

MICHIGAN WORKS! REGION 7B

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)
4-YEAR LOCAL PLAN

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2028

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Approval Request Form

1. Region Number: 02 Region 7B Consortium

2. Plan Title(s): WIOA Regional Plan for Program Years 2024 – 2027

3. Policy Issuance Number: 24 - 13

4. Plan Period: 07/01/24 - 06/30/27

The Chief Elected Official(s) and Workforce Development Board hereby request approval of this document. Please insert the printed name for each signature provided below.

Signature of Authorized Chief Elected Official

Date: 9/10/2024

Printed Name: D. Jay O'Farrell

Signature of Authorized Chief Elected Official

Date:

Printed Name:

Signature of Authorized Chief Elected Official

Date: 9/10/2024

Printed Name: Norman J. Fullmer

Michigan Works! Region 7B Consortium
Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act (WIOA)
Four Year Local Action Plan

Introduction

The Michigan Works! Region 7B Consortium (Region 7B) is comprised of six Mid-Michigan counties: Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Iosco, Ogemaw and Roscommon. Region 7B is considered rural; however, it retains a diverse business and employment structure. Manufacturing sector, logistics, healthcare, retail trade, hospitality, avionics, agricultural and tourism provide the economic base for the region which encompasses approximately 3,086 square miles.

This Region 7B Four Year Local Action Plan prioritizes the following strategies that are intended to advance these key Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) principles. This Local sets forth a strategy to:

- Direct investments in economic, education, and workforce training programs to focus on providing relevant education and training to ensure that individuals, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, have the skills to compete in the job market and that employers have a ready supply of skilled workers;
- Apply demand/job-driven strategies in the one-stop system;
- Enable economic, education, and workforce partners to build a skilled workforce through innovation in, and alignment of, employment, training, and education programs; and
- Incorporate this Local Plan into applicable Regional Plan per 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 679.540.

Labor Market Analysis

1. An analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions including:
 - The regional analysis prepared as part of the Regional Plan.

Region 7B is combined with Prosperity Region 3 therefore this Local Plan will include regional labor market information for the 14 counties located in the region, including the six counties of Region 7B. An analysis of the Region 3 labor markets and the local Region 7B labor markets has been conducted. The charts and graphics provide the most recent information available on population, earnings, income, employment trends and in-demand occupational areas. Data and assessment provided by the Michigan Center for Data and analytical Annual Planning Information Report 2024 (MCDCA 2024). These reports are split between Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium and Michigan Works! Region 7B.

Regional Labor Market Data and Economic Conditions

An updated and thorough analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions for the WIOA Planning Region.

- ***This shall include an analysis of existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.***

Existing and Emerging Industry Sectors and Occupations.

The Region's employment is dominated by two sectors: Trade, Transportation and Utility and Leisure and Hospitality. Nearly half of all jobs are in these sectors, significantly greater than the statewide average. Most other sectors are on par with Michigan averages, while Professional and Business Services is significantly under-represented, comprising just 5% of employment, compared to 17% statewide. Distribution across all sectors is provided in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Distribution of Industry Jobs, Second Quarter 2023, MWINC

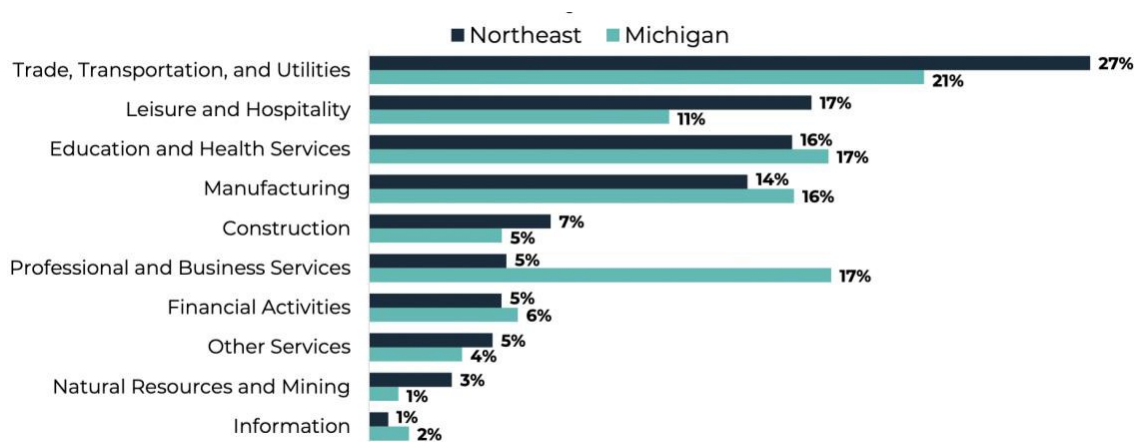
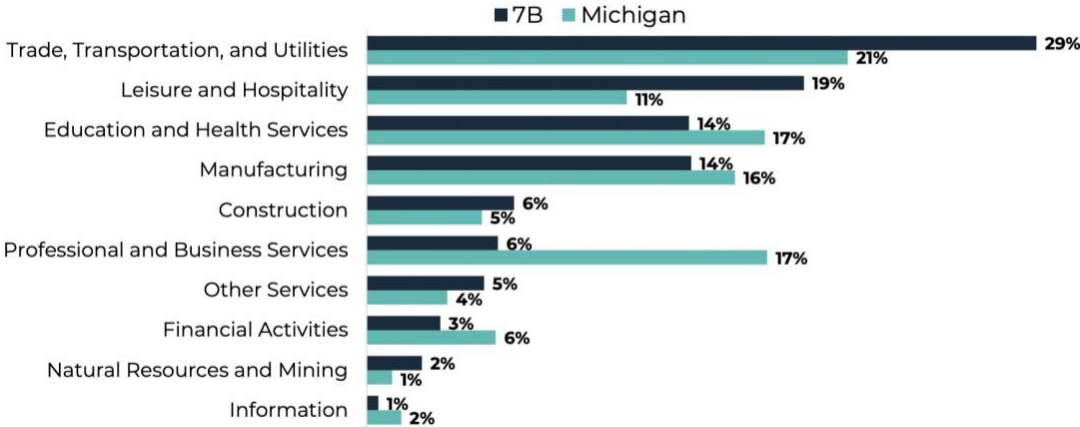


Figure 2: Distribution of Industry Jobs, Second Quarter 2023 Region 7B



Source MCDA 2024 from Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Michigan Center for Data and Analysis

Figures 3 and 4 show employment trends from 2017 – 2023, reflecting some commonalities but also some opposite trends within the Region. We note that six years compared before and after COVID employment. The previous Regional Plan Update contained data from during the pandemic and reflected COVID-related employment volatility, especially in the Leisure and Hospitality sector. These date reflect a more stable industry before and after the pandemic comparison.

In both the MW!NC and Region 7B areas, total employment trended up a small amount (+2% and +5%, respectively) from 2017-2023. The Region’s top sector, Trade Transportation and Utilities, held steady at -1% and +1% in MW!NC and 7B, respectively. The Information sector shows large declines here (down 26% and 36%, respectively), but it is important to note that this is only 1% of the Region’s employment, so very small changes in the number of jobs show up as large percentage changes.

Many other sectors show opposing trends:

- **Leisure and Hospitality:** In this Region’s prominent sector, Region 7B experienced 17% growth in employment, while MW!NC saw a 5% decline.
- **Construction:** In MW!NC, Construction is the top growth sector at 17%, on par with statewide trends. In Region 7B, Construction grew half as fast at 9%.
- **Professional and Business Services:** In MW!NC, this sector grew by 14%, significantly outpacing Michigan’s average of 2%. Region 7B experienced an opposite trend, where Professional and Business Services declined by 14%.

- **Other Services:** While Professional and Business Services declined in Region 7B, Other Services grew by 30%, significantly greater than MW!NC, where Other Services grew by 6%. This compares to a 2% decline statewide. The Other Services category includes personal care services (dry cleaning, laundry), home repair and maintenance, funeral homes and death care services, religious services, private household services, as well as other services.
- **Financial Activities:** The MW! NC area saw 9% growth in Financial Activities, while Region 7B experienced an opposite 10% decline.

Figure 3: Private Sector Job Trends, 2017 – 2023, MW!NC

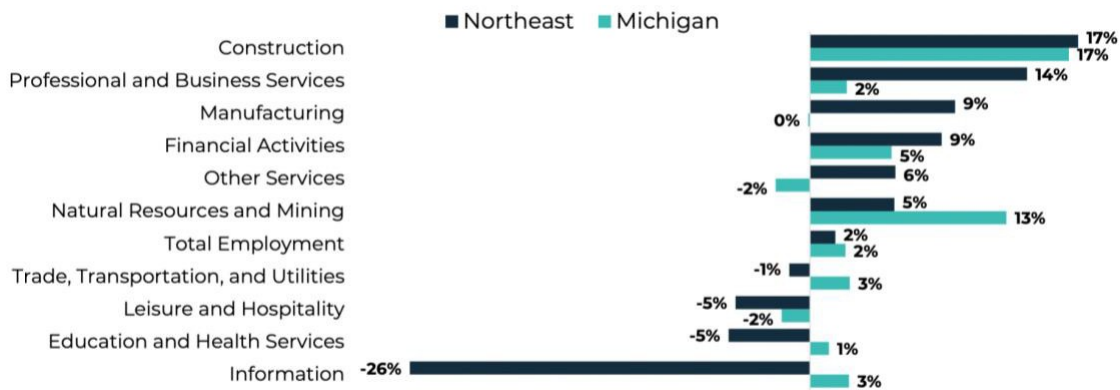
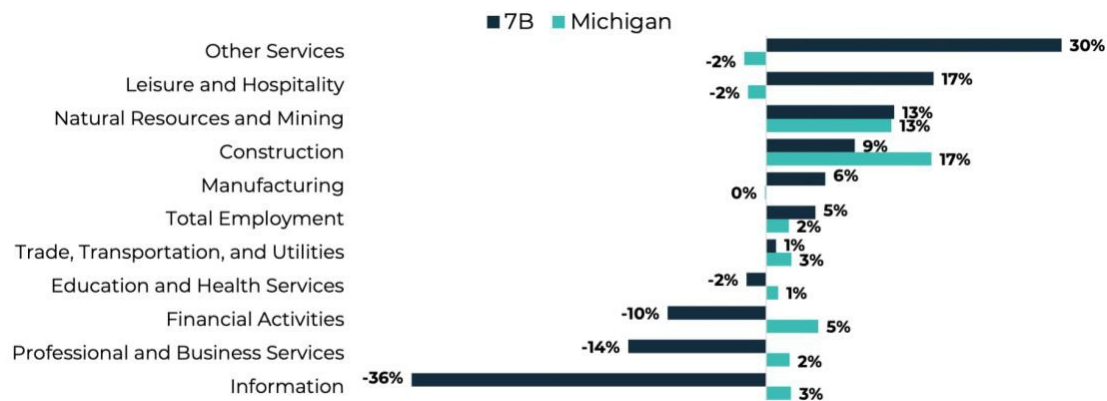


Figure 4: Private Sector Job Trends, 2017 – 2023, Region 7B



Tables 1 and 2 show the most frequent online job postings in the region in 2023. There were 9,100 online job postings in the region: 5,200 in MW!NC, and 3,900 in Region 7B. Consistent with the prevalence of the Leisure and Hospitality sector, retail salespersons and supervisors are most frequent, with merchandise display and several food service roles also making the list. Registered Nurses and nursing assistants were also frequently posted.

Table 1: Online Advertised Job Postings in MW!NE

Job Title	Postings
Retail Salespersons	394
Registered Nurses	336
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	334
Customer Service Representatives	177
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	168
Fast Food and Counter Workers	157
Nursing Assistants	136
Cashiers	101
Stockers and Order Fillers	95
Sales Reps., Goods, Nontechnical	92

Table 2: Online Advertised Job Postings in Region 7B

Job Title	Postings
Retail Salespersons	396
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	217
Registered Nurses	152
Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	104
Fast Food and Counter Workers	100
Customer Service Representatives	88
Food Service Managers	81
Tree Trimmers and Pruners	71
Nursing Assistants	65
Cashiers	64

Source MCDA 2024 from Help Wanted On Line Lightcast Developer

- **Employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations**

Tables 3-7 are from the Michigan Center for Data and Analytics Northeast Michigan Career Outlook through 2030 (MCDA 2030).² The region for this analysis covers Prosperity Region 3, which only includes 11 of the 14 WIOA Region 3 counties. We include this here as this is the best data indicative of the Region.

The tables highlight occupations likely to be in demand through 2030, estimating their expected annual opening rates, percentage growth, and average wages. The listings are by different levels of educational attainment and presented in alphabetical order, and there is also a separate listing for STEM jobs.

Table 3: Top High-Demand, Lower-Wage Occupations Requiring High School Diploma or Equivalent and Short-Term Training, through 2030

OCCUPATION (JOB TITLE)	ANNUAL OPENINGS	GROWTH (%)	WAGE RANGE
Animal Caretakers	35	19.0	\$12–\$15
Childcare Workers	70	14.3	\$12–\$19
Construction Laborers	65	16.4	\$17–\$23
Cooks, Institution & Cafeteria	35	13.6	\$13–\$16
Counter & Rental Clerks	35	14.8	\$13–\$21
Customer Service Representatives	110	3.6	\$13–\$19
Dishwashers	55	12.5	\$11–\$14
Fast Food & Counter Workers	420	11.8	\$11–\$13
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	215	26.7	\$13–\$15
Janitors & Cleaners, Except Housekeepers	110	8.1	\$14–\$17
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	85	5.0	\$14–\$18
Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	70	12.5	\$13–\$18
Light Truck Drivers	65	33.3	\$15–\$23
Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus	35	7.7	\$15–\$20
Receptionists & Information Clerks	55	7.3	\$13–\$17
Refuse & Recyclable Material Collectors	10	16.7	\$15–\$25
Retail Salespersons	275	5.3	\$12–\$17
Social & Human Service Assistants	25	25.0	\$13–\$17
Stockers & Order Fillers	310	9.4	\$14–\$17
Waiters & Waitresses	240	13.6	\$11–\$21

Source: MCDA 2030.

Table 4: Top High-Demand, High Wage STEM Occupations, through 2030

OCCUPATION (JOB TITLE)	ANNUAL OPENINGS	GROWTH (%)	WAGE RANGE
Architectural & Engineering Managers	10	0.0	\$49–\$65
Biological Techs	10	-10.0	\$18–\$23
Civil Engineers	5	0.0	\$30–\$44
Computer & Information Systems Managers	<5	0.0	\$36–\$62
Computer User Support Specialists	10	9.1	\$19–\$31
Electrical Engineers	<5	0.0	\$38–\$53
Environ. Scientists & Specialists, Including Health	5	0.0	\$30–\$39
Forest & Conservation Techs	10	-11.1	\$17–\$24
Foresters	5	0.0	\$29–\$39
Industrial Engineers	10	23.1	\$31–\$46
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses ◊	25	9.7	\$23–\$27
Mechanical Engineers	20	16.7	\$29–\$42
Medical and Health Services Managers ◊	25	35.0	\$35–\$48
Nurse Practitioners ◊	5	66.7	\$47–\$59
Pharmacists ◊	10	8.7	\$52–\$65
Physician Assistants ◊	5	40.0	\$50–\$60
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians ◊	15	14.3	\$24–\$30
Registered Nurses ◊	70	11.3	\$31–\$38
Software Developers & Quality Assurance Analysts	5	20.0	\$29–\$49
Zoologists & Wildlife Biologists	<5	0.0	\$33–\$41

Source: MCDA 2030.

Table 5: Top High-Demand, High Wage Postsecondary Certificate or Moderate-Term Training Occupations Through 2030

OCCUPATION (JOB TITLE)	ANNUAL OPENINGS	GROWTH (%)	WAGE RANGE
Aircraft Mechanics & Service Techs	70	13.0	\$19–\$30
Billing & Posting Clerks	20	12.5	\$16–\$21
Captains, Mates, & Pilots of Water Vessels	5	25.0	\$32–\$62
Cement Masons & Concrete Finishers	10	9.1	\$19–\$26
Coating & Painting Machine Operators	5	16.7	\$19–\$29
Construction & Building Inspectors	5	0.0	\$23–\$69
Ctrl. & Valve Install. & Repairers, Ex. Mech. Door	5	33.3	\$30–\$43
Dental Assistants	15	10.0	\$17–\$21
Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs	5	0.0	\$26–\$28
First-Line Supervisors of Police & Detectives	5	12.5	\$28–\$39
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	125	0.9	\$21–\$25
Insurance Sales Agents	40	21.9	\$21–\$61
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	25	9.7	\$23–\$27
Logging Equipment Operators	25	6.2	\$17–\$21
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	70	11.5	\$14–\$24
Operating Engineers	45	10.5	\$24–\$28
Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	35	2.3	\$25–\$34
Production, Planning, & Expediting Clerks	10	12.5	\$18–\$29
Sales Reps., Services	20	13.3	\$21–\$45
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	40	2.8	\$16–\$22

Source: MCDA 2030.

Table 6: Top High-Demand, High Wage Associate Degree/Long-Term Training/Apprenticeships Occupations Through 2030

OCCUPATION (JOB TITLE)	ANNUAL OPENINGS	GROWTH (%)	WAGE RANGE
Automotive Body & Related Repairers	10	0.0	\$18–\$25
Bus & Truck Mech. & Diesel Engine Specialists	15	6.7	\$21–\$26
Cardiovascular Technologists & Techs	<5	0.0	\$16–\$33
Carpenters	50	8.3	\$19–\$27
Claims Adjusters, Examiners, & Investigators	5	0.0	\$29–\$39
Court, Municipal, & License Clerks	30	7.4	\$17–\$22
Dental Hygienists	5	11.1	\$30–\$38
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	5	33.3	\$29–\$37
Electrical Power-Line Installers & Repairers	10	42.9	\$47–\$51
Electricians	25	10.0	\$18–\$30
HVAC & Refrigeration Mechanics & Installers	10	10.0	\$19–\$27
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	35	30.0	\$21–\$29
Machinists	35	6.2	\$17–\$25
Mobile Heavy Equip. Mechanics, Except Engines	10	12.5	\$22–\$29
Motorboat Mechanics & Service Techs	10	0.0	\$20–\$23
Paralegals & Legal Assistants	10	0.0	\$19–\$26
Plumbers, Pipefitters, & Steamfitters	15	8.3	\$19–\$30
Radiologic Technologists & Techs	15	14.3	\$24–\$30
Respiratory Therapists	5	40.0	\$31–\$31
Tool & Die Makers	10	0.0	\$21–\$30

Source: MCDA 2030.

Table 7: Top High-Demand, High Wage Bachelor's Degree or Higher Occupations Through 2030

OCCUPATION (JOB TITLE)	ANNUAL OPENINGS	GROWTH (%)	WAGE RANGE
Accountants & Auditors	40	10.8	\$25–\$38
Buyers & Purchasing Agents	15	0.0	\$21–\$35
Child, Family, & School Social Workers	30	10.7	\$18–\$31
Compliance Officers	5	20.0	\$26–\$37
Elementary School Teachers	55	-2.5	\$23–\$35*
Financial Managers	15	21.4	\$36–\$63
General & Operations Managers	110	12.5	\$22–\$49
Human Resources Specialists	15	7.7	\$22–\$32
Industrial Engineers	10	23.1	\$31–\$46
Industrial Production Managers	10	7.1	\$39–\$61
Lawyers	5	0.0	\$34–\$53
Management Analysts	10	11.1	\$35–\$66
Mechanical Engineers	20	16.7	\$29–\$42
Medical & Health Services Managers	25	35.0	\$35–\$48
Pharmacists	10	8.7	\$52–\$65
Project Management & Business Oper. Specialists	30	2.7	\$28–\$41
Registered Nurses	70	11.3	\$31–\$38
Secondary School Teachers	15	0.0	\$23–\$32*
Social & Community Service Managers	10	9.1	\$30–\$41
Software Developers & Quality Assurance Analysts	5	20.0	\$29–\$49

Source: MCDA 2030.

Drawing from Tables 3-7 above, the top in-demand jobs are ranked in Tables 8 and 9 below. There are far more projected openings in occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent and short-term training than those in other categories, but these occupations also pay lower hourly rates (Table 8). Table 19 ranks occupations with more educational requirements and higher wages.

Fast food and retail occupations dominate the top of this list, consistent with the Region’s extensive Leisure and Hospitality sector. Heavy tractor-trailer truck drivers top the list of high demand, high wage jobs, indicative of continuing growth in the Region’s transportation industry. The expanding healthcare sector is reflected in the number of openings for Registered Nurses and home health care aids.

Childcare workers and elementary school teachers are also in high demand, consistent with stakeholder discussion during the Strategy Session.

Following the MCDA tables, we provide summary tables with rankings of top jobs in order by projected openings (Tables 8 and 9).

Table 8: Occupations with the Most Projected Annual Openings Through 2030 – High-Demand (not high wage), Require High School Diploma or Equivalent Short-Term Training

Occupation (Job Title)	Annual Openings	Wage Range (\$s, hourly)
<i>Fast Food & Counter Workers</i>	<i>420</i>	<i>11-13</i>
<i>Stockers & Order Fillers</i>	<i>310</i>	<i>14-17</i>
<i>Retail Salespersons</i>	<i>275</i>	<i>12-17</i>
<i>Waiters & Waitresses</i>	<i>240</i>	<i>11-21</i>
<i>Home Health & Personal Care Aids</i>	<i>215</i>	<i>13-15</i>
<i>Customer Service Representatives</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>13-19</i>
<i>Janitors & Cleaners, Except Housekeepers</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>14-17</i>
<i>Childcare Workers</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>12-19</i>
<i>Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers</i>	<i>70</i>	<i>14-17</i>

Source: Our own compilation from MCDA 2030

Table 9: Occupations with the Most Projected Annual Opening through 2030 – High-Demand and High Wage, Require Education/Training Beyond High School

Occupation (Job Title)	Annual Openings	Wage Range (\$s, hourly)	Education required
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	125	21-25	Postsecondary Certificate or Moderate-Term Training
General & Operations Managers	110	22-49	Bachelors Degree or Higher
Registered Nurses	70	31-38	Bachelors Degree or Higher
Aircraft Mechanics & Service Techs	70	19-30	Postsecondary Certificate or Moderate-Term Training
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	70	14-24	Postsecondary Certificate or Moderate-Term Training
Elementary School Teachers	55	23-35	Bachelors Degree or Higher
Carpenters	50	19-27	Associates Degree/Long-Term Apprenticeships
Operating Engineers	45	24-28	Postsecondary Certificate or Moderate-Term Training
Accountants	40	25-38	Bachelors Degree or Higher
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers	40	16-22	Postsecondary Certificate or Moderate-Term Training
Insurance Sales Agents	40	21-61	Postsecondary Certificate or Moderate-Term Training

Source: Our own compilation from MCDA 2030

Knowledge and Skills

- **An analysis of knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs of in-demand industry sectors and occupations.**

The skill needs of employers with in-demand industries are determined through a combination of labor market data, job postings, and information directly from local businesses. Business Solutions Professionals (BSPs) within workforce programs (MWAs, Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), Veterans Services) establish ongoing relationships with employers throughout the WIOA region, maintaining a high level of local intelligence regarding their needs.

Regardless of industry or occupation, all employers in the region cite the need for workplace skills. Also referred to as “essential” or “soft” skills, these skills are critical to success on any job. Those most often required include attendance and punctuality, a positive and professional attitude, respect for authority, and the ability and commitment to hard work.

Healthcare is a top growth area, with workers needed over a range of education and skill levels. Registered Nurses, nursing assistants, and home health aides rank high on the MCDA 2030 occupational growth tables. Regional Leadership also notes the need for medical secretaries, administrative assistants, and mental health counselors, as well as broader needs in healthcare practitioners and social and human services occupations. These occupations cover a broad range of education and training levels, from Registered Nurses (requiring a bachelor’s degree or associate’s degree) to home health aides and administrative assistants (requiring high school diploma and/or short-term training).

Manufacturing companies are in need of entry-level production workers, as well as machine operators and programmers requiring training ranging from on-the-job training to an associate’s degree. The manufacturing industry also needs mid-level skilled technicians with cross-training to address machine repair and operation, requiring knowledge in hydraulics, robotics, electrical, and more. In addition, welders need American Welding Society certification in multiple types of welding.

Manufacturing companies are also more in need of highly skilled positions than ever before, such as various types of engineers and designers. These positions are very difficult to find in the labor pool within the region, so companies are often forced to recruit from outside. Talent attraction continues to be a challenge because of the lack of broadband internet, large cities, and amenities. In addition, the lack of housing at a variety of price points is a barrier to attracting talent from outside the area. The lack of housing also presents an issue related to transportation, as workers have a higher cost for commuting to and from available homes.

The *Transportation and Warehousing* industry is in need of heavy and tractor-trailer drivers, which are estimated in the MCDA 2030 tables to be the most in-demand high-wage occupation through 2030.

The *Retail Trade* and *Accommodation and Food Service* industries traditionally hired individuals without much training, unless hiring for management or skilled positions, such as Executive Chef. Highly skilled positions in food service used to require an industry certification and/or associate’s degree in the culinary arts. However, the severe need for workers in this industry has caused many employers to relax their requirement for credentials and offer on the job training. Most employers in these industries need employees with good customer service skills, but they will train them in-house on all other occupational skills.

Figures 5 and 6 present skills gaps in the MW!NC and Region 7B across all occupations. Many of the skill needs are consistent with the sector-specific needs described previously: Commercial Drivers License, retail sales, and teaching. A notable recent change is the deficit of Microsoft Office and Excel skills. These were listed as a top skills surplus four years ago, and they now rank as a top deficit. Leadership confirm this new trend, that employers are consistently in need of more Microsoft Application skills.

Figure 5: Skills Gaps – 2023 Q4, all occupations, MW!NC

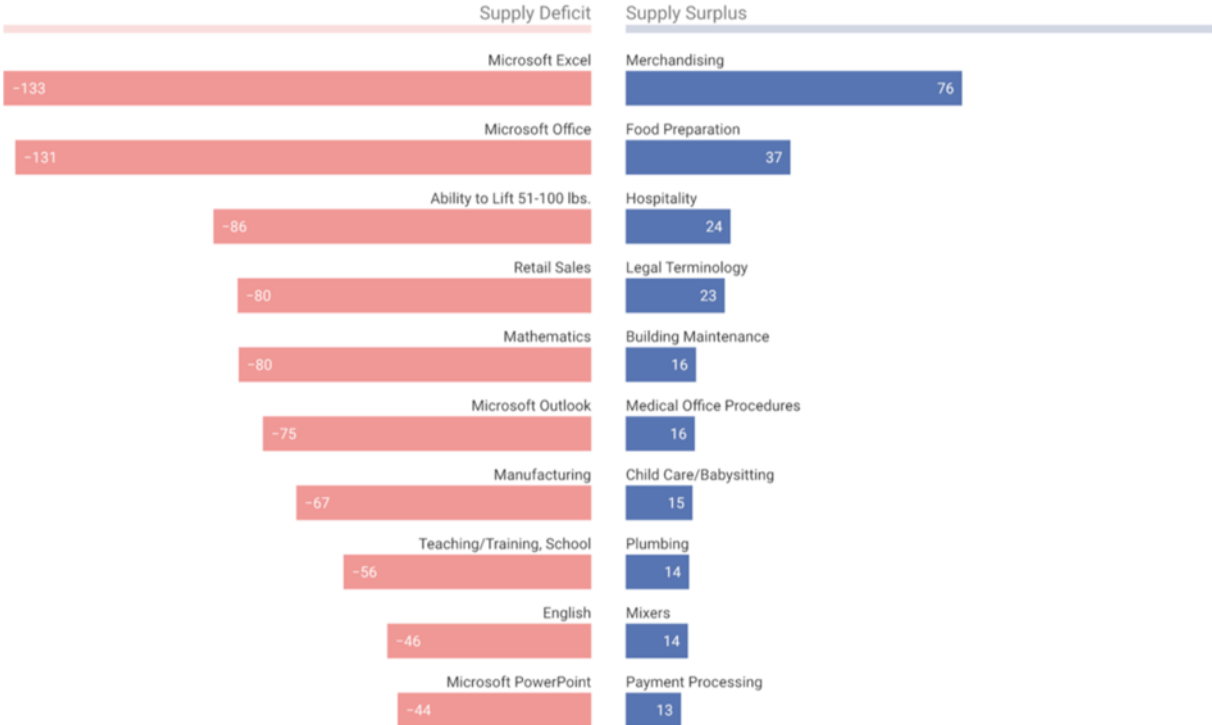
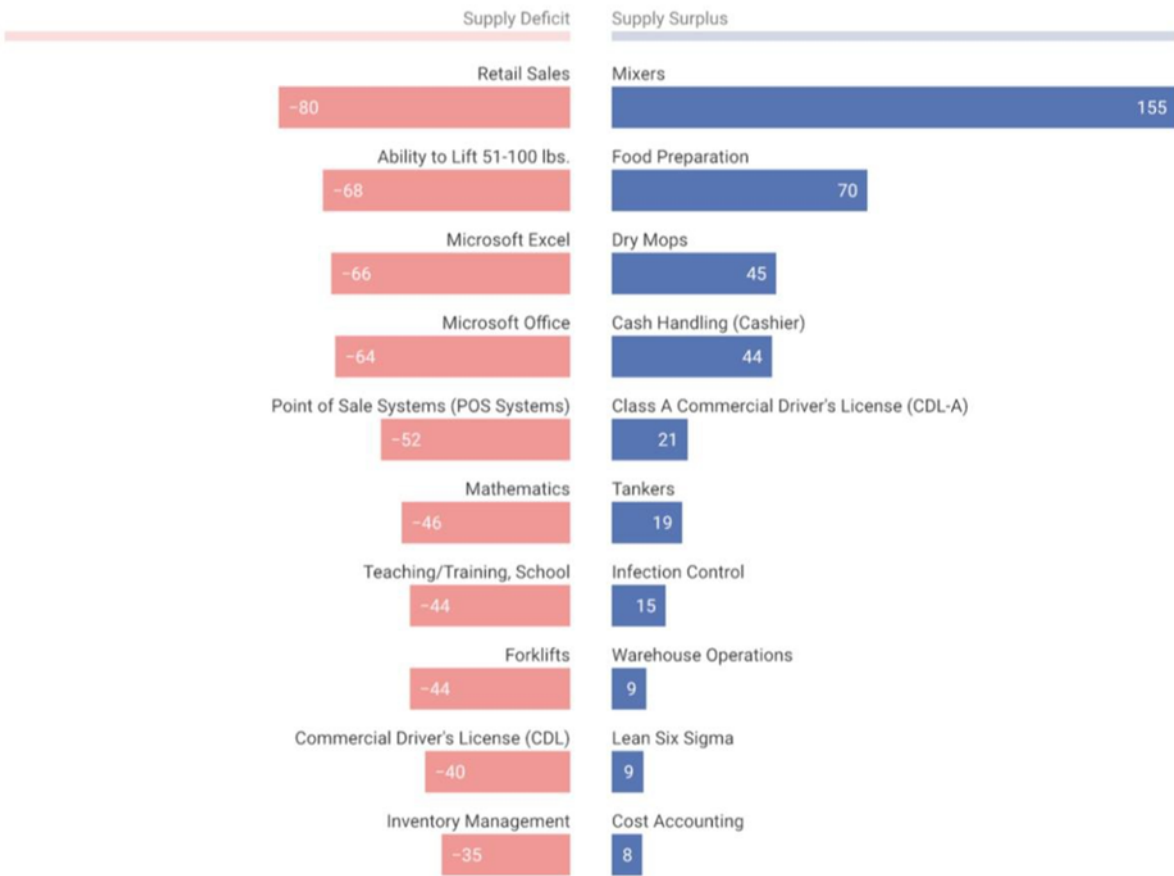


Figure 6: Skills Gaps – 2023 Q4, all occupations, Region 7B



Source: JobsEQ

Workforce Analysis

- **An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.**

Background Demographic Trends in the Region: Population Change, Age Distribution, Race/Ethnic Mix

Region 3 is home to 273,000 residents, and this population is evenly split between MW!NC and Region 7B. As a whole, Region 3 is experiencing slow growth, less than half the statewide average over 2012 – 2022 (Figures 7 and 8).

Figure 7: Population Change, 2012 – 2022, MW!NC

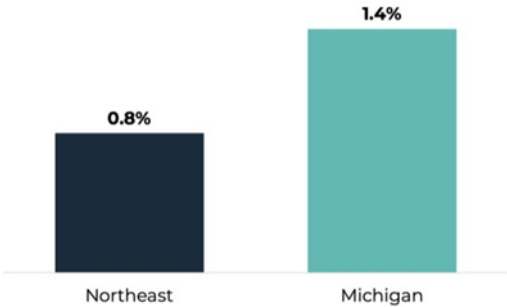
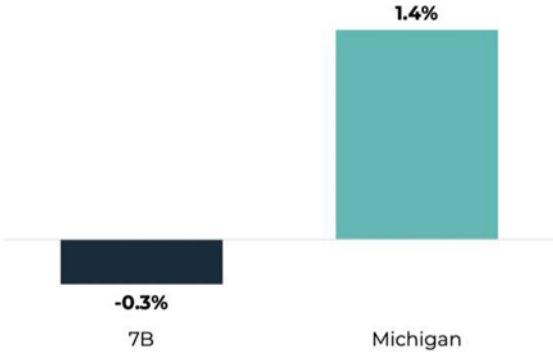


Figure 8: Population Change, 2012 – 2022, Region 7B



Source: MCDA 2024 from Population Estimates Program, US Census Bureau.

Region 3’s population is considerable older than statewide averages (Figure 9 and 10). Nearly 45% of the population is 55+. The Region’s 65+ population makes up ten percentage points more of the total population than the state’s average, and the higher-than-average proportion of the population 55 – 64 suggests the region will struggle with labor force participation and will have to work diligently to replace retiring workers in the coming years. This is a challenge, given that younger age groups are smaller in numbers.

Figure 9: Population by Age Group, MW!NC

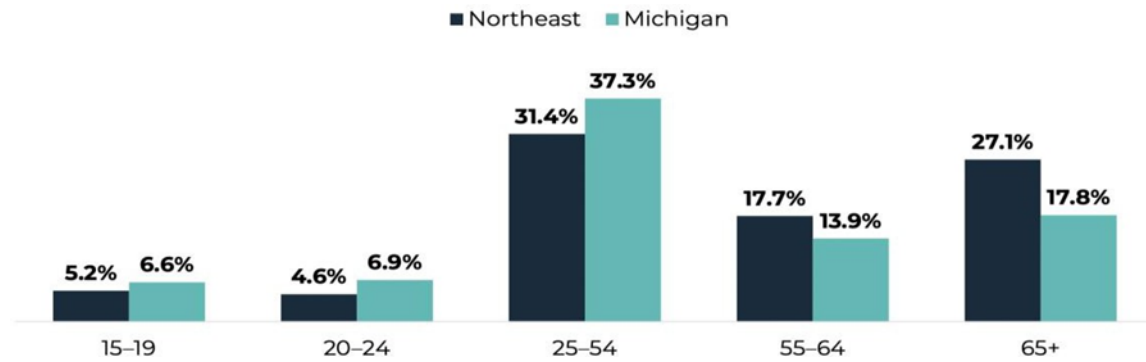
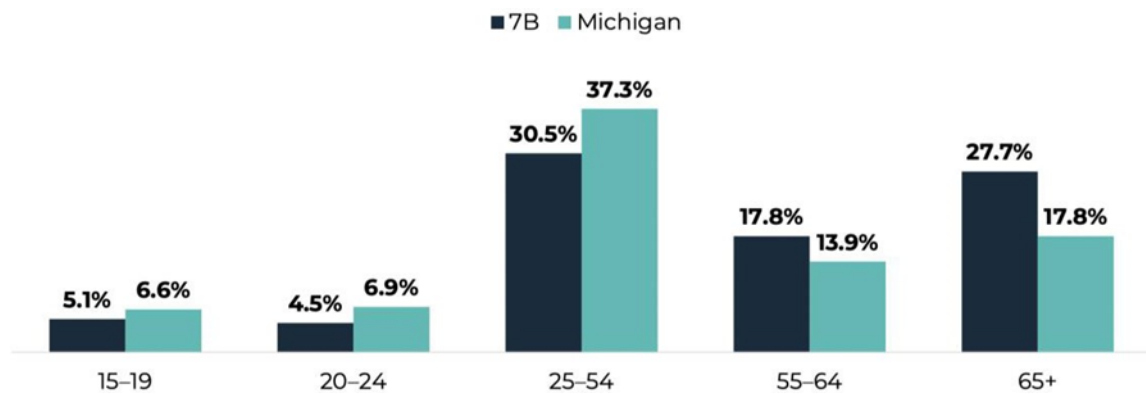


Figure 10: Population by Age Group, Region 7B



Source: MCDA 2024 from Population Estimates Program, US Census Bureau.

In terms of race and ethnicity, the Region is predominately white (94%), compared to a statewide average of 76% (Figures 11 and 12).

Figure 11: Population by Race and Ethnicity, MW!NC

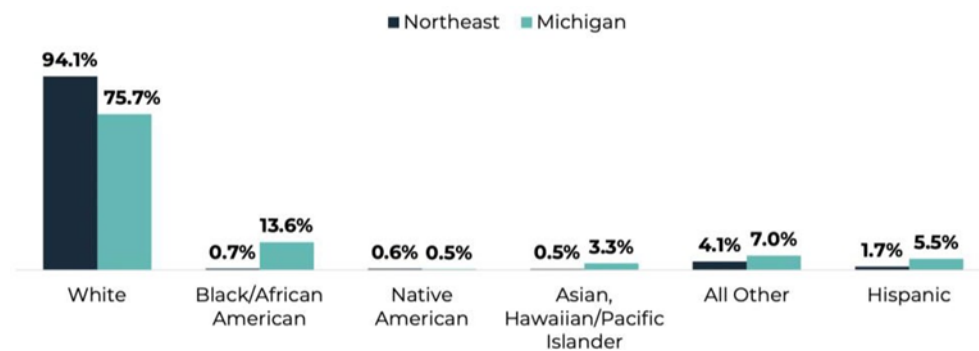
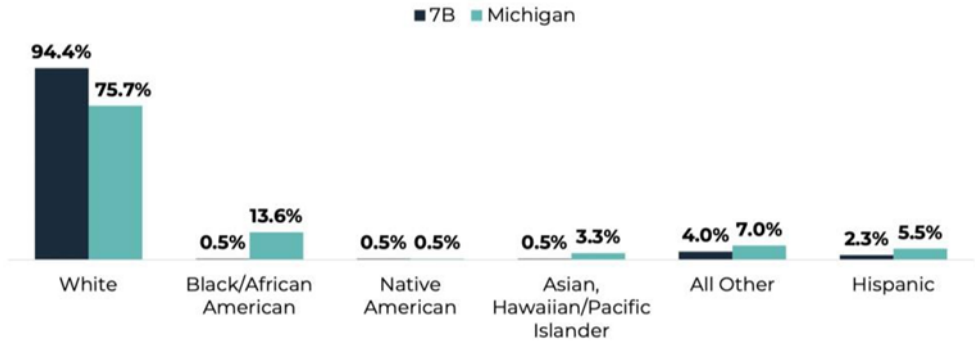


Figure 12: Population by Race and Ethnicity, Region 7B



Source: MCDA 2024 from Population Estimates Program, US Census Bureau.

Labor Market Trends: Employment/Unemployment Data & Labor Force Characteristics

Unemployment in 2023 returned to pre-pandemic levels, at 6.3%, though it remains elevated compared to statewide and national trends (Figures 13 and 14). Elevated unemployment in the Region is largely driven by higher unemployment among those 55+ and among males. Figures 15 and 16 show that the 55+ population is a greater share of the region’s residents, and that this population has both lower rates of labor force participation and lower rates of employment than statewide averages. Unemployment among males is elevated (7% and 8.8%, compared to 6.2% in Michigan), while unemployment among females is level with Michigan at 5.8% (Figures 17 and 18).

Figures 17 and 18 indicate slightly higher unemployment rates in Region 7B than in MW!NC (7.4% and 6.5%, respectively), looking at 2022 ACS data.

Figure 13: Unemployment Rates by Area and Year, MW!NC

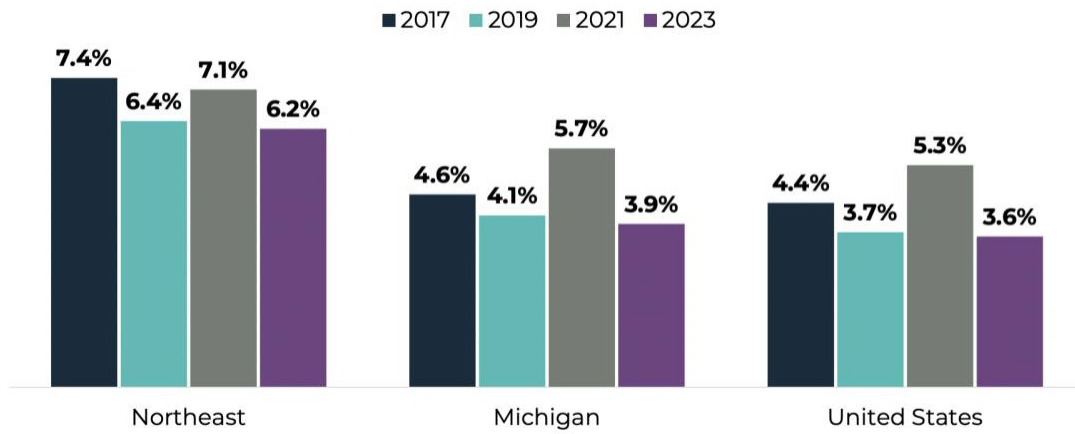
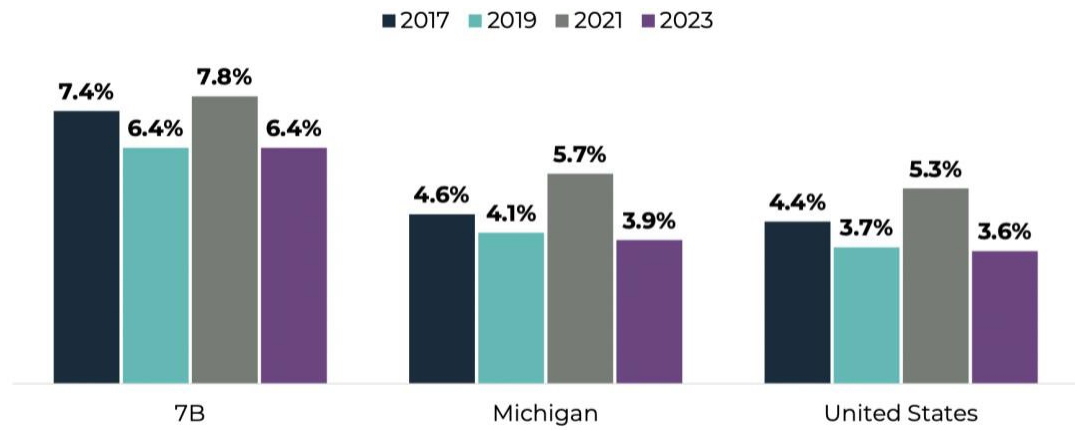


Figure 14: Unemployment Rates by Area and Year, Region 7B



Source MCDA 2024 from Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Figure 15: Labor Force Status of Older Workers, MW!NC

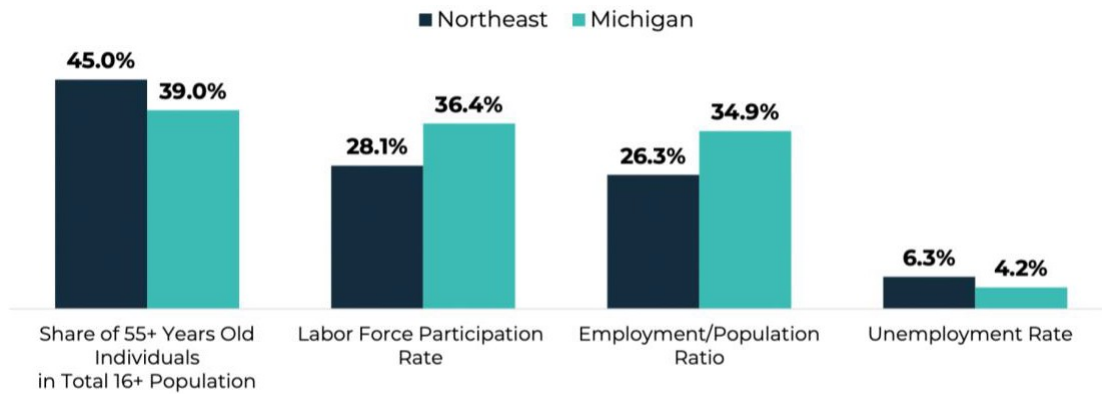


Figure 16: Labor Force Status of Older Workers, Region 7B

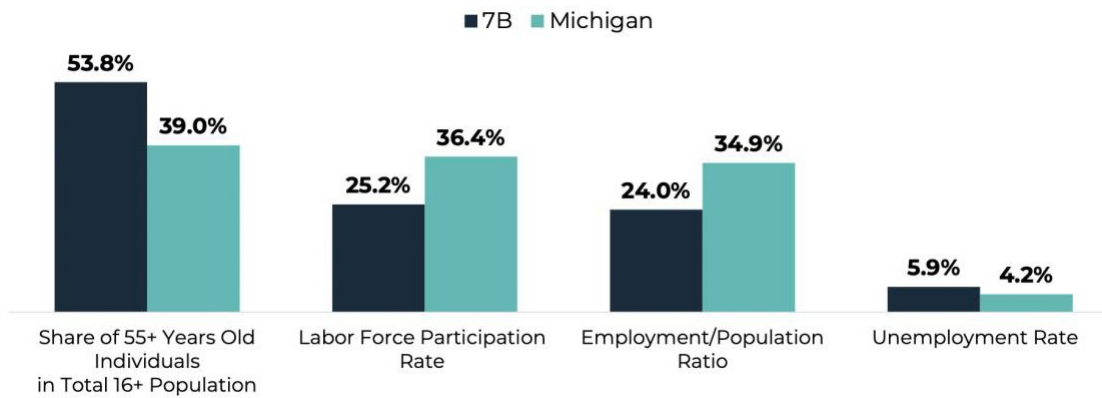


Figure 17: Unemployment Rates by Age and Gender, MW!NC

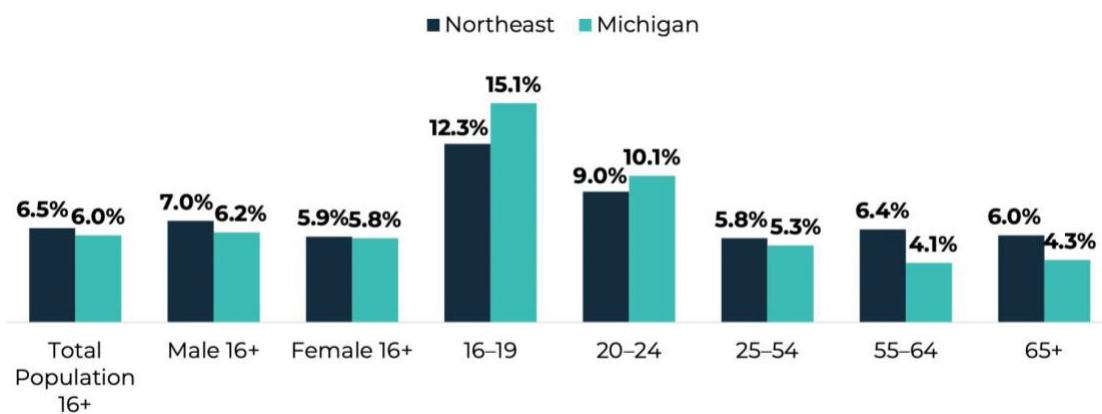
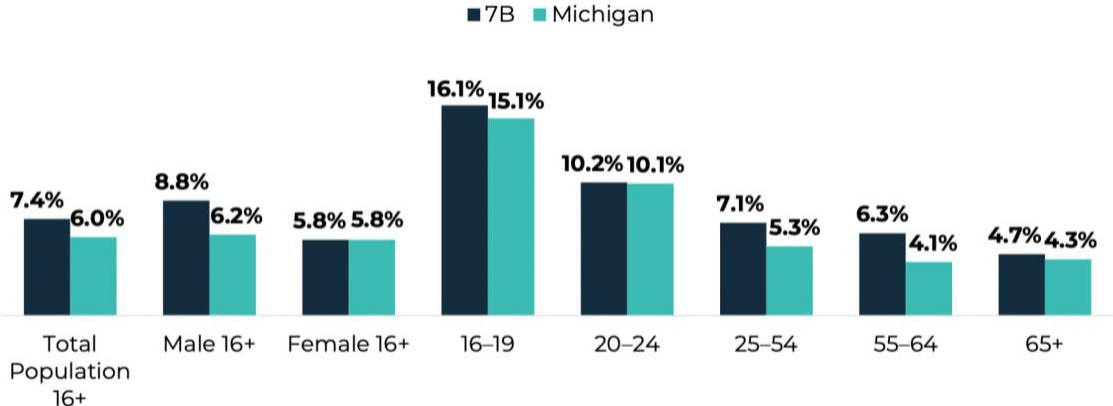


Figure 18: Unemployment Rates by Age and Gender, Region 7B



Source MCDA 2024 from 2018 – 2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, US Census Bureau

Unemployment by race and ethnicity is shown in Figures 19 and 20. The Region is predominantly white, so unemployment rates among very small groups can be difficult to interpret. We note a high 33% unemployment rate identified among Native Americans in 7B, though Native Americans comprise 0.5% of the population in 7B. This is likely attributable to a shift in business model for the area’s largest employer of the Native American population, Soaring Eagle Casino, where food service workers were laid off and transitioned to an outsourced company.

Figure 19: Unemployment Rates by Race and Ethnicity, MW/NC

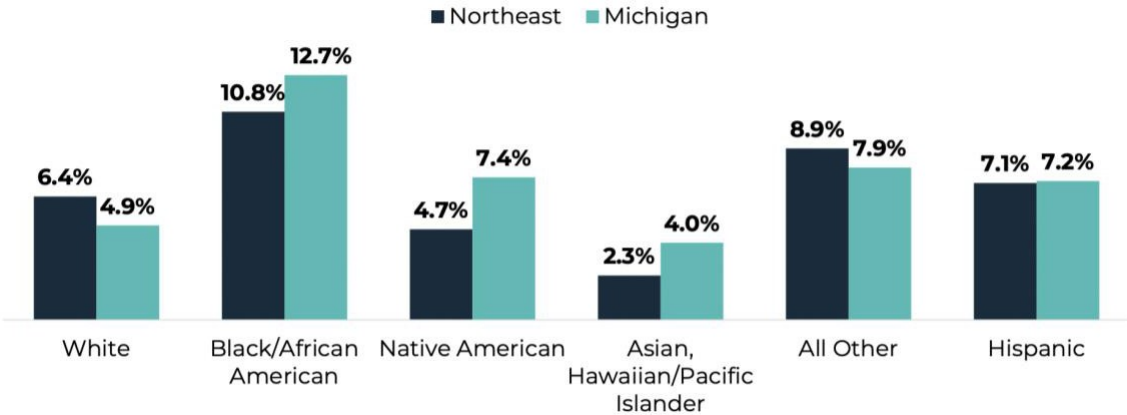
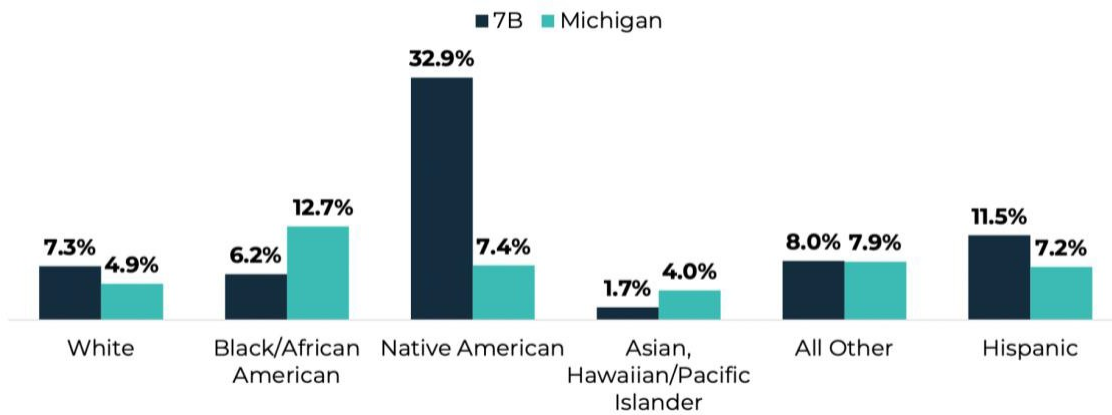


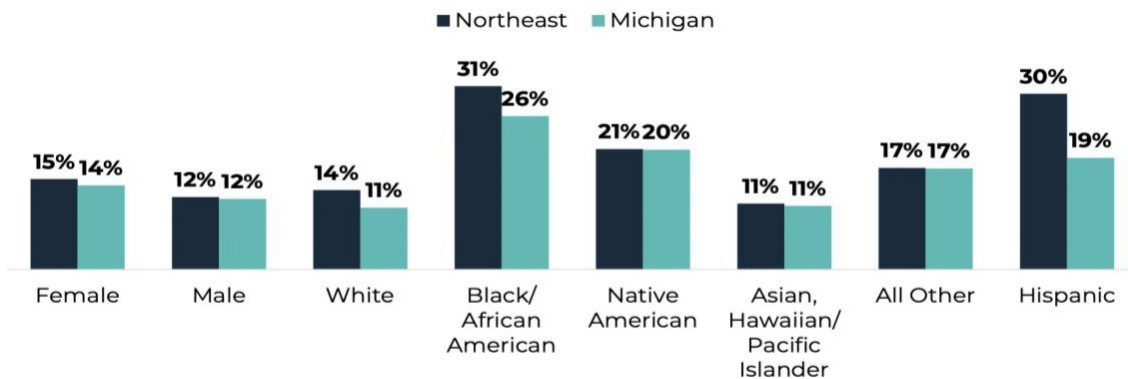
Figure 20: Unemployment Rates by Race and Ethnicity, Region 7B



Source MCDA 2024 from 2018 – 2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, US Census B
Individuals with Barriers to Employment

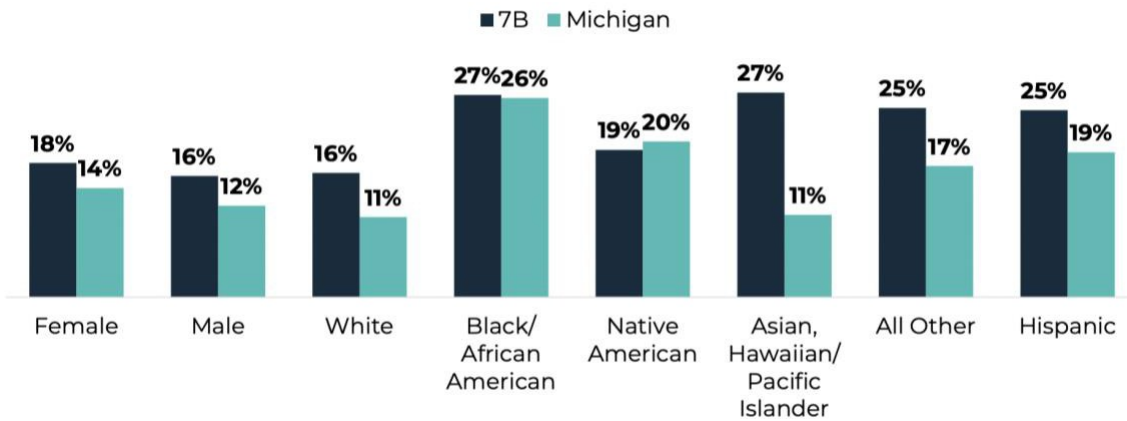
Poverty across the Region is elevated, largely driven by an elevated poverty rate in Region 7B (16.8%) compared to MW!NC (13.8%) and Michigan (13.1%) (Figures 21 and 22). Given the low populations among all non-white groups, percentages of poverty among non-white groups are likely to be noisy and are difficult to draw conclusions from in a single year data point.

Figure 21: Poverty by Race and Ethnicity, MW!NC



Source: 2018–2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 14)

Figure 22: Poverty by Race and Ethnicity, Region 7B



Source MCDA 2024 from 2018 – 2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, US Census Bureau

Disability rates across the Region were high among those 65+ but lower than state averages among those 64 and under (Figures 23 and 24). Notably, there are more males with disabilities than females, the opposite of the statewide trend.

Figure 23: Population with a Disability by Age and Gender, MW!NC

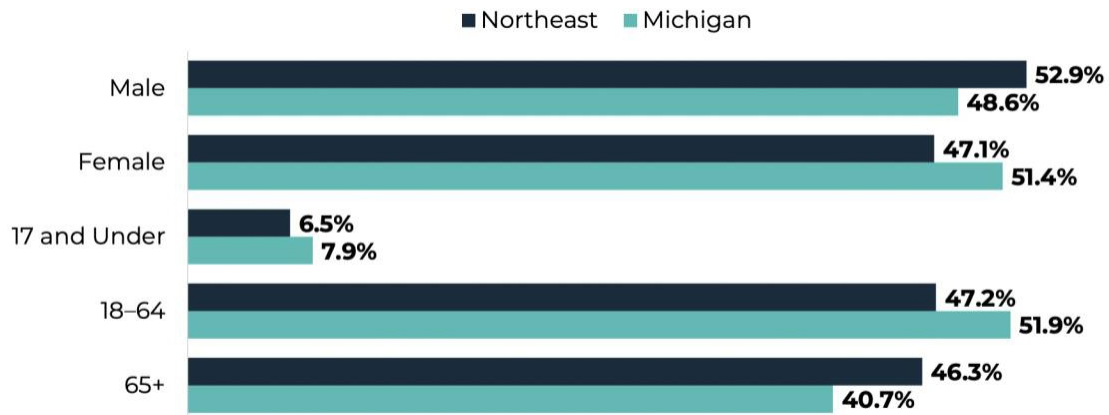
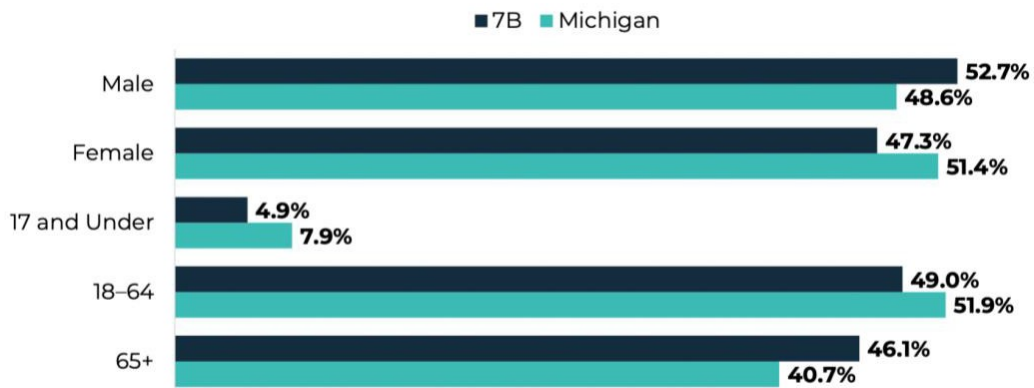


Figure 24: Population with a Disability by Age and Gender, Region 7B



Source MCDA 2024 from 2018 – 2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, US Census Bureau

Educational and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Educational attainment is relatively low in Region 3. The region has nearly half the rate of college and advanced degrees than the statewide average, and the proportion with a high school diploma or equivalency is around 30% more than the state average (Figures 25 and 26).

Figure 25: Educational Attainment (Ages 25+), MW/NC

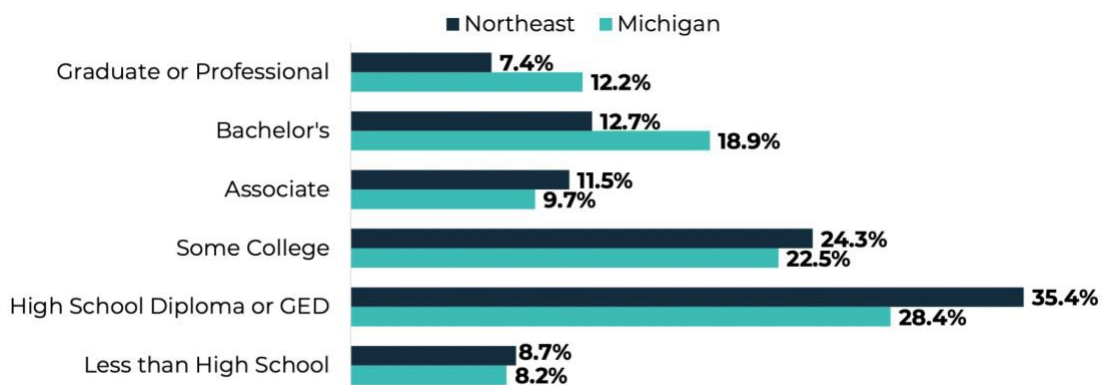
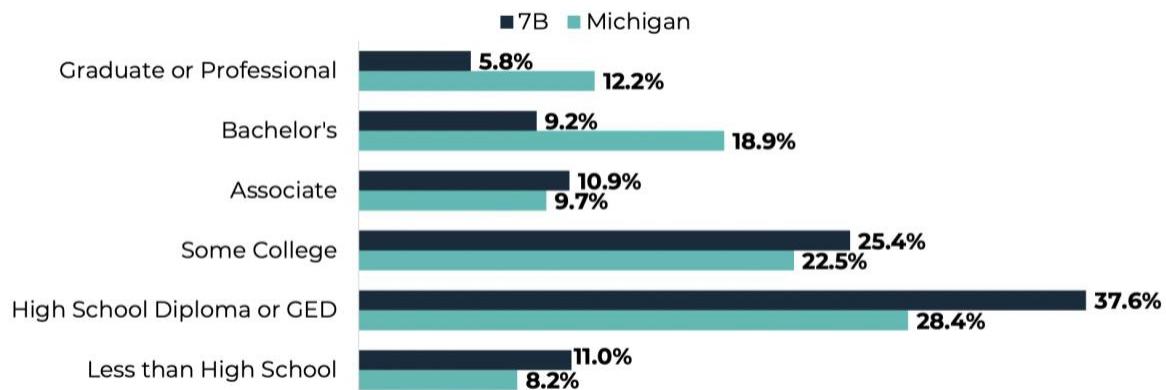


Figure 26: Educational Attainment (Ages 25+), Region 7B



Source MCDA 2024 from 2018 – 2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, US Census Bureau

Workforce Development in the Region

- An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in the region and the region’s capacity to provide the workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.**

Workforce Development Activities

The workforce development system in the region consists of multiple agencies and programs. Together, they form a network of services that prepare and maintain a skilled workforce to meet employer needs. The system consists of four domains of services:

- Education**, including CTE, general K-12, adult education (GED/HSE), and postsecondary certificate and degree programs, as well as combinations thereof such as dual enrollment and middle college.
 - Providers* in this domain include all K-12 school systems; four Independent School Districts (ISDs); Iosco-RESA Adult Education; Houghton Lake Alternative and Community Education; Alpena Community College; Kirtland Community College; Kirtland Gaylord M- TEC; North Central Michigan College; Mid-Michigan Community College; Industrial Arts Institute; and several private sector postsecondary training providers including Road Warriors Truck Driving School.
 - Kirtland Community College and Alpena Community College recently

expanded partnerships with Saginaw Valley State University, increasing access to Bachelor of Science degrees in Nursing (BSN).

- A Healthcare Career Pathway, funded by a grant that ended in December 2023, increased nursing training at Alpena Community College and fostered collaborations within the healthcare field in the Region.
- **Workforce Programs**, including career exploration and planning, case management, job search assistance, work-based training, funding for occupational training provided by the education sector, workplace readiness, training on self-advocacy, and connections to local employers. Specialized services are provided to opportunity youth, veterans, individuals and youth with disabilities, individuals on public assistance, justice-impacted individuals, migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFW), and more. Programs include, but are not limited to: WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; Employment Services including Veterans Services and MSFW; PATH/TANF;

State Vocational Rehabilitation; Trade Act (all acts); and Jobs for Michigan's Graduates.

- *Providers* in this category include Michigan Works! Northeast Consortium (MW!NC); Michigan Works! Region 7B (Region 7B); and programs under the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity (LEO): Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP), Veterans Services, and Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker Program.
- **Supportive Services**, including public assistance for food, childcare, income, utilities, and more; unemployment compensation; transportation services; food pantries; domestic violence shelters; substance use disorder rehabilitation; and many other programs that assist individuals and employers to remove barriers to successful, long-term employment.
 - *Providers* in this domain include the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS); LEO-Unemployment Insurance Agency; Northeast Michigan Community Services Agency (NEMCSA); local transit authorities; Great Start to Quality Resource Center; United Way; Health Departments; 2-1-1; Northern Michigan Substance Abuse Services (NMSAS); faith-based organizations such as Catholic Human Services and Salvation Army; and more. Both Michigan Works! Agencies also directly provide supportive services that address barriers to employment through a variety of funding sources, including the Barrier Removal Employment Success program.

- **Business Services**, including hiring assistance, training programs, retention

services, layoff aversion strategies, talent attraction services, labor market information, and wage data, are available through a variety of workforce development programs. In addition, business services across the ecosystem include economic development incentives and supports like site selection and growth; business planning and counseling; help with government contracting; access to overlooked talent pools (including justice-impacted individuals, veterans, and those with disabilities); coaching on accommodations for individuals with disabilities; retention services to reduce turnover; and work-based training programs, such as apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and incumbent worker training.

- *Providers* in this domain include both Michigan Works! Agencies, economic development entities covering all counties; the Michigan Small Business Development Center; APEX Accelerator; MRS; BSBP; and The Network (BRN administered by Region 7B). In addition, providers in most other domains work closely with employers to better understand their needs and support their workforce, including MWAs, Veterans Services, MRS and BSBP, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. All community colleges in the region have capacity to customize training programs for local employers.

Education and training activities are available for most in-demand industries and occupations. At the postsecondary level, the four community colleges, University Center, and private training providers offer the following programs for in-demand industries (this list is not all-inclusive):

Table 10: Education and Training Activities in the Region (not all-inclusive)

Healthcare	Manufacturing	Construction and Trades	Information and Professional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certified Nurse Aide • Registered Nurse • Health Information Technology • Surgical Tech • Medical Assistant • Critical Care Paramedic • Community Paramedic • Fast Track Healthcare Program (Clinical Medical Assistant; EKG Technician; Phlebotomy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturing Technology • Mechatronics • CNC Machining • Automation and Robotics • Programmable Logistics Control • CAD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welding • Automotive • HVAC • Concrete Technology • Utility Line Tech • Electrical Systems • Mobility Operators – ROV and UAV • CDL - A • Utility Arborist • Diesel Technician • EV Technician 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Information Systems • Management • Computer Aided Design • IT Fundamentals • Cybersecurity • Law Enforcement

Source: Our own compilation from Regional Leadership.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are offered by eight ISDs and/or local districts. The programs prepare students for most in-demand industries, and are designed to respond to the needs of industry within each community. Several programs offer industry-recognized credentials and/or college credit, some through early or middle college. Many of the programs listed above at the postsecondary level are also available through CTE programs; the programs work together to offer a career pathway with increasing skill levels and access to local employers.

The primary Adult Education program offered throughout the region is administered by

losco-RESA. Houghton Lake Alternative and Community Education is a partner for Adult Education in Crawford and Oscoda Counties. Adults can access services at any location to upgrade basic academic skills, improve computer and workplace literacy, and prepare for their GED, HiSET, or other high school equivalency exam.

The top 19 awards – certificates and credentials – earned during the 2021-2022 school year are presented in Table 11.

A number of high-demand occupations highlighted previously feature prominently here, including several health occupations, welding, CAD/CADD drafting, and HVAC technician. Notably, Registered Nurse Awards (122) are down a little from the previous Regional Plan (146 awards in 2019-2022). There have been significant efforts in this space in 2023 with the Healthcare Career Pathways and BSN partnerships, hopefully increasing this number in the future.

Table 11: Top 19 Awards by Program, 2021-2022 Academic Year

	Total Awards
Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies	160
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	122
Business Administration and Management, General	113
Line worker	91
Criminal Justice/Police Science	53
Welding Technology/Welder	45
Medical/Clinical Assistant	43
Medical Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiation Therapist	29
Automobile/Automotive Mechanics Technology/Technician	22
Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance Technology/Technician	20
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	19
Cardiovascular Technology/Technologist	18
Surgical Technology/Technologist	18
Electrician	16
Electrical, Electronic, and Communications Engineering Technology/Technician	15
General Studies	14
Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences, Other	13
CAD/CADD Drafting and/or Design Technology/Technician	13
Physical Therapy Assistant	10

Source: Our own compilation from JobsEQ data provided by MW!NC and Region 7B.

Strengths and Weaknesses

The region identified several strengths and weaknesses within the workforce development system. The Regional Service Strategies section below uses these strengths to mitigate weaknesses and turn disadvantages into opportunity.

Strengths

- *Make-It-Work Approach:* The region's service providers have a long history of strong partnerships, resulting in collaborative efforts that stretch limited resources.
- *Youth Engagement:* A range of programs are building awareness and opportunities for youth, such as Jobs for Michigan's Graduates, MW Youth programs – in-school and out-of-school, in-school navigators, CTE programs, school partnerships, and college access networks (OCAN). In addition to these programs, career exploration events are helping to expose youth to local options for career pathways, including MiCareerQuest, Talent Tours, Manufacturing Day, and Apprenticeship Week.
- *Jobs-Based Job Training:* The region successfully emphasizes apprenticeships, on-the-job training, Going PRO Talent Fund awards, and is collaborating to create meaningful training opportunities.
- *Broad Reach:* The region recognizes not everyone can or wants to attend college and cultivates opportunities for a variety of education/training levels, ensuring that there are multiple pathways to employment and economic opportunity.

Weaknesses

The labor market and economic conditions presented previously highlight a number of demographic challenges in this region:

- An older age distribution, with fewer young people aging into the workforce than seasoned workers reaching retirement age.
- Relatively high levels of unemployment and poverty.
- Lower than average educational attainment.
- A significant share of jobs (present and predicted future) are in lower-wage occupations.
- Relatively high long-term unemployment as those who exhaust unemployment benefits do not become re-employed.

In addition, the geography of the sparsely populated region creates challenges for the

workforce development system. The population of slightly less than 278,000 people is spread across a large expanse of 7,865 square miles.³ Together, the 14 counties are slightly larger than the state of Massachusetts.⁴ This causes several challenges to service delivery for all domains:

- *Transportation options* are very limited. County-based transit authorities exist only in some counties, with limited service. The low population density does not support the full range of transportation services. Therefore, individuals typically use their own vehicles for transportation to and from work. If their income does not support a reliable vehicle and ongoing maintenance, their ability to report regularly and on time is greatly reduced.
- *Lack of available and/or affordable childcare* and long drives to childcare opportunities constrain working opportunities for parents.
- *Lack of affordable housing*, which is also compounded by limited transportation services and a dispersed population, constrain employment and training opportunities.
- *Educational opportunities* are constrained, despite the relatively large number of programs and providers, due to geography. If a student lives too far from the program of their choice, they cannot attend because of the vast travel distance required.
- *Lack of broadband internet service* is a significant challenge for small businesses, entrepreneurs, and students. Though improvements are on the horizon, the lack of comprehensive broadband coverage in this rural region is a challenge.

Together, the “Big 3” structural challenges of transportation, available and affordable housing, and childcare were reiterated throughout the strategic planning process. We underscore the difficulties of workforce development amidst these challenges, though directly remedying them is largely beyond the scope of workforce development.

Capacity

The strengths and weaknesses discussed above illustrate both how well Regional Leadership are aware of the ongoing challenges and how dedicated they are to working on overcoming these barriers.

While services are excellent and well-connected to both employer and job seeker needs, this is a challenging task in a geographically dispersed region. Stretching program funds over a wider geographic area with transportation challenges inherently reduces capacity. Additional funding could improve capacity to provide more resources in more locations, improving accessibility.

Additional funding would provide capacity to expand in underserved communities

and assist more people with higher quality and targeted services. In a region with more persistent and structural barriers to employment, more individualized attention, longer-term relationships with staff, and more supportive services are especially valuable. Additional funding could provide more of this resource-intensive support. Additional training dollars could support more individuals with work-based training such as work experience and apprenticeships.

³ U.S. Census Bureau, data file from Geography Division based on the TIGER/Geographic Identification Code Scheme (TIGER/GICS), 2010

⁴ Land area in square miles, US Census Bureau Quick Facts, 2010

Additional capacity can be achieved through enhanced partnerships. Although the region is very strong in collaboration and relationships across all providers, there is always room for improvement. This is a collaborative region, accustomed to making the most of the resources available. In the Strategy Session, leadership discussed ways to continue and enhance collaborations for more capacity to reach both job seekers and employers.

Local Plan

- 1. A description of the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance as described in the WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency:**

Region 7B's stakeholders including WDB members, LEOs, partner agencies, and staff participated in planning efforts to identify goals (opportunities) and strategies. The process of assessing and implementing strategic visions and goals to meet the employment needs of local employers and participants will be an ongoing effort.

Mission

Region 7B strives to meet the needs of our employers and job seekers through a demand driven system to foster economic growth and prosperity. Connecting Employers, Resources and Talent.

Vision

To meet the needs of our area for Employment, Economic Development, Education, and Entrepreneurship in order to enhance the quality of life for our employers and residents.

The Local Plan aligns with the State of Michigan's WIOA plan goals/pillars: Pillar 1 Skills- Help more Michiganders earn a skills certificate or degree; Pillar 2 Opportunity- Increase access to opportunities that grow the middle class; Pillar 3 Growth- Support business and entrepreneurial growth through talent solutions.

Opportunity	Strategies
<i>Strengthen employer engagement and leadership within the system</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define the value proposition to employers and strengthen relationships to understand changing talent needs ● Identify employers that are succeeding with talent recruitment, development, and retention and promote their models, i.e. Exit interviews, Investment in addressing barriers such as available and affordable childcare ● Use sector strategies to increase collaboration across partners and companies (<i>Pillar 1</i>) ● Collaborate with economic development organizations to include regional priorities in wider economic strategies and to learn best practices from regions with similar priorities/challenges (<i>Pillar 3</i>)
<i>Leverage technology to increase connections and collaboration among partners (Pillar 1)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Customize services to a wide range of technology abilities (<i>Pillar 2</i>) ● Streamline onboarding with tech screening/microbadging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Utilize existing tech skills screening to identify and fill skill gaps ○ Provide more extensive tech skills where needed ● Combine with face-to-face / hybrid for workplace skills ● Increase use of social media/technology for greater visibility in the community and collaboration among partners
<i>Address the different needs of generations and make intergenerational connections</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Facilitate educational opportunities on communication preferences for all generations ● Use technology to better reach younger generations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More virtual options for programming ○ Increase social media outreach ● Increase intergenerational mentoring ● Support entrepreneurship opportunities for young people to take over businesses from retiring small business owners (<i>Pillar 3</i>) ● Increase financial literacy for younger and retiring generations (<i>Pillar 2</i>)

<p><i>Support progress in “The Big 3” challenges: housing, childcare, transportation (Pillar 2)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on workforce issues related to these systemic barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apprenticeships for childcare, construction workforce ○ Entrepreneurship, especially related to childcare ● Involve employers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Educate companies on the barriers ○ Help employers strategize retention and attraction strategies: Company cars, arranged carpooling / incentives, revolving loan fund for car repair/purchase ● Have a voice to represent the challenges that the workforce faces ● Maintain a workforce-focused effort here; avoid spreading too thin in this broad policy space
<p><i>Maintain strong partnerships and efforts for youth career exploration and planning (Pillars 1 and 2)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Connect with youth at a younger age <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More schools involved in youth career exploration ○ More youth from each school participating ○ Elementary age career exploration ● Manage expectations of younger generations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Entry level progression in the workforce ○ In person vs. virtual opportunities

Local performance goals for Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Local 2022 and 2023 performance goals for Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation as described in the WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A) are listed below. Performance goals for 2024 have not been negotiated at this time. This plan will be updated with the 2024 goals when available.

Michigan Works! Region 7B Consortium

Performance Measure	Program Year 2024
Adult	
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter After Exit	85%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	82%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,650
Credential Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	83.5%
Measureable Skill Gains	60.0%
Dislocated Worker	
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter After Exit	81.0%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	81.0%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,500
Credential Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	83.0%
Measurable Skills Gains	64.0%
Youth	
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter After Exit	79.0%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	77.0%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,200
Credential Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	74.3%
Measurable Skill Gains	48.7%
Wagner Peyser	
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter After Exit	70.0%
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	67.0%
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,200

- **A description of the local board’s strategy to align local resources, required partners, and entities that carry-out core programs to achieve the strategic vision and goals.**

Providing services directly to job seekers and employers as opposed to subcontracting services is a key strategy. Programs can be closely aligned with the agency’s mission, vision, and strategic goals, ensuring a cohesive approach to service delivery. It allows for programs to quickly be adjusted in response to changing community needs, policies, or new opportunities. Resources and existing staff can be leverage to capitalize on new opportunities reducing expenditures. A unified message across all programs fosters a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. This service delivery method builds stronger relationships with job seekers, employers, and partner agencies leading to a better understanding of needs.

2. **A description of the workforce development system in the local area including: The programs that are included in the Region 7B system, and a description of the local board’s strategy to work with entities carrying out core programs and other work force development programs to provide service alignment (including programs of study authorized under the Car D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006).**

Programs offered include: Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act (WIOA) programs (adult, youth and dislocated worker programs), Wagner Peyser Employment programs, Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), Adult Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation, Partnership, Accountability, Training and Hope (PATH), USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Programs, Veteran Services, Disabled American Veterans, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, The Bureau of Services for Blind Persons, Salvation Army, United Way, Women’s Aid Services, Adult Education Providers, Alternative Education Providers, Experience Works, Offender Success, Vocational and Community Education Providers, MSU Extension Offices.

The Region 7B Workforce System has been assembled to provide a number of core programs and services. Region 7B’s initial core priority is to train and employ disadvantaged populations, returning veterans, displaced workers, the unemployed and underemployed, or those seeking to upgrade skills to ensure greater job security to remain competitive in a global economy.

Region 7B staff will continue to develop a flexible and dynamic demand driven system of workforce development which prepares people for jobs that encourage self-sufficiency, lifelong learning, and work readiness.

Region 7B will continue to work with training providers and area employers to develop curriculum that helps students acquire the skills and aptitudes relevant to today's workplace.

Region 7B recognizes how partners of education, workforce development, and economic development continue to develop, strengthen and influence each other. The area is united and partners with community colleges, universities, Regional Educational Service District/Intermediate School District (ISD), economic development corporations, non-profits, chambers and others to influence workforce and economy.

These partners have influence on Region 7B programs and services, aligning them to meet customer needs. Members of the WDB serve on the CEAC and report to the WDB.

The CEAC serve in advisory capacity to the WDB on all educational issues. All partnerships will appropriately expand via WIOA priorities. The CEAC and WDB review the in-demand occupation list annually. The Business Solution Professionals, Career Advisor and Management have regular contact through joint meetings with the CTE Directors; STEM meetings and the Region 3 and 5 Strategic Team meetings, and execution of the MiCareerQuest Middle Michigan event. Members of the Business Services Staff also serve on the CTE advisory committees.

It is the Board's strategy to focus on continued collaboration with K-12 partners, Career Tech Education partners, MiSTEM Network, and post-secondary partners to expand Career exposure, exploration, experience, career readiness and navigation through the utilization of Career Navigators to create opportunities for youth to develop a plan to achieve goals for their future. The growth of the Career Navigator program, currently reaching six school districts, continues to grow year after year, due to the direct student benefits.

All three Career Tech Education partners are working towards adding a Career Navigator directly into their program. This will build upon the efforts to align curriculum towards particular USDOL Registered Apprenticeships, but will also serve to bridge the gap from classroom to work through meaningful work-based learning placements, pre-apprenticeship opportunities to earn a Michigan Apprenticeship Readiness Certification, as well as to build student to employer relationships.

- 3. A description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs will: Expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs. Improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).**

The local board supports the efforts of Region 7B's Career Navigators, Business Services, and Career Advisors to build relationships with Career Tech Education, Post-secondary education, the PK-12 educators, Veterans Services, local employers, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, and other community organizations to build a diverse talent pipeline system that, through a variety of measures including barrier-removal, supportive services, access to training and education, will support growth. Continue to collaborate with employers, community partners, and Post-secondary educators to strengthen engagement through sector strategies to identify business, talent, education, or other needs for each industry, as a means to strengthen the services available to support local employers. This support translates into a stronger talent pipeline of well-trained individuals who are ready and available to work. The Region 7B Boards support the increasing value of facilitating the development of career pathways for all client-customers and co-enrollment in core programs (as appropriate).

Region 7B staff are trained as Global Career Facilitators and will offer the opportunity for core partners to join in this training; new hires each enter into our USDOL Registered Apprenticeship that leads to becoming a journeyman as a Workforce Development Specialist. This will ensure that no matter the point of entry for participants, they will receive the same exceptional level of service to help them find their own Career Pathway. Region 7B also provides communication avenues for the Business Solutions staff, training providers, career counselors, etc. to discuss training needs identified by Sector Partnerships through video and conference calling technology, face to face meetings, and through other committees and workgroups in our region.

Some of the other projects we have been working towards in manufacturing, as part of a Sector Strategy and in partnership with Central Michigan Manufacturing Association and Mid Michigan College, is the establishment of a Pre-Hire Manufacturing Skills training program. This Pre-Apprenticeship training prepares individuals with the skills required to be successful in entry-level manufacturing positions, including USDOL Registered Apprenticeships within manufacturing. This training includes basic math, blueprint

reading, measuring instruments, robotics and more.

This program was created several years ago, but due to advances in technology, was no longer effectively serving the need of the employers, so a re-design was indicated.

Through the use of available technology and partnerships with area community colleges and ISDs, some career pathways outlines and examples are readily available. This information coupled with various instances of career counseling ensures the Board's supplemental support and service facilitation.

Finally, it is a standard Region 7B practice to achieve the maximum effectiveness and efficiency of all workforce development funds. As a result, co-enrollment of client-customers is a standard employed Agency practice/priority. Likewise, co-enrollment facilitates the expanded range of service opportunities for eligible clients.

Each staff member is cross-trained in the programs operated within the One-Stop which allows for Region 7B to best serve participants by connecting them with the most effective program to ensure success, often times leading to co-enrollment. The local Region 7B leadership Boards continue to support this cost-effectiveness practice.

Region 7B's partnerships with employers, post-secondary providers, the K-12 Career Tech Education providers, and USDOL Registered Apprenticeships, as well as LEO's Going Pro Talent Fund initiative, have improved overall access to post-secondary education, in efforts to increase the number of working-age adults with a skill certificate or college degree to 60% by 2030. These activities have also increased focus on post-secondary credential attainment and has inspired the enhancement of industry-recognized certification's that are portable and stackable to further encourage degreed pathways.

The Pre-Apprenticeship program with Kalitta has taken a different turn and they are now relying upon the CTE and Adult Ed programs to provide the Pre-apprenticeship training. The Going Pro Apprenticeship ended as did the MAICA grant. These programs have supported the dramatic growth in the workforce for Kalitta Air who now maintains 1,870 employees in Oscoda. At any given point in time, they have 150-200 Apprentices in training.

Current funding sources to help develop the Apprenticeship/Pre-Apprenticeship models and partnerships are through MiSTAIRS.

- 4. A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to: Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sector and occupations, in workforce development programs; Support a local workforce development system meet the needs of businesses in the area; Improve coordination between workforce development and economic development; Strengthen linkage between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.**

Region 7B works jointly with employers, educational institutions, and other agencies to ensure that skills attained by trainees as a result of participation in employment and training programs are consistent with the requirements of employers for workforce success. Region 7B utilizes the BSP program design; each county has a BSP that is the connection point between the employer and workforce development, ensuring that the employer's voice is heard.

Region 7B staff will continue to increase the role of private employers in the planning, development and evaluations of WIOA-funded education and employment training programs. Employers help to direct IWT, Customized Training, and OJT under this demand driven system.

BSPs are a critical component of gathering the Employer feedback to ensure that the demand driven system is working. BSPs gather feedback through a variety of methods, including but not limited to surveys, face to face meetings, training reviews, etc. This feedback is incorporated into the continuous improvement process at a local level through Management.

BSPs also report to the WDB on a regular basis to ensure that the feedback from Employers is not only heard by Management, but also the local boards.

The Sector partnerships, including business associations such as manufacturing and healthcare, as well as workforce development board members; the BSPs bring feedback to management; presentations to the WDB which includes education and other core partners. Employers are surveyed periodically to gauge needs of the businesses.

Another resource for employers, created as a retention strategy, is The Network, a Business Resource Network. The Network is a business solution to an economic problem. This solution focuses Retention, Talent, and Partnerships. The Network is a fee for service program, supported by workforce dollars and employer contributions.

The Region 7B Business Services Team (BST) serves as the ongoing direct channel between One-Stop/American Job Center staff, job seekers and businesses. The BST offers assistance in creating job orders, provides information about tax incentives for hiring and Labor Market Information (LMI), offers employer seminars, interviewing facilities and access to career exploration events. The BST develops long term relationships with businesses for employee recruitment, retention and training and offers follow-up with the employer to ensure that their needs have been met. The BST also takes an active role in the business community by attending Chamber of Commerce meetings, serving on Economic Development Boards, Business and Professional Associations, etc. The Network, a Business Resource Network, is a resource for businesses to bring a certified Life Coach to their business to work with employees to reduce barriers and improve retention, while creating opportunities for advancement.

Also, Region 7B has adopted the Michigan Industry Cluster Approach (MICA) in order to actively pursue industry sectors where, as a region, it had a distinct competitive advantage. Using the cluster-based economic development strategy, Region 7B targets those involved in the general manufacturing (targeting plastics, manufacturing, machine building, and research and development) and agriculture industries. One of the most critical challenges facing the manufacturing industry, in general, is the need for both highly skilled and semi-skilled workers for automotive related and plastics manufacturing.

Region 7B is the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) in four of the six counties. In Arenac, Gladwin, Ogemaw, and Roscommon Counties our BST is dually branded in workforce and economic development tasks. Through NTC, a 501c(3) organization, county economic development dollars are passed from the county to NTC and then onto Region 7B. This way all business services are managed under one roof for seamless project coordination, development and delivery.

The BST has all the tools, awareness and facilitation to be in-the-know for current business and economic issues.

This partnership endorsed and promoted by the Boards has greatly improved the coordination between workforce development and economic development programs and services.

The benefits of the blended-services approach have been increased recognition of in-demand occupation needs, greater staff efficiencies, and improved information sharing between Region 7B Boards, EDC councils, community collaborative, etc. The BST also meets regularly with the Business Development Manager (BDM) from Michigan Economic and Development Corporation and joins the BDM on retention visits.

To strengthen linkages between the One-Stop/ American Job Centers and the unemployment insurance programs, appropriate paper and online documents are readily available at all locations. Additionally, information on the location and contact numbers for unemployment insurance Resolution Centers is also available.

Each Resource Room is staffed with at least one Employment Services Specialist to help provide one-on-one assistance for customers in each of our six counties and other service center staff are cross-trained to be able to aid in employment services. Each service center has a telephone line that allows for individuals utilizing employment services priority when contacting the Unemployment Insurance Agency.

The Employment Services Specialist is trained to provide staff assisted services, such as Labor Market Information, job referrals, referral to WIOA services, etc. to help individuals applying or receiving unemployment benefits access the services they need to help them achieve success. The service center staff are also trained to provide Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) services to those that are referred.

5. A description of how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

As was identified and explained in an earlier Plan section, the Region 7B Boards have a long history of uniquely blending local and regional economic development and workforce development efforts/activities. A unique partnership practice in the six-county Region 7B region is the blending of business services and county economic development organization activities. Region 7B is the EDC in four of the six counties. In Arenac, Gladwin, Ogemaw and Roscommon Counties, our Business Service Team is dually branded in workforce and economic development tasks. Through NTC, a 501c(3) organization, county economic development dollars are passed from the county to NTC and then onto Region 7B. This way all business services are managed under one roof for seamless project coordination, development and delivery. For the remaining two counties that do not have direct EDC responsibilities, Region7B maintains a position on one of their boards, as well as regular communication with the EDC partners in those counties. This helps to ensure consistent communication and collaboration on matters pertaining to Economic Development needs and activities.

The BST has all the tools, awareness and facilitation to be in-the-know for current business and economic issues. This partnership endorsed and promoted by the Boards has greatly improved the coordination between workforce development and economic development programs and services. The benefits of the blended-services approach have been increased recognition of in-demand occupation needs, greater staff efficiencies, and improved information sharing between Region 7B Boards, EDC councils, community collaborative, etc. The BST also meets regularly with the Business Development Manager (BDM) from Michigan Economic and Development Corporation and joins the BDM on retention visits.

Entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services are two specialty areas cooperatively addressed. Community colleges that service the Mid-Michigan region have prioritized these career-building areas as have the Region 7B Boards. Formalized course training possibilities, curricula, and credit-driven options have/are being considered.

Several of the Michigan Works! Offices in the Region 7B area have SBDC resources for those seeking information to start their own businesses. The BST is also available for interested individuals to meet with and will be provided an appropriate referral to resources available to ensure success. In addition area ISDs and individual high schools have embraced entrepreneurship and/or microenterprise instruction.

- 6. A description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area including: How the local board will ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of the local employers, workers and job seekers. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA (Section 188), if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (41 United States Code [USC] 12101, et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. A description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.**

As was described earlier in this Plan, the Region 7B Boards have and will continue the use of advanced interactive computer communication technologies to ensure maximum one-stop service delivery reach.

Additionally, in partnership with local and regional workforce development partners, appropriate client-customer service delivery linkages will be facilitated to build the reliable accessible “closer-to-home” service opportunities.

Use of interactive webcast technologies has been a major step in cross-regional communications and information exchange. Additionally the use of transportable computer equipment has enabled Region 7B staff to establish partial one-stop services at any facility that retains internet connectivity.

These capacities will continue to be enhanced and expanded based on available funding and State system support.

Region 7B implements mechanisms to ensure compliance with all notification, complaint handling, and file documentation requirements established by the State and follows the State’s uniform procedures in the event a complaint of discrimination, seeking review and resolution under these procedures, is filed with the agency.

Region 7B does not discriminate in employment or in provision of services based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetics, sexual orientation, pregnancy, familial status, veteran status, height, weight, arrest without conviction, political affiliation or belief, or any other characteristic or activity protected by Federal or State laws and regulations; and against any beneficiary of programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), on the basis of the beneficiary's citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States, or his or her participation in any WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity.

Regularly review policies and procedures with staff during staff meetings, regarding ADA compliance, i.e. automatic doors, restrooms and workstations. When needed interpreters are provided as well as assistance with paperwork completion. Staff are encouraged to participate in training provided by the Michigan Works! Association as well as other venues. Region 7B will also consult with MRS regarding compliance with Americans with Disability Act (ADA) for the service centers and program accessibility.

Additionally, Region 7B leadership will ensure that ADA compliance issues are a standard agenda item for quarterly staff meetings. This will include information on accessibility trainings locally, regionally and in the State. Also as appropriate, online tutorials regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of program, services, technology and related materials will be made available to Region 7B staff and partners. Collaborative online training will be conducted through utilization of the Agency's video conferencing technology.

Region 7B and one stop partners coordinate a variety of workforce development resources to create a seamless, customer-friendly system that addresses the needs of employers and job seekers by offering education, job training, human service and other workforce development services to residents of this region. The partners have agreed to support the Michigan Works! system and have committed program resources to its success.

As previously indicated our partners include:

- Veteran Services provide services to veterans and contribute funding for infrastructure costs to be co-located;
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services provide services to persons with disabilities and contribute funding for infrastructure costs to be co-located;
- Mid Michigan Community Action Agency provide services to the community and contribute funding for infrastructure costs to be co-located;
- Bay Arenac Women's Services provide services to the community and contribute

funding for infrastructure costs to be co-located;

- RISE provides services to the community and contributes funding for infrastructure costs to be co-located;
- Adult Education and Alternative Education Providers provide services to youth and adult learners and contribute funding for infrastructure costs to be co-located;
- Michigan Department of Corrections (Offender Success) provide services to parolees and contribute funding for infrastructure costs to be co-located;
- Additional partners providing services in the One-Stop/ American Job Center include The Bureau of Services for Blind Persons, Salvation Army, Experience Works, Vocational and Community Education Providers, MSU Extension Offices, and NTC.

They will assist in the promotion and marketing of the system through their individual programs, and work toward providing excellent customer service, including participating in measurements of customer satisfaction and performance.

7. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

Despite being rural, this area is positioned well to provide a variety of adult and dislocated worker services to meet the needs of employers and job seekers. The following services are available, under WIOA Sections 134(c)(2), which include the referral and coordination of services, as appropriate:

- Determination of eligibility to receive assistance for employment training services;
- Outreach, intake, and orientation regarding the information and other services available;
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs;
- Job search, placement assistance, and career counseling where appropriate;
- Employment statistics information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas (including job vacancy listings by market area, information on job skills necessary to obtain vacancy jobs, and information related to local occupations in demand and the earnings and skill requirements for such occupations);
- Performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services;
- Information regarding how the local area is performing in relation to performance measures and performance information regarding the local One-Stop delivery system in the local area;
- Information relating to the availability of supportive services (e.g., child care, transportation) and referrals to supportive services;
- Information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for welfare-to-work, and financial aid for

- programs;
 - Use of resource rooms;
 - Group instructional sessions (e.g., resume writing);
 - Referrals to employment opportunities;
 - Internet access to job information and training services; and
 - Individual job development, job clubs, and screened referrals when accomplished through the use of self-service and informational activities.
- On-the-Job Training (OJT): OJT operates as a hire-first, job-specific training program, with training provided directly by local employers.

The employer/trainer receives partial reimbursement of the wages paid to the participant during a negotiated training period. Training periods are based on the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) Standard Vocational Preparation time, adjusted downward to reflect the trainee's entry-level skills and experience. Public employers may serve as OJT employer/trainers in a ratio not to exceed the local ratio of public to private employers. Because OJT is a hire-first, employer-delivered training program, it is responsive to the immediate hiring needs of local employers and to the occupational goals of local job seekers. Training is on an individualized basis and can, therefore, respond to the market hiring needs of small businesses, and can be targeted to occupations, which promise sustained employment opportunity, at wage rates, which contribute to family self-sufficiency. By providing training subsidies, OJT assists local businesses to hire and train new employees from the local labor pool and encourages labor force replacement and expansion. OJT is a multi-occupational program, responding to the immediate hiring needs of local employers.

- Classroom Training (Occupational): Occupational classroom training programs teach participants specific vocational skills designed to prepare them for immediate post-program employment. Local high schools, intermediate school districts, vocational institutes, community colleges or four-year institutions deliver all occupational classroom training.

All occupational classroom-training programs may use the TABE competencies and other available career aptitude tests for participants and job placement services. Occupational classroom training programs may be conducted entirely in the classroom or may include a combination of classroom activities and on-the-job vocational training. Occupational classroom training programs provide participants with prerequisite entry-level skills for higher level occupations and can provide the support services necessary to assist individuals to overcome secondary barriers to employment.

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) will be used for training services in Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. This will allow a participant to choose among qualified training providers. Customers will be able to utilize ITAs based upon funding availability and the individual assessments conducted.

- Registered Apprenticeships - Registered Apprenticeships provide employers that have job opportunities, requiring high-skill levels to connect with qualified job seekers who have potential to obtain the required high-skill levels.
- Entrepreneurial Training - Entrepreneurial skills training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business. Such training must develop the skills associated with entrepreneurship. Such skills include, but are not limited to, the ability to: take initiative; creatively seek out and identify business opportunities; develop budgets and forecast resource needs; understand various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option; and communicate effectively and market oneself and one's ideas.
- Incumbent Worker Training – designed to ensure that employees of a company are able to gain the skills necessary to retain employment or avert a layoff, and must increase both the participant's and company's competitiveness. An ideal incumbent worker training is one where a participant acquires new skills allowing the participant to move into a higher skilled and higher paid job within the company, thus allowing the company to hire a jobseeker to backfill the incumbent worker's position.

Incumbent worker training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (including a group of employers in partnership with other entities) to retain a skilled workforce, or to avert the need to lay off employees by assisting the worker in obtaining the skills necessary to retain employment.

- Customized Training: Customized training is designed to meet the specific requirements of an employer or group of employers with the commitment that the employer(s) hire the participant(s) upon successful completion of the training. For employed individuals to qualify for customized training, the employee must not be earning a self-sufficient wage or wages comparable to higher or higher than wages from a previous employment. The local WDB defines this as this as any wage that is less than a previous job, within the last five years, or if the wage of the employee is not comparable to the average wage listed for that occupation on O*Net.

The training for current employees must incorporate new technologies, processes or procedures, skills upgrades, workplace literacy, or other training that may result in the employee being able to advance in the career pathway; it must also lead to an increase in wage.

- Follow-Up Services: Follow-up services will be provided, as appropriate, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in adult or dislocated worker workforce investment activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. While follow-up services will be made available, not all of the adults and dislocated workers who are registered and placed into unsubsidized employment will need or want such services. The following are available under career services, as well as training services if combined with other training activities:
- Adult Education and Literacy Activities –programs, activities, and services that include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, or integrated education and training.
- Job Readiness Training - provides, through classroom lecture and role play, the development of the same set of skills and understanding to be acquired through work experience. It is generally offered as pre-vocational world-of-work skills that may include showing up on time, and workplace attitudes and behaviors.

Job readiness training usually does not include an associated work component, but it may.

- Transitional Jobs – a way for adults and dislocated workers with barriers to employment, who are experiencing chronic unemployment or have an inconsistent work history, to develop a work history and basic skills essential to keeping a job. Transition jobs are time-limited, subsidized employment in the public, private or nonprofit sectors. Comprehensive career and supportive services will be made available to transitional jobs participant. Transitional jobs can be effective solutions for individuals to gain the necessary work experience that they would otherwise not be able to get through training or an OJT. The goal is to establish a work history for the individual, demonstrate work success and develop skills that lead to entry into unsubsidized employment. There is no expectation that the individual will continue their employment with the employer after the work experience is complete.

Assessment of Region 7B adult and dislocated worker workforce development activities and services will be an ongoing continuous improvement function. On at least a quarterly basis the following actions will be initiated:

- Assessment of activity/service performance based on participant development notes and/or outcome data.
- Review of participant follow-up data to assess impact and value of applicable activities.
- Service provider/partner continuous improvement sessions to assess service type and availability.
- Placement of continuous improvement activities on Board agendas to ensure timely assessment is completed.

Region 7B will ensure that these actions and improvements are in line with the Region 3 regional plan.

8. A description of the design framework for youth programs in the local area, and how the 14 program elements required in 20 CFR Section 681.460 are to be made available within that framework.

Region 7B has developed a very strong Youth services program to provide a variety of youth services, including individuals with disabilities, traditionally underserved populations, as well as those with barriers to success. Previous assessments of outcomes within the region have previously identified disconnected youth (not going to school and not employed), high school drop-out rates, low college enrollments, and low training/connectivity to employers as problem areas. This has led to the enhancement of the Youth Services to include all of the following elements: 1) With input from the CEAC, Region 7B will engage youth with employers to create connections to the workforce, provide career exposure, and develop job readiness skills. 2) Maintain relationships with employers who have demonstrated positive outcomes with mentoring/coaching youth through their first work experiences. 3) Through regular contact with employers, and through Sector partnerships, Business Services Professionals from each county will stay apprised of what skills are in demand, what jobs are available, new technology that could pose skills challenges, new career fields, as well as potential new training programs that will meet local needs. 4) Emphasis will be placed on individualized career exploration to identify interests, current skills, skills testing results reviewed to help each youth identify the specific career pathway(s) they are interested in pursuing, as well as the coinciding educational path. Alongside this activity, the youth will have opportunities for job shadows, work experiences, leadership development,

supportive services, positive peer group development, and follow up program services.

5) A work experience component (coupled with education and/or training) will allow area young adults to build appropriate work habits before being placed in unsubsidized jobs. Work experience will not be a stand-alone service but a service integrated with other year-round services. 6) Summer programs may offer opportunities to link academic and occupational learning, and provide other elements and strategies as appropriate to serve the individual economic needs and career goals of the participants. 7) Local young adult employment and training policies and practices will be developed as needed to ensure continuity of services in Region 7B.

WIOA funds will be utilized to enhance and complement State, Region and other partner initiatives for eligible young people. It is be the goal of Region 7B, along with community partners, to provide the following program elements:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;
- Alternative secondary school offerings;
- Summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning;
- Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships, job shadowing, work-based learning, pre-apprenticeships;
- Occupational skills training;
- Leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision-making, team work and other activities;
- Supportive services;
- Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months, that may occur both during and after program participation;
- Follow-up services to access resources to remove barriers;
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual young adults;
- Financial literacy education;
- Career Exploration activities that includes access to Career Pathways, Labor Market and employment information, MiCareer Quest, job shadows and work experiences
- Digital Literacy;
- Entrepreneurial skills training;
- Labor market and employment information; and
- Prepare a plan for their future which will include specific next steps to transition into training, post-secondary education, or employment.

9. Local definition of Part B of Basic Skills Deficiency, which reads “a youth who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.”:

Part B. Who is a youth or adult, the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Basic Skills Deficient Local Definition: 681.290

1. An individual that is enrolled in remedial courses in post-secondary education

-or-

2. Has a social, mental or physical impairment as documented by a physician or other qualified service provider

-or-

3. Lacks the short-term pre-vocational skills (i.e. the learning skills, communication skills, or computer literacy skills) an individual needs to prepare for unsubsidized employment or training, as documented by and in his/her comprehensive assessment

-or-

4. On the Job Training ONLY- if an individual possesses 50% or less of the skills required to do the job as indicated by the training outline.

10. Description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which include an identification of successful models of such activities. Further, defined “requires additional assistance” for In-School and Out-of-School youth eligibility criterion in Local Plan.

Assessment of the type and availability of youth services will be conducted in a manner consistent to the assessment of adult and dislocated worker activities. Comprehensive assessment can include interviews, observation, career assessments and inventories (O*Net, CareerScope).

Assessment of Region 7B youth workforce development activities and services will be an ongoing continuous improvement function. On at least a quarterly basis the following

actions will be initiated:

- Assessment of activity/service performance based on participant development notes and/or outcome data.
- Review of participant follow-up data to assess impact and value of applicable activities.
- Service provider/partner continuous improvement sessions to assess service type and availability.
- Placement of continuous improvement activities on Board agendas to ensure timely assessment is completed.

Successful models for assisting youth with disabilities in Region 7B are effectively blended into the Agency/Adult Education partnership service process. Examples include:

- Customized tutoring to better target individual development
- Modified credit recovery processes to allow additional opportunity for advancement
- Young Professionals Program
- More frequent collaborative case management with MRS, Adult Education service providers and Michigan Works! staff to maintain maximum use of personnel and financial resources.

Definitions of Youth that require additional assistance is defined as the following:

ISY: Individual who Require Additional Assistance to enter or complete an education program or to secure or hold employment: (if no other barrier applies, only 5% of enrollments can use this barrier)

- Have repeated at least one secondary grade level or are one year over age for their grade;
- Have a core grade point average of less than 1.5;
- For each year of secondary education, are at least two semester credits behind the rate required to graduate from high school;
- Are emancipated youth;
- Have aged out of foster care;
- Are previous dropouts, have been suspended five or more times, or have been expelled;
- Have court/agency referrals mandating school attendance;
- Are deemed at risk of dropping out of school by a school official;

- Have experienced recent traumatic events, are victims of abuse, or reside in an abusive environment as documented by a school official or other qualified professional;
- Have serious emotional, medical, or psychological problems as documented by a qualified professional;
- Have never had a job;
- Have been fired from a job within the 12 months prior to application
- Have never held a full-time job for more than 13 consecutive weeks (full-time is a minimum of 32 hours of employment per week)
- Have not worked for 90 consecutive days in the last six months
- Have been referred to or are being treated by an agency for a substance abuse related problem.

OSY: A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment (if no other barrier applies, only 5% of enrollments can use this barrier).

- Have repeated at least one secondary grade level or are one year over age for their grade;
- Have a core grade point average of less than 1.5;
- For each year of secondary education, are at least two semester credits behind the rate required to graduate from high school;
- Are emancipated youth;
- Have aged out of foster care;
- Are previous dropouts, have been suspended five or more times, or have been expelled;
- Have court/agency referrals mandating school attendance;
- Are deemed at risk of dropping out of school by a school official;
- Have experienced recent traumatic events, are victims of abuse, or reside in an abusive environment as documented by a school official or other qualified professional;
- Have serious emotional, medical, or psychological problems as documented by a qualified professional;
- Have never had a job;
- Have been fired from a job within the 12 months prior to application
- Have never held a full-time job for more than 13 consecutive weeks (full-time is a minimum of 32 hours of employment per week)

- Have not worked for 90 consecutive days in the last six months
- Have been referred to or are being treated by an agency for a substance abuse related problem.

11. Information regarding any waivers being utilized by the local area, in accordance with any Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity-Workforce Development (LEO-WD) communicated guidelines or requirements regarding the use of the waiver(s).

Region 7B reserves the right to utilize the following State approved waivers:

- Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 of Governor’s reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY). The waiver reduces the minimum expenditure requirement to 50%.
- Waiver associated with WIOA Section 134(d)(4) and 20 CFR 680.800(a) to allow local areas to reserve more than 20% of Adult and Dislocated worker funds for incumbent worker training (IWT). This waiver allows for up to 50% of the funds to be used for IWT.
- Waiver associated 20CFR 680.780 to adjust the six-month employment requirement for IWT. This waiver no longer requires incumbent workers to be employed six months before receiving training.

12. Description of how the local board coordinates relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

The Region 7B Boards recognize that quality education is an essential factor in achieving a qualified workforce, thereby leading to sustainable economic development. It is verified that the fastest-growing and highest-paying jobs require some post-secondary education.

Region 7B is a partner with three community colleges (Alpena Community, Kirtland Community and Mid-Michigan College) that provide an array of educational courses and

takes an active role in the CEAC, which includes representatives from K-12 and ISDs. Both Kirtland and Mid-Michigan College have a MTEC that have private sector employers on their boards, helping to drive curriculum development to meet the needs of local employers. All are in agreement that the most significant industries in the area are the manufacturing sector, logistics, healthcare, retail trade, hospitality, avionics, agricultural and tourism. We also are within commuting distance from Delta, Northwood University, Central Michigan University, Alma College, Saginaw Valley State University, etc.

Core partners serve as members on the WDB that meet quarterly; Adult Education is directly provided in four of our service centers. Region 7B through a unique partnership with Bay Arenac ISD, IRESA and Clare Pioneer to provide Alternative Education in five of our service centers. Each service center in Region 7B is Pearson Vue certified as a GED Testing site for our clients, as well as a WorkKeys testing site; this reduces the chances of duplication of services and streamlines funding and staffing. Region 7B employs the Career Navigators, with funds from the school districts, and work to coordinate career services to K-12 with Clare/ Gladwin RESD to avoid duplication of services and to provide expertise. Coordination with the secondary schools to provide Mock interview; talent tours; career fair/business expo/career day; Reality Stores; MiCareerQuest; National Apprenticeship Week Events; Employment Skills workshops and Fast Track in the Post-Secondary providers.

The Region 7B Board will ensure relevant coordination between secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities.

13. A determination of whether 7B has elected to provide supportive services and needs related payments. The MWAs that elect to provide supportive services to participants during program enrollment must describe the procedure to provide supportive services. The procedure will include the conditions, amounts, duration, and documentation requirements for the provision of supportive services.

Region 7B provides supportive services to eligible participants to remove barriers that will enable them to participate in program activities including training, job search, and employment needs. A supportive service will not be provided if it is readily available in a timely manner from another source. The goal is to aid participants in job acquisition and retention. Funding limitations are established for the provision of supportive services by funding source. The provision of support services shall be documented in the One-Stop Management Information System where available.

Case notes shall be used to document supportive services that are reasonable and necessary for the individual to complete training and/or to obtain/retain permanent

employment. Region 7B will not provide needs related payments.

14. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

Region 7B will coordinate availability of local resources with the 2-1-1 system in each of the counties. To overcome participate transportation barriers Region 7B provides a variety of supportive services such as car repair, license fee, registration fee, mileage reimbursement, funds for public transportation. We collaborate with all our transit providers. We are also a member of the Clare County Transit board.

15. A description of the local per participant funding cap.

Region 7B has a \$10,000 funding cap for ITAs. ITA funds are utilized for tuition, fees, books, and other training requirements.

16. Description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the One-Stop delivery system.

All of our offices employ full-time staff capable of delivering Wagner-Peyser Act services. As the sole provider of Wagner-Peyser Act services, cross training of staff and information sharing ensures that we are aware of other services available from all core programs and partners. The Employment Services Specialists are able to make appropriate referrals to other core programs and community resources. Through our collaboration and participation with other partners we are all able to maximize services to those we serve.

17. A description of how the local area is planning to deliver employment services in accordance with the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, as amended by

Title III of the WIOA. This description shall include: The identification of a point of contact (name, address, phone number, email). Information regarding whether the MWA is providing employment services directly in the local area or if service providers are being used. If service providers are being used, please include the name of the provider, the type of entity, and whether or not the provider is a merit-based organization. For type of entity, please choose from the following: state governmental agency, local unit of government, special purpose unit of government, school district, intermediate school district, public community college, public university, or other. A description of how Wagner-Peyser funded services will be provided at no cost to employers and job seekers. An explanation of how labor exchange services will be provided using the three tiers of services: self-services, facilitated services, and staff-assisted services. A description of the manner in which career services are being delivered. A listing of how many staff at each site will be available to provide services. A description of how the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) Work Test will be administered. This description must include an explanation of how the registration of UIA claimants will be conducted and how reporting claimant non-compliance with the “able, available, and seeking work” requirements will be managed. A description of how the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment requirements will be administered. An explanation of how the MWA will participate in a system for clearing labor between the states by accepting and processing interstate and intrastate job orders as a component of the National Labor Exchange System. An explanation of how the MWA will ensure veterans will be provided access to the same employment services received by the general population. This explanation must include a description of the screening process the MWA uses to refer eligible veterans to Veteran Career Advisors for case management services and how priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses will be applied in the delivery of Wagner-Peyser funded services. An assurance that Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs) will have equitable access to and receive the full range of employment services that are provided to non-MSFW customers. An explanation of the services and staffing the MWA will use to ensure that MSFWs will be provided access to the same employment services, benefits, protections, counseling, testing, and job and training referral services received by the general population. This explanation shall include a description of the referral process to state MSFW staff or other appropriate MWA staff. A description of any other planned services or activities for which Wagner-Peyser funds will be utilized.

Point of Contact

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402 N. First St.
Harrison, MI 48625
989-539-2173
Reg7b@michworks4u.org

Region 7B provides all Wagner- Peyser services directly and we do not contract services at this time. Region 7B provides all services at no cost to employers and job seekers. The three tiers of services are:

Self- Services: Basic customer job search on computers and/or newspaper listings, obtaining paper resources

Facilitated Services: Workshops, assistance with copying/faxing

Staff- Assisted Services: Assistance with inputting information, career guidance/counseling, assistance filing for UI benefits/registering for work

A description of the manner in which career services are being delivered.

- Job search assistance.
- Assessments.
- Job referrals.
- Placement of job seekers.
- Re-employment services to Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants.
- Registering UI claimants for work.
- Delivery of the UI Work Test.
- Recruitment services for employers.
- Labor Market Information.

All staff have the ability to Wagner Peyser services. Region 7B has process maps and work instructions that outline the process of delivery of services.

At a minimum, claimants put their profile on the PMTC, but are encouraged to do an entire resume. Assistance is offered to help with the process. ES staff assist with job postings if needed.

Once a profile/resume is on the PMTC, ES staff input the information the MIS system that it was completed, along with case noting. It can also be noted if the claimant is "ready, willing and able to work". Claimant is provided job leads, if applicable. If the

claimant is non-compliant with the requirements, it is case noted and reported to management, who will ensure it is reported accurately.

Region 7B participates in accepting and processing interstate and intrastate job orders as requested by posting them on the Pure Michigan Talent Connect and advertising them in our Resource Room and media outlets, when appropriate.

Veterans are provided the same access to services that the general population has access to and more. Customers are greeted at upon entry into the service center and fact finding begins. Customers are asked to complete a Program Interest Form, which specifically asks if customers are veterans. A veteran self identifies or indicates he/she is a Veteran or spouse of a Veteran. Staff explain Core Services and Veteran's Preference to the Veteran (include PMTC 24 hour hold, training monies, etc.), aid the Veteran in completing resume, job search, etc. as needed. Staff also make appropriate referrals to outside resources as needed.

Staff offer for the Veteran to fill out a Military Service Questionnaire (3 different forms: 1. Current Active Duty, 2. Spouse or Family of a US Veteran or Service Member, OR 3. Military Service) form to see if the Veteran is eligible for services from the VCA Specialist, beyond Core Services offered through Employment Services. Region 7B staff review the Military Service Questionnaire to see if Veteran is qualified for VCA Services. If a Veteran is qualified the Military Service Questionnaire is provided to VCA.

Region 7B ensures access for MSWs. MSWs receive the same services as any customer that utilizes services in Region 7B service centers. MSWs are often identified in the Resource Room and are referred to Career Advisor to determine eligibility and suitability for WIOA programs that they require for workforce development services. There are no other services planned at this time for Wagner- Peyser services.

18. Description of any navigators being utilized in the local area to provide targeted support and resources to specific groups of individuals with barriers to employment.

We employ Career Navigators that are located within the high schools. The schools and Region 7B provide funds to make this position. The Career Navigators provided targeted support and resources for the Youth in secondary schools. Their work is associated with Career Exploration and skills development to equip them with the necessary skills for success in pursuing education, training and work.

They also help these individuals navigate any barriers that are holding them back from success.

19. Description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under the WIOA Title II. This description includes how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with the WIOA Sections 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and the WIOA Section 232.

Established agreements are in place with all providers. The Region 7B Boards and staff coordinate workforce development services with all Adult Education and Literacy activities in our six counties. Providers are located in the Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Iosco, and Ogemaw One Stop/ American Job Centers. The Region 7B Executive Director is a board member of the Alternative Educational Academy for Iosco and Ogemaw counties.

All Region 7B offices are Pearson Vue GED testing sites. In 2024 mobile testing was added as an testing option through a partnership with Iosco RESA. Region 7B is the license hold and provides accounting and technical support while Iosco RESA provides the equipment and staff to test participants. With mobile sites for local jails and the general public we are able to provide participants lacking transportation.

The Executive Steering Committee of the Workforce Board of Region 7B reviewed and approved the 2024 WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Applications for services in our area.

20. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services

available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA Section 107(d)(11)) between the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) or other local entities described in WIOA Section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 720 *et seq.*) (other than Section 112 or Part C of that Title (29 USC 732, 741) and subject to Section 121(f)) in accordance with Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

All agreements have been submitted to the LEO-WD and are available for review by emailing reg7b@michworks4u.org.

21. A description of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds (Grant Recipient).

In accordance with WIOA and State of Michigan directives Region 7B is the fiscal recipient for the six county Michigan Works! area.

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22. A description of the competitive process that is used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

When applicable, Region 7B will competitively procure sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities. The competitive process involves developing a request for proposal, publically advertising the availability, evaluating the proposal, awarding services, and developing a contract to provide services.

All competitive procurement complies with the most recent LEO-WD Policy Issuance regarding procurement.

- 23. The local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO(s) to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. Local boards are not required to provide or negotiate performance levels for those measures designated by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) as baseline measures as described in Section II.**

Performance Measures for 2024 and 2025 have not been negotiated at this time. See 1 above for 2022 and 2023 measures.

- 24. A description of the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board. For this section, local boards shall include:**
- **Effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria the local board will implement to assess their one-stop centers. A description of how the local board will allocate one-stop center infrastructure funds. A description of the roles and contributions of one-stop partners, including cost allocation.**

The Region 7B Boards will utilize the following effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria to assess the Region 7B Service Centers:

- A review of employer contacts, services requested and resulting satisfaction.
- Board members are encouraged and given opportunities to attend training and professional development to stay abreast of the most current workforce trends, including evidence based practices.

Based on the results of maintaining a continuous improvement process, the Region 7B Boards will appropriately allocate One-Stop/ American Job Center infrastructure funds to match the needs of client-customers both job seekers and employers. This action should ensure the most effective and efficient use of all workforce development funds. Infrastructure costs are allocated using our cost allocation plan approved by the WDA.

Detailed information regarding the Region 7B cost allocation plan for infrastructure funds include the following factors:

- Number of eligible versus non-eligible visiting the Centers;
- Space required for co-located partners providing onsite services;
- Needs for additional and/or specialized equipment or technology to ensure

- appropriate services;
- Incidence of special needs client-customers visiting one-stop Service Centers.

Each program will be charged directly for costs incurred that benefit only that program. These may include, but are not limited to: staff time, equipment, client-related support services and training costs.

In addition, each program will be charged a share of costs that benefit the program indirectly.

Cost categories include administration, training, core, intensive, career services, basic services, incumbent worker services, support services, car purchases, public transportation, auto related, and information technology/computerization and other as needed.

A spreadsheet is developed after the end of each month to determine the percentage of pooled costs to charge each grant or other provided services. Region 7B calculates the respective percentages by using the distribution of Region 7B direct staff wages, such as providing space for GED programs, specific building square footage will be used to determine appropriate costs.

As was described earlier in the Local Plan document, Region 7B will utilize a Memorandum of Understanding process to organize the roles and contributions of Service Center partners including cost allocation. When core partners utilize space in our service centers the Memorandum of Understanding is used to determine use value vs. the service value to determine a dollar value.

Based on the long-term positive relationships maintained with service partners and the limitations on service availability based on the rural nature of the Region 7B area, little cost allocation processing will be required.

However, applicable cost allocation factors such as office space required, number of client-customers served, and time on-site are used to appropriate costs.

Specific planned roles and contributions of one-stop partners include but are not limited to the following:

- General assistance in greeting and guiding customers to the appropriate service location/person.
- Participation in developing and distributing marketing materials in the Region.

- Contribution to co-facilitation of workforce development services to appropriate customers as needed.
- Provision of customer service data to ensure in-demand activities are available and duplication of services is eliminated.
- Partner in the development and delivery of special service events such as job fairs, business luncheons, resume workshops, etc.

25. A description of how training services outlined in WIOA Section 134 (Adult and Dislocated Worker) will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including: If contracts for training services will be used. Coordination between training service contracts and individual training; accounts. How the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

Region 7B does not plan to utilize contracts for training services. However, if needed this option will be considered for training services and coordinated with the ITA process. ITAs will be used for training services when appropriate. This will allow a participant to choose among qualified training providers. Customers will be able to utilize ITAs based upon funding availability and the individual assessments conducted. In the event training is requested that is not included on the ITA list, staff may submit a request for funding to the Region 7B Executive Director. After evaluating the request, the Executive Director will determine a determination as to whether or not to fund. Individuals may use the ITA account to access training services from any ITA eligible training provider on the statewide eligible training provider list. Michigan Works! Service Center staff may inform and facilitate career decisions; however, the ultimate decision shall rest with the customer.

To qualify, participants may be required to take a skills assessment test administered by Region 7B. The range of services that an ITA can pay for will be training costs, books, fees, and other training requirements.

26. A description of the process used by the local board, consistent with Section III, to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into development of the Local Plan, particularly for representative of businesses, labor organizations and education.

Region 7B's stakeholders including WDB members, LEOs, partner agencies, and staff participated in the regional and local focus groups to provide input for the plans. The WIOA Local Plan will be posted at www.michworks4u.org from July 30, 2024 to August

29, 2024 for the public comment period. Members of the WDB, CEAC, and LEOs will be emailed about the public comment period and social media will be utilized.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), availability of the final Local Plan will include reference to accommodations or special request of the plan in alternate formats, such as large print, audiotape, etc.

Persons wishing to comment must do so by email to:
Mark L. Berdan, Executive Director
Michigan Works! Region 7B
Reg7b@michworks4u.org

27. A description of how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under the WIOA and by one-stop partners.

In light of the rural nature of Region 7B's six county structure, incorporating an effective and efficient technologically-based system to manage the collection of client-customer information and data is important for programs carried out under the WIOA and by One-Stop/ American Job Center partners. Region 7B utilizes the internet based WDA One-Stop Management Information System (OSMIS), an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management system. Region 7B receives training and monitors data entry for accuracy on a regular basis.

Region 7B utilizes Salesforce, a computer-based database to track, monitor, and analyze service center traffic, service utilization, business services and activities. Salesforce allows Region 7B to use one system for both job seeker services, business services, and business resource network services. The system aids in our continuous improvement efforts to streamline services.

Use of interactive webcast technologies is essential in cross-regional communications and information exchange. Additionally the use of transportable computer equipment has enabled Region 7B staff to establish partial one-stop services at any facility that retains internet connectivity.

These capacities will continue to be enhanced and expanded based on available funding and State system support.

28. A description of the local priority of service requirements.

- a) **First**, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA Adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds.
- b) **Second**, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds, which are low income, receiving public assistance or basic skills deficient (defined below).
- c) **Third**, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
- d) **Fourth**, as a priority population established by the Workforce Development Board, Underemployed Individuals as defined in the WIOA manual:
 - 1. Individuals employed less than full-time (35 hours or less per week) who are seeking full-time employment.
 - or-
 - 2. Individuals who are employed in a position that is inadequate with respect to their skills and training.
 - or-
 - 3. Individuals who are employed, but whose current job's earnings are not sufficient compared to their previous job's earnings from their previous employment, which equals less than 70 percent of the individual's wage received from their most recent job earnings.
- e) **Last**, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA with approval from management.

Priority Groups are:

Veterans and Eligible Spouses
 Recipients of Public Assistance
 Low Income individuals (Lower Living Standard Income Level)
 Individuals who are Basic Skills Deficient

Underemployed Individuals (Locally Defined)

Basic Skills Deficient Definition:

Who is a youth that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th (8.9) grade level on a generally accepted standardized test (which ONLY includes the following: Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) or Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)).

-or-

Who is a youth or adult, the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Basic Skills Deficient Local Definition: 681.290

An adult that meets Basic Skills Deficient Criterion A

-or-

An individual that is enrolled in remedial courses in post-secondary education

-or-

Has a social, mental or physical impairment as documented by a physician or other qualified service provider

-or-

Lacks the short-term pre-vocational skills (i.e. the learning skills, communication skills, or computer literacy skills) an individual needs to prepare for unsubsidized employment or training, as documented by and in his/her comprehensive assessment

-or-

On the Job Training ONLY- if an individual possesses 50% or less of the skills required to do the job as indicated by the training outline.

- 29. A description of how the local board coordinates workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.**

Region 7B works closely with the State Rapid Response representatives, which includes notification of closures, coordination of services, and processing WARN and SUB WARN notices. The Rapid Response Team (RRT), as described in the attached policy, is responsible for working in collaboration with the State Rapid Response Representatives, including Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) Representatives.

- 30. A description of RR activities. The RR activities encompass activities necessary to plan and deliver services to Dislocated Workers to facilitate a relatively quick and unencumbered transition to employment or training, following either a permanent closure or mass layoff or a natural (or other) disaster resulting in a mass job dislocation. The State is responsible for providing RR activities. The State staff is assigned a geographic territory with the responsibility for the coordination of RR activities between the state and the local area. A Worker Adjustment Retraining Notification (WARN) Act notice typically activates the RR intervention in plant closings and mass layoffs. The WARN Act requires employers with more than 100 employees to provide at least 60 days advance notice of a covered plant closing or mass layoff at a site where the plant closing/mass layoff will affect at least one-third of the workforce and a minimum of 50 employees. The State monitors media reports and uses a network of local contacts, such as the MWAs, State and local economic development officials, the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, union officials, United Way, and other partners to identify plant closings or layoffs. Services included as part of the RR process include:**
- a. Initial RR meeting with the company and union officers (if applicable).**
 - b. Worker orientation meetings for employees. These meetings include presentations by MWA service providers and provide information on employment services; WIOA-funded career services (basic and individualized) and training services; Trade Adjustment Assistance, if applicable; special population services (Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Veterans' services), and local/community services (United Way, local community colleges, credit union counseling, etc.). Collaboration with other state agencies (e.g., Office of Retirement Services, Friend of the Court) are planned as needed. Michigan UIA representatives may also participate in worker orientation meetings and provide information on how to file/claim unemployment insurance benefits. Establishment and organization of a Joint Adjustment Committee (JAC). A JAC is an ad hoc group of workers and managers who organize to provide adjustment services on behalf of the employees who are about to lose their jobs due to a plant closure or a mass layoff. The purpose of a JAC is to help displaced workers make a successful transition to a satisfactory job or training in the shortest possible time.**
 - c. Layoff Aversion IWT, which includes an assessment of the potential for averting layoffs in consultation with the state or local economic development agencies, including private sector economic development entities and other key partners, up to a year in advance of**

an actual or potential dislocation event. Special attention and reference should be given to the timeframes and activities charted in the USDOL Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 9-12. An IWT is the actual employment and training instrument to upgrade and alter skills to maintain employment or transition to similar employment, a preventative measure, to save jobs, increase economic productivity, and decrease the negative impacts of unemployment. Reference the USDOL TEN 9-12, and the WIOA Manual. d. State Adjustment Grants (SAGs) are additional increments to a local area's Dislocated Worker formula funding award to meet documented funding deficits. The MWAs may request additional funding for a single or multiple dislocation event(s) via a SAG, following the application process outlined in the WIOA Manual. The process includes review of the application and supporting documents and negotiation with the MWA to finalize the award. WD reserves the right to award SAGs with specific terms and conditions, including demonstration that the SAG aligns with the Michigan Employer-Led Collaborative Approach, and/or an obligation to spend all or part of the SAG by the end of the Program Year in which it was granted or another time period as determined by the WD. e. National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs) are another form of assistance provided to dislocated workers. The NDWGs are discretionary grants awarded by the Secretary of Labor to provide employment-related services for dislocated workers in specific circumstances. WD and local MWAs work together to develop the application and project design for an NDWG, in response to a specific dislocation event. f. MWAs shall develop a policy describing how the local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with the aforementioned statewide RR activities provided by WD to address actual or potential dislocation events, in accordance with WIOA, Section 134(2)(A) and 20 CFR 682.300 to 682.330. In addition to the general RR elements listed under the subsections above, the policy must include, but is not limited to the following actions: i. A listing of the name of the person, title, mailing address, email address, and telephone number primarily responsible for (1) JACs, (2) SAGs, and (3) NDWGs.

ii. The steps taken to include layoff aversion as a component of RR, whether realized as a policy or a set of procedures in conformity with the USDOL TEN 9-12 and the WIOA Manual.

iii. A description of the coordination of layoff aversion with IWT.

iv. A description of the MWA's role in the function of JACs.

v. A description of the local circumstances which would activate a request for a SAG (for example, specific level or percent of local Dislocated Worker formula funding expended, obligated and/or unobligated; specific level or percent of local and/or regional unemployment; the size of an actual or

potential dislocation event; the time period between local dislocation events, etc.).

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA requires a Rapid Response process describing how Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion will be administered and coordinated with the State. This process sponsors activities to prevent closures and assist dislocated workers in obtaining re-employment as soon as possible after a job loss.

Business Solutions approach

Each county in the Region 7B Consortium service area has a BSP that is tasked with building ongoing relationships with employers to enhance the Region 7B demand driven model. This includes regular contact with employers, whether through direct contact, memberships on associations and councils, industry meetings, retention visits in conjunction with MEDC, etc. This approach provides for open communication to help avert layoffs and allows for the earliest intervention.

Layoff Aversion Strategies

As a standard practice, BSP's are well versed and trained in layoff aversion strategies. Layoff Aversion strategies and activities are designed to prevent, or minimize the duration of unemployment resulting from layoffs. This is a comprehensive approach that is customized to specific needs, quickly deployable, and coordinated with partners as necessary. Some of these strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Incumbent Worker Training is designed to ensure that employees of a company are able to gain the skills necessary to retain employment or avert a layoff, and must increase both the participant's and a company's competitiveness. An ideal incumbent worker training is one where a participant acquires new skills allowing the participant to move into a higher skilled and higher paid job within the company, this allowing the company to hire a jobseeker to backfill the incumbent worker's position.

Incumbent worker training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer, including a group of employers in partnership with other entities, to retain a skilled workforce, or to avert the need to lay off employees by assisting the workers in obtaining the skill necessary to retain employment.

- MWA will have the ability to use up to 50% of combined total of adult and dislocated worker allotments for incumbent worker training.
- Succession planning is often needed to help business owners find a way to allow a business to thrive after they have decided to leave. The Business Services Team has been trained in Employer Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) as a way to provide help to businesses that may be struggling with this situation.
- Customized Training allows an employer or group of employers to have a training that meets the unique needs of the job seeker and employer(s). This type of training can be used to hire new employees that presently lack the skills needed by the employer in a shorter turnaround time than traditional training.
- Economic Development is interwoven into the Business Services model at Michigan Works! Region 7B; four of the six BSP's are also directors of economic development in their county, while the remaining two are board members of the economic development groups. Every BSP attends retention calls with MEDC, strengthening the linkage between local workforce and economic development and State economic development, bringing more resources to businesses.

Other services that may be provided, as needed, are: asset mapping, providing assistance to employers in managing reductions in force, assisting in prefeasibility studies to determine if a company's operations may be sustained through a buy-out or other means, engage in proactive measures to identify opportunities for potential economic transition and training needs in growing industry sectors or expanding businesses, etc.

Rapid Response System

Region 7B will coordinate Rapid Response activities with the state to address potential or local events. Region 7B will utilize the state Layoff Aversion Guide to help guide activities in the Rapid Response system. When the BSP or any other staff member, either through direct communication or observation is made aware of a closure or

significant layoff they will email the Rapid Response contact (Chief Operating Officer) so that a WARN or SubWARN can be completed.

- WARN: The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) generally requires that a company employing 50 or more people trigger a WARN notices to be filed with TIA. This notice is provided to the affected employees, any union representing them, the appropriate unit of local government, Michigan Works 7B Consortium, and the State.
- SubWARN: Smaller employers, although not required, are also encouraged to notify complete a SubWARN notice. These are notices that help provide the State with a more complete picture of the economic and business climate.

Rapid Response Activities

The Rapid Response Process requires employer cooperation. It is through the Team's relationship with their businesses and partners, Service Center personnel seeing unusual numbers of customers coming in from a particular business (an early warning network) and/or notification from the state that employer contact begins.

Once a Rapid Response Team (BSP, Service Center Staff, Rapid Response contact, and other appropriate partners) has been formed it is essential that all of its focus be directed towards the displaced workers. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. Secure an accurate listing of the soon to be displaced workers (along with addresses, phone numbers, exit dates, years employed, etc).
2. Deliver quality services to affected employees before a layoff occurs, whenever possible.
3. Customize the services offered to meet the needs of the situation and the workers.
4. Prepare affected workers for transition from current employers to new opportunities.
5. Make the education and training effective for the individual (utilizing the appropriate evaluation and counseling techniques), with consideration of OJT, vocational and degree opportunities.
6. Conduct a Dislocated Worker Survey (hard copies available from TIA)
7. Assist with filing of Trade Adjustment Act, if applicable.

This process begins with administrative staff receiving a WARN Report from TIA and/or a

SUB WARN Report. Once the WARN or SUB WARN Report has been received, the RRT will:

- Have immediate and on-site contact with the employer, affected workers or their representatives and local community to discuss and create a strategy to address:
 1. The employer's layoff plans and schedule;
 2. The background, probable assistance needs and reemployment prospects of the affected workers; and
 3. Resources available to meet the short and long-term assistance needs of affected workers'
- The provision of information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs
- The assessment of other necessary services and resources needed, including workshops and classes, use of worker transition centers, regional hiring events
- Determination of the need for application of National Dislocated Worker grants

There are additional tools that are available to enhance the Rapid Response activities that, when appropriate, will be used. These include, but are not limited to:

Joint Adjustment Committee (JAC)

The RRT will, if needed, help organize a JAC, comprised of administrative staff, to help conduct the meetings and provide support staff, Service Center Staff, to provide information on services available, Unions, Displaced Workers, and the RRT. This will occur by mutual consent of the company (and union, if present) where at least 50 workers are being laid off and there is at least 60 days subsequent to the Rapid Response meeting before layoffs are completed that a JAC may be established with TIA support. Meetings will be scheduled the displaced workers will be requested to complete a Needs Survey.

After this information is compiled, the team will be able to determine if customized training sessions, seminars or workshops need to be developed.

State Adjustment Grant (SAG)

SAGs, may be used for statewide Rapid Response activities to provide additional assistance to local areas that experience mass layoffs, plant closings, or other events that precipitate increases in the number of individuals seeking dislocated worker services.

Activities funded by these grants must be consistent with the WIOA Dislocated Worker (DW) guidelines and the MICA Guidelines. SAGs are to support significant dislocation events with temporary time-limited funding.

Region 7B will apply for additional Dislocated Worker funds when possible. Circumstances in which we would apply may include, but not be limited to lack DW funds, unemployment rate and multiple or a large business closing.

National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG)

NDWGs are discretionary funding awarded by the Secretary of Labor to serve dislocated workers and other eligible individuals affected by major economic dislocations, emergencies or disasters.

In necessary circumstances employment-related service needs will be sought in coordination with state for application of funds.

Rapid Response Contact

SAG AND NDWG Rapid Response Activities and JAC

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