



DEPARTMENT OF  
**WORKFORCE  
SERVICES**

# WIOA ANNUAL REPORT

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT



PROGRAM YEAR

# 2023

JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024

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*Auxiliary aids (accommodations) and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities by calling 801-526-9240. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech impairments may call Relay Utah by dialing 711. Spanish Relay Utah: 1-888-346-3162.*

# STATE PLAN

UTAH'S STATE WORKFORCE Development Board (SWDB), along with agency, community, education and business partners developed the 2024-2028 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) plan during Program Year 2023 (PY23). The process involved aligning the goals and strategies of the board's committees with the governor's economic development plan, gathering input from core, required and additional partners, encouraging public review of the plan and hosting a statewide virtual town hall to review the plan and address questions. The full plan, including an executive summary, can be viewed at this link: [jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioastateplan.pdf](https://jobs.utah.gov/wioa/wioastateplan.pdf)

The Board and Utah's core and required WIOA partners reviewed, updated and renewed the WIOA partnership agreement defining the responsibilities and expectations of all American Job Center partners. This important document includes data and information sharing requirements and establishes infrastructure costs that are necessary to meet the requirements of WIOA law as well as support American Job Centers.

The Utah State Workforce Development Board's 2023 annual service project supported Utah families who struggle to provide required school supplies for their children. Donations were made to schools in thirteen school districts across the state and were collected at American Job Centers.

## APPRENTICESHIPS COMMITTEE

The Apprenticeship Committee offers key support to initiatives that promote and expand the use of registered apprenticeships in Utah. Utilizing apprenticeships as a tool to provide skills-based education, increase our workforce pipelines, attract new businesses, and provide career advancement opportunities is the primary focus of the committee's function as the Apprenticeship Utah Network. The committee reviewed the state WIOA plan goals and strategies to ensure their important activities

are relevant and aligned with overall Utah workforce development goals.

The committee supported the Apprenticeship Summit held during National Apprenticeship Week. The event had over 180 attendees and included an apprenticeship job fair in the evening. The Apprenticeship Committee offers key support to initiatives that promote and expand the use of registered apprenticeship in Utah.

This year the committee helped guide the Department of Workforce Services in obtaining and implementing Base Formula funding and Competitive funding through the State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grant with the Department of Labor. This provided resources to hire two apprenticeship navigators at the Utah Department of Workforce Services to facilitate employer engagement and coordinate the development of new registered apprenticeship programs. The navigators have added 20 new apprenticeship programs and bring the total number of active apprentices in registered programs to an all-time high of 4,731.

## CAREER PATHWAYS COMMITTEE

The Career Pathways Committee provides a forum for partners across the state to exchange ideas and explore ways they can collaboratively align and leverage resources to promote education and career pathways to support Utah's workforce development. During the past year, the committee focused on developing strategies for creating access to career pathways for all, including K-12 students, individuals who have left the K-12 system, those living in rural communities, individuals who are underemployed or unemployed, individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency.

Committee members engaged in discussions about the need for stronger connections between education and the workforce, working on identifying ways to promote work

experience opportunities that facilitate the transition from skills training to employment. They also shared information about career pathway activities and projects throughout the state. For example, Talent Ready Utah shared their launch of a higher education study, which may provide insights into the current utilization of artificial intelligence across different industries and the core digital literacy skills employers expect from new hires. Additionally, the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation (USOR) informed the committee about a career exploration and job fair for individuals with disabilities held in April 2024.

## **OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

The Operations Committee oversaw the successful four year review and update for the WIOA Partner Memorandum of Understanding Infrastructure Funding Agreement and the One-Stop Operator Memorandum of Understanding. The committee reviewed and updated its goals and strategies for the WIOA plan. In addition, the committee facilitated the required OneStop Center certifications, which included all of the affiliate offices. Finally, the committee supported updates to the job seeker and business customer survey, which included a move to a new survey platform. Since this committee is made up of members from the State Workforce Development Board and leadership from all WIOA core and required partners, it plays an important role in providing recommendations for WIOA and board initiatives.

The Operations Committee oversaw the successful four-year review and update for the WIOA Partner MOU IFA and the One-Stop Operator MOU. The committee facilitated the American Job Center certifications, which included all of the affiliate offices. Finally, the committee supported updates to the job seeker and business customer survey, which included a move to a new administrative survey platform. Since this committee is made up of members from the SWDB and leadership from all WIOA partners, feedback from all groups was incorporated.

## **SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES COMMITTEE**

The Services to Individuals with Disabilities Committee provides various services and educational tools for employers, job seekers, advocates and caregivers. Lunch

and Learn events were made available to businesses and community partners. These opportunities included presentations on workers' compensation, federal employment, ADHD in women, unleashing your potential, suicide prevention and other topics. Morgan Stanley, Intermountain Healthcare, UTA and Goldman Sachs hosted Youth Mentoring events which offered both business mentors and students important information for career development and personal growth.

The employer workshop on recruiting, hiring, and retaining individuals with disabilities was offered in March and September. Additionally, the Work Ability Career Preparation and Job Fair were held in April and October. Disability:IN Utah hosted the Disability:IN Utah Summit in conjunction with the Workforce Services annual Golden Keys Awards. This event honors employers and community partners who have helped promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities and awards scholarships to outstanding students.

## **YOUTH COMMITTEE**

The Youth Committee met regularly during the past year. Committee members and guests shared information about resources to assist youth and discussed ways to coordinate and align resources. Workforce Services shared an update on career counseling training provided to WIOA Youth and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors. The training focused on motivational interviewing, trauma information care and engaging with youth. The Youth Committee continues strategizing to increase awareness of youth partner programs, including developing program overview videos that can be shared on social media. The committee also discussed and updated their goals and strategies throughout the state WIOA plan to ensure its activities are aligned with the overall state goals.



# CAREER PATHWAYS

UTAH'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM uses various strategies to implement career pathways that meet individual needs. The SWDB and its partners work together to facilitate coordination of these efforts.

In early 2024, Big-D Construction expressed interest in participating in WIOA Youth internships. Workforce Services collaborated with the YouthBuild construction program at Ogden-Weber Technical College to refer graduates to this internship opportunity. In the first six months, nine YouthBuild participants were placed at BIG-D Construction in a WIOA Youth internship earning \$25 an hour. Big-D has been open to offering long-term employment to any youth who does well and would like the opportunity to continue with them. The first youth who completed their internship was offered permanent employment and plans to continue working while continuing his training and education. Collaboration with WIOA, YouthBuild and Big-D Construction has created a beneficial career pathway that YouthBuild and Big-D hope to expand to other areas in the nation.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

Utah continues to utilize work experience to assist youth and adult job seekers in acquiring occupational skills needed to obtain suitable employment. Workforce development specialists create work experience opportunities along with employers and other community stakeholders. They connect work-ready customers with employment opportunities that align with their employment and career goals. The SWDB Youth and Career Pathways committees assist in coordinating efforts to promote and expand work experience opportunities for employers and job seekers. Outreach to employers has expanded work experience opportunities for individuals with disabilities and increased engagement with technical colleges to educate students about work experience programs provided by partner agencies.

Workforce Services offers three types of work experience programs:

1. Youth Employment Internships Opportunity
2. On-the-Job Training
3. Work-based Learning Experience

The Youth Employment Internship Opportunity program provides youth with short-term work experiences while earning wages. Internships provide youth with employability, workplace skills and soft skills required for the job. Internships provide the opportunity for youth to explore various occupations to assist them with more long-term career planning.

The On-the-Job Training program is offered to youth and adult job seekers. The program helps job seekers who have the education needed to do the job, but lack the necessary work experience for the job, or who lack the credentials. Job seekers receive on-the-job training and remain employed after completion. The program provides opportunities for job seekers to return to the workforce, increase skill sets and become self-sufficient. Workforce Services facilitates a productive employer-employee relationship. This approach helps customers pursue a successful and meaningful career by using an individualized work experience placement strategy.

Structured work-based learning experiences tailored for people with disabilities are also provided. Through this initiative, participants are placed in professional settings, allowing them to benefit from hands-on training, mentorship and the application of their skills in genuine job contexts. These experiences amplify their technical expertise and interpersonal skills, while enhancing their self-assurance and comprehension of workplace intricacies. As participants engage with these work environments, they garner a more defined perspective of their career goals, become adept at advocating for necessary workplace accommodations and establish meaningful professional connections. Real-time feedback

from these job situations further enables participants to pinpoint their strengths and areas that might require further refinement.

## APPRENTICESHIPS

Workforce Services has received several apprenticeship grants over the past five years. This has increased awareness among sponsors, apprentices and job seekers of the support Workforce Services can provide for apprenticeship. The State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grant, provides base formula funding and competitive funding that is used to support a new teaching apprenticeship program with the Utah State Board of Education, pre-apprenticeship curriculum development with Weber State University and additional employer incentives to help new companies developing apprenticeships. The grant funding will focus on expanding apprenticeship to education services, care economy, tech/cybersecurity and supply chain.

The state has also taken considerable steps to collaborate in strategies to grow youth apprenticeship. The Utah State Board of Education is developing standards needed to offer youth apprenticeship as a specific course code for school districts statewide. Creating a flexible course code that adapts to various work processes while maintaining high standards for registered youth apprenticeship programs will help encourage current sponsors to engage in youth programs and attract new companies to start apprenticeships. As part of the National Governors Association Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship (PAYA), committee members have helped to conduct a barriers study for youth apprenticeship that will help identify gaps and make policy recommendations to advance the use of these programs. To learn more visit [apprenticeship.utah.gov](http://apprenticeship.utah.gov).

# STRATEGIES FOR BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGING BUSINESS PARTNERS, determining their needs and finding workforce solutions is a priority in Utah as demonstrated in the WIOA plan goals and strategies. Workforce system partners continue to develop strong partnerships as they work together to implement Utah's WIOA plan.

Workforce Services employs skilled workforce development specialists who reach out, engage and support Utah employers. Workforce development specialists meet individually with employers, to educate them on services, help determine the individual employer's workforce needs and provide solutions.

Utah has two apprenticeship navigators at Workforce Services to facilitate employer engagement and coordinate the development of new registered apprenticeship programs.



## EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

Workforce Services selected two approaches for effectiveness in serving employers, the employer engagement rate and the repeat business rate. Employer measures are reported as one measure for the state, combining the efforts of all core programs. For PY23, Utah's employer engagement rate was 31.1% and the repeat business rate was 53.1%.

Staff use the Effectiveness in Serving Employers report, to review how well Workforce Services engages with employers in real time. The report tracks both approaches for serving employers by identifying the following:

- All statewide employers
- Employers engaged in the current program year and the past three program years
- Employers not engaged in the past three program years

- The number of employers engaged versus potential employers for the timeframe and regional area selected

The report identifies the employer's name, date the employer was served and the staff that served the employer. Staff can identify and contact employers who have not utilized services by using this report. They can also identify previously engaged employers to ensure services continue to be offered. Ongoing training is provided for staff to ensure all services to employers are documented accurately in the system.

Utah is preparing to implement the new Effective in Serving Employers measure defined in the final rule as retention with the same Employer in the second and fourth quarters following a participant's exit from a WIOA core program in PY24.

# STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

WORKFORCE SERVICES SUPPORTS many statewide activities. For example, statewide activity funds are used to disseminate the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and promote information on program services, accessibility, employer services and success stories highlighting effective service delivery strategies. Funding was also used to conduct research and evaluation, customer surveys, program outreach and provide technical assistance to one-stop partners to meet the goals of Utah's WIOA Plan. Other funded activities include supporting the SWDB, professional development opportunities for staff, monitoring services and administrative costs, such as finance.

The funds spent on the statewide activities have directly and indirectly impacted program performance. For example, Utah's quality control process includes a team of specialized reviewers called the performance review team. This team conducts monthly reviews of WIOA cases. The

first type of review involves eligibility criteria. This review ensures that only eligible individuals enroll in a WIOA-funded program. These reviews help Workforce Services reduce findings from audits performed by the state auditor's office. The second type of review is a monthly random selection of all WIOA cases. These reviews monitor adherence to policies and provide targeted individualized training for staff.

Utah's American Job Center partners and staff continue to receive support and necessary training on the partner referral system, which is another statewide activity. The system supports American Job Centers' ability to refer individuals to partners and track outcomes. The system is utilized by partners of American Job Centers, including all WIOA core, required and additional partners. All staff can access information sheets for each partner program or service that display the partner name and description, services provided, eligibility criteria, referral process and

contact information. The partner referral system supports “warm hand-off” referrals. The referrals are accepted by a partner and can be tracked. Partners can update their information in the system and offices are encouraged to use the outcomes recorded to continually improve the referral process. On-site community liaisons in each office facilitate the use of the system and provide support to partners located outside the office.

## **VIRTUAL JOB FAIRS**

Workforce Services offers virtual job fairs every other month available to all Utah job seekers and employers who hire Utah residents. The job fairs allow job seekers from across the state to gather in a virtual environment with employers to find and apply for positions. “Success at a Virtual Job Fair” workshops are available before each job fair. These workshops provide tips and strategies for job seekers to ensure they are able to effectively navigate the virtual job fair. Within the job fair platform, job seekers can upload resumes and professional photos and track the jobs they applied for and employer booths visited. They can type in a chat or talk with employers on video and search for employment by location and job title. Employers can highlight company profiles, provide links to videos, websites or webcasts, link to social networks, post online applications for open positions and hold on-the-spot interviews through video chat. Employers can view chat histories and view all job seeker profiles and resumes of those who entered their booths for up to 10 days after the event. During the past year, over 4,300 job seekers have connected with hundreds of employers through the virtual job fairs.

An employer who attended the virtual job fairs stated, “Your virtual job fair is an excellent recruiting tool; I have hired several individuals from these events.”

## **STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

A team of highly skilled program specialists support individuals and teams across the state to facilitate consistency, quality and accuracy in program delivery and performance across programs. Support includes

targeted coaching for individuals and teams, ongoing training on policies and procedures, supporting staff with implementation of statewide initiatives and follow-up activities to assist in implementation. The program specialists partner with supervisors and managers in American Job Centers to help staff achieve performance outcomes and provide quality customer service. They also partner with state-level staff to identify strategies to improve performance measures and make recommendations for improving policies and procedures.

This team provides new employee training virtually and in person, individual coaching and mentoring. Over the past year, approximately 120 new and incumbent staff have been involved in new employee training, program-specific training or both. Staff training and development is a priority for Workforce Services to provide employees the opportunity to increase their knowledge and skills, as well as facilitate practices to help customers receive quality, consistent and effective services.

## **ONE-STOP CERTIFICATIONS**

Workforce Services recertified the American Job Centers in Price and Provo, in addition to all affiliate offices this past year. This marks the third recertification for these offices. In addition, the Tooele office was recertified for the second time. The board members attending the certifications during the past seven years noted that the process seems to effectively support and strengthen partnerships across the state demonstrating improvements and expanded services to many of Utah’s citizens who are most in need of assistance. Utah’s SWDB members alternate participating directly in the certifications which provides members an opportunity to understand the WIOA partner work taking place in centers. It is particularly helpful for new members to help them better understand their overall role on the board.

## **WORKSHOPS**

Workforce Services provides a range of professional development workshops designed to support job seekers. Our offerings include pre-recorded, in-person and

live virtual sessions tailored to various employment needs. Pre-recorded workshops are accessible 24/7 to individuals registered in the UWORKS system on jobs. utah.gov, focusing on essential employment success skills. Topics include resume writing, interviewing techniques, networking, job search strategies and workplace professionalism. In-person workshops are held monthly across various offices statewide. These workshops cover job seeking topics such as resume writing, interviewing skills, job search strategies and LinkedIn essentials. Live virtual workshops address critical job seeking topics, including “How to Succeed at a Virtual Job Fair” and “Find a Job You Love.” The “How to Succeed at a Virtual Job Fair” workshop is held the day before the Statewide Virtual Job Fair, which is held every two months, while “Find a Job You Love” is offered weekly. This latter workshop is available in partnership with Re-employment Supportive Services for unemployment insurance claimants nearing the end of their benefits.

In Program Year 2023, Workforce Services conducted nearly 200 in-person and live virtual workshops, reaching over 5,000 participants statewide. These workshops equip individuals with the tools and knowledge needed to advance their employment and career goals.

## **RAPID RESPONSE**

Utah’s Rapid Response program implements early intervention strategies during layoff events to engage employers, community partners and training providers. These strategies help avert the negative impacts of layoffs by quickly moving workers from a layoff situation to employment or training.

Approximately 5% of Dislocated Worker funds are reserved for Rapid Response activities. This is accomplished through formalized coordination with the state’s Dislocated Worker unit or American Job Center staff, which is provided by workforce development specialists if the layoff impacts less than 15 workers.

The Dislocated Worker unit is housed in the Workforce Development Division at Workforce Services. The team includes the state Rapid Response coordinator, the Dislocated Worker program specialist and the Trade Adjustment Assistance program specialist. This structure facilitates program coordination and the ability to design and deliver comprehensive services to dislocated workers.

The Dislocated Worker unit follows up on all Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) notifications, trade petitions and trade-certified companies to ensure prompt delivery of services. The Dislocated Worker unit gathers and tracks layoff and closure data and disseminates layoff notification records. This information is used by Workforce Services leadership, area directors, workforce development specialists, the Unemployment Insurance Division and the Workforce Research and Analysis Division to plan for and potentially avert layoffs or minimize the impact on workers by matching workers to available jobs. This is accomplished by providing job fairs, job search workshops, Dislocated Worker and Trade Act Assistance, Unemployment Insurance Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program and other appropriate career services.

With Utah’s unemployment rate averaging about 3.2%, the Dislocated Worker unit saw a slight increase in WARN notices received during the past year. For PY23, the Dislocated Worker unit processed 33 layoff notices in response to WARN notifications. In response to the WARN notifications, the Dislocated Worker unit provided 18 in-person and one virtual Rapid Response presentation(s).

Workforce development specialist staff play an important role in Rapid Response by building and maintaining relationships with employers, which is key to receiving early notification from employers on planned layoff or closure events. This allows critical time to plan and customize services for specific events that will meet workers’ needs. During layoff or closure events, workforce development staff participate in Rapid Response delivery by coordinating with the Dislocated Worker unit and delivering Rapid Response services as appropriate. This process includes collaborating with workforce system partners to quickly reconnect impacted workers with employers.

Rapid Response teams emphasize connecting employers and dislocated workers to American Job Centers during presentations so individuals can utilize available partner resources. This includes organizing job fairs on-site and at American Job Centers. Rapid Response workshops are offered to all dislocated workers impacted by a layoff, and businesses are offered assistance from the Workforce

Development team. Workshop topics include:

- Unemployment information
- Proper work search registration
- Online job search resources
- American Job Center resources
- Job coaching
- Dislocated worker training
- Veteran services
- Temporary assistance

During workshops, impacted workers are registered in Utah's case management system, UWORKS, which expedites access to services. UWORKS identifies information such as Rapid Response services received, career services received, company information and layoff and closure data. Employment counselors use this information to determine WIOA Dislocated Worker and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) eligibility.

In PY22, the TAA program was federally under termination status. Although new petitions are not currently being certified, all affected workers under previously certified petitions can continue receiving services. With no newly certified petitions and a robust economy, the TAA program has been limited. All Utah customers who are eligible for TAA are reviewed for Dislocated Worker eligibility, which leads to a 100% co-enrollment rate.

## **LAYOFF AVERSION AND REEMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES**

Workforce development specialists connect with employers in their geographically assigned areas to assist with and promote Rapid Response and layoff aversion with employers, even if they are not subject to WARN requirements. Workforce development specialists meet with the company's leadership to provide resources and help employees transition to new employment. When possible, employers recruiting in similar industries are invited to participate in Rapid Response workshops or be onsite to provide information on their available openings.

Workforce Services implements strategies to assist employers in preventing permanent layoffs and

reconnecting unemployed Utahns to employment. Some of these strategies include:

- Connecting employers with workforce development specialists and Rapid Response services
- Providing onsite recruitments
- Providing access to statewide virtual job fairs
- Hosting in-person job fairs
- Developing work experience opportunities including apprenticeships
- Connecting job seekers to Utah's labor exchange system
- Providing virtual workshops including Resume & Application, Networking, Interviewing, Job Searching Strategies and Professionalism in the Workplace
- Reaching out unemployment Utahns to discuss available resources
- Providing individual job search assistance

## **WAGNER-PEYSER STRATEGIES**

The State of Utah utilizes Wagner-Peyser funding to provide targeted labor exchange activities to employers, unemployment insurance claimants, veterans, persons with disabilities, ex-offenders and elderly workers. Under WIOA, Wagner-Peyser funds career services for all individuals, including job search and placement assistance, an initial assessment of skills and needs, referral to appropriate resources, labor market information, comprehensive assessment, development of an individualized employment plan and career planning.

Wagner-Peyser funding assists Utah in reaching its goals of preparing a qualified workforce and providing direct access to jobs in Utah. The labor exchange system afforded by Wagner-Peyser meets the needs of job seekers and employers through self-directed online services, as well as mediated services available in American Job Centers statewide.

## **MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARMWORKER SERVICES**

Workforce Services collaborates with Utah's National Farmworker Jobs program and conducts in-person

outreach allowing for valuable connections with the farmworkers. Workforce Services staff shares contacts and information pertaining to Utah cities where a high concentration of farmworkers reside. Sharing information results in joint outreach visits to more migrant and seasonal farmworkers and gaining a deeper understanding of their needs. The combined efforts of this strategic outreach aids in offering the full range of available services to workers, who in the majority of cases, do not visit the American Job Centers.

The Migrant Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) program provides a platform for farmworkers to file a complaint or share concerns about work related activities, such as unpaid wages or undesirable work conditions. As outreach efforts continue, the MSFW program helps workers understand worker rights and resources available for their families.

## **VETERAN SERVICES**

Workforce Services delivers services to assist veterans, military service members and spouses in obtaining and retaining employment. The federally funded Wagner-Peyser grant is used to provide employment services to job seekers, including veterans. The federally funded Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) is specifically targeted to veterans with qualifying barriers to employment. The state-funded Accelerated Credentialing to Employment (ACE) program provides funding for short-term training for veterans, actively serving National Guard and Reserve members, and their spouses who do not qualify for other veteran services. These staff work with external partners to ensure employment and support services are provided consistently throughout Utah.

During PY23, Workforce Services focused on increasing veteran employment services to all veterans, military service members and spouses statewide by providing individual case management and post-employment services. Workforce Services offers priority of service and targeted services for veterans and their spouses, assisting them with ways to quickly and efficiently navigate the job market and find employment that aligns with their military experience. Workforce Services provides individualized career services, online tools and job development services tailored for veterans.

The Utah Patriot Partnership program recognizes employers that have pledged to hire or employ qualified veterans over qualified non-veterans.

JVSG staff coordinate with WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker employment counselors to ensure veterans' pre-employment training needs are met through co-enrollment.

## **ADULT EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS**

Adult education works closely with partners to create programs for students that provide an entry into career pathways with opportunities to explore careers such as automotive technician, welding, engineering, business, transportation and health care. Adult education programs continue to work with employers to provide contextualized English language acquisition courses. These partnerships are timely, as the number of multilingual students and workforce needs continue to increase.

Additionally, adult education students succeed as programs collaborate with partner agencies to increase the resources available to students. For example, programs across the state have reached out to other agencies, such as the Utah State School of the Deaf and Blind and the Division of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DSBVI), to ensure students with disabilities have access to needed resources. Recently, several students with visual and hearing impairments graduated from adult education because of these partnerships. The English Skills Learning Center (ESLC) and Granite Peaks Adult Education, in particular, have worked closely with DSBVI and Vocational Rehabilitation to develop curriculum that will meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Davis Adult Education started a new entrepreneurship course for students between 16 and 18 years old that walked students through the process of running a business. The entrepreneurship course incorporated project-based learning where students learned by running a freeze-dried candy business. One student said, "This class has definitely pushed me out of my comfort zone, but it's also given me the tools to thrive in whatever I try to do. I'd say it's amazing. I hope all future students here at Canyon get to experience this opportunity."

Adult education continues to focus on accelerating students' pathways through programs such as Integrated Education and Training and contextualized instruction. Adult education is also aligning instruction to the Personalized, Competency-Based Learning framework that aligns with adult learning theory and better meets the needs of individuals.

Entrada High School focused on increasing student wellness services by partnering to provide mental health therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy classes and Positive Psychology classes. These additional supports provide students with skills to succeed inside and outside of the classroom.

Ogden Adult Education has opened their space to community partners such as Head Start, Community Health Clinic, Cottages of Hope and Suazo Business Center which provide financial literacy, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, a community library and a commercial kitchen open to the public. These partnerships provide additional resources for students and the community at large.

## **CHOOSE TO WORK**

The Utah State Office of Rehabilitation's Business Relations and Choose to Work teams collaborate to support Utah employers in hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities. Their extensive range of services includes employer training, technical support, and guidance on financial incentives available for hiring individuals with disabilities. Additionally, they provide recruitment assistance, placement support and on-the-job training resources. The program is dedicated to expanding its reach to employers in rural communities, where access to these resources can be more limited. It also focuses on building partnerships with employers to create and enhance work-based learning opportunities tailored to students with disabilities. By fostering these connections, the program aims to improve career prospects and employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities across the state.

## **RE-ENTRY PARTNERSHIPS AND SERVICES**

Workforce Services allows employers to indicate in their job posting if they are willing to hire an individual with a criminal background. Employers can also choose to participate in the Federal Bonding Program and utilize the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. This federal tax credit is available to employers investing in American job seekers who have consistently faced barriers to employment. Job seekers can search for job postings where the employer has indicated they would hire someone with a criminal background.

American Job Center leadership meets regularly with the Utah Department of Corrections to coordinate services and

build partnerships to assist individuals exiting incarceration. Additionally, they partner with their local criminal justice systems to provide services where appropriate.

## **YOUTH PARTNERSHIPS**

To assist youth facing homelessness in the Salt Lake County area, Workforce Services has partnered with Volunteers of America, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services to support the Youth Resource Center. Workforce Services staff are actively involved at the facility, offering in-person support through WIOA services and connecting to public assistance.

American Job Center staff partner with local education providers, Catholic Community Services resettlement agency supporting refugee foster care youth to provide WIOA services and share information on services available through Workforce Services.

## **JUVENILE JUSTICE PARTNERSHIPS**

Workforce Services has been building stronger partnerships with Utah's Juvenile Justice and Youth Services to streamline enrollments in WIOA Youth and identify service gaps. This includes regularly presenting information on WIOA services and youth resources to Juvenile Justice staff and youth clients. For example, one employment counselor partnered with local Juvenile Justice to provide services while the youth are still in custody. Juvenile Justice has coordinated with Workforce Services to allow employment counselors to meet with youth at youth centers and detention centers. Employment counselors help youth apply for WIOA, resolve barriers to enrolling in WIOA, connect to resources and begin building a relationship. Juvenile Justice invites employment counselors to attend weekly case staffings to provide wraparound services for youth.

## **RURAL AREA OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIP**

The Southeast area has made great strides in bringing services to remote communities where many customers are over 90 miles from the closest American Job Center. Some remote communities are part of the Navajo Nation. Workforce Services staff volunteer at events in these communities which includes helping with food distribution. During these events, staff share information on Workforce Services and develop relationships with the community and

school partners. Building these relationships opens the door for Workforce Services staff to obtain access to community spaces and schools where they can meet with customers. Staff use laptops to provide services and help customers apply for unemployment insurance, SNAP, WIOA and other public assistance programs. Some locations require staff to problem solve things such as helping customers connect to power, internet and providing services outside the facility. These efforts have resulted in Navajo youth and adults participating in WIOA services including youth employment internships. The community centers and schools have asked staff to make regular visits. Workforce Services continues to improve access to services and grow trusting relationships with the Navajo Nation and rural communities.

## JOB CORPS PARTNERSHIPS

Workforce Services partners with Job Corps to refer eligible youth and provide career services to youth transitioning out of Job Corps.

A young woman in rural Utah came into an American Job Center seeking assistance with her eligibility case

and job search. An employment counselor in the office assisting the customer found that she was trying to finish high school or get her GED. The employment counselor shared several resources and programs available through Workforce Services including information on Job Corps. The employment counselor is a Job Corps graduate and was able to share her personal experience with the program. The young woman was very interested and the employment counselor connected her to a Job Corps recruiter. She was accepted into the program and is now at the Clearfield Utah Job Corps center. Her mother shared that her daughter is doing well, thanked the employment counselor for the referral to Job Corps and has been telling everyone she knows to come to Workforce Services to get help with their job search and connect with other programs and resources.



# PERFORMANCE MEASURES

DURING PY23, Utah focused on the WIOA Annual Report data to reflect the state's commitment to strengthen its workforce development system and continues to review data reported as part of the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) for accuracy and completeness. Ongoing collaboration continues between the Workforce Research and Analysis Division, WIOA program administrators, other WIOA core partners and other state agencies that contribute reporting information to ensure all required elements are captured.

Utah's common exit policy includes the following programs: WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, WIOA Youth, Trade, Jobs for Veterans State grant, Wagner-Peyser, apprenticeship and vocational rehabilitation. Once a participant does not receive a countable service for 90 consecutive days, the exit date for all of the aforementioned programs is the date of the last countable service.

Workforce Services tracked each performance measure and found the state achieved successful results for each individual WIOA performance indicator, attaining at least 50% of the negotiated goal. For each of the performance measures that were lower than expected, Workforce Services reviewed the program and data reporting for accuracy.

Workforce Services has explored ways to increase capturing measurable skill gains and credential attainment, including working with Adult Education and post-secondary providers to receive completion data and learn best practices from states that are doing well in both of these measures. Workforce Services continues to provide training and support to staff statewide to encourage staff to accurately capture measurable skill gains and credential attainment .

### Performance Outcomes PY23

Performance Measure Element	Negotiated Goal	Actual	Individual Indicator Score
<b>Adult Program</b>			
Employment Rate - 2nd Quarter After Exit	76%	75.4%	Success
Employment Rate - 4th Quarter After Exit	73.2%	72.8%	Success
Median Earnings - 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,970	\$8,187	Success
Credential Attainment	72%	66.7%	Success
Measurable Skill Gains	55%	43.2%	Success
<b>Dislocated Worker Program</b>			
Employment Rate - 2nd Quarter After Exit	82%	78.1%	Success
Employment Rate - 4th Quarter After Exit	82%	79.2%	Success
Median Earnings - 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$10,800	\$11,737	Success
Credential Attainment	70%	63.7%	Success
Measurable Skill Gains	51%	39.3%	Success
<b>Youth Program</b>			
Employment Rate - 2nd Quarter After Exit	76.7%	82.4%	Success
Employment Rate - 4th Quarter After Exit	71%	76.2%	Success
Median Earnings - 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,300	\$5,624	Success
Credential Attainment	55%	60.9%	Success
Measurable Skill Gains	50%	44.5%	Success
<b>Wagner-Peyser Program</b>			
Employment Rate - 2nd Quarter After Exit	70%	65.9%	Success
Employment Rate - 4th Quarter After Exit	68%	66%	Success
Median Earnings - 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,700	\$8,570	Success

### DATA INTEGRITY

Workforce Services' Workforce Research and Analysis Division utilizes data validation on reporting elements to verify individual characters provided through user input are consistent with expected characters of integer, decimal or string. Simple range and constraint validation are used to ensure the correct number of expected characters are in

the fields as defined. Code and cross-reference validation is used to verify the data entered by staff is consistent with the data rule descriptions. These validity constraints involve cross-referencing supplied data with the element's edit check description to ensure compliance. Workforce Services' source systems have internal structured validation

rules that are used in the input process. The systems are designed with data definitions that place limits on what constitutes valid data as part of the data entry process.

Management Information Systems staff work with the Workforce Services business team to review all edit checks and Department of Labor quarterly report analysis issues and determine corrective action quarterly. Necessary modifications are made to the report coding and data results are revalidated and resubmitted through the online edit-check process. Any updates to the PIRL are reviewed by Management Information Systems and WIOA business teams to update policy or system, and then modify the reporting code as necessary. The updates are reviewed and validated, then submitted through the edit check validation process. The WIOA business team ensures policies support gathering accurate data and appropriate source documentation. American Job Center staff receive training on how to capture data and additional targeted training when abnormalities or errors are identified.

Each year, Workforce Services' Performance Review Team completes a review of required common data elements of PIRL. Existing policy and procedures capture the

data validation requirements and process. A statistically valid sample of records for each program reported in the PIRL is reviewed to ensure the data is pulled accurately from the case management system, UWORKS, and that appropriate source documentation validates data reported. Reviews are captured in UWORKS through an edit tool that allows Workforce Services to track trends, anomalies and errors. Program staff follow up with appropriate parties to ensure the error is corrected and, if appropriate, policy is updated and staff receive targeted training.

The performance review team evaluated the joint and DOL required common data elements for the PY23 annual validation. Through the data validation process, program staff were able to collaborate with Management and Information Systems staff to update data queries and policy was reviewed and updated to ensure only acceptable source documentation is allowed for data validation. Program staff compiled a list of anomalies and followed up with Management and Information Systems staff to ensure the errors and corrections are completed.

# RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

## WIOA SERVICES EVALUATION

Workforce Services continued to implement projects developed as a result of the WIOA Evaluation finalized in spring of 2020. The full report is available on the Utah SWDB [website](#). Workforce Services program staff, in collaboration with American Job Center managers, developed an action plan to build on successful program implementation behaviors and recommended program improvements, especially for youth. In PY23 Utah implemented several action plan items.

The evaluation found that 17% of youth customers not currently receiving mental health treatment felt that they needed assistance. During the last program year, Workforce Services braided funding and started having internally licensed clinical therapists provide mental health services to WIOA-enrolled customers. This

year, a total of 109 WIOA participants were referred to Workforce Services licensed clinical therapists. Utah also developed a youth-specific mental health workshop, *Adulting 101*. These workshops address healthy relationships, stress management, goal setting and physical and emotional health. This workshop was held twice in PY23 and had a total of 12 attendees. Workforce Services continues to explore other opportunities to support youth and adult mental health services in Utah including increasing mental health workshop attendees.

A contract was established with Dynamic Works to assist in increasing youth engagement. As youth are better served, improved outcomes are often achieved. Identified WIOA Youth employment counselors attended a three-part training to include topics such as mentoring, coaching, motivational interviewing, trauma informed case management, techniques to address

barriers, connecting and engaging with youth and work experience. This training complements previous training received by employment counselors. Separate training on these topics was provided to leadership staff and department trainers. Ongoing sustainability meetings with leadership have been held to ensure that the skills learned will continue to be part of team culture. Resources and tools have been and will continue to be developed to support ongoing implementation of the learned concepts. This will also allow the information to be shared with new employment counselors and those working with the adult population. New employee training was updated to align with the additional techniques and tools that were learned as part of this training.

A workgroup created a training for all employment counselors on [careeronestop.org](https://careeronestop.org) resources. This training increased counselors' ability to perform more in-depth career exploration with their customers and improved case managers' ability to crosswalk skills between different types of employment. The training was provided to employment counselors and is available as a refresher training to incumbent employment counselors.

Utah expanded the opportunities for leadership development across the state including participation in formalized programs (both in-person and virtual), but also allowed youth to write essays and engage in public speaking opportunities around topics that are of interest to them.

To respond to barriers with attending training due to not having reliable child care, WIOA Program staff partnered with the Workforce Services' Office of Child Care. Workforce Services had previously implemented child care benefits for customers in training if they were also working a minimum of 15 hours per week. In PY22 Office of Child Care services piloted an exemption for Employment Supported Child Care Benefits. If an applicant was enrolled in WIOA training services they would be exempt from the requirement to work a minimum of 15 hours per week and would receive child care benefits while in training. In PY23 this exemption was approved for ongoing implementation. Office of Child Care and WIOA employment counselors have worked together to assist WIOA participants with over \$150,000 in Office of Child Care benefits.

During PY22, Workforce Services contracted with the Social Research Institute at the University of Utah to complete a data analysis of WIOA sponsored customers to determine if the training programs they participated in had a positive impact. For each program these questions were addressed: What were the completion rates and employment rates? Are there common programs or providers with success or failure rates? This evaluation will be reviewed during PY24.



# CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MEASURES

WORKFORCE SERVICES is committed to providing exceptional customer service. Utah continually gathers feedback from customers using several different methods. American Job Centers use the job seeker survey developed in partnership with the SWDB, surveys for specific events, verbal feedback provided to operations staff and feedback from partner agencies. Core partners discuss customer feedback at American Job Center meetings. The feedback is used to improve processes, increase accessibility and provide information about training and professional development activities. Customer feedback will continue to be collected and used to drive decisions for improving service levels at the American Job Centers. The Department has invested funding to implement changes to the Labor Exchange system based on feedback from employers and job seekers in an effort to support Utah's workforce. The changes were well received by job seekers and employers.

## JOB SEEKER SURVEY

Utah's American Job Centers collect information from job seekers. This is accomplished through online and

paper surveys depending on the individual's preference. The survey questions focus on the goals of the American Job Center, specifically effective and quality referrals. The information is used to continually improve American Job Center services. During the past year, Workforce Services along with the SWDB Operations sub-committee have updated the job seeker survey. This included updating the questions and moving the survey to a new platform.

## BUSINESS CUSTOMER SURVEY

Collecting data from business customers and engaging with them is critical for Utah's workforce development strategies. The Operations sub-committee, in partnership with Workforce Services, has updated the business customer survey and moved it to a new platform. Workforce Services and the SWDB look forward to collecting and reporting data from business customers from the updated survey that will help the American Job Centers continue to improve services to business customers.

# WAIVERS

## UTAH USAGE OF WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY WAIVER: PROVIDING INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNTS TO IN-SCHOOL WIOA YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

Utah continues to use a waiver of the requirement to provide Individual Training Accounts to Out-of-School Youth ages 18 to 24 enrolled in WIOA Youth. The waiver is used to assist in-school youth in maintaining focus on education and exploring career options that require post-secondary education. Having more youth interested and engaged in education leading to credential attainment

allows Utah to increase its supply of workers to in-demand industries and occupations. Workforce Services has been monitoring its progress in implementing the waiver to ensure Utah complies with waiver goals and meets measurable programmatic outcomes.

WIOA Youth Expenditure PY23	
In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %
3.25%	96.75%

The above data shows that Workforce Services is exceeding the requirements for out-of-school youth spending. By the end of PY23, 96.75% of WIOA Youth funds were spent on out-of-school youth and only 3.25% on in-school youth.

A quarterly breakdown of in-school youth versus out-of-school youth expenditures indicates that out-of-school youth expenditures significantly exceeded the expenditure goal of 75% in each quarter.

WIOA Youth Expenditures							
Qt 1 (07/01/23 - 09/30/23)		Qt 2 (10/01/23 - 12/31/23)		Qt 3 (01/01/24 - 3/31/24)		Qt 4 (04/01/24 - 6/30/24)	
In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %	In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %	In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %	In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %
5.20%	94.80%	4.37%	95.63%	2.23%	97.77%	2.34%	97.66%

Utah maintains its in-school youth enrollments at a level that has supported the above indicated increase in out-of-school youth expenditures. At the end of PY23, only 133, or 8.83% of youth served were in-school youth, and a quarterly breakdown of enrollments shows a shift towards enrolling more out-of-school youth, as agreed upon in the waiver.

WIOA Youth Enrollments									
Qt 1 (07/01/23 - 09/30/23)		Qt 2 (10/01/23 - 12/31/23)		Qt 3 (01/01/24 - 3/31/24)		Qt 4 (04/01/24 - 6/30/24)		PY23 Total	
In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %	In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %	In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %	In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %	In-School Youth %	Out-of-School Youth %
11.82%	88.18%	10.19%	89.81%	8.96%	91.04%	8.62%	91.38%	8.83%	91.17%

\*\* The quarterly percentage may include the participants served in the previous quarter(s)\*\*

Out of the 133 in-school youth served in PY23, 24 youth were working toward obtaining a post-secondary credential. The remaining in-school youth were working on completing secondary school requirements with the intent to eventually enroll in post-secondary education. Three in-school youth attained a post-secondary credential and, so far, one obtained employment. The youth who started post-secondary training and did not complete still benefited from their exposure to post-secondary education and gained additional marketable skills. Out of six in-school youth who did not graduate, 50% obtained employment.

Out of the 133 in-school-youth served in PY23, 16 youth were engaged in work-based learning. Seven youth were still participating in work-based learning at the end PY23, and out of nine youth whose work-based learning agreement ended in PY23, seven (77.78%) successfully completed their work experience program. The impact of connecting in-school youth to work-based learning was significant, as five out of the seven youth who successfully completed their work-based learning also obtained employment or enrolled in post-secondary education.

Workforce Services has maintained its partnership with the Utah Department of Health and Human Services who oversees the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and delegates the administration of the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program to Workforce services to serve in-school youth who are preparing for post-secondary education. This federally-funded program is designed to assist foster care youth, or youth who have aged out of foster care, with support needed to complete post-secondary education and obtain employment. Since most foster care youth are in-school youth, the waiver enables Workforce Services to serve this at-risk population and positively impact their ability to earn post-secondary credentials, enter the workforce and become contributing members of society. During PY23, Utah served 60 ETV youth and five of them successfully completed the program and earned a credential. Additionally, 71.43% of ETV youth had their ETV enrollment closed due to income.

The waiver also positively impacted education providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), as they were not required to go through procurement in addition to completing the list requirements. This encourages providers to continue to be on the ETPL, benefiting both the in-school and out-of-school youth. Utah continues to certify the education providers and monitor their performance.



# SUCCESS STORIES

ALL CORE PARTNERS coordinated to contribute to the development of this report, including the success stories.

[Rural Hiring Success Video](#)

[Veteran Success Video](#)

## **Vocational Rehabilitation & Workforce Development: Collaboration for Success**

Johnathan's journey to overcome his substance use-related disabilities led him to a new outlook on life and opportunities. Referred to Vocational Rehabilitation by a community partner, Johnathan expressed his goal of helping others overcome addiction. With support from his Vocational Rehabilitation counselor and a WIOA employment counselor, he secured transitional employment to gain stability and continue his treatment.

Vocational Rehabilitation and WIOA collaborated to fund his attendance in a peer support certification program and the purchase of a laptop. Vocational Rehabilitation

also assisted with transportation and work clothing. After completing his certificate and maintaining sobriety, Johnathan obtained employment as a peer support specialist, eventually earning a promotion to facility manager.

Now, as a role model and advocate, Johnathan mentors others on their sobriety journeys. He credits Workforce Services for equipping him with essential skills in communication, conflict resolution and empathy-building, enabling him to effectively support and guide his clients.

## **WIOA Mental Health Services**

One of Workforce Services' therapists provided therapy to a 41-year-old WIOA customer who was unable to access other resources for 14 months, with services ending in May 2024. He was struggling with issues related to his finances and his small business, as well as deeper clinical issues such as childhood trauma, family cultural issues, a recent divorce, time management

skills and motivation. The therapist referred him to the Utah State Office of Rehabilitation and worked with his counselor there to help him get tested for ADHD and start on medication. She also helped him clinically, to work through some erroneous beliefs and fears he had concerning medication. Through their individual therapy sessions, the customer started enjoying successes with his small business and also found other employment that was appropriate for him. The customer had improved relationships with his parents. He has begun processing his divorce and has learned how to better communicate in relationships.

### **Apprenticeship**

A customer came to Workforce Services in 2019 to apply for WIOA services. At that time he had recently lost his job and was seeking assistance to become a computer programmer. During this time he found another job, but was again laid off in November of 2020. He came to Workforce Services with a high school diploma and work experience as a shop tech, digital pressmen, hydro blaster and customer service. WIOA assisted the customer with multiple technical certificates and he completed his program in 2021. Following training completion, the customer began to search for employment but was unsuccessful. He was referred to Apprenti by his employment counselor, hoping to find employment as an apprentice in the tech industry. In September of 2022, the customer was accepted into Apprenti's apprenticeship program and began training as a cybersecurity analyst. He was placed with a large employer in the state for his on-the-job learning. In September 2023, he completed his apprenticeship program and was hired as a full-time salaried employee. He expressed gratitude to his employment counselor and is on his way to a stable career.

### **Adult Education**

Ahmed arrived in Utah from Somalia paralyzed by a bullet to his spine. Confined to a wheelchair, he needed many resources: medical treatment, housing, job training and English lessons. His IRC caseworker connected him with the Asian Association of Utah where he began Level 3 English classes. Always grinning with a mischievous sense of humor and undimmed optimism about his future, Ahmed became the "youngest son" and mentee of one of our 78-year-old veteran students.

Transportation to school was a challenge, especially in winter, so his case worker searched for an electric wheelchair that would allow him easier access to the bus and TRAX. The wheelchair changed his life. Eight months later, his English much improved, Ahmed participated in a computer literacy program offered through a collaboration between the Workforce Services Refugee Services and Salt Lake Community College. He finished his computer training and is now working at Amazon. Ahmed often remarked about his unlucky but lucky life. Discussing what it meant to be lucky during class one morning, Ahmed said that he was unlucky a bullet found him, but lucky to be alive.

### **Foster Care Youth**

Reagan enrolled in WIOA when she was aging out of foster care and a senior in high school. She lacked family support and was struggling with her grades and attendance. Her employment counselor provided mentoring to build her confidence and help her overcome barriers. Through completing career assessments, Reagan found she was interested in becoming a lawyer. Reagan graduated from high school and with the help of her employment counselor identified which college would help her get into law school. Reagan graduated with her associate degree in victim's advocacy and bachelor's degree in criminal justice. During summer 2024, Reagan participated in a WIOA Youth internship as an administrative law clerk for a local city while she prepared for law school that started in fall 2024.

### **Refugee**

A refugee customer from Ethiopia, who speaks Tigrinya as her primary language, was unsuccessful in retaining employment. A workforce development specialist helped her find an on-the-job training position working in the laundry department of a local motel. The available shift was mornings to early afternoons, which would allow her to balance work with her childrens' school schedules. During a visit to the motel to see how things were going for her, the workforce development specialist noticed the instructions to operate the machinery were only posted in English and Spanish. He asked permission to make copies of the signs in her native language. When he returned to the motel and posted the signs in Tigrinya, her face lit up. She appreciates her new position and continues to work with her employment counselor on her long-term goals.

## **Single Mother**

Kristin came to Workforce Services in September 2018. At the time, she was a single mother of three young boys, and just one year prior had lost her daughter. Kristen found herself unemployed and in need of financial assistance. Kristen was enrolled with Adult Education to complete her GED and knew she needed more education to attain a better job to support her young family. Over the next five years she worked hard, despite setbacks, to complete her associate registered nurse degree. She graduated with a smile on her face and a job offer to work at a hospital in the sepsis and respiratory wing.

## **Foster Care Youth**

John was referred to Workforce Services by the Division of Child and Family Services when he was a senior in high school and in foster care. At that time he was working at a fast food restaurant and had been promoted to shift lead. John knew that he wanted to do more for himself financially by securing a career with a promising future. John graduated early from high school. After completing career assessments and doing some career exploration he narrowed his career goal to becoming a welder or electrician. Workforce Services identified an electrician employer who was willing to provide an internship opportunity to see if this would be the type of job he could see himself doing for the future. John met with the employer and they seemed to click right away. John successfully completed his internship learning on-the-job and was retained by the employer as a full-time employee.

## **WIOA Adult**

Jessica participated in the Family Recovery Court program for the past two and a half years. She struggled due to a learning disability, trauma from childhood abuse and domestic violence in previous relationships. She also lost custody of her children. Jessica worked diligently through all of her challenges to get and remain sober, obtain housing and regain the custody of her two children. An employment counselor assisted Jessica with job seeking skills, provided mock interview opportunities and feedback on soft skills necessary to maintain employment. With the help of her employment counselor, Jessica has been working in retail for almost three months and was recently promoted to assistant store manager.

Jessica has attained and utilized the tools, support and involvement in the recovery community to continue moving toward her goals.

## **WIOA Youth**

A WIOA Youth customer with a disability was searching for a job after receiving support from WIOA to complete Information Technology certifications. The youth had no previous work experience. A workforce development specialist and an employment counselor found a suitable placement for the youth customer to complete a WIOA Youth employment internship. After completing his internship successfully, the youth's supervisor advocated with the company to keep the youth in an on-the-job training work experience to continue developing his skills as a system administrator, network administrator, system security and system inventory control.

## **Single Father**

A single father applied for WIOA to receive CDL training because his current employment did not pay enough to meet the needs of his family. He completed the training program and found employment working for a local construction company as a CDL driver. He is now financially stable, works close to home and supports his daughter.

## **Single Mother**

Yvelise is a widowed, single mother of ten-year-old twins who relocated to the United States from the Dominican Republic. She was struggling to obtain employment and applied to WIOA for assistance. Her employment counselor spent time with Yvelise working on job search skills including completing an application, resume writing, references and interviewing. Due to her hard work and friendly personality she was referred to an open position with Workforce Services as an employment counselor in another office. Yvelise was hired and is doing a great job supporting customers. Yvelise stated, "For me, it is more than an honor that my story can be used as an example. I hope it will be an inspiration to others."

## **Veteran**

John applied for WIOA when he was laid off after working 14 years in the information technology field. John had served in the U.S. Marine Corps and was

eligible to work with a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist. The DVOP and employment counselor assisted John with career exploration in a new career path as a Mechanical Engineering Technician. Through collaboration with a workforce development specialist, John was placed in an on-the-job training opportunity with an automation company. He completed his on-the-job training and is now earning \$30 an hour. John is now enrolling in training to obtain an automation technology certification.

because she had moved in with her brother after losing her apartment. Jane received mental health services and worked with her employment counselor to find transportation and resolve immediate needs. She was co-enrolled with Vocational Rehabilitation and began training to be a phlebotomist, where she excelled as a model student. Upon completion of the program, she obtained full-time employment paying \$20 an hour. Jane has been promoted and she has secured a new apartment for herself and her children.

**TANF**

Jane had been enrolled in the Family Employment Program (TANF) for seven months with minimal participation. She needed support for her mental health, criminal background and lack of motivation, and

# **Attachment A**

## **WIOA State Plan 2022 Modification Request for Waiver Providing ITAs to In-School WIOA Youth Participants**

Utah requests a waiver on the requirement of providing Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to only out-of-school youth ages 18-24 enrolled in the WIA/WIOA Youth program.

As per current WIOA Regulations: 681.550:

“In order to enhance individual participant choice in their education and training plans and provide flexibility to service providers, the Department allows WIOA ITAs for out of school youth, ages 18-24 using WIOA youth funds when appropriate.”

While this allows flexibility for serving out-of-school youth through post-secondary training, it does not give Utah the flexibility to continue to serve those youth customers enrolled as in-school who are preparing to graduate and extend their educational goals into post-secondary opportunities.

As of February 11, 2020, Utah has 85 in-school youth customers and 404 out-of-school youth customers enrolled in the WIA/WIOA program, 24 in-school youth are still enrolled in secondary education. Once those customers graduate, they will need continued support through post-secondary educational activities in order to obtain the certificates needed to find employment.

If the Department of Workforce Services is going to offer an adequate supply of workers to in-demand industry and occupations, it cannot include only those who are determined to be out of school as part of that supply. Utah needs a waiver to support those with post- secondary educational goals past high school. In-school youth deserve the same opportunities for support as those being served as out-of-school youth, and it would be a disservice to those in-school customers to not support them past their high school diploma or its equivalent. Although it has been recommended to close the enrollment of those in-school youth who graduate and then re-enroll them as an out of school youth for the purpose of assisting them with an ITA after age 18, this poses a risk that the customer may no longer be eligible under the new barrier requirements. It also prevents the Department of Workforce Services from serving youth customers who graduate early (at 16 or 17 years of age) under an ITA, even if they are enrolled as an out of school youth once they earn their diploma.

Having to procure for Occupational Skills Training services for in-school youth would also create an unnecessary and undue burden on those providers who have already submitted the required information to be on Utah’s Eligible Training Provider List. Because state schools and effective providers of post-secondary training have already been identified through the Eligible Training Provider List, having an additional process for procured providers for those in-school youth customers would create a duplication of effort for those providers that would not occur if those in-school youth wishing to access post-secondary training have access to the Eligible Training Provider List through an ITA. It has been difficult to encourage training providers to participate on the Eligible Training Provider List and the State has gone to great lengths to provide technical support and encouragement. This duplication and additional burden for providers could limit provider participation on the Eligible Training Provider List and in turn limit options for customer choice.

Because Utah already has an Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in place and an electronic way to pay providers for educational services offered, both in-school and out of school youth will be served adequately under this waiver.

Waiver Plan: The waiver request format follows WIOA Regulations section 681.550

1. Statutory regulations to be waived: WIOA section 681.550
2. Describe actions the state has undertaken to remove state or local statutory or regulatory barriers: N/A
3. Waiver goals and measurable programmatic outcomes, if the waiver is granted:
  - Continue to serve the in-school youth already enrolled past high school completion through post-secondary training under an ITA
  - Continue to encourage education providers to remain current on the Eligible Training Provider List and provide technical assistance where needed to gather performance data that will help both in and out of school youth to receive services.
  - Make a gradual shift toward enrolling more out of school youth and using those funds to support other activities, such as work experiences, leadership development activities, and mentoring, along with training activities under ITAs
  - Continue to monitor training completions and outcomes for both in and out of school youth to meet the federal requirements for training completions and job placements for youth.
4. Describes how the waiver will align with the department's policy priorities such as: A. Supporting employer engagement B. Connecting education and training strategies C. Supporting work-based learning D. Improving job and career results; and E. Other guidance issued by the department.

Through allowing both in-school and out-of-school youth to use Individual Training accounts to access training services it opens up more training programs for the youth to select from as they will now be able to use the Eligible Training Provider List approved programs. By opening up the training program opportunities youth will be able to better connect to training programs that match their interest, support their learning style and better prepare them for employment and work-based learning. Youth who are able to complete occupational skills or adult education programs more easily may be more prepared to enter the job market and be a qualified employee. By serving in-school and out-school youth with the same policy and procedures allows for a continuity of services for all youth. All youth will be eligible to receive training services, connection to work-based learning and then employment and job search support. To better connect youth to work-based learning, they will be able to use the Eligible Training Provider List and find registered apprenticeships and also more easily find academic components that give them the credentials and support to be successful at an Internship or On-the-Job training placement.

5. Describe any individuals affected by the waiver:

The effect of this waiver would be positive for both in-school and out of school youth customers who are enrolled, as both groups would be supported with WIOA funding while completing post-secondary training activities. The effect of this waiver would also be positive for education providers on the Eligible Training Provider List as they will not be required to go through procurement in addition to the requirements of being on the Eligible Training Provider List. This will hopefully encourage providers to continue to be on the Eligible Training Provider List.

This waiver will be able to affect disadvantaged populations and youth with barriers to employment through ensuring both in-school and out-of-school youth are able to receive all of the youth program services, receive a continuity of services without disruption and have access to more training providers and programs. Both in-school and out of school youth may have significant barriers to employment and have had previous hardships that could impact their ability to be successful. It is important for these youth to be able to not only receive support but to be able to customize their services to match their interests and abilities. Without this waiver in-school youth would be

restricted to select training programs where they are less prone to be successful and find suitable employment. Also without this waiver, in-school youth who would like to receive an ITA would have to be closed and enrolled as an out-of-school youth. This disrupts continuity of services and could potentially stop services that could greatly benefit a population who may be disadvantaged and have barriers to employment.

6. Describe the process used to:

a. Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver:

- Continue to review in-school enrollments and those accessing post-secondary education through an ITA to assess whether the waiver continues to be necessary.
- Review financial reports quarterly to ensure out of school youth expenditures are continuing to exceed the in-school expenditures in order to meet the goal of spending 75 percent of funds on out of school youth.
- Biannual monitoring of providers available to youth on the ETPL to ensure there are options to foster customer choice.
- Make adjustments as necessary based on the number of in-school youth accessing ITAs and the amount of funds being spent on out of school youth.

b. Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver: Consistent with the general waiver request, the state will adhere to the publication requirements to ensure the broadest participation possible, including appropriate partners and interested parties such as labor, community based partners, and the State Workforce Development Board.

c. Provide any local board affected by the waiver with an opportunity to comment on the request: Utah is a single state and therefore no local board would be affected.

d. Ensure meaningful public comment, including comment by business and organized labor, on the waiver: The Department of Workforce Services provides access to the waiver in order for businesses, organized labor, and the community to have an opportunity to make public comments on the waiver for a period of 30 days.

e. Collect and report information about the waiver outcomes in the state's WIOA Annual Report: The outcomes of this waiver will be reflected through the common performance measures, specifically credential attainment, measurable skill gain attainment and employment rates.

7. The Secretary may require that states provide the most recent data available about the outcomes of the existing waiver in cases where the state seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver:

Workforce Services has been monitoring its progress in implementing the waiver to ensure Utah complies with waiver goals and measurable programmatic outcomes are met.

Utah continues to use a waiver to meet the requirement of providing Individual Training Accounts to Out-of-School Youth ages 18 to 24 enrolled in WIOA Youth. The waiver is used to assist in-school youth with maintaining focus on education and exploring career options that require post-secondary education. Having more youth interested and engaged in education leading to credential attainment allows Utah to increase its supply of workers to in-demand industry and occupations. Workforce Services has been monitoring its progress in implementing the waiver to ensure Utah complies with waiver goals and meets measurable programmatic outcomes.

<i>WIOA Youth Expenditure PY19</i>		<i>WIOA Youth Expenditure PY20</i>	
<i>In-School Youth %</i>	<i>Out-of-School Youth %</i>	<i>In-School Youth %</i>	<i>Out-of-School Youth %</i>
11%	89%	7%	<b>93%</b>

The above data shows that Workforce Services is exceeding the requirements for out-of-school youth spending. By the end of PY20, 92.91% percent of WIOA Youth funds were spent on out-of-school youth and only 7.09% percent on in-school youth.

A quarterly breakdown of in-school youth versus out-of-school youth expenditures indicates that out-of-school youth expenditures significantly exceeded the expenditure goal of 75%.

<b>Qt 1</b>		<b>Qt 2</b>		<b>Qt 3</b>		<b>Qt 4</b>	
<i>(07/01/20 – 09/30/20)</i>		<i>(10/01/20 – 12/31/20)</i>		<i>(01/01/21 – 03/31/21)</i>		<i>(04/01/21 – 06/30/21)</i>	
<i>ISY %</i>	<i>OSY %</i>						
11%	89%	4%	96%	7%	93%	7%	93%

Out of the 137 in-school youth served in PY20, 42 youth (30.66%) were working toward obtaining a post-secondary credential. The remaining in-school youth were working on completing secondary school requirements with the intent to eventually enroll in post-secondary education.

Workforce Services has maintained its partnership with John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and administers the Education and Training Voucher program by serving in-school youth preparing for post-secondary education. This federally funded program is designed to assist foster care youth, or youth who have aged out of foster care, with the support needed to complete post-secondary education and obtain employment. In Utah, a WIOA co-enrollment is required to administer the Education and Training Voucher program to foster care youth. Since most of the foster care youth are in-school youth, the waiver enables Workforce Services to serve this at-risk population and positively impact their ability to earn post-secondary credentials, enter the workforce and become contributing members of society. Utah served 162 Education Training Voucher youth during PY20.

The waiver positively impacted education providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as they were not required to go through procurement in addition to completing the requirements to be on the list. This encourages providers to continue to be on the ETPL, benefitting both the in-school and out-of-school youth. Utah continues to certify the education providers and monitor their performance.

# Attachment B

## Waiver Approval Letter

**U.S. Department of Labor**

Employment and Training Administration  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20210



June 7, 2022

The Honorable Spencer Cox  
Governor of Utah  
State Capitol  
Suite 200  
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Dear Governor Cox:

Thank you for your waiver request submission to the U.S. Department of Labor (Department) regarding certain statutory and regulatory provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the accompanying plan to improve the statewide workforce development system (enclosed). The waiver request was received March 15, 2022, as part of your recent WIOA State Plan modification. This letter provides the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) official response to your request and memorializes that Utah will meet the outcomes and implement the measures identified in its plan to ensure accountability agreed to by Utah and ETA. This action is taken under the Secretary's authority to waive certain requirements of WIOA Title I, Subtitles A, B, and E, and Sections 8–10 of the Wagner-Peyser Act in WIOA Section 189(i).

Requested Waiver: Waiver of 20 CFR 681.550 to allow WIOA individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY).

ETA Response: ETA approves for Program Year (PY) 2022 and PY 2023, the State's request to waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only out-of-school youth (OSY), ages 16–24. In addition to these OSY, the State may use ITAs for ISY, ages 16–21. ETA reviewed Utah's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the ability of Utah to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system. Approval of this waiver should not impede the State's efforts to prioritize OSY, including outreach to the OSY population.

The State must report its waiver outcomes and implementation of the approved waiver in the WIOA Annual Report. ETA will use this information to assess continued waiver approval and to identify promising practices that may be adopted more widely. ETA is available to provide technical assistance to you in support of your goals. If you have questions, feel free to contact my office at (202) 693-2772.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brent Parton", written over a light grey background.

Brent Parton  
Acting Assistant Secretary

Enclosure

cc: Casey Cameron, Director, Utah Labor Commission  
Nicholas E. Lalpui, Dallas Regional Administrator, ETA  
Cynthia Green, Federal Project Officer, ETA

# Attachment C



## Job Seeker Survey

Which Workforce Services office did you visit?

How easy or difficult was it for you to find what you needed in this office?

- Very easy
- Somewhat easy
- Neither easy or difficult
- Somewhat difficult
- Very difficult

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your experience in our office?

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

If you were dissatisfied with your experience in our office, please describe the reason.

Please let us know if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
The office staff who served me were knowledgeable about the information and services I needed.						
The information and services I needed were provided in a format that was easy for me to understand and use.						
I would recommend this office or services to a friend.						
I feel the Department of Workforce Services shows concern for my needs.						
I feel the Department of Workforce Services can reliably provide the services I need.						

Were you referred to another location, website or phone number to access the services you needed?

- Yes
- No

How were you referred to the services you needed? Please select all that apply.

- Directed to a website
- Provided a phone number to call
- Sent to another location or another agency
- Introduced, in person or by phone, to someone at another agency
- Given a flyer, brochure or pamphlet
- Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_

The referral process and the information I received were:

- Very helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Neither helpful or unhelpful
- Somewhat unhelpful
- Very unhelpful

Which of the following services did you receive today? Please select all that apply.

- Employment Services - Job Search and Job Preparation
- Adult Career and Education Services
- Youth Career and Education Services
- Eligibility Services (Financial Assistance, Food Stamps, Child Care, Medical)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- Family Employment Program
- Veteran Services
- Unemployment Insurance

Please rate your level of satisfaction with any of the following services you received today.

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Employment Services - Job Search and Job Preparation					
Adult Career and Education Services					
Youth Career and Education Services					
Family Employment Program					
Veteran Services					
Eligibility Services (Financial Assist., Food Stamps, Child Care, Medical)					
Unemployment Insurance					
Vocational Rehabilitation Services					

Please provide any additional information you would like to share with us.

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Would you like a Workforce Services representative to contact you regarding your experience in this office?

- Yes     No

Please briefly describe what you would like to discuss when a representative contacts you.

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Please provide your contact information for a representative from Workforce Services to contact you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone and email: \_\_\_\_\_



## Attachment D

### Utah Statewide Job Seeker Survey Results

December 2023 – June 2024:

Number of Customer Surveys Completed - 2,315

Rating Scale of 1 – 5

How easy or difficult was it for you to find out what was needed in this office?	4.8
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your experience in our office?	4.8
The office staff who served me were knowledgeable about the information and services I needed.	4.9
The information and services I needed were provided in a format that was easy for me to understand and use.	4.8
I would recommend this office or services to a friend.	4.9
I feel the Department of Workforce Services shows concern for my needs.	4.8
I feel the Department of Workforce Services can reliably provide the services I need.	4.8

Were you referred to another location, website or phone number to access the services you needed? Yes 25%

How were you referred to the services you needed?

Directed to a website	213
Provided a phone number to call	189
Sent to another location or another agency	94
Introduced, in person or by phone to someone at another agency	78
Given a flyer, brochure or pamphlet	80
Other	92

Rating Scale of 1 - 5

The referral process and the information I received were very helpful	4.9
-----------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Which of the following services did you receive today? Select all that apply.

Employment Services - Job Search and Job Preparation	640
Adult Career and Education Services (WIOA)	163
Youth Career and Education Services (WIOA)	74
Eligibility Services (Financial Assistance, Food Stamps, Child Care, Medical)	1084

Vocational Rehabilitation Services	68
Family Employment Program (TANF)	60
Veteran Services	33
Unemployment Insurance	290
Other	250

Please rate your level of satisfaction with any of the following services you received today. Rating scale of 1-5.

Employment Services - Job Search and Job Preparation	4.8
Adult Career and Education Services (WIOA)	4.9
Youth Career and Education Services (WIOA)	4.8
Family Employment Program (TANF)	4.7
Veteran Services	4.8
Eligibility Services (Financial Assistance, Food Stamps, Child Care, Medical)	4.8
Unemployment Insurance	4.6
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	4.8