Career Center(s), including in remote areas, through the use of virtual services, technology and other means.

MNWB will facilitate access to services provided through the Career Center system via:

- Expansion of access points throughout the Metro North region- In addition to the two full-service and one satellite brick-and-mortar locations, there is currently an access point in Malden. Additional access points are currently under consideration.
- Virtual services- Implementation of virtual services plan in collaboration with the Career Center operator, which could include online-based services for both job seekers and employers.

1. Career Center demonstrates virtual service customer flow aligns with requirements outlined in 100 DCS 08.121: MassHire Virtual Service Delivery policy. Provide current virtual service customer flow and any other supporting documentation.

- c. How entities within the MassHire Career Center system, including Career Center Operators and Partners, ensure compliance with WIOA sec. 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Metro North Career Centers will be fully compliant with ADA regulations and be fully equipped with equipment and other tools to accommodate individuals with disabilities. In addition, the Career Centers and MNWB will work within the core partner MOU framework to ensure all system partners are trained and supported for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. Partners have already undertaken cross-training and co-location schedules have been implemented.

- d. The roles and resource contributions of your Partners – please describe how these relationships are sustained and kept productive.

MNWB convenes the MOU partners leadership team on a quarterly basis. MNWB works closely with the Career Center to move the work of the MOU forward and ensure progress towards meeting goals are met. MNWB takes the lead in overseeing the implementation of shared infrastructure contributions. In addition, during FY21, the Metro North Workforce Board and the Metro North Career Center Leadership conducted 2 Professional Development Days for all MOU partners where the role of the partnership, the shared customer process and a presentation from each provider on their services was shared. In addition, the professional development days were recorded and each MOU partner has agreed to include the recordings as a part of their onboarding process of staff who work within the MOU partnership. MNWB and MNCC aims to plan and convene the Professional Development Day annually.

- (6) Please provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in your local area.

Adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in Metro North include:

- Basic Services
 - Outreach, intake, and orientation
 - Initial assessments
 - Job search assistance
 - Access to LMI
 - Eligibility for more in-depth services, including training

- Individualized Services
 - Comprehensive and specialized assessments
 - Development and implementation of an individualized employment plan
 - Individualized career counseling and planning
 - Identification of and plan to address barriers to employment
 - Paid and unpaid work experiences
 - Referral to training
 - Follow-up/retention services

- Training
 - Occupational skills training
 - ABE/ESOL training offered in conjunction with occupational skills training
 - OJT
 - Apprenticeships
 - Incumbent worker and customized training

- Follow-up Services
 - All WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers receive 12 months of follow-up, as required

- Business Services
 - Assist employers with filling job vacancies- job listings, job matching, specialized recruitment events, job fairs
 - Assess employers' workforce needs
 - Recruit employers for regional industry/sector partnerships
 - Dissemination of information related to statewide employer resources- Mass BizWorks, Workforce Training Fund, workplace education grants, tax credits

(7) Please provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in your area including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. Please include an identification of successful models of such activities.

a. Please also provide a description of youth workforce investment activity coordination with the Department of Transitional Assistance, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind.

Youth workforce investment activities currently offered through the Metro North workforce development system include:

- WIOA Title I Youth- Three in-school and three out-of-school programs currently provide academic and career programming to eligible Metro North youth.
- School to Career Connecting Activities- Metro North youth staff are co-located at seven partner high schools, providing an array of career awareness and career development services.
- YouthWorks- youth from six Metro North communities are placed in subsidized, summer

job placements which include Signal Success soft skills training. A separate year-round program is offered, focusing on in-demand career-pathway programming in fields such as IT and Healthcare for, subsidized placement opportunities, and project-based work for youth aged 14-21

As core system partners, DTA, MRC, and MCB all participate actively in the Metro North MOU process, including collaboration on youth services where appropriate. MNWB also convenes the Metro North Youth Committee which oversees the provision of youth investment activities and guides the Board's youth strategy. Moving forward, MNWB will be evaluating the necessity of broadening the membership of the Youth Committee to include system partners that serve youth with disabilities.

(8) Please explain how the Board coordinates relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

MNWB has made it a priority to strengthen partnerships and coordination between the region's workforce development activities and secondary/postsecondary education programs. MNWB will continue this work via:

- Existing grant programs and partnerships, such as the youth workforce investment activities described in the previous response and sector based partnerships such as the Retail Academy incumbent worker program and NAMC advanced manufacturing programs.
- Support for secondary school districts' applications for Chapter 74 programs, Innovation Pathway, and/or Early College Pathway designations- MNWB has, and will continue, to support and collaborate with local school districts who apply for these programs/designations.
- Regional Planning- the Greater Boston Regional Planning team has both secondary and postsecondary representatives on the core planning team. MNWB will work to take this regional-level coordination down to the local level

(9) How does the Board coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area? Please include a description of how other programs and services in your local area are leveraged to compliment workforce investment activities.

MNWB has a Board-approved Support Services Policy which sets aside funds for the provision of support services, including transportation, to eligible WIOA Title I customers. In addition, the Career Center staff coordinates with local agencies and organizations, including core system partners, to fill in gaps and leverage the resources available throughout the region.

(10) What plans, assurances, and strategies do you have in place for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services and

otherservices provided through the Career Center delivery system?

The Metro North Career Center Operator is responsible for the provision of Wagner-Peyser services in addition to WIOA activities. This integrated structure allows the Operator to manage service delivery, maximize coordination, and avoid duplication of services. MNWB, in its monitoring role, works closely with the Operator to ensure all services, including Wagner-Peyser, are delivered in compliance with state, federal, and local regulations. MNWB and the Operator meet on a monthly basis to review and discuss issues pertaining to the Career Center system in Metro North, which provides a regular system for discussion, identification of issues, and implementation of any needed improvements.

(11) How are career and training services, required under WIOA, provided to Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs) through the MassHire Career Center(s)?

MSFW signage is posted at all career center locations and is included in the Career Center Services (CCS) orientation presentation given to new customers. Any identified MSFW will be provided career and training services as required by WIOA in accordance with the service delivery process given to all career center customers.

(12) Please describe how the Board coordinates WIOA title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA title II. This description must include how the Board carries out the review of local applications submitted under title II consistent with WIOA secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232:

Each eligible provider desiring a grant or contract from an eligible agency shall submit an application to the eligible agency containing such information and assurances as the eligible agency may require, including a description of –

- i. of how funds awarded under this title will be spent consistent with the requirements of this title;*
- ii. any cooperative arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities;*
- iii. how the eligible provider will provide services in alignment with the local plan under section 108, including how such provider will promote concurrent enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate;*
- iv. how the eligible provider will meet the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3), including how such provider will collect data to report on such performance indicators;*

- v. *how the eligible provider will fulfill Career Center partner responsibilities as described in section 121(b)(1)(A), as appropriate;*
- vi. *how the eligible provider will provide services in a manner that meets the needs of eligible individuals; and*
- vii. *information that addresses the considerations described under section 231(e), as applicable.*

MNWB will coordinate with adult education activities under WIOA Title II in the following ways:

- MNWB staff will review adult education proposals and participate on funding decision teams
- MNWB staff will participate in program quality reviews/monitoring
- MNWB will support and provide guidance to adult education programs in the region in the areas of employer engagement, career pathways, and development of region-wide workforce partnerships.
- MNWB will coordinate activities with adult education providers via the core partner MOU and the Regional Planning process. All of these groups provide avenues for further coordination and collaboration between adult education and workforce development.

(13) Please provide the name and contact information of your Fiscal Agent.

- Richard Dalton, Chief Financial Officer: rdalton@masshiremetronorth.org; 508-571-0914

(14) Please describe the competitive process that is used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA title I activities.

Please see Attachment B for MNWB's Procurement Policy for WIOA Title I activities.

(15) Please provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of your local area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the performance of your local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the Career Center system in the local area.

Local Boards may insert or provide a link to local performance goals. *Link must be accessible to ACLS bidders.*

The following are Metro North's WIOA performance goals as submitted to MassHire DCS:

Performance Measure	FY2021 Proposed Local Goal	FY2022 Proposed Local Goal
WIOA ADULT MEASURES		
Employment Q2	86.5%	86.5%
Employment Q4	78.0%	78.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$5,800	\$6,200
Credential Rate	73.0%	73.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	40.0%	40.0%
WIOA DISLOCATED WORKER MEASURES		
Employment Q2	86.0%	86.0%
Employment Q4	85.0%	85.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$7,700	\$7,800
Credential Rate	60.0%	62.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	40.0%	40.0%
WIOA YOUTH MEASURES		
Employment/Education Q2	81.0%	81.0%
Employment/Education Q4	74.0%	74.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$3,500	\$3,600
Credential Rate	70.5%	70.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%	50.0%

The following are performance requirements for WIOA Title I eligible training providers in Metro North:

Contractors must meet the following performance requirements in order to remain on the Eligible Training Provider List for ITAs in Metro North:

- a) 70% program completion rate
- b) 65% job placement rate, at least 65% of which must be training-related
 - i. Job placements must be unsubsidized employment for a minimum of 20 hours per week and retained for at least 30 days in order to count as a job placement.

Performance will be measured each fiscal year. Performance is calculated based on customers who received Metro North ITAs. In January of each year MNWB will run a performance report through December 31st of the previous year. Failure to meet performance requirements will result in a formal notification by the MNWB to the training provider. Providers will have 14 business days from date of notice to submit a formal written response, providing any additional information and documentation. Upon receipt of provider's response, MNWB will work with contractor to implement a corrective action plan. Failure to meet performance requirements will result in programs being removed from the Eligible Training Provider List for ITAs in Metro North.

The following are the FY21 performance metrics for the Career Center as approved by the Metro North Workforce Systems Committee:

Measure	FY'21 Goal
---------	------------

# of new Employers served	220
# of repeat Employers served	280
Total # of Employers served	500
# Employers receiving enhanced services	300
# of Employers receiving job seeker referrals	200
# of Employers who hired a job seeker referral	75
Total Individuals served	9,600
UI Claimants Served	7,488
Total Job Seekers Unemployed	8,064
Persons with disabilities served	520
Veterans served	480
WIOA Adult Total Participants	161
WIOA Adult New Participants	76
WIOA Adult Total Entered Employment Rate At Exit	86%
New WIOA Adult Participants in Training Activities	41
Total WIOA Adult Participants in Training Activities	96
Total DLW Participants	134
New DLW Participants	84
WIOA DLW Total Entered Employment Rate At Exit	86%
New WIOA DLW Participants in Training Activities	27
Total WIOA DLW Participants in Training Activities	55

# Employers receiving enhanced services	300
# of Employers listing job orders	250
# of Employers from healthcare industry who received a service	47

# of Employers from technology industry who received a service	9
# of Employers in Cambridge who received a service	19
# of Employers in Chelsea who received a service	9
# of Employers in Everett who received a service	5
# of Employers in Malden who received a service	7
# of Employers in Revere who received a service	4
# of Employers in Somerville who received a service	4
Customers with <i>less than high school</i> diploma	460
Customers <i>age 55+</i>	3,036
Customers age 21 and under	160
Persons with Disabilities Placement Rate	29%
Veterans Placements Rate	30%
Total Veterans Entered Employment	100
Cambridge residents served	600
Chelsea residents served	600
Everett residents served	300
Malden residents served	400
Revere residents served	400
Somerville residents served	500
Placement*** rate for job seekers served	30%
Total entered employment	2,880
Total entered full time employment	2,400
Placement*** rate for full time employment	25%
WIOA Adult Priority ITA's	15%
WIOA DLW Priority ITA's	30%

(16) What are the actions and activities that support the MassHire Board's continued status as a high-performance workforce board?

a. What trainings are applicable to Board members?

All new board members meet individually with the President/CEO of MNWB and attend a new member orientation. The orientation covers all information relevant to being a Board member, including WIOA and other funding sources supporting the workforce development system in Metro North; MNWB's mission, vision, strategic plan, and governance structure; current programs and initiatives; and Board committees. New board members are also assigned a "mentor," a fellow Board member with experience who provides guidance and assistance with the roles and responsibilities of being a Board member.

b. How do business Board members contribute to workforce development in your region?

The responsibilities of all Board members, as approved by the Board membership, include:

- Support the MNWB's mission and goals as established in the strategic plan, assisting in developing the strategic plan and providing strategic direction
- Attend and actively participate in MNWB meetings
- Actively participate in at least one committee of interest (attend and participate in at least 75% of meetings) and/or lead and actively participate in industry partnerships in members' sector field
- Bring your special knowledge and expertise to the table – including industry workforce knowledge, finance, fundraising, and community expertise
- Connect MNWB to key outside organizations, boards, businesses, training and education providers, and elected officials – open doors for workforce development partnerships
- Become familiar with the work and impact of the workforce development system and the customers it serves
- Act as a spokesperson for the MNWB and represent the MNWB to the outside community and within your organization with enthusiasm and integrity, requesting information when needed
- Assist in the recruitment, orientation, and mentoring of new Board members
- Help ensure the MNWB's financial sustainability
- Willing to accept and support decisions that are democratically made
- New Board members attend onboarding training including required trainings

c. How does your Board support the business services in the career centers?

The MNWB members actively engage with the business services staff at the Career Center. Members meet individually with BSR staff to discuss their specific businesses and provide guidance to staff on how to engage employers. In addition, MNWB provides opportunities for BSR staff to engage with Board members as a group at quarterly Board meetings. These individual and group engagements have been invaluable to guiding the BSR staff at the Career Center with ensuring the highest quality employer services in the region.

d. To what extent does inter-/intra-Board collaboration result in positive outcomes for job-seekers and businesses?

The active involvement of the MNWB members with the workforce investment activities and local partners engaged in the system has been critical in meeting the needs of job seekers and businesses. MNWB staff actively recruit potential members who believe in the mission and vision of the MNWB and bring expertise and insight that can move the work in a positive direction. MNWB members have shown a great willingness to collaborate with stakeholders across the system as well as with each other, which has resulted in many positive outcomes for the region. MNWB staff will continue to support these collaborations between the Board members and partners and among Board members themselves.

- (17) How are the training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 provided through the use of individual training accounts? If contracts for training services are or will be used, how is/will the use of such contracts coordinated with the use of individual training accounts?
- a. How does the Board ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are provided?

MNWB oversees the WIOA Title I eligible training provider list in Metro North and works collaboratively with the Career Center to ensure delivery of WIOA training services that includes informed customer choice. Once the Career Center determines a customer to be eligible for WIOA training services and requests an Individual Training Account (ITA), MNWB staff reviews the request to ensure proper eligibility. The review of every ITA customer file ensures that every customer receiving WIOA training funds meet all eligibility requirements, including ensuring informed customer choice.

MNWB, in its monitoring capacity, also reviews the ITA process on an annual basis as part of the annual Career Center monitoring process. Part of this review includes ensuring that Career Center staff are implementing informed customer choice sufficiently and appropriately.

MNWB also oversees training programs funded through other sources targeted at Career Center customers. MNWB works with the Career Center to ensure all Career Center customers are informed of all the available training programs and are referred to the appropriate program, regardless of how the training services are to be provided or funded.

- (18) Please describe the local area strategy and service plans for utilization of the following work-based training models:
- a. On-the-Job Training, including use of the Commonwealth's waiver to provide up to 90% employee wage reimbursement to businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

MNWB executed a Master Agreement with MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board for the NDWG grant which funded temporary employment for workers needed for front line and emergency food distribution agencies, Individual Training Accounts, and On-The-Job training. MNWB and Career Center staff are informed and aware of this program and it is included as one of many "tools" in the employer engagement tool box when staff engage employers.

- b. Apprenticeship.

MNWB is one of four workforce boards leading the Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (NAMC), a statewide leader in the development and implementation of apprenticeships in the manufacturing sector. Through a state grant, NAMC has expanded registered apprenticeships to dozens

of manufacturers in Northeast Massachusetts, and aims to expand the work statewide.

MNWB also stays up-to-date on apprenticeship developments in the IT/Tech and Healthcare sectors, the two priority industries in the Greater Boston Regional Planning Blueprint and two areas in which MNWB will coordinate with state supported efforts.

c. Incumbent Worker Training.

MNWB supports customized incumbent worker training in specific sectors, such as a Board-led incumbent worker iBEST training program and incumbent worker training in the manufacturing sector through the NAMC partnership, as well as the promotion of incumbent worker training programs such as the Workforce Training Fund and workplace education grants through Mass. DESE. MNWB will continue to work collaboratively with the Career Center to promote and develop incumbent worker training programs that meet the needs of employers.

d. Work Experiences (paid or unpaid).

MNWB supports paid/unpaid work experiences primarily through its youth programs. Paid experiences such as the subsidized summer jobs via YouthWorks and unpaid experiences such as some of the placements in the Connecting Activities program are both vital to youth developing workforce skills and gaining an awareness of key industries in Metro North.

- e. Transitional jobs (§ 680.190 – *one that provides a time-limited work experience, that is wage-paid and subsidized, and is in the public, private, or non-profit sectors for those individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have inconsistent work history, as determined by the Local Board. These jobs are designed to enable an individual to establish a work history, demonstrate work success in an employee-employer relationship, and develop the skills that lead to unsubsidized employment*). –

MNWB does not currently prioritize transitional jobs. MNWB will evaluate the need for transitional jobs in the Metro North workforce system.

- f. Online remediation tools for OJT/apprenticeship screening in support of cultivating and demonstrating workplace competencies.

The Metro North Career Centers primarily use the Career Ready 101 tool for testing and remediation for different training programs, including apprenticeship programs. The Centers utilize all three learning module categories of the Career Ready 101 suite.

- (19) Please describe the process the Board uses, consistent with WIOA sec. 108(d), to provide up to a 30-day public comment period prior to

submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of your local plan particularly for representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations.

MNWB posted the draft local plan on its website and distributed to its distribution list via email. The distribution list includes Board members, employers, training and education providers, elected officials, local government partners, and other community partners. The draft local plan will be posted for 30 days and any comments that represent disagreement with the plan will be included in the submission to the Governor.

(20) Describe progress made implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake, referral, and case management information system for WIOA Partner Shared Customers.

The local MOU Partners discuss the intake and case management system for shared customers across agencies. Currently, two shared customer referral processes have been developed finalized:

- From MHMNCC to a Partner
- From a Partner to MHMNCC

The approved upon processes include a shared customer release form that has been translated in multiple languages. To facilitate resource and information sharing among the WIOA partners, MNWB maintains a Shared Customer Webpage. The Career Center utilizes the MOSES system to track and document all intake and case management services. In addition, MNWB and its partners will coordinate with state-level efforts to develop a comprehensive, technology-enabled tool for shared customers across agencies.

(21) Please describe how the Board will implement the Virtual Career Pathway tool locally both for customers who can be wholly served by the Virtual Tool and those who will need to request personalized assistance.

- a. How will the Virtual Tool be used once total public access is restored?
- b. How will staff be assigned/deployed?
- c. How will MassHire Board and Career Center leadership ensure that all staff are crossed trained to be part of process and ensure seamless customer service?

To build a robust system of career pathways and Work-Based Learning opportunities, MNWB seeks to utilize technological tools that assist customers' exposure and interaction with career paths such as online career exploration gateways to increase understanding of the types of jobs available, virtual job fairs to create a way to connect job seekers and employers without the need for travel, or using online platforms for development of employability or technical skills. Once the statewide virtual career pathway tool is released, all MNWB and MNCC staff will be trained.

(22) Please describe the local policy and process that ensures priority for adult career and training services is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), § 680.600 and 100 DCS 18.101.1 (Attachment C).

- Veterans and eligible spouses
- Recipients of public assistance
- Other low-income individuals
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient

The Local Board may establish a process that also gives priority to other individuals eligible to receive such services outside the groups given priority under WIOA, provided that it is consistent with the priority of service for Veterans. Please note the local policy and process must be consistent with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and § 680.600.

POS for Veterans: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/priority-of-service-for-veterans>

State Plan: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/fy2020-workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act-wioa-massachusetts-combined-state-plan/download>

MNWB follows state guidance related to Priority of Service for adult career and training services for recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. This is included in the One-Stop Career Center Charter and annual fiscal contracts with the Career Center Operator.

In addition to the statutory-required priorities listed above, MNWB has established one additional priority of service locally:

- Individuals that lack a postsecondary credential from a US institution.

