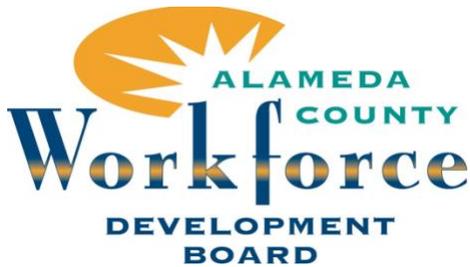


East Bay Regional Planning Unit



Workforce
Development Board
Contra Costa County



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I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

With the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, Congress moved the national workforce system in a new direction in terms of how to approach economic and labor market demands. While establishment of local workforce areas over the last four decades has always taken into account local labor markets, WIOA recognizes that economies tend to be regional and may extend beyond political boundaries that define local areas. WIOA's recognition of regional economies gave rise to California's establishment of Regional Planning Units (RPU), which represent groups of local workforce areas that work collaboratively to develop strategies reflecting regional economic needs of business and the workforce.

In accordance with federal and state guidance, the East Bay Regional Planning Unit (EBRPU) has developed a four-year Regional Plan to guide strategic initiatives throughout Program Years (PY) 2021-24, which covers June 1, 2021 through June 30, 2025. WIOA requires a Biennial Modification to the Regional Plan. This 2023 version of the Plan serves as the required update and, once approved by state officials, will become the official version of the PY 21-24 Regional Plan from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025.

About the Region and EASTBAY Works

The East Bay Region of California is a sub-region of the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area, one of the most productive and prosperous regions on the planet. The EBRPU is a partnership of member workforce development boards representing Alameda County and the City of Oakland, and Contra Costa County and the City of Richmond.

The partner workforce development boards have a long-standing regional partnership pre-dating WIOA, under the **EASTBAY Works** brand. Since 1997, the adoption of a common moniker has helped to create a unified brand that helps achieve many of California's goals for regionalism, as it establishes a singular identity that is recognizable to businesses and jobseekers and is used to promote workforce development services and initiatives.

It should be noted that EBRPU, East Bay region, East Bay partner Boards, and **EASTBAY Works** (EBW) are used interchangeably throughout the 2023 Biennial Modification to the PY 21-24 Regional Plan. Also of note are the following abbreviations for the local boards that are used throughout the Regional Plan: Alameda County Workforce Development Board (ACWDB); Oakland Workforce Development Board (OWDB); Richmond Workforce Development Board (RWDB); Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County (WDBCCC).

Development of the Regional Plan and Its 2023 Modification

The initial four-year plan developed for the East Bay region covered PY 2017-20, and was updated in 2019 in accordance with WIOA requirements. In response to guidance published by State officials in September 2020, EBW representatives began to prepare a new plan for PY 2021-24. Context for this planning was, however, unprecedented, as the COVID-19 pandemic was still in its early stages, prior to the widespread availability of vaccines and reopening of businesses and communities. The PY 21-24 EBRPU Regional Plan reflects the circumstances under which it was developed, highlighting the immediate and severe impacts of and limitations resulting from the pandemic, along with various uncertainties regarding the economy, labor market, and workforce participation. The 2023 Biennial Modification to the PY 21-24 plan, has been developed under far different circumstances than the original version. As such, EBRPU leadership has been able to address regional approaches and initiatives from a clearer vantage point, where reopening and recovery characterize the economic landscape.

II. ANALYTICAL OVERVIEW OF THE REGION

In late 2022, EBW commissioned a current analysis of key economic, demographic, and labor market data within the region. The resulting report has informed the 2023 Biennial Plan Modification's content addressing: employment and unemployment data; educational and skill levels of the workforce; current business needs; and relevant skill gaps; and analysis of industries and occupations with existing and emerging demand.

Development and Content of Labor Market Analysis

To support the biennial update to the EBRPU PY 21-24 Regional Plan, the *EBW Analytical Overview of the Region* was prepared by insytanalytics, in a January 2023. Key content of the report includes:

- *Demographics;*
- *Economy: COVID-19 impact and recovery; economic output; labor force and employment; industries, occupations, and skills; and core industries; and*
- *Emerging Sectors and Trends*

Select information from the report is included within this version of the Regional Plan. The full report, [EASTBAY Works Analytical Overview of the Region](#) includes extensive data summaries and illustrative graphics and is available on the EBW website, www.eastbayworks.com.

About the Analysis

The economic and workforce analysis presented herein, and in greater detail in the full report, includes the latest data and trends on demographics, occupations, and industries within the East Bay. It is comprised of information vital to workforce development planning, such as income and poverty data, skills and educational levels, and employer demand.

As stated, The East Bay Region of California is a sub-region of the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. The analysis presented within this section treats the East Bay as a single area, recognizing that the East Bay's two counties have clear distinctions, with different opportunities and challenges. In 2019, Alameda County accounted for approximately 67 percent of the East Bay's jobs. A large share of those jobs were in traded sectors ranging from biotechnology, creative professional services, and information technology to advanced manufacturing and logistics. In contrast, Contra Costa County's economy, with only few significant office concentrations, is dominated by household-serving sectors, such as food services, healthcare, hospitality, and personal services. In addition, eastern Contra Costa County, which has some of the Bay Area's lowest-cost housing, is also relatively distant from the Bay Area's major employment centers.

Overview of Current East Bay Workforce and Labor Market

The East Bay population is highly educated and increasingly diverse, which makes the region an exceptional place for high-value, high-wage, and high-growth industries and jobs. There are stark disparities, however, in education, income, and exposure to barriers, such as poverty and disability. These educational disparities create significant obstacles for many of the East Bay's residents to access stable, high-quality jobs; an issue that will continue to worsen as technology shapes the skills required to access better-paid jobs. At the same time, the region faces important challenges, from population and labor force participation rates that are still below pre-pandemic levels to persistent inequality as the economy continues to recover.

Between 2022 and 2032, the white population of the region is predicted to decline by 18 percent (170,000) and the Black population by nine percent (25,000), while the Asian population is expected to increase by 15 percent (119,000) making Asians the largest racial group in the East Bay. Linguistic diversity is consistent with a relatively large foreign-born population in the East Bay Region. Nearly 30 percent of East Bay residents are foreign born. Furthermore, between 2022 and 2032, population loss is largely expected to occur among younger age cohorts. This indicates that the East Bay population is predicted to continue getting older in coming years putting added pressure on services such as healthcare and increasing demand for low-wage service jobs supporting the elderly.

The relatively high median income in the East Bay obscures large racial and ethnic gaps in household income. For instance, white households have a median income of \$123,347 while the median income of Hispanic or Latino households is \$82,011, and for Black households in Alameda County it is \$59,817. Women, including many women of color, people with a high school diploma or less, part-time workers, and the unemployed are disproportionately in poverty. While only 6.4 percent of white residents are in poverty, 15.2 percent of Black residents and 11.8 percent of Hispanic or Latino residents are in poverty.

Educational attainment is relatively high in the East Bay compared to the rest of California, however as with income, there are significant disparities by race and ethnicity. Among adults 25 years and older, 28 percent have earned a bachelor's degree compared to 22 percent of Californians and 20 percent have earned a graduate, professional, or doctorate degree compared to 14 percent of Californians.

The COVID-19 pandemic was a tremendous shock to the East Bay economy and lasting impacts are expected. From January 2020 to January 2021, the East Bay lost approximately 112,000 jobs, or nine percent of total jobs. The pandemic exacerbated both economic and health disparities in the region, particularly along racial, ethnic, and gender lines. These disparities have been evident in problems such as workforce job stability, access to opportunity, on-the-job coronavirus exposure, and physical and mental health outcomes.

East Bay industry is highly diversified with the number of jobs distributed similarly across the largest sectors. Educational and Health Services is the largest major sector with 204,500 jobs in September 2022, which makes up 17.4 percent of nonfarm employment in the region. When considering industry sub-sectors, however, manufacturing (9.7 percent), retail trade (9.3 percent), and accommodation and food service (8 percent) are largest in the East Bay.

The core industries (size, growth potential, middle wage jobs) for East Bay are: manufacturing, professional and scientific, healthcare, construction, and transportation and warehousing. These industries are positioned to generate substantial innovation, investment, and job and business growth over the coming years. In addition, substantial venture capital has gone to technologies associated with autonomous vehicles, cloud-based productivity software, semiconductors, artificial intelligence (AI), and cybersecurity. While these industries are much smaller, they have the potential for massive societal disruption and could play an outsized role in the East Bay's future economy.

While there are many promising signs and areas of opportunity in the region, a major challenge and contributor to the East Bay's cost of living is housing. Housing prices have risen sharply since the mid-1990s and, especially, following the Great Recession, as housing costs began to rise again after 2012. The median listing price for housing in Alameda County in June 2022 was \$1.02 million up from \$700,000 in December 2016.¹ In Contra Costa County, the median listing price in June 2022 was \$867,000. High housing costs are also cited by employers as one of the greatest challenges in attracting and retaining workers. Expensive housing can deter talented workers in professional fields from moving to or staying in the region.

Additionally, a recent wave of layoffs in the “tech” industry is likely to affect the East Bay region. Estimates suggest that by early December 2022, over 120,000 people had been laid off by Bay Area tech companies with more layoffs expected. Layoffs will create short- and medium-term problems for the East Bay economy, but it also could mean an opportunity for East Bay companies to hire talented workers who have been let go.

A. Analysis of Employment and Unemployment Data

In October 2022, there were nearly 1.39 million East Bay residents in the labor force compared to 1.42 million in February 2022. Since the start of the pandemic, labor force participation has been lower among younger workers and older workers as well as less-educated workers. In 2021, 70 percent of workers between 25-64 years old with a high school education or less participated in the labor force compared to 87 percent with a bachelor's degree or higher. Similarly, 85 percent of men were in the labor force compared to 75 percent of women and 74 percent of women with children. This large gender gap in the East Bay and elsewhere is partly due to caregiving responsibilities,

¹ St. Louis Fed

² Bureau of Labor Statistics

particularly among mothers.³ But it also reflects longer-term trends in women's labor force participation. Nationally, the largest differences in labor force participation because of the pandemic were by level of education.⁴

Persistently low labor force participation in the East Bay is consistent with national trends showing labor force participation below pre-pandemic levels by 1.3 percent.⁵ While the cause of persistently low labor force participation is still under investigation, there is some evidence that people out of the labor force or working part time have less desire to work since the start of the pandemic.⁶ This suggests that the persistent contraction in labor supply is not driven mostly by women responding to the demand for childcare, since the drop in desired work hours is evident across demographic groups. The largest declines in desired work hours are among people with less than a college degree, which may indicate that lower-educated workers are avoiding low-wage service jobs that put them at higher risk for illness even as the effects of the pandemic subside.

Consistent with a smaller labor force, fewer people are employed now than prior to the pandemic despite a low rate of unemployment in the region. In September 2022, there were 1.18 million people employed compared to 1.19 million in February 2020.⁷ Overall, there are roughly half-a-million people between the ages of 16 and 64 years old who are either unemployed or not in the labor force.

While labor force participation is still recovering, unemployment has returned to pre-pandemic levels. In October 2022, the unemployment rate was 3 percent, the same level of unemployment as February 2020, just before the onset of the pandemic.⁸ Although unemployment has risen slightly since May 2022 when it fell to a low of 2.6 percent, it remains far below its April 2020 peak of 14.6 percent. Since returning to pre-pandemic levels, unemployment in the East Bay has been consistently lower than California as a whole, which has hovered around 4 percent since May 2022.

There are substantial differences in unemployment rates by race. In 2021, the annual unemployment rate was 7.2 percent in the East Bay. For white workers, unemployment was 7.3 percent and for Asian workers it was 5.8 percent. By contrast, Black workers had an unemployment rate of 9.4 percent. While unemployment has fallen by more than half in 2022, low unemployment rates don't necessarily lead to narrower gaps. For example,

³ Montes, Smith, and Leigh (2021). "Caregiving for Children and Parental Labor Force Participation During the Pandemic." Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. <https://www.federalreserve.gov/econres/notes/feds-notes/caregiving-for-children-and-parental-labor-force-participation-during-the-pandemic-20211105.html>

⁴ Goldin (2021). "Assessing Five Statements about the Economic Impact of COVID-19 on Women." National Bureau of Economic Research, White Paper. https://www.nber.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/GOLDIN_SEANWhitePaper.pdf

⁵ Bureau of Labor Statistics <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empst.pdf>

⁶ Faberman, Mueller, and Sahin (2022). "Has the Willingness to Work Fallen During the Covid Pandemic?" Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. <https://www.chicagofed.org/publications/working-papers/2022/2022-08>

⁷ Bureau of Labor Statistics; California Employment Development Department

⁸ Bureau of Labor Statistics

in 2019 unemployment in Alameda County was 3.9 percent and Black unemployment was 6.5 percent compared to 3.7 percent for white workers, a larger gap than in 2021. One reason is that the job gains between April 2020 and through 2021 were largely associated with an increase in low-wage jobs, while the number of middle- and high-wage jobs remained steady. As race and unemployment data become available for 2022, we are likely to see the same inequalities across racial and ethnic groups.

B. Analysis of the Educational and Skill Levels of the Workforce, the Current Needs of Employers in the Region, and Relevant Skill Gaps

Educational attainment is an important factor in reducing the risk of being in poverty. Educational attainment is relatively high in the East Bay compared to the rest of California. Among adults 25 years and older, 28 percent have earned a bachelor's degree compared to 22 percent of Californians and 20 percent have earned a graduate, professional, or doctorate degree compared to 14 percent of Californians.⁹ East Bay residents are also less likely than other Californians to have less than a high school diploma (11 percent), no more than a high school diploma (17 percent), or some college but no degree (17 percent).

Earnings vary widely across levels of educational attainment in the East Bay from approximately \$32,000 a year for people 25 years and older with less than a high school diploma to around \$83,000 a year with a bachelor's degree and over \$100,000 a year with a graduate or professional degree.¹⁰ Educational attainment is highly racialized, thus contributing to the racial inequalities in income and poverty. Whereas 56 percent of East Bay residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, 30 percent of Black residents, including 26 percent of Black men, have the same level of educational attainment. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders (24 percent), Hispanic or Latinos (23 percent), American Indian or Alaskan Natives (19 percent), and people who identify as some other race (17 percent) are particularly less likely to have a bachelor's degree or higher. Additionally, 25 percent of American Indian or Alaska Natives, 29 percent of Hispanic or Latinos, and 35 percent of people who identify as some other race have less than a high school education. These groups are especially at risk of being in poverty, as educational attainment impacts access to well-paying jobs in the East Bay.

Among East Bay residents with bachelor's degrees or higher, 56 percent have a degree in a science and engineering or related field compared to 51 percent throughout California.¹¹ The East Bay therefore has an especially scientifically and technically capable workforce. However, science and engineering education is unevenly distributed among men (57 percent) and women (40 percent). Outside science and engineering, 23 percent of residents have a postsecondary degree in the arts and humanities and 17 percent in business.

⁹ US Census ACS 1-year estimate

¹⁰ US Census ACS 1-year estimate

¹¹ US Census ACS 1-year estimate

Another key indicator of the regional economy is demand for skills by regional employers and the supply of skills in the labor force. Skill demand can be measured by its prevalence in online job postings, while skill supply can be measured by its prevalence in workers' online profiles on websites such as LinkedIn. Among the top in-demand skills, there is generally more demand than supply. One exception is marketing, which is the top in-demand skill. Between December 2021 and November 2022, marketing was included in over 32,000 job postings, or six percent of all job postings during that period, but was included in nine percent of all worker profiles. Marketing is a more prevalent skill in the labor force than other high-demand skills, which may make it easier for employers to find qualified workers to do marketing. Other top skills are also more prevalent in job postings than job profiles. For example, computer science was in three percent of job postings and one percent of worker profiles. This suggests that employers may have a more difficult time finding qualified employees with computer science skills.

Education, training, and skill requirements pertaining to the region's target sectors is addressed below in subsection C, *Analysis of Industries and Occupations with Existing and Emerging Demand*.

C. Analysis of Industries and Occupations with Existing and Emerging Demand

The local workforce development boards in the East Bay region have selected manufacturing, healthcare, and transportation and warehousing as the region's target sectors, recognizing that other sectors, such as construction and information communications and technology, are also significant in the region. The full analysis, accessible through the hyperlink above, provides information on these and other emerging occupations.

The region's target industries, which are described below, are among those that drive economic output in the East Bay. These industries are positioned to generate substantial innovation, investment, and job and business growth over the coming years.

Manufacturing: The strength of manufacturing's recovery is especially positive for the region. Ninety percent of manufacturing jobs are located in Alameda County. Although only 10 percent of manufacturing jobs are in Contra Costa County, the industry is the largest contributor in terms of economic output (Gross Regional Product) in the county. Manufacturing generates an outsized impact on the East Bay's economic output and high-quality job opportunities. The industry is directly linked to the Bay Area's thriving innovation ecosystem. The manufacturing sector in the East Bay consists of biomedical, life sciences, chemicals, electronics, food and beverage, machinery, metals, and transportation equipment manufacturing.

There are nearly 114,000 manufacturing jobs, and, as of January 2021, manufacturing accounted for \$38.1 billion of the East Bay's Gross Regional Product and \$16.1 billion in

earnings.¹² Manufacturing is predicted to grow 29.1 percent between 2016 and 2026. The industry is critical for the East Bay's economic growth. The industry provides a higher share of entry-level, middle-wage jobs than other sectors with relatively low barriers to entry in terms of experience and educational levels required. Manufacturing businesses tend to provide robust on-the-job training and career pathway opportunities.

The average salary for manufacturing jobs in the East Bay is \$147,692, much higher than the \$95,117 national average for similarly sized regions. However, wages vary widely across the industry and given the relationship between educational attainment and wages, white and Asian workers are likely to be in the highest paying positions. There are disproportionate numbers of Asian (33.9 percent) and Hispanic or Latino (25.5 percent) workers in the industry, and disproportionately few white (31.7 percent) and Black (5.7 percent) workers. The industry is also highly gendered with men, making up 67.1 percent of workers.

The largest manufacturing sector is automobile manufacturing, which accounts for more than 23,000 jobs.¹³ This sector is continuing to grow. From November 2021 to November 2022, there were nearly 37,000 unique job postings by roughly 1,500 employers. Tesla (3,142) and Lucid Motors (3,098) each accounted for roughly three times the number of job posts as Abbott Laboratories (1,094), Siemens (742), and Thermo Fisher Scientific (612).

Advanced manufacturing is a large and growing part of the East Bay manufacturing sector. There are over 7,500 East Bay workers employed in semiconductor-related manufacturing.¹⁴ Another 5,343 are employed in surgical and medical instrument manufacturing. Together, the top ten advanced manufacturing industries employ nearly 27,000 people in the East Bay. The importance of advanced manufacturing is evident in job postings data. From August to October 2022, computer science was the most frequently sought-after skill. Other top skills include new product development, automation, electrical engineering, data analysis, and mechanical engineering.

Healthcare and Social Assistance: The majority of healthcare and social assistance jobs are located in Alameda County (63 percent in 2021), but this is also the largest sector in Contra Costa County, with more than 66,000 jobs.¹⁵ Gross Regional Product of the healthcare and social assistance industry has grown steadily since 2007 from \$9.02 billion to \$20.6 billion and \$16.8 billion in earnings in 2021.

There are more than 180,000 healthcare and social assistance jobs and the sector is predicted to grow by 23.3 percent between 2016 and 2026.¹⁶ The largest number of jobs are in Ambulatory Healthcare Services and Social Assistance. There are nearly 50,000 people employed as Home Health and Personal Care Aides, which is over a

¹² Lightcast 2022

¹³ Lightcast 2022

¹⁴ Lightcast 2022

¹⁵ Lightcast 2022

¹⁶ California Economic Development Department; Lightcast 2022

quarter of the industry and has median hourly earnings of only \$16.98. The size of this occupation accounts for the high demand for skills such as CPR, caregiving, meal planning and preparation, and companionship. Wages across the sector are relatively low with a few exceptions such as Registered Nurses, which account for 10.1 percent of employees. From November 2021 to November 2022, the median advertised hourly wage in job postings for Healthcare and Social Assistance jobs in the East Bay was \$24.09

Healthcare and social assistance is a highly gendered industry with 72.9 percent of jobs held by women. There are also disproportionate numbers of Asian (31.6 percent) and Black (14.8 percent) workers. Over three-quarters of job postings over the past year listed less than a bachelor's degree as a required or preferred education level, including 39 percent that did not list any education requirement or preference.¹⁷ While there are low barriers to entry in the industry, it is highly racialized and gendered with predominately low-wage jobs.

Transportation and Warehousing: There are approximately 44,000 Transportation and Warehousing jobs in the East Bay with nearly 80 percent of jobs in Alameda County.¹⁸ Although the sector is relatively small, it has been predicted to grow by 42.7 percent between 2016 and 2026. Over the past 12 months, there were nearly 11,000 unique job postings with FedEx and UPS as the top hiring companies. Warehousing and Truck Driving the top skills in demand.

The East Bay plays a critical role in the broader region's goods movement and logistics ecosystem supported by the Port of Oakland and regional Airports, the Port of Richmond, rail and highway connections, and extensive space for warehouses, vehicle storage, and other distribution facilities.

The Transportation and Warehousing industry is key to the Blue Economy. Technological change is at the heart of the growing Blue Economy, which is key to the East Bay's future economy. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, prior to the COVID-10 pandemic, the Blue Economy grew faster than the national economy.¹⁹ Between 2014 and 2018, economic output of America's seaports grew 17 percent and reached 26 percent of Gross Domestic Product.

The Port of Oakland is one of the ten busiest container ports in the United States by cargo volume. The seaport enables the East Bay's businesses (especially manufacturing businesses) to efficiently engage with a global supply chain. The Port of Richmond is another major support for the East Bay economy, providing bulk and liquid cargo transportation.

¹⁷ Lightcast 2022

¹⁸ California Employment Development Department 2022; Lightcast 2022

¹⁹ NOAA (2021) <https://aambpublicoceanservice.blob.core.windows.net/oceanserviceprod/economy/Blue-Economy%20Strategic-Plan.pdf>

The federal government is focused on growing the Blue Economy in key areas such as marine transportation, ocean exploration, seafood competitiveness, tourism and recreation, and coastal resilience.²⁰ These are opportunities for the East Bay economy to grow.

Transportation and Warehousing workers are disproportionately men (70.8 percent), Hispanic or Latino (31 percent), and Black (15 percent). Entry-level education requirements and wages are relatively low throughout the industry apart from management positions, which typically require a bachelor's degree.

²⁰ NOAA (2021)

III. REGIONAL INDICATORS

The California Workforce Development Board has established “regional indicators” to assess coordination and measure progress within California’s 15 RPUs. The indicators serve to track processes and activities utilized by regions, providing a foundation for regional approaches that align with the needs of businesses in key sectors.

Regions must choose at least one of the following indicators:

Indicator A: The region has a process to communicate industry workforce needs to supply-side partners.

Indicator B: The region has policies supporting equity and strives to improve job quality.

Indicator C: The region has shared target populations of emphasis.

Indicator D: The region deploys shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education to meet the target population's needs.

A. Regional Indicators and Associated Outcomes and Metrics

Given the long history of collaboration among the four local workforce development areas that operate under the EBW brand, the East Bay RPU has selected indicator D: *The region deploys shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education to meet the target population's needs.*

In accordance with guidelines provided in connection with Regional Plan Implementation grants administered by the State Board, regional outcomes and metrics have been established for Indicator D.

Outcomes

Outcomes concerning the regional indicator include the following objective, along with two goals.

Objective: The East Bay region shares and coordinates resources to provide ongoing professional development and capacity building training for funded service providers and workforce development system partners in support of meeting the needs of region’s target populations and other key customers.

Goal 1: The region will have systems in place to: a) deliver ongoing professional development and capacity building training to funded service providers and system partners; b) track funded service providers’ and partners’ participation in regional professional development and capacity building training; and c) evaluate effectiveness, relevance, and applicability of professional development and capacity building training.

Goal 2: Increase the capacity of the system's service delivery network to: a) connect with regional sector strategies; b) engage in inclusive outreach and recruitment; and c) deliver equitable and inclusive service strategies.

Metrics

Regional leadership has approved the following metrics, which focus on eight benchmarks against which the region will measure and track its progress on Indicator D outcomes.

1. Number of Training Topics: As a measure of appropriateness and necessity, the number of topics relevant to staff's needs on which training is provided annually.
2. Number of Training Sessions: As a measure of availability and access, the number of annual sessions during which staff can participate in training, whether in-person or through other modalities.
3. Number of Training Hours: As a measure of the investment in training to build staff skills and effectiveness, the total number of hours of training provided annually.
4. Number of Training Attendees: As a measure of impact on overall system capacity, the total number of contracted service providers' and workforce system partners' direct services staff who annually participate in training.
5. Percentage of Funded Service Providers Represented: As a measure of engagement, the percentage of service providers who staff attend annual training.
6. Training Participant Evaluation of "Overall Effectiveness of Training:" As a measure of customer satisfaction concerning training effectiveness, 80% of participants will rate training as effective.
7. Training Participant Evaluation on "Ability to Apply Information Learned:" As a measure of customer satisfaction regarding training relevance and utility of information provided, 80% of participants will indicate that they can apply information learned to their work.
8. Training Participant Evaluation on "Recommend Training to Others:" As a measure of customer satisfaction regarding training quality and applicability to workforce development system functions, 80% of participants will indicate that they would recommend training to others.

B. Impact of Indicators and Metrics on Service Delivery

Local workforce system leaders chose to concentrate their joint efforts on sharing resources for staff training, as this outcome holds significant promise to increase the effectiveness of local boards, service providers, partners, and their frontline staff who deal directly with customers. As outlined in the 2023 Local Plan Modifications developed by the East Bay partner Boards, training will cover a wide range of topics, each of which has the potential to improve the quality-of-service delivery as well as participant outcomes. Training will include, but not be limited to, sessions addressing the following areas:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): The need to update staff's DEI knowledge base and skills is ongoing. DEI topics that could benefit frontline and other workforce services staff may include: understanding DEI; diversity vs. inclusion; unconscious bias; microaggressions; intentional inclusion; culture and identity awareness; accessibility; and inclusive leadership.

Cultural Competency: Training will be provided to support staff's understanding of the general characteristics of cultural diversity, cultural norms, and cultural differences. Staff will understand the importance of respecting individual cultural experiences, learn to better communicate with others to understand and address potential barriers to service, and develop greater cultural sensitivity within the workplace. Staff will become more aware of their own cultural beliefs and culturally related behaviors, and potential power imbalances, privileges, or biases when providing services.

Trauma-Informed Approaches: Regional representatives will identify and facilitate training on working with trauma-exposed participants. This will include developing skills to promote conversation; learning how to respond to disclosure; integrating participants' safety when providing services, advocacy, outreach; and trauma-informed care. Local boards may collaborate with local behavioral health agencies with expertise in this area.

Digital Literacy Skills: To ensure that staff's skills remain up to date with new technology and that new staff are exposed to the digital technology applications they need to work effectively in their roles, training will be provided annually, and refresher courses will be provided on an ongoing basis.

Evidenced-Based Approaches to Working with Priority Populations: Increasingly national workforce development system stakeholders, along with organizations in allied disciplines, have been collecting and disseminating data-informed and evidence-based best practices through a wide range of training modalities. Training focused on effective practices for serving people with disabilities, older workers, English language learners, justice-involved individuals, and others vulnerable and underserved target populations will likely be among the sessions made available to workforce system staff.

IV. FOSTERING DEMAND-DRIVEN SKILLS ATTAINMENT

The EBRPU has played a key role in the development of sector initiatives aligned with growth and other significant industries in the East Bay region and elsewhere in the Greater Bay Area. Regional representatives have facilitated dialog among industry leaders, while also fostering communication between employers and the workforce development system and its partners. As a result, stronger linkages between workforce and training agencies have been developed with businesses in key sectors and new career pathway programs have been developed to prepare job seekers for careers in the region's most promising sectors.

A. In-Demand Industry Sectors for the Region

Within the analytical overview section of the Plan, the subsection titled *Analysis of Industries and Occupations with Existing and Emerging Demand*, indicates that the local workforce development boards of East Bay region have selected manufacturing, healthcare, and transportation and warehousing as the region's target sectors, recognizing that other sectors, such as construction and information, communications and technology, are also significant in the region. The 2023 [EASTBAY Works Analytical Overview of the Region](#) offers detailed information regarding the region's target sectors and other industries with current and emerging demand.

B. Sector and Other Industry-Focused Initiatives

The EBRPU is currently working closely with two mature partnerships in the manufacturing and health sectors: the [Association of Manufacturers Bay Area](#) (AMBayArea) and the [Bay Area Health Workforce Partnership](#) (BAHWP). As described below, EBW has an extensive history of engagement with both of these partnerships, providing financial and infrastructure support, networking, and thought leadership as the partnerships have convened industry and developed programs.

Key contributions of the regional workforce system to sector initiatives in manufacturing and healthcare include the development of career navigation tools and support for creation of training programs for in-demand occupations. In addition, the EBRPU helps to advance sector initiatives in the region by facilitating communication between Directors of these partnerships and career centers staff to share LMI data, answer questions, and discuss training opportunities.

Manufacturing Sector Partnership

AMBayArea includes approximately 60 dues-paying employer partners from the nine-county Bay Area, with many more businesses being engaged through events and communications. The primary focus of the collaborative is to ensure that manufacturing thrives in the Bay Area. The EBRPU has been engaged with and actively supported AMBayArea since its inception. AMBayArea has pursued an array of strategies and

activities focused on increasing awareness of and expanding access to career opportunities in advanced manufacturing, aligning available training activities with employer demand, and linking manufacturing employers with prospective employees.

With the support of the East Bay partner boards, AMBayArea has developed a Manufacturing Volunteer Match Program to connect manufacturers with students, parents, and educators, and increase public awareness of career opportunities in manufacturing. The program allows educators to post their requests for industry volunteers to meet with their students. The volunteer might be asked to present in the classroom, judge a science competition, mentor a robotics team, act on an advisory board, host a classroom visit to the company's facility, table at a career fair, etc.

The Volunteer Match Program is funded by the EBRPU, and conducted in partnership with the East Bay Workforce Development Boards, Bay Area community colleges, Bay Area LEEDS (Linking Education and Economic Development Strategies), and Bay Area K-12 schools.

As the Biennial Modification to the PY 21-24 Regional Plan was in development, AMBayArea leadership provided updates on the partnership's initiatives, including current efforts to outreach to formerly incarcerated individuals and plans to implement presentations on careers in manufacturing careers within the region's jails. Going into the remainder of the four-year period represented by the Plan, AMBayArea will continue to concentrate on working with local workforce system representatives, including front line staff, in developing their knowledge of manufacturing careers and in recruiting candidates for training and employment.

Healthcare Sector Partnership

The [Bay Area Health Workforce Partnership](#) (BAHWP) is an employer-led initiative carried out with the support of community and education leaders, which seeks to meet current and future workforce needs of healthcare employers, expand employment opportunities for local workers, and strengthen the regional economy. The BAHWP employs a range of strategies to achieve these goals, including: increasing and diversifying the pool of qualified healthcare workers; helping trained individuals to secure jobs to meet regional demands; aligning the needs and priorities of employers in health profession education and training programs; systematically increasing work-based learning opportunities for K-16 and health professions students; building a data-driven rationale for changing current systems, infrastructure development, and sustaining healthcare workforce initiatives; and developing and advocating for policy solutions that eliminate barriers to increase workforce and education capacity, investment, and sustainability.

The BAHWP also seeks to implement specific internship and training opportunities in the healthcare field. These include: identifying opportunities for youth internships with industry partners; support for growing healthcare training opportunities in behavioral health, medical assistant, dental assistant, phlebotomy, emergency medical technician,

and pandemic-related employment; and supporting outreach and recruitment for regional training opportunities. The BAHWP has begun to develop apprenticeship models, as well.

In a 2023 update, EBHWP reports that much of its current efforts are supply-side driven, as the partnership has been successful in securing several grants to train new workers for high-demand healthcare careers. Many of these grants have an equity focus, as they target individuals from groups that are under-represented in the industry and are underserved by the workforce system. Looking ahead, BAHWP and local boards in the region should work together to engage healthcare employers in discussions regarding both current and forecasted demand and subsequently collaborate on program development and securing additional grant funding for training.

To complement their work with BAHWP, the local boards of the East Bay are each involved in a wide range of healthcare initiatives, such as City of Oakland's Community Healthcare Sector Partnership, which focuses on many smaller employers, such as clinics. Local boards also work directly with healthcare employers of all sizes, as exemplified RWDB's relationship with Kaiser Permanente and the Kaiser School of Allied Health.

Other Industry-Focused Initiatives

The EBW partners are addressing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Information Communication Technology space through a State Workforce Board-funded Workforce Accelerator Fund initiative, the East Bay Youth Technology Apprenticeship. In collaboration with regional employers and community-based partners, the innovative model is creating pathways to quality jobs for opportunity youth from disadvantaged or low-income communities by scaling successful strategies and embedding them into the workforce system. The initiative is closing the digital divide while instilling digital literacy through paid work experience supported with tailored wrap-around supportive services. The partners are fundraising to sustain this successful pilot.

As referenced above, the Transportation and Warehousing sector and the Blue Economy are essential to the region's future. EBW partners have long-standing partnerships with the key employers in the sector and are exploring ways to deepen their collaboration and stay informed of trends and opportunities as technology continues to shape the future of goods movement and skills requirements in the workforce.

Throughout the East Bay, the four boards are connected to various pilots and emerging initiatives in ICT, construction, trade and logistics, gig work, and entrepreneurial skills training. The boards expect that new sector strategies and partnerships may be developed over the two years remaining in the current regional planning cycle

A recently initiated project supporting East Bay's target sectors is being implemented through a state-funded Regional Equity and Recovery Partnership (RERP) grant. Under this grant program, the region will collaborate with the community college system to

develop and enhance curricula and pathways. Three of the East Bay boards will focus on healthcare occupations, while ACWDB plans to concentrate on careers in manufacturing.

Regional Commitment to Career Pathways

The East Bay partner Boards work consistently on developing strategies supporting growth and development of sector pathways in the region. One key area of this work is related to building systems and infrastructure to connect Career Center referrals to sector opportunities in a timely manner. The number and diversity of the network of EBW-related partners represents a unique resource. The multiple America's Job Center of California sites in the region serve as mechanisms for direct referrals to training and employment opportunities in manufacturing, healthcare, and other in-demand sectors.

An area of potential regional activity and coordination among EBW partners could be the collection of data on the outcomes of people referred to sector-related activities through the EBW network of service providers. Tracking this data (which includes information such as participant completions, certificates, job placements, etc.) could help identify how different elements of the region's sector-based partnerships are functioning, determine effectiveness and where changes need to be made. By incorporating data related to race and gender, the EBRPU could bring an equity lens to this effort, supporting each partnership in ensuring that women and communities of color are obtaining the same opportunities as other individuals in achieving access to sector-based training and employment.

C. Strategies to Communicate with Regional Employers

While the East Bay region spans two sizable, densely populated counties, overall, it is compact by California standards. The local boards within the region, therefore, share many businesses, which are actual or potential workforce system customers. Many workers commute across municipal and county boundaries, further highlighting the fact that businesses in the East Bay are regional employers.

When multiple workforce boards attempt to work together to promote their services to businesses that may need support in various locations, a common problem is disparate messaging and branding, which creates recognition problems and may cause confusion among business customers. The local boards of the East Bay recognized this problem many years ago and implemented a strategy that continues to support their efforts to communicate with regional employers. This strategy starts with the common EBW brand used by all four boards as the face of the local workforce development delivery system, along with co-branding as America's Job Centers of California, which link the regional system to the larger statewide network of workforce assistance centers. Business can access the EBW website to review services available for businesses and secure contact information for local business services representatives. To further promote consistent messaging and coordinated service delivery, Business Service Managers from the four local areas meet on a regular basis to discuss strategies for serving regional businesses. Service providers to businesses served by multiple boards may be funded through WIOA

Title I formula programs, regional grants, partner programs, or a combination of these resources.

V. ENABLING UPWARD MOBILITY FOR ALL CALIFORNIANS

Providing job seekers and workers in the East Bay opportunities to improve their economic status and achieve long-term financial stability is a driving principle of the EBRPU. All four local boards, along with service providers, workforce system partners, and training organizations are committed to creating a regional workforce system that promotes equity. Following are descriptions of workforce development programs, initiatives, and strategies that empower individuals, families, and communities.

A. Working with Businesses that Provide Quality Jobs

East Bay partner Boards will continue to prioritize business customers based on a several key factors, including whether the company is within one of the region's priority sectors; wages and wage progress potential; and opportunities for job and career advancement. While specific employer selection criteria are a matter of policy and, therefore, are determined at the local board level, it is central to the region's economic justice-based mission to align job seekers with organizations that will allow them to obtain their long-term career and financial goals.

Regional leadership is also aware that the CWDB has adopted the following definition of job quality and strives to meet these criteria whenever possible:

“Quality jobs provide family-sustaining wages, health benefits, a pension, worker advancement opportunities, and collective worker input and are stable, predictable, safe and free of discrimination. Quality jobs have the potential to transform workers’ lives and create resilient, thriving firms and communities and a more just and equitable economy.”

B. Shared Target Populations and Targeted Service Strategies

The local boards prioritize services to a wide range of vulnerable and underserved populations, including, but not limited to justice-involved individuals and opportunity youth. Below are examples highlighting current and potential regional strategies and initiatives to meet the unique needs of these priority populations. It should be noted that 2023 Biennial Modifications to PY 21-24 Local Plans developed by the four East Bay WDBs elaborate on services to other shared target populations, such as English language learners, foreign born individuals, refugees, non-custodial parents, CalFresh recipients, veterans, displaced workers, and others.

Justice-Involved Individuals

Justice-involved individuals face fundamental barriers to employment, including lack of access to housing or transportation, difficulties with document recovery, and behavioral health needs, which are often not addressed through traditional workforce development programs. There are 135 organizations within the region's network of publicly funded and

community-based providers serving the supervised population, 48 of which provide some level of workforce-related services. However, only a handful of organizations provide a continuum of workforce services paired with support services, and few provide earn and learn or on-the-job training opportunities. EBRPU is addressing this gap using Prison to Employment (P2E) funds, offering justice-involved individuals incentives to participate in workforce programs, strategies to remove barriers, and paths to a sustainable career.

The region is launching its second P2E project in 2023. EBRPU will continue to develop staff capacity to coordinate with crucial P2E partners, such as Probation and Community Correction Partnerships. The region is also building on our existing regional partnership with California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Division of Adult Parole Operations, and intends to expand reentry employer networks that are currently supported by various grants funded through federal, state, local, and philanthropic sources. The addition of new P2E funding to existing resources will infuse crucial support to help integrate these efforts into a seamless service delivery system that meets the needs of justice-involved populations.

Opportunity Youth

EBW recognizes the significant barriers that youth and young adults involved with the foster or justice system, along with those who are homeless, experience in connecting to workforce services, career pathways, and employment. East Bay partner Boards plan to increase engagement and services for this population by adopting innovative strategies to address barriers and enable these opportunity youth to connect with life-sustaining employment. Promising strategies include Summer Youth Employment Programs; the Workforce Accelerator Program-funded East Bay Youth Technology Apprenticeship IT & Web Development Program; Securing the State youth program expenditure waiver to serve high risk in-school youth (foster, homeless, justice-involved) and provide career assessment and planning, paid work experience, and incentives for completing milestones; Leveraging county Foster Youth Services, Probation and McKinney Vento funding to provide educational supports for in-school opportunity youth; Outreach and WIOA enrollment of youth soon to be released from incarceration; and low youth to case-manager ratios. Additional strategies include, weekly financial stipends and incentives and high-touch connections to partners offering specialized supportive services, such as, housing assistance, life coaching, professional mentorship, and mental health services.

C. Equity and Ensuring Equal Access to Training and Services

The EBRPU is engaged in a range of structural and systemic efforts intended to promote equity and economic justice in the region's workforce system. This is the focus of current regional plan implementation funding and of broader regional economic recovery planning activities. The goal is to integrate equity into the emerging strategies that boards will employ throughout the continued recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. While the pandemic required the redirection of resources to address the most urgent issues, it has also provided the chance to revisit existing strategies and explore new approaches. For example, ACWDB is conducting extended data analysis, which has revealed

underrepresentation of key target groups in various programs. These results have led to an outreach strategy at the zip code level to reach individuals in targeted communities. Based on initiatives of this type, local level best practices have the potential to be scaled regionally.

The EBRPU has a number of other promising local level initiatives to draw upon. In the area of equity in workforce strategies, the Oakland Workforce Development Board is working with the City of Oakland's Department of Race and Equity to develop and integrate equity-focused policies and practices into the local workforce system. On-the-job training is being used by a number of local boards as a strategy for enabling training participants with limited income and assets to support themselves while they engage in training. State ETP funds have been used by the RWDB to offer paid work experience to students with disabilities, and by WDBCCC to provide medical assistant training in a partnership with the BAHWP. The local boards in Oakland, and Richmond have developed their own equity strategies around First Source and Local Hire agreements in their jurisdictions. All four of the Local Boards are engaged in the P2E project, which builds upon AB109 realignment in both counties to bring paid work experience and customized supportive services to justice-involved individuals returning to the community.

Increasing Equity Capacity

Among the East Bay local boards, there is unanimous commitment to increasing workforce system capacity in the area of equity and economic justice. While strategies are in place, there is broad acknowledgement that improving equity for system customers is an ongoing process. Peer-to-peer learning among EBW partner Board Directors is continuous and includes discussions with key stakeholders to explore equity in workforce strategies. Going forward, partner boards may also consider identifying various local and regional policies and programs from various disciplines that have shown positive outcomes. Such information could be used to identify measures to track dimensions of equity in practices and outcomes across the regional workforce system, and could include adopting policies at the local level to support equity and job quality standards, along with those that emphasize income mobility.

The boards' commitment to improving equity strategies can create spaces for difficult and necessary conversations among the boards and with stakeholders. These conversations, inquiries, and learning exchanges have the potential to move the region forward in the design and/or adoption of practices to support greater equity and better job quality for the system's customers. Strategic service alignment across the region could take place where opportunities present themselves.

Regional Equity Strategies

Across the four local workforce areas of the East Bay, a wide range of effective workforce strategies have been promoted to increase equity and opportunity for all individuals and communities. As outlined within the analytical overview section of this Plan, a focus on educational attainment, skills development, and job-specific training for occupations

providing good wages and strong advancement potential are part of a sound approach to income mobility and creating paths to the middle class. The following approaches exemplify strong companion strategies to a focus on high wage, high demand jobs.

Work/Wage-Based Training Models

Participation in unpaid training and education is often not an option for individuals with barriers to employment. Low wages in comparison to the high cost of living in the East Bay region means that workers cannot forego income and sustain themselves during their participation in extended education and training programs. Providing workers with wages while they are training enables them to focus on learning new skills while not having to sacrifice income for themselves and their families. While there are numerous work-based training models allowable under WIOA and partner programs that offer earn-and-learn opportunities, EBW is focusing on two strategies offering both short- and long-term benefits to trainees: on-the-job training (OJT) and apprenticeships.

On-the-job training allows for employers to be reimbursed for a portion of a worker's wages while they are engaged in training. The training period generally lasts about three months, but is based on skills to be acquired and a dollar cap that varies by local board. Employers may be reimbursed up to 50 percent of hourly wages. When workers participate in OJT, they have the opportunity to earn wages, acquire skills, and learn job-specific functions at their new place of employment. Under the OJT model, workers are guaranteed a minimum of 32 hours per week and must be paid wages at least reflecting the current industry standard. Employers hire the trainee as a regular employee.

Apprenticeship offers substantial opportunities to advance equity in the workforce by providing access to quality, family-sustaining jobs, and income mobility. It can allow individuals who are unable to forego income to continue to earn a salary while they learn a new profession, or to advance in their existing field. Apprenticeships can also offer women and persons of color the chance to overcome barriers by demonstrating their skills in the workplace, enabling them to be evaluated and hired on their merits, rather than being excluded based on their identification as part of a particular group.

Working with a wide range of partners, local workforce boards throughout California, including those in the East Bay, are beginning to accelerate their participation in the development and implementation of registered apprenticeships programs. For example, ACWDB has begun to publicize its commitment to enhance apprenticeship efforts, acknowledging that "apprenticeships are perhaps the most powerful, yet least understood model." The board is convening a local apprenticeship roundtable with the goal of increasing awareness and understanding of apprenticeships, identifying occupations for which apprenticeship programs are needed, developing and seeking approval of new apprenticeships, and implementing these programs in cooperation with employer sponsors.

First Source and Local Hiring

two of the local boards in the region have supported the development of, and are engaged with, local hire ordinances in their communities, which leverage the economic power of local government to expand opportunities for local residents to obtain employment with contractors on city-funded projects. The RichmondBuild pre-apprenticeship construction training program works closely with businesses that are subject to this ordinance to provide a pathway to construction employment for program graduates. Also in the construction sector, the Richmond and Contra Costa County Boards collaborate with providers of the Multi-Core Construction Curriculum (MC3) pre-apprenticeship training, which offers on-ramps into skilled trades in the building and construction sector.

The City of Richmond and the Port of Oakland whole have local hiring policies which mandate a certain percentage of those employed on government-funded construction projects be filled by qualified local residents. In Richmond, local hiring policies impact not only construction employment, but also retail, office, administrative, and other employment in the city.

Wrap-Around Support

A key to delivering supportive services with an equity lens is developing an equity-centered service delivery system, ensuring that services are as accessible as possible to those who need them and are allocated to different communities in proportion to the need. The Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative (CCWC) model is an innovative approach to the no-wrong-door model of service delivery, which has been replicated in part by ACWDB. The OWDB has also used an equity analysis to identify the most impacted communities and aligned resources to meet support needs.

Regional workforce development efforts in the East Bay are predicated around an understanding that all workers have unique challenges and needs. Without vital services and resources, workers will not be successful in training, in their job search, and on the job. The following supportive services are some of the strategies that the region utilizes to empower job seekers and workers to participate in and successfully complete training and other workforce services: childcare; transportation; uniforms and work appropriate clothing; tools required for work; books; health and mental health services; costs to cover required medical tests (e.g., TB tests); legal services; emergency food; shelter; costs associated with obtaining required documentation or licensing (e.g., California state ID card, state testing, licensing fees); and parking permit fees for training purposes at community colleges or other training sites.

Financial Literacy

Financial literacy education supports participants moving toward financial self-sufficiency. The WDBCCC provides financial literacy services to enable workforce system participants to learn how to improve their income, increase their savings, build assets, and strengthen their credit rating. Because financial literacy is fundamental to the success of so many program participants, other boards within the region may consider scaling this model to help their participants improve financial literacy skills.

VI. ALIGNING, COORDINATING, AND INTEGRATING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

As described in the introduction to the 2023 Regional Plan Modification, the local workforce development boards' of the East Bay developed a structure to support program alignment many years prior to WIOA and California's implementation of the RPU framework for regional coordination. This long history of collaboration is the basis of the region's adoption of the "regional indicator" that is focused on resource coordination. The information that follows highlights both examples of collaboration and opportunities for cost sharing.

A. Regional Coordination Strategies

The local workforce boards continue to build on past and current successes in aligning and integrating programs, services, and strategies. Below are approaches utilized to achieve coordination.

EASTBAY Works Memorandum of Understanding

While the four local boards have distinct MOUs with core, required, and other local partners, the EBW partnership operates under its own regional MOU which enables the implementation of regional initiatives that are supported, primarily, by specialized grants from the CWDB and the state Employment Development Department.

The EBW MOU outlines goals core objectives for the partnership, including:

- Streamlining processes, reducing duplication, and managing similar services;
- Receiving grants or other funding for regional planning, plan implementation, staff, workforce system training, and expansion of regional initiatives;
- Coordinating execution of regional projects through sharing in regional funding;
- Agreeing that the lead subgrantee (local board) will contract with the other local boards in separate services agreements for each WIOA Subgrant to allocate funds and implement multi-board programs more efficiently; and
- Establishing a "lead agent" framework for other regional projects to efficiently implement regional initiatives.

America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs)

The AJCCs of the East Bay region operate as independent entities, but contribute to regional strategies by sharing their information on the EBW website, which enables job seekers across the region to locate the services that are most accessible to them. The geographic distribution of the centers throughout the region's four local area Alameda and Contra Costa Counties unifies the region by providing access to one-stop services

for all of the region's residents. Additionally, all funded service providers are required to publish events to the EBW regional online events calendar hosted by the EBW website.

Coordination with Regional Economic Development

East Bay partner Boards recognize economic development as an essential partner within the workforce development ecosystem of the region. An important component of the EBRPU's coordination with regional economic development efforts is the representation of the Business Services Manager of each of the four East Bay local workforce boards on the East Bay Economic Development Alliance (EDA) Economic Development Directors' table. This relationship allows for cooperative conversations about regional business climate, business openings and closings, and other collaborative opportunities between economic development and workforce development. A key service of the EDA is its development of annual economic outlook reports that provide data and analysis on the current and emerging trends impacting the region's economy and its workforce.

Each local board within the region has its own relationships with economic development organizations and functions. The efforts of one board to coordinate workforce and economic development often inform strategies used by other boards. The OWDB is uniquely situated for collaboration with local economic development initiatives, as it is situated inside the City of Oakland's Office of Workforce and Economic Development. This structure enables the OWDB to closely align its policies and programs with the economic development agenda of the city and to influence city policy related to workforce training and development.

In addition to collaboration with EDA and local economic development in Oakland, the EBRPU benefits from a strong relationship between the WDBCCC and the East Bay Leadership Council (EBLC), as well as the Contra Costa Economic Partnership (CCEP), both of which are based in Contra Costa County. The EBLC is a public policy advocacy organization that has as its mission to increase the economic vitality and quality of life in the East Bay. Membership includes many of the region's largest employers. The WDBCCC collaborates with the CCEP in leading the Equitable Economic Recovery Task Force, which is focused on creating an equitable recovery and opportunities for those who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic-induced recession.

The region's participation in a Bay Area grant funded by California's Community Economic Resiliency Fund (CERF) program is the most current example of collaboration with economic development to achieve the goals it shares with the workforce development system. The Bay Area High Road Transition Collaborative (BA-HRTC), which includes representation by EBW leadership, will lead the planning phase of the CERF grant. BA-HRTC members will work together to re-envision regional economic development planning in ways that are centered around the values of equity, high-road employment, and sustainability and climate resilience, that are shaped by workers and impacted community/members themselves. Goals established for the planning phase include several efforts that correspond with strategies expressed in this Plan, including, but not limited to, investments in high road training partnerships that create economic

mobility opportunities for local workers. The East Bay partner Boards will monitor the progress of the BA-HRTC to assess where opportunities become available to support, participate in, and scale initiatives and efforts made possible through CERF funding.

Promising Models for Strengthening Collaboration

Among the promising practices for cooperative service delivery that have been implemented in the region is the Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative (CCWC). The CCWC is an innovative public-nonprofit partnership of twelve education and workforce development organizations that currently operate within Contra Costa County. The CCWC was developed in response to an identified need for regional collaboration and system alignment to move beyond strategies that prioritize low-wage, immediate employment opportunities and work toward development of pathways to sustainable, well-paid employment for diverse job seekers.

The CCWC leverages WIOA dollars and resources already available in the County to provide services that connect participants to education and training opportunities. These services attempt to enhance essential employability skills and assist in the development and pursuit of educational and career goals that lead to income mobility and quality jobs.

Alameda County has adopted similar strategies and there is potential for all four boards within the region to take advantage of comparable models and ones that help to expand the workforce development system network beyond traditional boundaries to encompass a wide range of disciplines that reach individuals with multi-faceted and diverse needs.

B. Regional Administrative Cost Arrangements

Regional grants and other funding have created opportunities for the local boards within the region to share and leverage funding that benefits all local workforce areas and the region as a whole.

Budgeting for Coordination

An annual EBW budget supports regional communications and functions, including the previously referenced website with a virtual service locator and a regional events calendar. The budget contains line items for resource development, strategic planning, and other items that are determined necessary when the annual budget is created. In addition, EBW administers the HOTJOBS email listserv that links more than 350 workforce, education, and training professionals and provides a conduit for information sharing in the field. The four local boards may also share costs of regional research and planning efforts, while they continue to explore opportunities for administrative cost sharing.

The regional budget also supports the Regional Organizer position. The RO is key to managing all regional initiatives, resource development, and grant reporting, and serves as a central point of contact and coordination between the workforce development

system, regional industry partnerships and other system partners. The RO facilitates meetings at various levels for local boards in the region (e.g., Directors, Program Managers, Business Services Managers, Career Center Managers and the service network) to identify best practices, troubleshoot obstacles, build capacity, enhance the EBW brand, and identify opportunities for collaboration and innovation.

Strategic Initiatives

Activities carried out under specialized grant programs provide the clearest examples of strategic initiatives under which local boards share costs and participate in centralized administration. Such programs include a Regional Equity and Recovery Partnership (RERP) grant program; state-funded Prison to Employment (P2E) grants; a series of Regional Plan Implementation (RPI) grants, which have been made available to regions since 2018 and which were preceded by regionally unifying “SlingShot” grants. Other discretionary grant programs in which two or more East Bay partner Boards participate also benefit from centralized administration and sharing of costs to support service delivery across multiple local workforce development areas.

Apart from participation in grant programs, strategic initiatives, such as comprehensive training that is planned for direct services staff of contracted providers and partners, exemplify the benefits of cost sharing across the region.

VII. PRIORITIES AND KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE EASTBAYWORKS REGION

As part of the process used to develop the original PY 21-24 Plan for the East Bay region, workforce leaders and their Regional Organizer held public input sessions via videoconference to gather ideas and recommendations from individuals representing workforce system stakeholder organizations and the community at large. Feedback from these sessions was embedded into the Plan. During the development of the 2023 biennial update to the Plan, the local boards once again came together to seek input from workforce system partners, stakeholders, and members of the community. Based on a public forum held to inform the update to the Regional Plan, several themes were identified. The topics enumerated below capture these themes and are now slated for further examination, exploration, development, and/or enhancement over the remaining period of the Regional Plan.

The Directors of the four local boards that comprise EBW will work with their WDB members, elected officials, business leaders, the Regional Organizer, and local partners and stakeholders to set an agenda for review of these priorities and, following such review, determine where, when, and how any related action should be taken.

1. Changing attitudes about work, careers, and the labor market, particularly among younger workers, have become more evident in the wake of the pandemic. Workforce system stakeholders need to take stock of differing values that exist within the current multi-generational workforce and help job seekers and businesses to better understand the ways in which varying views effect workforce priorities, workers' preferences, work styles, and more.
2. The digital divide and lack of digital equity significantly affect many groups and individuals within the region. The workforce system partners should work together and collaborate with government, the private sector, and other disciplines to formulate strategies to eradicate lack of digital access.
3. The regional workforce system should seek to build career pathways that create opportunities for income mobility across a wide range of growth sectors, including target sectors outlined in the Regional Plan and in sectors with emerging growth and significance.
4. Trauma and a range of issues that impact emotional well-being are among the most significant lingering effects of the pandemic for many East Bay residents, and workforce system partners should consider opportunities to collaborate with public and community-based mental health organizations and providers.
5. Local workforce development boards and workforce system partners should implement strategies to effectively inform businesses of services available to

- them, including work-based and hybrid learning programs in which businesses are directly involved in hosting/providing all or part of the training.
6. EBW may benefit from developing messaging that highlights and differentiates the value and content of its services from other programs and resources.
 7. Given the limitations of WIOA on who can be served and the services that can be provided, local workforce boards throughout the East Bay region should examine opportunities to expand partnerships and linkages with organizations and programs that serve individuals and provide services that WIOA does not.
 8. Many East Bay residents looked to non-traditional employment models, such as gig jobs, during the pandemic and remain interested in opportunities to create their own work opportunities. Workforce system partners should examine opportunities to increase the availability of entrepreneurial skills training.

VIII. APPENDICES

- A. Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary (Attachment 1)
- B. Public comments received that disagree with the Regional Plan (Attachment 2)
- C. Signature Page (Attachment 3)



**EAST BAY REGIONAL
PLANNING UNIT**
Regional Plan 2021-2024

**East Bay Regional Planning Unit
PY 21-24 Regional Plan Public Comment Announcement**

The East Bay Regional Planning Unit (EBRPU) is pleased to release the Draft 2021–2024 Regional Plan for 30-day public comment ending April 19, 2021.

The plan is available on the [EASTBAYWorks](#) website. Comments can be submitted directly to regionalplancommentebrpu@gmail.com or through the [EASTBAYWorks](#) website.

The State of California Workforce Development Board requires regions to create new Regional Plans every four years. The EBRPU comprises the four East Bay Workforce Development Boards serving Alameda and Contra Costa Counties and the Cities of Oakland and Richmond.

Developed with input from partners and stakeholders, the regional plan describes goals and strategies for building regionally coordinated workforce services to meet the needs of employers and job seekers anchored by equity and inclusion.

The East Bay Regional Planning Unit (EBRPU) includes the following Workforce Development Entities in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties:

- EASTBAYWorks
- Alameda County Workforce Development Board
- Contra Costa County Workforce Development Board
- Oakland Workforce Development Board
- Richmond Workforce Development Board

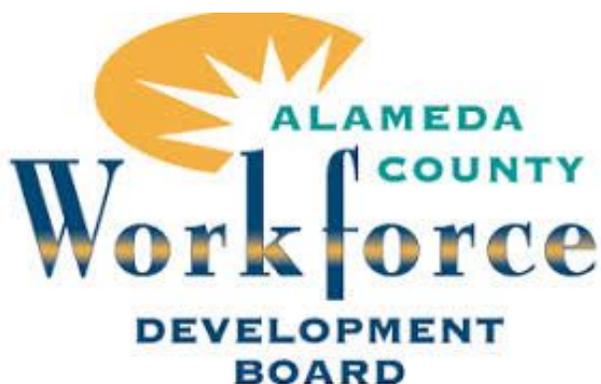


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East Bay Regional Planning Unit Regional Plan 2021-2024

Introduction

The East Bay Region of California is a sub-region of the nine county San Francisco Bay Area, one of the most productive and prosperous regions on the planet. The East Bay Regional Planning Unit (EBRPU) is a partnership of member Workforce Development Boards representing Alameda County and the City of Oakland, and Contra Costa County and the City of Richmond. The four Workforce Development Boards have a long-standing regional partnership pre-dating the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), under the EASTBAYWorks brand.

1. Analytical Overview of the Region

Workforce and Economic Analysis

The East Bay Region's economy and its workforce have been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, workforce and economic analysis requires maintaining a balance between short-term impacts and long-term trends. Further, the value of historical data in predicting future trends is limited. The uncertainties of the current economic crisis are woven into this analysis as part of the larger effort to plan for regional workforce development efforts once the COVID pandemic abates.

The following Workforce and Economic Analysis is intentionally framed through a racial equity and economic justice lens. The disproportionate impact of the COVID-induced recession on people of lower socio-economic status and persons of color cannot be overstated. Job losses have hit levels not seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s, particularly in occupations such as food service, hospitality, personal service, entertainment, and travel—positions filled predominantly by lower paid workers. Protests on behalf of racial justice and equity occurred across the country in the Fall of 2020. Though these protests were sparked by incidents of police brutality against African American citizens, they were also an outcry against the economic inequity laid bare by the pandemic.

This section also includes information vital to workforce development planning, such as demographic information, income and poverty data, skills and educational levels, and employer demand.

1.a. COVID-19 Impact on the East Bay Workforce

Much like the rest of the United States, California and the East Bay Region have experienced serious disruption as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in March 2020, counties issued stay-at-home orders and on March 19th California Governor Gavin Newsome issued the nation's first statewide stay-at-home order. At the time this plan was written the pandemic continues, and both Alameda and Contra Costa Counties are under stay-at-home orders as rates of infection and deaths remain high. This section details the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the East Bay workforce.

The pandemic has had a devastating impact on jobs in the region, across sectors, with a 10.5% decrease in total jobs during a one-year period (October 2019 - October 2020). The leisure and hospitality industry has been the most affected industry during that time period, losing 36,700

(30.4%) jobs.¹

Historically, when workers lose their employment during times of recession they experience much larger lifetime earning losses than when employment is lost during non-recession times. During the more recent Great Recession, workers in Washington State who were displaced and reentered the workforce “earned 16% less than comparable workers who had not been displaced.”² Job loss during a recession can also have generational impacts. For example, children whose fathers were dislocated during the 1980s recession earned less as adults than children of fathers who were not displaced.³ It appears that job loss during a recession also has serious health implications, with workers displaced during the 1980s recession experiencing a life expectancy reduction of 1 to 1.5 years.⁴ Although not yet fully quantified, the current pandemic and economic recession will likely have a similar impact on today’s workforce.

Prior to the pandemic (2014 - 2018), 28% of all workers (1.1 million) in the Bay Area were considered essential.⁵ Among essential workers in the region, people of color and immigrants are disproportionately represented. People of color comprised 58% of all workers and 66% of essential workers. In contrast, white workers comprised 42% of all workers but only 34% of essential workers. As shown in Table 1, 10 of the Bay Area’s 11 essential worker sectors are filled disproportionately by people of color.

¹ “Monthly Labor Force Data for Counties, October 2020 - Preliminary,” *Employment Development Department: Labor Market Information Division*, published November 20, 2020,

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1boqhAzDjefSsx1sTUijeJDEL_CTO1i/edit#gid=175580821

² B. Rose Kelly, “Great Recession Still Plagues Workers With Lower Lifetime Wages,” *Princeton University*, March 12, 2018, <https://spia.princeton.edu/news/great-recession-still-plagues-workers-lower-lifetime-wages>

³ <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/jobs/2011/11/04/unemployment-and-earnings-losses-a-look-at-long-term-impacts-of-the-great-recession-on-american-workers/>

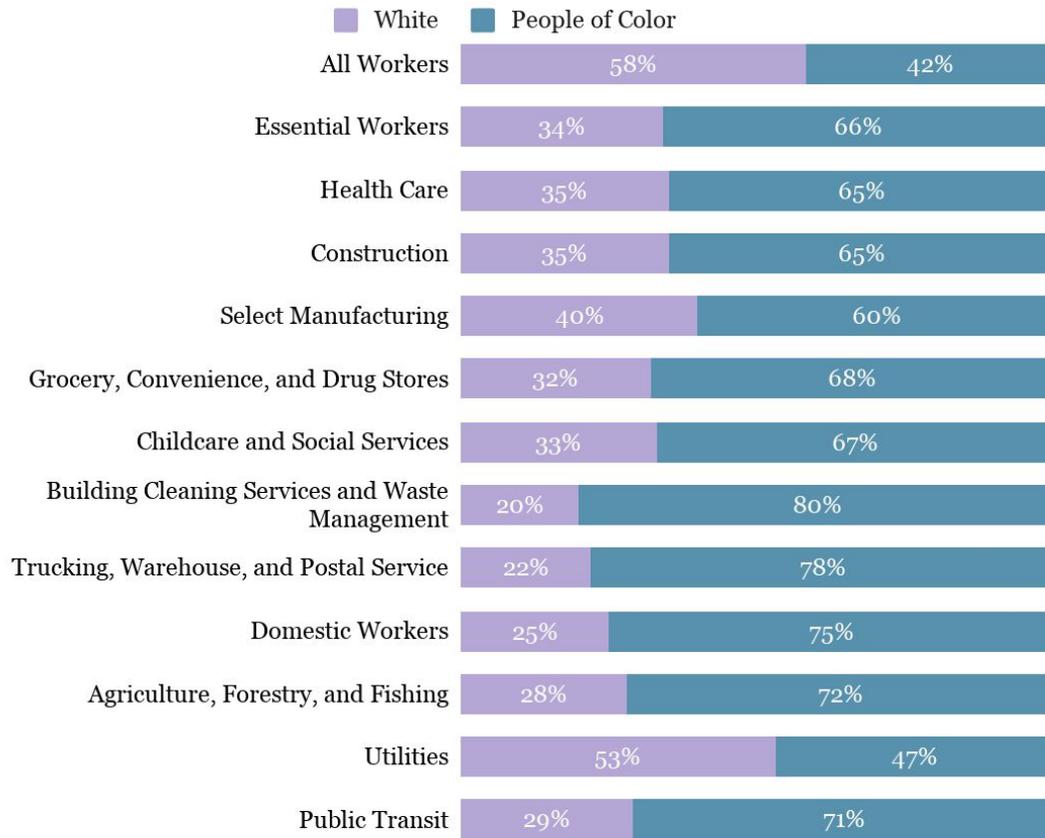
⁴ Michael Greenstone, Adam Looney, and Michael Greenstone and Adam Looney, The Hamilton Project, “Unemployment and Earnings Losses: A Look at Long-Term Impacts of the Great Recession on American Workers,” *Brookings Institute*, November 4, 2011,

<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/jobs/2011/11/04/unemployment-and-earnings-losses-a-look-at-long-term-impacts-of-the-great-recession-on-american-workers/>

⁵ All data in this paragraph is from Jamila Henderson, “A Profile of Frontline Workers in the Bay Area,” *Bay Area Equity Atlas*, May 13, 2020, <https://bayareaequityatlas.org/essential-workers>

Table 1: Bay Area Essential Workers By Industry and Race⁶

Bay Area Essential Workers by Industry, White vs. People of Color (2014 - 2018)



COVID-19 Impact on Minority-Owned Businesses

Workforce trends in the East Bay follow several national trends. Across the United States, over a two-month period at the beginning of the pandemic, the number of Black-owned businesses declined by 41%, immigrant-owned businesses by 36%, Latinx-owned businesses by 32%, and Asian-owned businesses by 26%.⁷ In comparison, white-owned businesses decreased at a rate of 17%. As the pandemic endures and financial strain has continued to affect business, the impact on minority-owned businesses has likely worsened since these early statistics were reported. The East Bay small business community is particularly susceptible to negative effects caused by the economic downturn. The majority of East Bay businesses (80%) employ less than 10 employees. These “microbusinesses” are often less financially stable, with limited cash reserves for emergency situations. Moreover, microbusinesses in the East Bay are disproportionately minority or women owned,⁸ making these populations particularly susceptible to economic loss. The

⁶ Henderson, “A Profile”. <https://bayareaequityatlas.org/essential-workers>

⁷ All data in this paragraph is from “Black and Brown Owned Businesses Hit Hardest by COVID-19 Pandemic,” Covid Insight Center, posted August 1, 2020 <https://insightcced.org/black-and-brown-owned-businesses-hit-hardest-by-covid-19-pandemic/>

⁸ East Bay Economic Development Alliance, “East Bay Business Recovery Survey Results,” May 19, 2020: 3.

image below demonstrates East Bay job loss during the pandemic in three key sectors. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, in October 2019, the East Bay Region was home to 1,187,600 total jobs in all sectors. As indicated in the figure below, the decline in total employment from that date to October 2020 was 124,700, equal to 10.5% of all jobs.

East Bay jobs decreased by 124,700⁹

from October 2019 to October 2020.

Figure 1: Decline in Jobs in Identified Sectors

Leisure and hospitality jobs decreased by 36,700	Government jobs decreased by 17,500	Private educational/ health services jobs decreased by 14,800¹⁰
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COVID-19 Impact on Workers

Many people have started working remotely to avoid health risks and abide by government mandates to work remotely to the extent possible during the pandemic. Compared to the rest of the Bay Area, the East Bay Region has fewer workers in occupations that are considered eligible to work remotely.¹¹ Although 45% of Bay Area residents can work remotely, in Contra Costa County only 38% and in Alameda County 40% have that option.^{12, 13} Workers who are not able to work remotely are faced with extremely difficult decisions related to balancing the need for income, health, and issues related to childcare, child education, and public transportation.

Children across the country have been forced to rely on virtual or some form of home-based “distance learning” as a result of school closures during the pandemic. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, almost 93% of all households with school-aged children report that their children have transitioned to learning at home.¹⁴

Working mothers, especially those with young children, have been negatively impacted by the pandemic at greater rates than mothers with older children and all fathers. According to a McKinsey & Company Women in the Workplace 2020 report, one out of every three working mothers have considered either leaving their jobs or reducing their hours because of the pandemic.¹⁵ Black, Latinx, and Hispanic women have experienced higher rates of

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ajtpuoSRjo-4iLqswWuZDBOvwwJySkOj/view>

⁹ Juliet Moeur, “Oakland Hayward Berkeley MD Labor Force and Industry Employment Narrative,” Employment Development Department, 2020,

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pI3oCSSlJT4zcnCfpBAKJjcXXLSoh5uL/edit#>

¹⁰ Moeur, “Oakland Hayward”, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pI3oCSSlJT4zcnCfpBAKJjcXXLSoh5uL/edit#>

¹¹ Jonathan I. Dingel and Brent Neiman, “How Many Jobs Can be Done at Home?” Becker Friedman Institute, (July 2020) 2-4, https://bfi.uchicago.edu/wp-content/uploads/BFI_White-Paper_Dingel_Neiman_3.2020.pdf

¹² “Bay Area Economic Update,” Bay Area Council Economic Institute, October 22, 2020,

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ayW8UePzg_3F5aw1oqBo-TUL1wA4DakO/view

¹³ East Bay Economic Outlook 2020,” *East Bay Economic Development Alliance*, published May 21, 2020,

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mB3T8vx56GPxjlonuspUipFvEnvDvpdl/view>

¹⁴ Kevin Mcelrath, “Nearly 93% of Households With School-Age Children Report Some Form of Distance Learning During COVID-19” *United States Census Bureau*, August 26, 2020,

<https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2020/08/schooling-during-the-covid-19-pandemic.html>

¹⁵ Sarah Coury, Jess Huang, Ankur Kumar, Sara Prince, Alexis Krivkovich, and Lareina Yee, “Women in the Workplace 2020,” *McKinsey & Company*, September 30, 2021, <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/women-in-the-workplace>

unemployment compared to white women.¹⁶ Further, economists predict that female employment will not return to pre-pandemic levels until 18 months after employment levels for men return to normal.¹⁷

“COVID-19 has also increased the pressure on working mothers, low-wage and otherwise. In a survey from May and June, one out of four women who became unemployed during the pandemic reported the job loss was due to a lack of childcare, twice the rate of men surveyed. A more recent survey shows the losses have not slowed down: between February and August mothers of children 12 years old and younger lost 2.2 million jobs compared to 870,000 jobs lost among fathers.”

- Bateman, Nicole and Ross, Martha. *Why has COVID-19 been especially harmful for working women?* Brookings. October 2020.

EBRPRU COVID-19 Recovery Strategy

EBRPU partners are preparing for continued COVID-19-impacted and post-COVID-19 scenarios. The Region does not want to develop plans with potentially obsolete or inaccurate data or in a state of great uncertainty. This exploratory work could include: strategies for surge occupation recruitment, response to regional layoffs, and business engagement and support. It could also include re-envisioning service delivery strategies, updating Board policies, streamlining service delivery, and expanding virtual capacity. All of the above would be considered through an equity lens, ensuring access for priority populations, with particular emphasis on quality jobs and the training pathways and supports necessary for success in the evolving labor market.

This work would more likely begin in the latter part of the first -year of 2021-2024 Regional Plan implementation based upon the state of public health measures and of the economy. The region does not want to develop plans with potentially obsolete or inaccurate data or in a state of great uncertainty. The beginning of this exploratory work could include When it does, it could begin with convenings of EBRPU partner Board Directors to develop priorities, a potential scope of work, and outcomes to put out for procurement, contract piggy-backing, or sole-sourcing, as appropriate, to project manage this activity.

This initial activity would help the Region achieve the Regional Plan objective of developing regional COVID-19 recovery strategies that are aligned with external developments and are most likely to succeed.

1.b. Overview

As of the 2019 census, the East Bay Region had a population of 2,799,005 (1,656,754 in Alameda, 1,142,251 in Contra Costa).¹⁸ Homelessness in the East Bay has been increasing in recent years: in 2019, 8,022 individuals were experiencing homelessness in Alameda County

¹⁶ “May Jobs Report: A Case Study in Pervasive Racism and Sexism,” *TIME’S UP Impact Lab: Women on the Front Lines*, June 8, 2020, <https://timesupfoundation.org/may-jobs-report-a-case-study-in-pervasive-racism-and-sexism/>

¹⁷ André Dua, Kweilin Ellingrud, Michael Lazar, Ryan Luby, Sanjay Srinivasan, and Tucker Van Aken "Achieving an Inclusive US Economic Recovery," *McKinsey & Company*, February 3, 2021, <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/achieving-an-inclusive-us-economic-recovery>

¹⁸ "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates," *United States Census Bureau*, 2018, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=dp05&g=0500000US06001,06013&tid=ACSDP5Y2019.DP05&hidePreview=false>

(compared to 4,040 in 2015 and 5,629 in 2017).¹⁹ In 2020, 2,277 individuals experienced homelessness in Contra Costa (compared to 1,730 in 2016, 1,607 in 2017, and 2,234 in 2018).²⁰,
21

In the Bay Area as a whole, almost 3 out of every 5 workers are people of color.²² Among the emerging workforce (workers 25 years or younger), 70% are people of color. The largest emerging demographic group is Lantinx workers, who will soon comprise 33% of the Bay Area workforce.

Educational and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Residents of the East Bay have a relatively high level of educational attainment when compared to the state as a whole. In Alameda County, 50.6% residents 25 years old or older have a bachelor's degree or higher.²³ The comparable statistic for Contra Costa County is 43.0%. This is significantly above the 35.0% of people 25 years and older statewide who have a bachelor's degree or higher. At the other end of the spectrum, 27.7% of residents of Alameda County aged 25 and older had a high school education of less, as did 28.8% of Contra Costa County residents in this age group. The percentage for the state as a whole is 36.6%.

These relatively high levels of educational attainment for the region as a whole do not reflect the substantial educational challenges faced by communities in Hayward, Oakland, Richmond, and East Contra Costa County. As shown in the images below, educational attainment in the Bay Area varies considerably in different geographic locations within the counties and within the cities.

¹⁹ "Alameda County Homeless Count & Survey," *Applied Survey Research*, 2019: 1-87,

<https://homelessness.acgov.org/homelessness-assets/docs/2019AlamedaCountyHomelessCountReport.pdf>

²⁰ "Contra Costa County: Annual Point in Time Count Report" *Contra Costa Health Housing & Homeless Services*, August 2020: 1-47, <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/PIT-report-2020.pdf>

²¹ Contra Costa, "Annual Point in Time Count Report" . <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/PIT-report-2020.pdf>

²² All the data in this paragraph is from Abbie Langston, Edward Muña, and Matthew Walsh, "Advancing Workforce Equity in The Bay Area: A Blueprint for Action," *Rework The Bay*, 20, Accessed February 22 2021, https://reworkthebay.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Advancing-Workforce-Equity-in-the-Bay-Area_FINAL_o.pdf

²³ All data in this paragraph is from "American Community Survey: Educational Attainment For The Population 25 Years And Over," United States Census Bureau, August 26, 2020, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=American%20Community%20survey%20Table%20B15002&g=0500000US06001,06013&tid=ACSDT1Y2019.B15002&hidePreview=false>

Figure 2. Percentage of Alameda County Residents with a High School Degree or Less

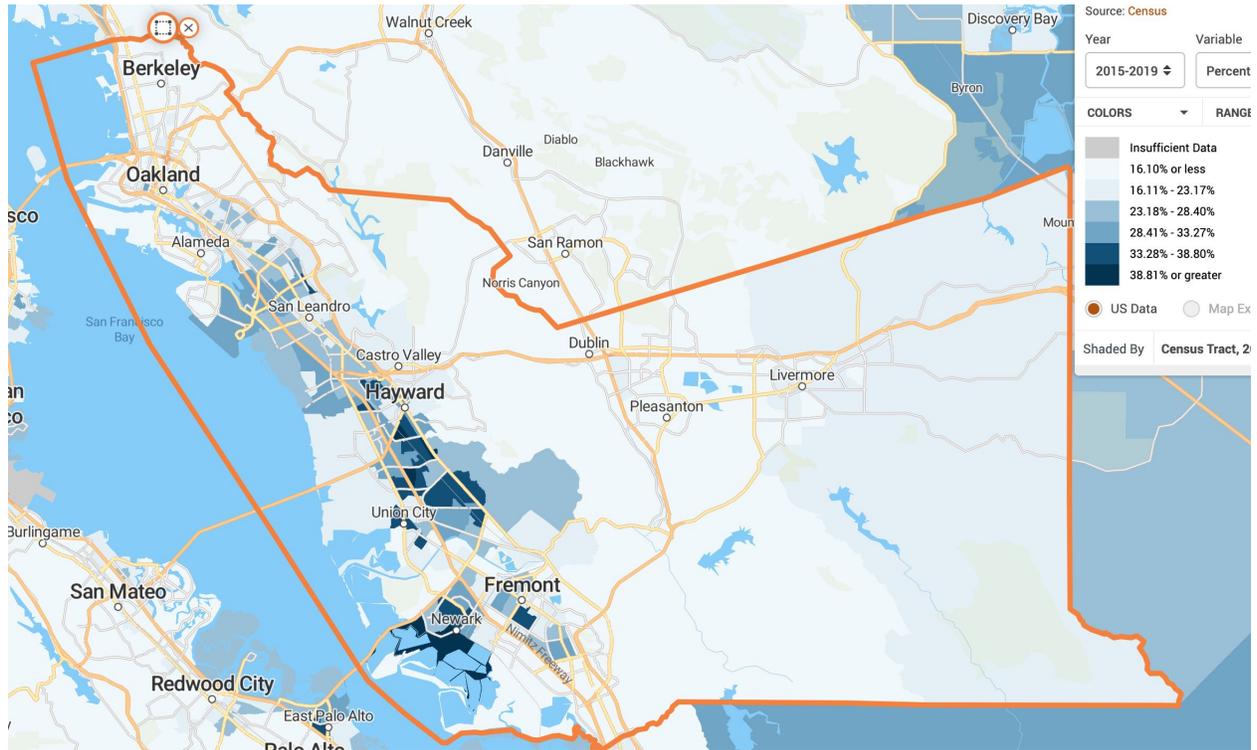


Figure 3. Percentage of Contra Costa County Residents with a High School Degree or Less

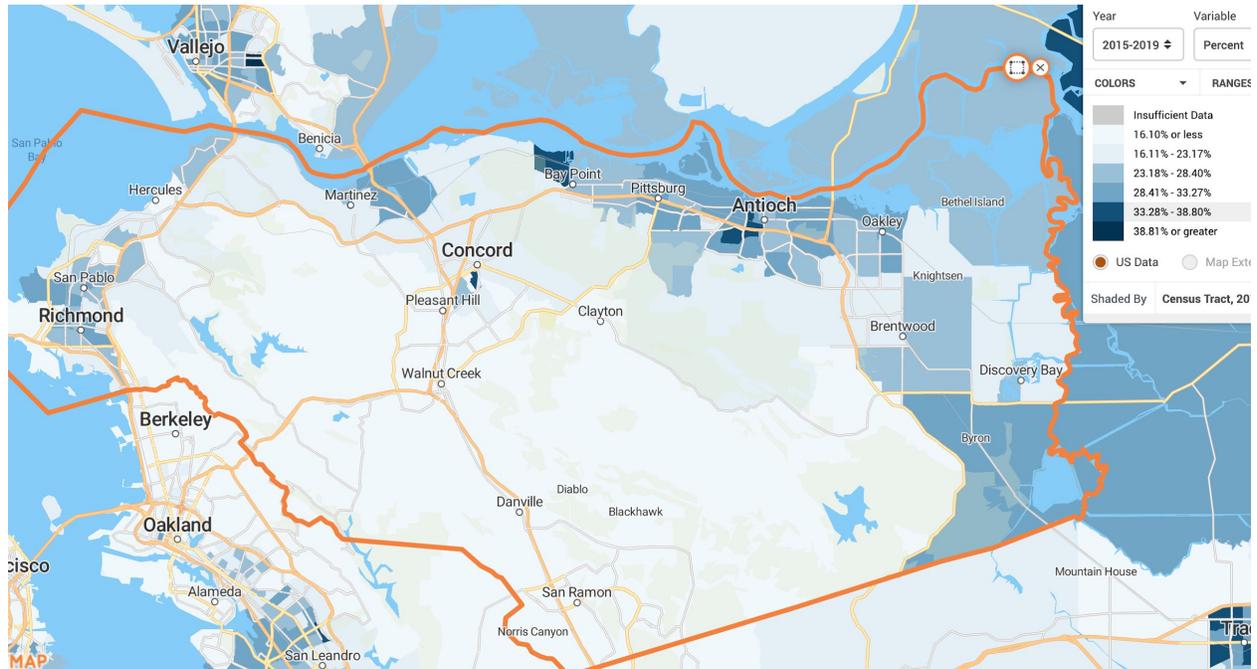


Figure 4. 2019 Educational Attainment in the East Bay for Population Age 25 and Older²⁴

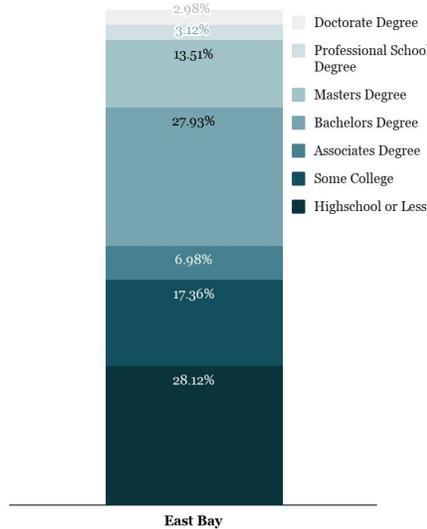
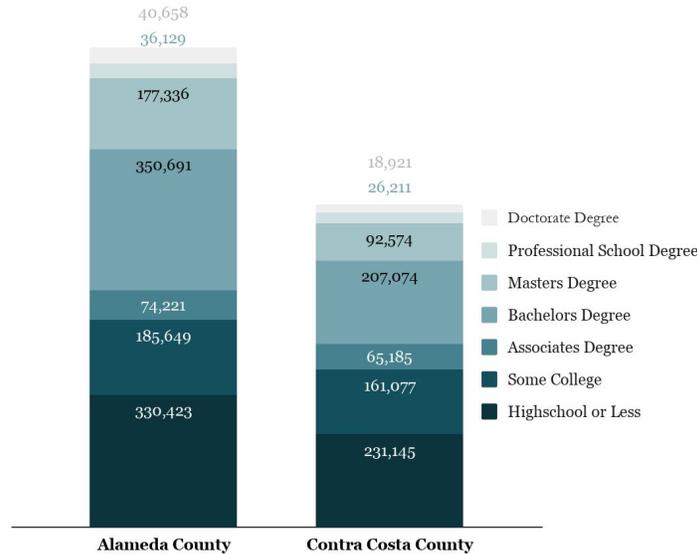


Figure 5. 2019 Educational Attainment in Alameda and Contra Costa County²⁵



In the long term, the relatively low level of formal education in these communities poses a particular challenge, considering 7 out of the top 10 fastest growing professions in the Bay Area all require more than a high school diploma (see Table 10).²⁶ Educational attainment in the Bay

²⁴ United States Census Bureau, “Sex By Educational Attainment” . <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=American%20Community%20survey%20Table%20B15002&g=0500000US06001.06013&tid=ACSDT1Y2019.B15002&hidePreview=false>

²⁵ United States Census Bureau, “Sex By Educational Attainment” . <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=American%20Community%20survey%20Table%20B15002&g=0500000US06001.06013&tid=ACSDT1Y2019.B15002&hidePreview=false>

²⁶ Employment Projections: 2016-2026 Local Employment Projections Highlights,” *Employment Development*

Area varies considerably by race and ethnicity. For example, of individuals ages 25 - 64, more than 60% of Asian or Pacific Islanders have a Bachelor's Degree compared to 29% of the Black population and less than 28% of the Latinx population.²⁷ These educational disparities depict a critical challenge to achieving equity in the workforce.

Table 2. Bay Area Resident Education by Race

Bay Area Residents with a High School Diploma or Less ²⁸	
Race	Percentage with HS Diploma or Less
Asian or Pacific Islander Immigrant	21%
Asian or Pacific Islander U.S.-born	12%
Black	31%
Lantinx Immigrant	71%
Lantinx U.S.-born	37%
Native American	40%
White	14%

Workforce Age

In the East Bay, 1,886,664 people (67.9%) are of “working age,” between 15 and 64 years old. There are 172,120 additional individuals (6.1%,) between the ages of 10 to 14, who will likely enter the workforce in the near future.²⁹ Figure 6 demonstrates the share of the East Bay population by age group.

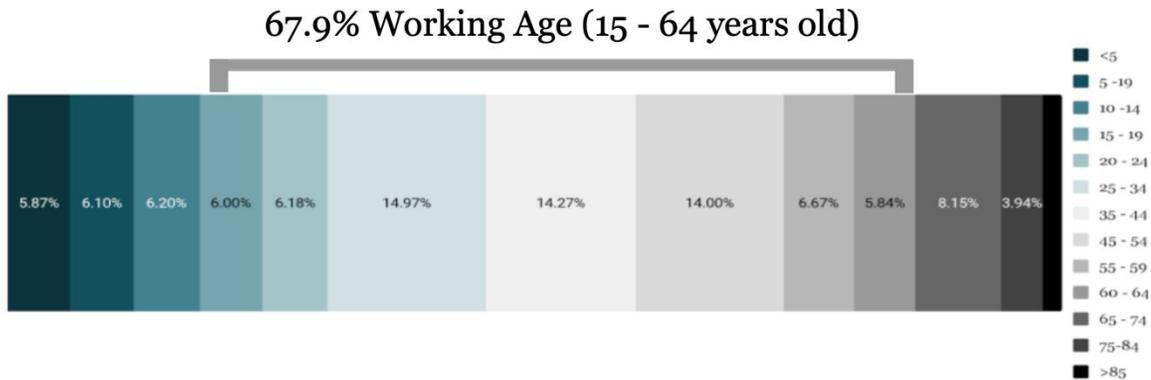
Department State of California, accessed February 22, 2021
<https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/employment-projections.html>

²⁷ Abbie Langston, Edward Muña, and Matthew Walsh, “Advancing Workforce Equity in The Bay Area: A Blueprint for Action,” *Rework The Bay*, 28, Accessed February 22 2021, https://reworkthebay.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Advancing-Workforce-Equity-in-the-Bay-Area_FINAL_o.pdf

²⁸ Langston, Muña, and Walsh, “Advancing Workforce Equity,” 28 . https://reworkthebay.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Advancing-Workforce-Equity-in-the-Bay-Area_FINAL_o.pdf

²⁹ "American Community Survey Demographic and Housing Estimates: 5-Year Estimates Data Profile ," *United States Census Bureau*, 2018, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=dp05&g=0500000US06001.06013&tid=ACSDP5Y2018.DP05&hidePreview=false>

Figure 6. Age of East Bay Population³⁰



Cost of Living

The annual cost of living for a family of two adults and two children in Alameda County is \$121,922 in Alameda County, and \$125,672 in Contra Costa County. In the East Bay, housing constitutes the largest expenditure in a family’s budget. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, child care constituted 15% of the cost of living budget. Due to the pandemic, many working families can no longer rely on traditional child care options, which has likely impacted child care expenses. While the portion of the cost of living devoted to transportation has likely declined for better-off workers who have been able to work from home, transportation remains a substantial cost for lower income workers who do not have this option. This is particularly true for those who have had to relocate farther from their place of employment in search of more affordable housing.³¹ Table 3 below shows the breakdown in the annual cost of living for a typical family in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

Table 3. Annual Cost of Living for a Family in Alameda & Contra Costa Counties³²

Costs	Alameda County	% of Total Cost of Living	Contra Costa County	% of Total Cost of Living
Housing	\$27,525	22.58%	\$28,713	22.85%
Food	\$10,959	8.99%	\$10,443	8.31%
Child Care	\$17,984	14.75%	\$18,440	14.67%
Transportation	\$14,679	12.04%	\$15,922	12.67%
Health Care	\$13,228	10.85%	\$12,953	10.31%

³⁰ United States Census Bureau, " Demographic and Housing Estimates" .
<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=dp05&g=0500000US06001.06013&tid=ACSDP5Y2018.DP05&hidePreview=false>

³¹ “Family Budget Calculator” *Family Budget Map*, Economic Policy Institute, last modified March, 2018,
<https://www.epi.org/resources/budget/>

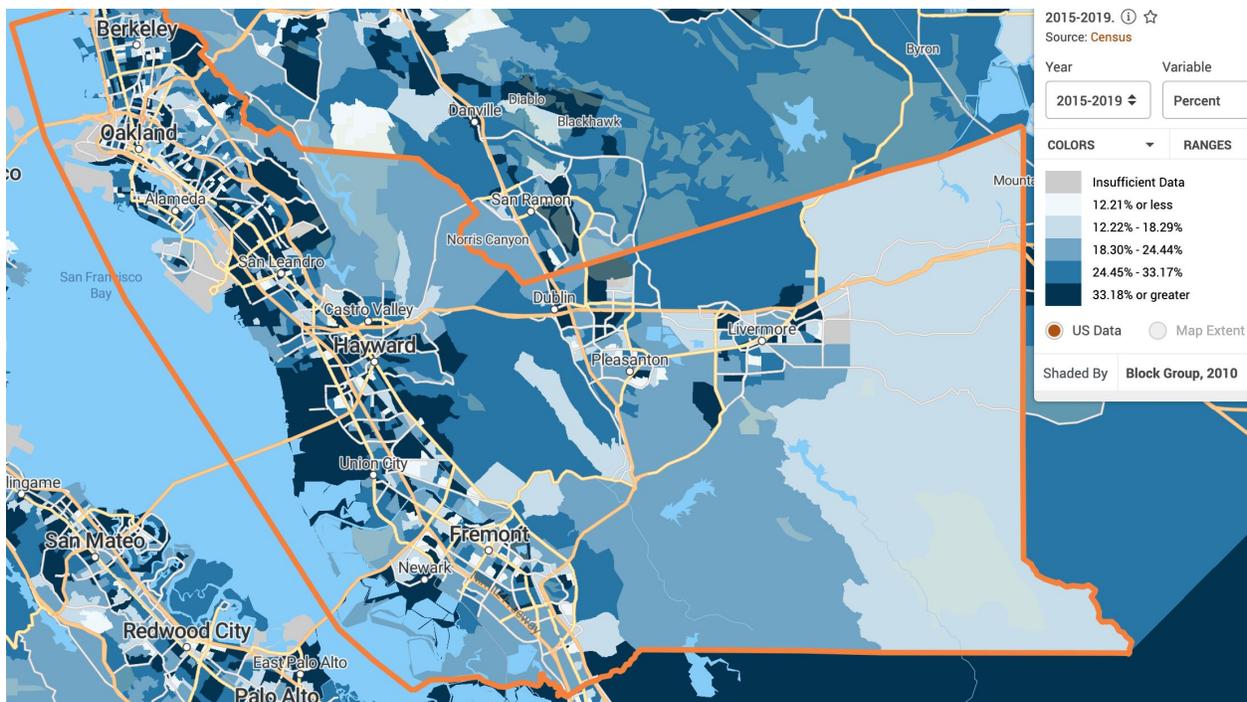
³² “Family Budget Calculator” *Family Budget Map*, Economic Policy Institute, last modified March, 2018,
<https://www.epi.org/resources/budget/>

Costs	Alameda County	% of Total Cost of Living	Contra Costa County	% of Total Cost of Living
Other Necessities	\$15,526	12.73%	\$15,797	12.57%
Taxes	\$22,021	18.06%	\$23,405	18.62%
Total	\$121,922	100.00%	\$125,672	100.00%

High Housing Cost

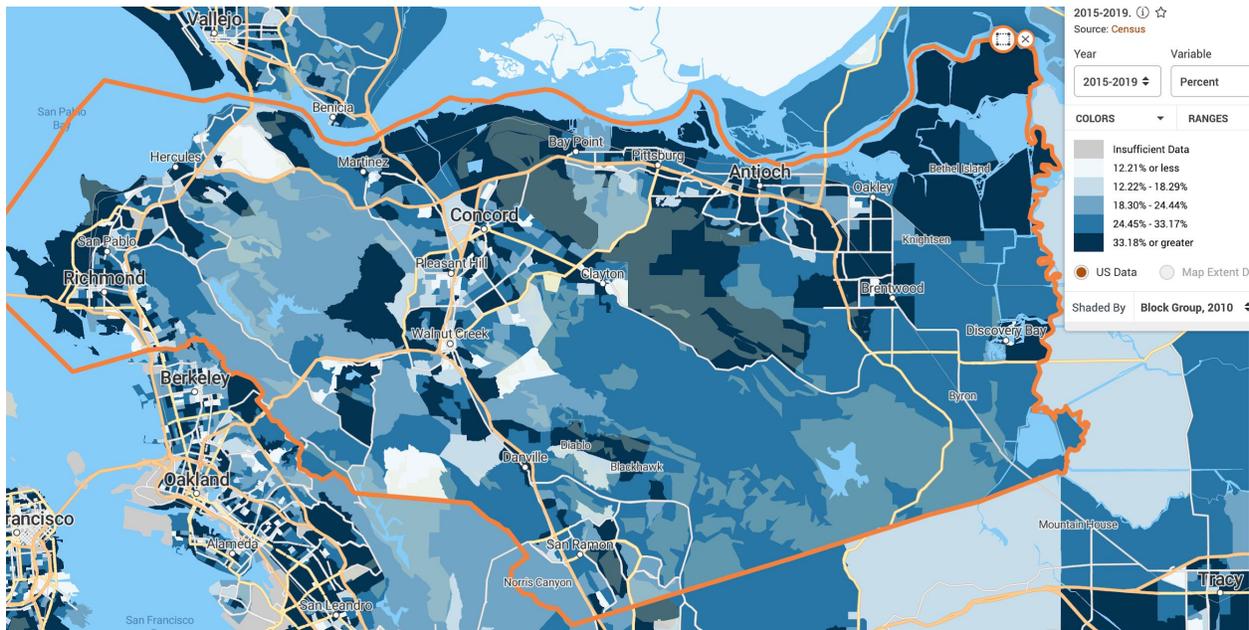
The very large number of households in the East Bay whose incomes fall below the cost of living identified in the table above are required to spend an unmanageable portion of their income on housing. When a household spends 30% or more of its income on housing costs, it is considered housing burdened. Much of the East Bay is overburdened by housing costs. Almost all of the East Bay has households that are housing burdened, however, specific geographic locations (as shown in the maps below, developed from recent data from the U.S. Census) have much higher percentages of their communities that are considered housing burdened.

Figure 7. Alameda Homeowners Burdened by Housing Costs (Census 2015 - 19)



As the maps indicate, the western portion of Alameda County is home to communities that are experiencing housing burden, specifically portions of the cities of Berkeley, Hayward, and Oakland. In contrast, the areas in Contra Costa County with the highest percentage of their community burdened by housing costs are scattered throughout the county.

Figure 8. Contra Costa Homeowners Burdened by Housing Costs (Census 2015 - 19)



Workforce Household Income

Cost of living for a two-adult and two-child household exceeds the median household income in both Alameda (\$121,922 cost of living compared to \$92,574 income) and Contra Costa (\$125,672 compared to \$93,712).^{33-34,35} Many households in the East Bay earn much less than the national median income (\$68,703 in 2019).³⁶ Nearly one quarter of households in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties had an income between \$10,000 and \$49,999. In addition, both counties have a sizable number of households making less than \$10,000 per year (4.2% in Alameda and 3.5% in Contra Costa).³⁷ Further detail is provided in Figure 9 below. In the State of California, minimum wage is \$13.00 per hour for employers with 25 or less employees and is \$14.00 per hour for employers with 26 or more employees.³⁸

³³ "Family Budget Calculator" Family Budget Map, Economic Policy Institute, last modified March, 2018,

<https://www.epi.org/resources/budget/>

³⁴ Jessica Semega, Melissa Kollar, Emily A. Shrider, and John Creamer, "Income and Poverty in the United States: 2019" *United States Census Bureau*, September 15, 2020,

[https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2020/demo/p60-270.html#:~:text=Median%20household%20income%20was%20%2468%2C703,and%20Table%20A%2D1\).](https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2020/demo/p60-270.html#:~:text=Median%20household%20income%20was%20%2468%2C703,and%20Table%20A%2D1).)

³⁵ "Income in the Past 12 Months (In 2018 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars): 2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables," *United States Census Bureau*, 2018,

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=S1901&g=0500000US06001.06013&tid=ACST5Y2018.S1901&hidePreview=false>

³⁶ Jessica Semega, Melissa Kollar, Emily A. Shrider, and John Creamer, "Income and Poverty in the United States: 2019" *United States Census Bureau*, September 15, 2020,

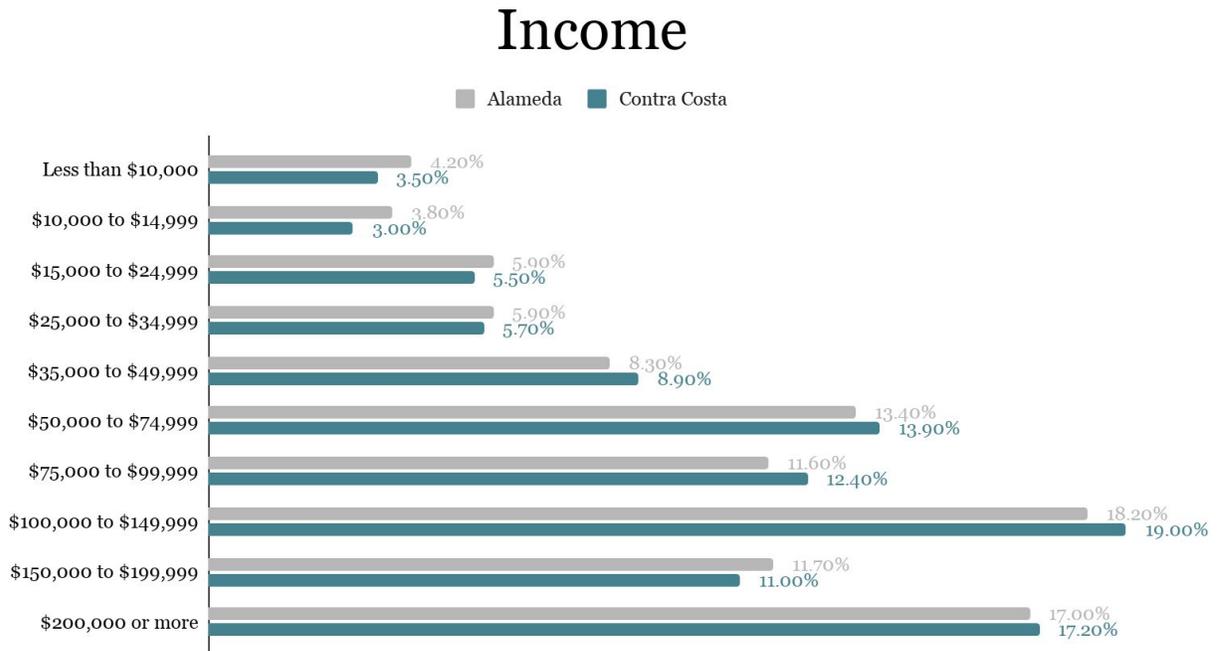
[https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2020/demo/p60-270.html#:~:text=Median%20household%20income%20was%20%2468%2C703,and%20Table%20A%2D1\).](https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2020/demo/p60-270.html#:~:text=Median%20household%20income%20was%20%2468%2C703,and%20Table%20A%2D1).)

³⁷ United States Census Bureau "Income in the Past 12 Months".

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=S1901&g=0500000US06001.06013&tid=ACST5Y2018.S1901&hidePreview=false>

³⁸ "State Minimum Wage Laws," Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, last modified January 1, 2021, <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/minimum-wage/state#ca>

Figure 9: Proportion of the Population at Different Income Levels in the East Bay



The technology boom of recent decades brought dramatic changes to the San Francisco Bay Area. However, from 1990 to 2018, the Bay Area experienced incredible job growth, the highest of which was for low-wage jobs (50% compared to 38% for high-wage and 25% for middle-).³⁹ However, during this same period, increases in total earnings for low- and middle-wage workers (51% and 44%, respectively) significantly lagged behind those for high-wage workers (149%).⁴⁰ During this same period, .⁴¹ Though the number of low-wage jobs grew faster than the number in other categories, the wages for those jobs increased at just one third of the rate for high-wage jobs, raising significant questions about entrenched injustice within the region’s economy.

There are multiple factors that are currently contributing to an economic crisis for lower income workers in the East Bay. These include: an extraordinarily high cost of living, including an inordinate amount of income spent on housing; and growing commutes for workers who have relocated in search of lower housing costs. These burdens have fallen most heavily on communities of color, which are disproportionately represented among lower income workers. For this reason, racial equity and economic justice must continue to be key reference points for the creation of workforce development strategies for the region.

Poverty

The rate of residents living in poverty in the East Bay (8.47%) is considerably lower than the national average (12.3%); however, these figures do not account for the high costs of living in the East Bay compared to the rest of the nation (see Cost of Living above). The federal poverty line

³⁹ Langston, Muña, and Walsh, “Advancing Workforce Equity,” 24 . https://reworkthebay.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Advancing-Workforce-Equity-in-the-Bay-Area_FINAL_o.pdf

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Langston, Muña, and Walsh, “Advancing Workforce Equity,” 24 . https://reworkthebay.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Advancing-Workforce-Equity-in-the-Bay-Area_FINAL_o.pdf

does not take into account geographic differences in the costs associated with housing, transportation, child care, or medical costs, for example.⁴²

In the Bay Area as a whole, nearly 60% of Black women renters and more than 50% of Latinx women renters “are both housing-cost burdened (meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing) and economically insecure (meaning they have family incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level). This is more than double the rate for white male renters.”

Employment is a major protective factor against poverty. Therefore, workforce development initiatives that enable unemployed individuals to secure employment should be viewed as a major anti-poverty strategy in the region. Figure 10 indicates the poverty rate for unemployed East Bay residents in contrast with that of employed residents.

Figure 10. Poverty Rates for Employed and Unemployed Individuals in the East Bay



The above findings are particularly relevant during the current economic crisis. For low-wage workers (those earning less than \$27,000 per year), the employment rate from January to October 2020 decreased by 22% in Alameda and 33% in Contra Costa. This is in contrast to only a 0.9% decrease for high-wage workers (those earning more than \$60,000) in Alameda and a 0.1% increase in employment for high-wage workers in Contra Costa.⁴⁵ The threat of unemployment makes already disadvantaged low-wage workers even more susceptible to falling into or falling further into poverty.

Poverty among Black residents of the East Bay is 3 times the rate for white residents, while poverty among the Latinx East Bay community is 1.8 times the rate for those who are white.

⁴² Areeba Haider, Justin Schweitzer, “The Poverty Line Matters, But It Isn’t Capturing Everyone It Should,” *Center for American Progress*, March 5, 2020 <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/poverty/news/2020/03/05/481314/poverty-line-matters-isnt-capturing-everyone/>

⁴³ “Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months: 2019: ACS 1-year Estimates Subject Tables” *The United States Census Bureau*, 2019, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=poverty&g=0500000US06001.06013&tid=ACSS1Y2019.S1701&hidePreview=false>

⁴⁴ United States Census Bureau, “Poverty Status” . <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=poverty&g=0500000US06001.06013&tid=ACSS1Y2019.S1701&hidePreview=false>

⁴⁵ Langston, Muña, and Walsh, “Advancing Workforce Equity,” 39 . https://reworkthebay.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Advancing-Workforce-Equity-in-the-Bay-Area_FINAL_o.pdf

Among all census-designated race categories, whites have the lowest poverty rate. Table 4 below provides the most recent census data by race for residents of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

Table 4. Poverty Rates by Race in the East Bay (2019)⁴⁶

Race	Alameda County		Contra Costa County		Combined	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
By Census Race Category						
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,180	9.60%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Asian	35,178	6.90%	10,270	5%	45,448	6.34%
Black or African American	33,881	19.30%	14,771	14.8%	48,652	17.68%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	797	6%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Two or More Races	7,546	7.20%	5,349	7.4%	12,895	7.32%
White	39,280	6.20%	33,500	5.6%	72,780	5.90%
Other Race	27,699	14.70%	25,816	16.1%	53,515	15.32%
By Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity (as defined by the Census)						
Hispanic or Latino	37,577	10.30%	34,202	11.5%	71,779	10.84%
Not Hispanic or Latino	107,984	8.45%	56,306	6.66%	164,290	7.73%

1.c. Labor Force

Unemployment

As of October 2020, the East Bay region had a slightly lower rate of unemployment (7.9% in both Alameda and Contra Costa County) than the state as a whole (9%). The region’s unemployment rate more than doubled since March 2020 when it was 3.9%.⁴⁷ According to a national Federal Reserve analysis, COVID-19-caused unemployment is disproportionately impacting workers in the lowest wage quartile.⁴⁸ Wage earners in the lowest quartile are experiencing unemployment above 20%, compared to less than 5% for the highest-wage earners.

⁴⁶ United States Census Bureau, “Poverty Status” .
<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=poverty&g=0500000US06001,06013&tid=ACSST1Y2019.S1701&hidePreview=false>

⁴⁷ “East Bay Economic Outlook 2020,” *East Bay Economic Development Alliance*, published May 21, 2020, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mB3T8vx56GPxjlonuspUipFvEnvDvpdI/view>

⁴⁸All of the following data is from Lael Brainard, speech on full employment in the new monetary policy framework, January 13, 2021. <https://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/speech/brainard20210113a.htm>

White unemployment rates nationwide are at 6%, while Latinx unemployment is 9.3% and Black unemployment is 9.9%. Table 5 provides a snapshot of employment in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

Table 5. October 2020 East Bay Labor Force⁴⁹

County	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
Alameda	830,900	765,400	65,500	7.9%
Contra Costa	552,600	508,900	43,700	7.9%

In an article published in June of 2020, the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics acknowledged that the published national unemployment rate of 13.3% for May of that year was actually closer to 16.4%⁵⁰ It is likely that the unemployment rates identified above are even higher than estimated due to this misclassification.

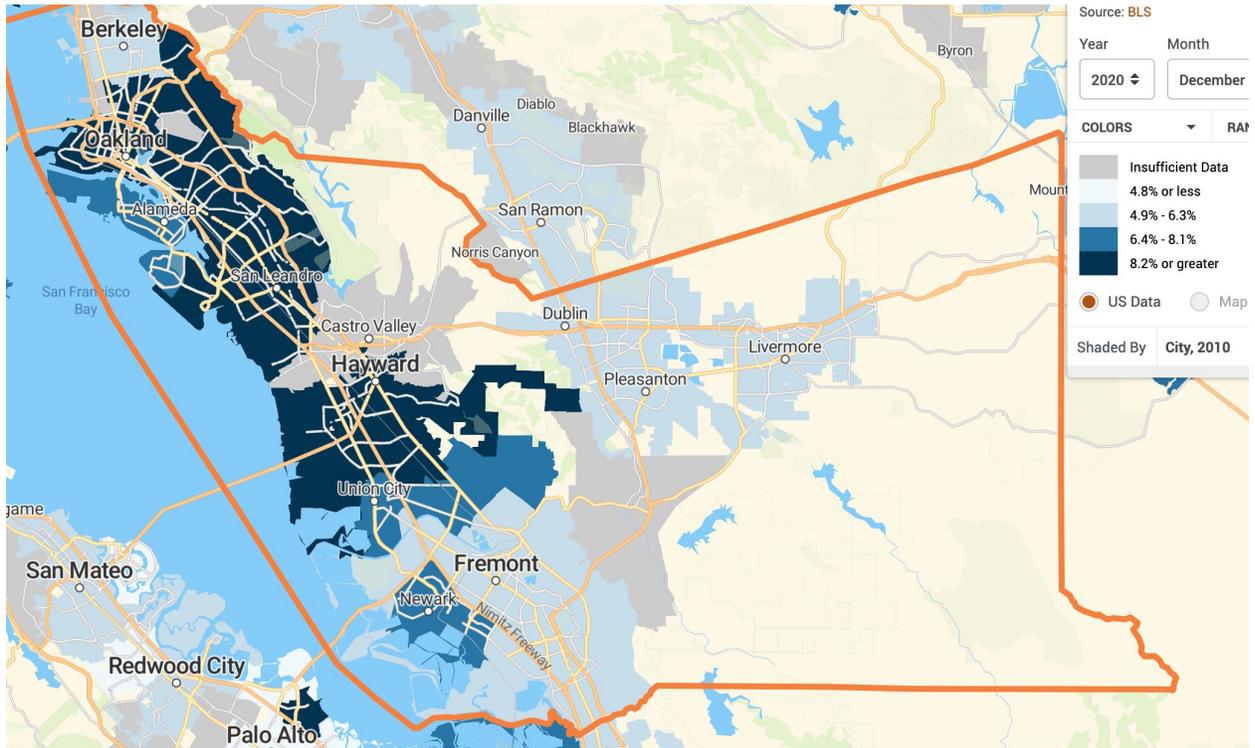
Although the East Bay Region has a lower rate of unemployment than does California, cities within the region have higher rates than the state as a whole. In Alameda County, the highest rates of unemployment are concentrated in the cities of Hayward, Oakland, and San Leandro. Historically, certain ZIP Codes within Oakland and Hayward in Alameda County, and Richmond and Pittsburg in Contra Costa County have experienced disproportionately high levels of unemployment compared to the surrounding region. It is likely that these communities have continued to experience extremely high rates of unemployment during the economic crisis sparked by the pandemic.

The maps that follow provide a sense of the distribution of unemployment across each county in the East Bay region.

⁴⁹ “Monthly Labor Force Data for Counties, October 2020 - Preliminary,” Employment Development Department: Labor Market Information Division, published November 20, 2020, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1boqhAzDjtesSxi1sTUijeJDEL_CTO1i/edit#gid=175580821

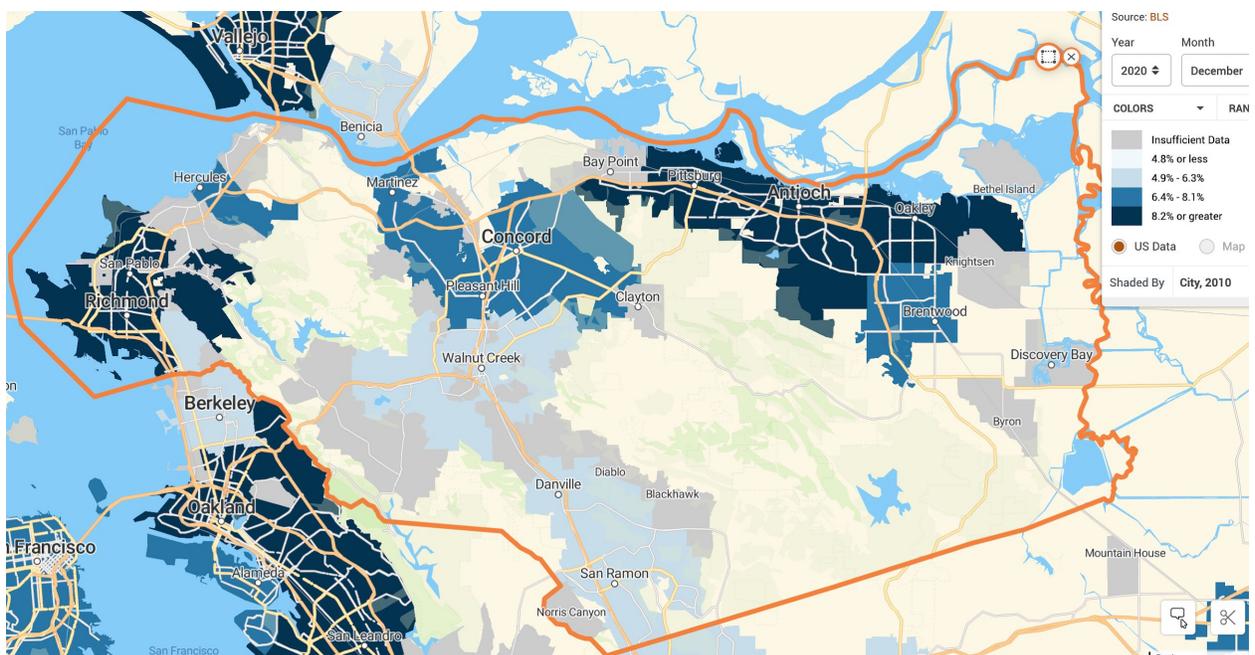
⁵⁰ Update on the Misclassification that Affected the Unemployment Rate, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 29, 2020 <https://blogs.bls.gov/blog/2020/06/29/update-on-the-misclassification-that-affected-the-unemployment-rate/>

Figure 11: Alameda County Unemployment Rates: December 2020



In Contra Costa County, the highest rates of unemployment are in the cities of Richmond, Pittsburg, Antioch, and Oakley.

Figure 12. Contra Costa County Unemployment Rates: December 2020



Although the unemployment rates the number of “people who are jobless, looking for a job, and available for work” is an important indicator of a regional workforce, it is also important to consider the labor force participation rate, which provides the “percentage of the population [16 years old and over] either working or actively seeking work.”^{51, 52} In other words, those not counted in the labor force participation rate are, for whatever reason, not participating in the labor force. Along with the 7.9% of unemployed people who are actively looking for work in the East Bay, 32.9% of individuals over the age of 16 in Alameda and 35.2% in Contra Costa have chosen not to participate in the labor market. These numbers are even higher for individuals who are living in poverty, of whom more than half have dropped out of the labor market. As presented in Table 6 below, education appears to be a major protective factor against leaving the labor market, as 34.6% of individuals in Alameda County with less than a high school diploma have dropped out of the labor force compared to only 13% with a bachelor’s degree or more. The numbers are similar for Contra Costa County (32.1% and 15.3%, respectively).⁵³

Table 6. East Bay Labor Force Participation Rate 2019⁵⁴

	Alameda County	Contra Costa County	California
Over Age 16	67.1%	64.8%	63.7%
Under Poverty	45.5%	49.5%	48.5%
< High School Graduate	65.4%	67.9%	65.5%
High School Graduate	75.0%	74.2%	73.1%
Some College or Associates	80.0%	79.2%	73.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	87.0%	84.7%	85.8%

In November 2020, approximately eight months into the COVID-19 pandemic, the labor force participation rate for California as a whole was 60.5% (39.5% not participating).⁵⁵ According to a national Federal Reserve analysis released in January 2021, “labor force participation for prime-age workers has declined, particularly for parents of school-aged children, where the declines have been greater for women than for men, and greater for Black and Hispanic mothers than for White mothers.”⁵⁶ These statistics demonstrate that the pandemic has not only worsened

⁵¹ “How the Government Measures Unemployment: What are the basic concepts of employment and unemployment?” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, last modified October 8, 2015, https://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_htgm.htm

⁵² U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “How the Government Measures Unemployment” . https://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_htgm.htm

⁵³ “Employment Status: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Table,” U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=s2301&g=0400000US06_0500000US06001,06013&tid=ACSST5Y2019.S2301&hidePreview=false

⁵⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, “Employment Status” . https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=s2301&g=0400000US06_0500000US06001,06013&tid=ACSST5Y2019.S2301&hidePreview=false

⁵⁵ “Labor Force Participation Rate for California [LBSNSA06],” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, February 22, 2021. <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LBSNSA06>

⁵⁶ Lael, Brainard, speech on full employment in the new monetary policy framework, January 13, 2021. <https://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/speech/brainard20210113a.htm>

unemployment, but has potentially forced additional people out of the labor force altogether, creating additional strain on communities and municipal services.

Prior to the pandemic (as shown in Table X below), although youth unemployment in the East Bay was lower than the unemployment rate for the state as a whole, Alameda County was facing lower rates of youth labor force participation than the rest of California. In Alameda, 70.5% of 16 to 19 year-olds and only 32.2% of 20 to 24 year-olds were participating in the labor market.

Table 7. Youth Unemployment and Labor Force Participation Rate 2019⁵⁷

Age	Labor Force Participation			Unemployment		
	Alameda	Contra Costa	California	Alameda	Contra Costa	California
16 - 19	29.5%	37%	31%	11.2%	15.6%	18.44%
20 - 24	67.8%	76%	72.7%	7.9%	5.3%	9.2%

1.d. Industry and Occupational Demand

Job Openings

Likely impacted by the pandemic, the total number of jobs in the East Bay Region decreased by 10.5% from October 2019 to October 2020. The leisure and hospitality industry was particularly impacted during that time period, losing 36,700 (30.4%) jobs.⁵⁸ Table 8 below demonstrates....

Table 8. Total Employers, Employees and Payroll for the East Bay Region and California⁵⁹

Area	Total Employer Establishments	Total Employees	Total Annual Payroll (\$1,000)
Alameda	40,508	698,915	\$51,985,434
Contra Costa	24,286	340,960	\$23,960,119
California	954,632	15,223,664	\$1,020,958,926

While there has been a decrease in the region’s total number of jobs, the East Bay region still has job openings in a variety of industries. Considering the larger percentage of the population with a low level of formal education (see Workforce Education section above), it might be encouraging that the top 10 occupations with the most projected job openings between 2016 and

⁵⁷ “Employment Status: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Table [Table S2301],” U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=s2301&g=0400000US06_0500000US06001.06013&tid=ACSST5Y2019.S2301&hidePreview=false

⁵⁸ Employment Development Department, “Monthly Labor Force Data” .

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1boqhAzDjefSsxi1sTUijeJDEL_CTO1i/edit#gid=175580821

⁵⁹ “COVID-19 Demographic and Economic Resources: US Demographic and Economic Data At A Glance,” U.S. Census Bureau COVID-19 Site, last modified January 1, 2021, <https://covid19.census.gov/>

2026 only require a high school diploma or less. However, as shown in Table 9 below, none of these occupations provide wages comparable to the median income (\$92,574 in Alameda and \$93,712 in Contra Costa). Personal care aides were projected to have the most job openings, followed by food workers, cashiers, retail salespersons, and waiters and waitresses. Due to the impact on both the leisure and hospitality and retail industries from the pandemic, it is possible that the demand for these positions will be impacted, at least in the short term future. Out of the occupations with the most projected job openings, personal care aides are the lowest paid (\$24,707 median annual wage) and customer service representatives are the highest (\$41,998).

Table 9. East Bay Job Openings by Occupation 2016 - 2026^{60,61}

Occupational Title	Qualifications	Total Projected Job Openings	Median Hourly Wage	Median Annual Wage
Personal Care Aides	High School diploma or equivalent	82,800	\$11.88	\$24,707
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	No credential required	51,000	\$12.18	\$25,325
Cashiers	No credential required	47,950	\$12.46	\$25,909
Retail Salespersons	No credential required	40,880	\$12.92	\$26,880
Waiters and Waitresses	No credential required	32,740	\$13.06	\$27,166
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	No formal educational credential	29,150	\$15.63	\$32,497
Office Clerks, General	High School diploma or equivalent	27,490	\$18.24	\$37,934
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	High School diploma or equivalent	22,540	\$13.52	\$28,128
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	No credential required	22,150	\$16.75	\$34,829
Customer Service Representatives	High School diploma or equivalent	21,270	\$20.20	\$41,998

⁶⁰ “Employment Projections: 2016-2026 Local Employment Projections Highlights,” *Employment Development Department State of California*, accessed February 22, 2021
<https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/employment-projections.html>

⁶¹ Updated projections that consider the impact of COVID and recovery efforts may look different.

COVID-19 Impact on Job Openings in the East Bay

In contrast to the projections (2016 to 2026) presented above, the San Francisco Bay Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research examined job postings over an eight-month period during the pandemic (March through October 2020). This analysis is reflected in the charts below, which show the types of low-level and mid-level skill jobs in the East Bay with the most job openings over this period on average. Middle-skill jobs are defined as jobs “that require more education and training than a high school diploma but less than a four-year college degree.”⁶² Of the 25 jobs they recorded the most postings for, 19 are considered to require only low- or middle-level skills. Although the “Laborer / Warehouse” worker was the leading job in terms of the number of postings during the period (1,961), the second most prevalent was “Software Developer / Engineer” (1,128), which is considered a high-skill job.⁶³ Overall, low-skill jobs appear to be more resilient during the COVID-19 pandemic than middle skills jobs, with 7,199 low skill job postings versus 4,466 middle skill job postings in the region.

Many similar occupations projected to have the most job openings in the table above are also proving to be resilient during the pandemic, as indicated in the chart below. The “Laborer / Warehouse” occupation, which likely corresponds with the category of “Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand” is the most resilient occupation during the pandemic and was also projected to be the occupation with the 6th most openings between 2016 and 2026. Personal care aides were the most projected occupation before the pandemic and are still very prevalent in the region, ranking seventh most common in the Excellence for Labor Market Research’s analysis. Considering the extra demand for cleanliness and sanitation caused by the public health crisis,⁶⁴ it is particularly noteworthy that “Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners,” which ranked number nine in the projection, does not even appear in the most COVID resilient list. Many of these positions may have experienced a reduced demand because employees are now working from home instead of in office buildings. This is one occupation that could rebound in the near future, especially as workers return to the workplace while the pandemic continues. “Sales Delivery Driver” makes an appearance on the most resilient list, but was not projected at all before the pandemic, which is likely the result of the increasing number of Americans buying goods online during the pandemic.⁶⁵

⁶² “Research: Middle Skills,” *Harvard Business School*, accessed February 22, 2021
<https://www.hbs.edu/competitiveness/research/Pages/middle-skills.aspx>

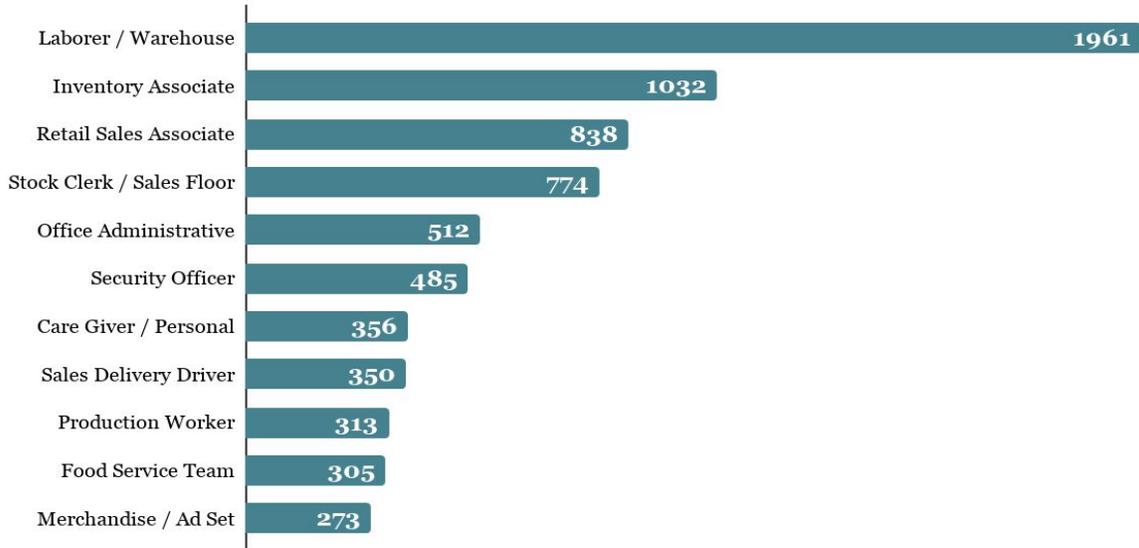
⁶³ “San Francisco Bay Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research,” *San Francisco Bay Region: LMI News & Updates*, published December, 2020 <https://sites.google.com/baccc.net/coe>

⁶⁴ Dan Biewener, “Janitorial Services Face Explosive Demand Due to COVID-19. Are You Ready?” *Fundbox*, March 24, 2020 <https://fundbox.com/blog/covid-19-janitorial-demand-rise/>

⁶⁵ “Exclusive Data: Twenty-Five Percent of Consumers Say Retail, Online Grocery Digital Shift Will Stick” *PYMNTS*, June 4, 2020 <https://www.pymnts.com/coronavirus/2020/the-great-reopening-doubling-down-on-digital-commerce-contactless/>

Figure 13: Low-Skill Job Openings March to November 2020

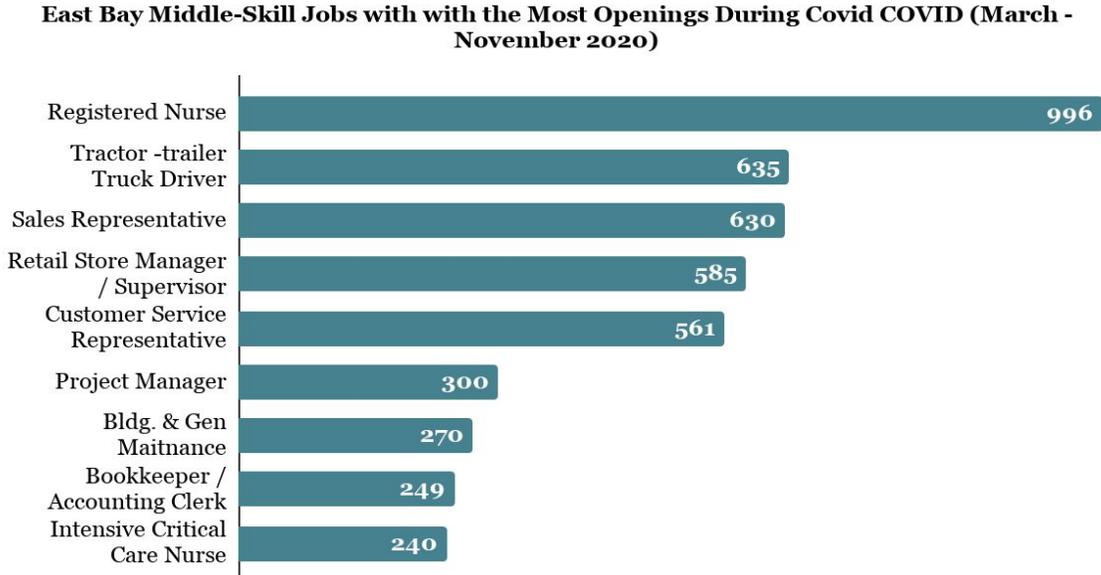
East Bay Low-Skill Jobs with the Most Openings During COVID (March - November 2020)



Overall, middle skill jobs comprised 5 out of the top 10 job postings during the pandemic.⁶⁶

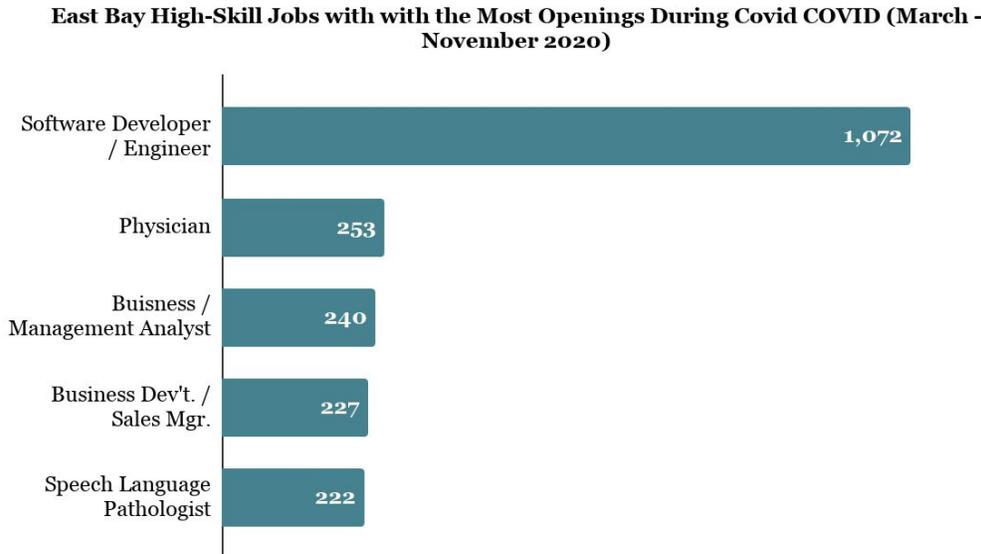
⁶⁶ “San Francisco Bay Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research,” *San Francisco Bay Region: LMI News & Updates*, December, 2020, <https://sites.google.com/baccc.net/coe>

Figure 14: Middle-Skill Job Openings March to November 2020



Software Developer / Engineer was the only high-skill job in the top 10 job posting.⁶⁷

Figure 15: High Skill Job Openings March to November 2020



Fastest Growing Occupations

Looking forward, wages for the fastest growing occupations are much higher compared to wages for the current most common jobs. Although many of the fastest growing occupations only

⁶⁷“San Francisco Bay Region: The Labor Market in 2020,” *Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research*, accessed March 1, 2021, <https://sites.google.com/baccc.net/coe>

require at the most an Associates or postsecondary non-degree award, educational requirements for these occupations are substantially higher than the current most common occupations, which only require at most a high school education. Table 10 below demonstrates the wages for the region’s fastest growing occupations. Across these 10 occupations, the average median wage (excluding Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians) is \$40,263.

Table 10. East Bay Fastest Growing Occupations (2016 - 2026)⁶⁸

Occupation	Qualifications	Change	Median Hourly Wage	Median Annual Wage
Solar Photovoltaic Installers	High school diploma or equivalent	120.80%	\$18.94	\$39,401
Cabinetmakers and Bench Carpenters	High school diploma or equivalent	50.90%	\$17.90	\$37,237
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	Associate's degree	42.90%	\$48.02	\$99,881
Medical Assistants	Postsecondary non-degree award	38.30%	\$18.89	\$39,283
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	Postsecondary non-degree award	37.60%	\$19.35	\$40,263
Surgical Technologists	Postsecondary non-degree award	34.90%	\$31.19	\$64,868
Respiratory Therapists	Associate's degree	33.60%	\$41.68	\$86,711
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	Associate's degree	33.00%	NA	NA
Home Health Aides	High school diploma or equivalent	32.80%	\$13.20	\$27,454
Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists	Associate's degree	31.10%	\$41.55	\$86,426

Middle-Skill Jobs

Middle-skill jobs, “those that require more education and training than a high school diploma but less than a four-year college degree”⁶⁹ are abundant in the East Bay region. The region’s

⁶⁸ “Employment Projections: 2016-2026 Local Employment Projections Highlights,” *Employment Development Department State of California*, accessed February 22, 2021

<https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/employment-projections.html>

⁶⁹ “Research: Middle Skills,” *Harvard Business School*, accessed February 22, 2021

<https://www.hbs.edu/competitiveness/research/Pages/middle-skills.aspx>

large number of people with some college experience or an associate’s degree have plenty of potential job opportunities. Table 11 below provides job opening information for the Bay Area as a whole. The occupation title category of bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks have the most job openings out of the region’s top 20 occupations with the most openings and the ninth highest wages (\$54,468). is the average median annual wage across the top 20 middle skill occupations which have the most job openings in the East Bay occupations is \$51,412.

Table 11. Bay Area Top 20 Middle Skill Occupations By Total Job Openings (2016-2026)⁷⁰

Occupational Title	Total Projected Openings	Median Hourly Wage	Median Annual Wage
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	14,825	\$26.19	\$54,468
Teacher Assistants	13,662	NA	\$39,704
Nursing Assistants	11,265	\$19.88	\$41,351
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	10,355	\$23.82	\$49,548
Medical Assistants	8,959	\$22.18	\$46,139
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	5,308	\$20.31	\$42,239
Dental Assistants	5,113	\$21.65	\$45,039
Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	5,035	\$25.62	\$53,276
Computer User Support Specialists	4,435	\$33.93	\$70,576
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	4,426	\$32.50	\$67,595
Manicurists and Pedicurists	4,373	\$13.41	\$27,894
Hairdressers, Hair Stylists, and Cosmetologists	3,991	\$15.02	\$31,244
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	2,575	\$29.59	\$61,552
Massage Therapists	2,532	\$23.36	\$48,598
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	2,353	\$33.05	\$68,738
Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	2,301	\$31.25	\$64,990
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	2,041	\$34.18	\$71,110
Web Developers	1,913	\$47.08	\$97,923
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	1,833	\$17.00	\$35,349
Computer Network Support Specialists	1,531	\$38.97	\$81,061

⁷⁰ “Employment Projections: Supply and Demand Tool,” Employment Development Department State of California, accessed February 22, 2021, <https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/geography/supply-and-demand-tool.html>

Industry Trends

Table 12 below provides estimates of 2016-2026 growth in several core industries in the East Bay. Given the disruption to the leisure and hospitality industry caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the projected growth of this industry is unlikely without significant public investment as part of COVID recovery efforts. Out of the jobs that are considered most vulnerable to layoff in the U.S. during the COVID-19 pandemic, food and beverage jobs are ranked the most vulnerable and travel and attraction-related jobs are the sixth most vulnerable to layoffs.⁷¹

In the short term, there is potential for the other industries listed below to also be negatively impacted. While healthcare was predicted to be the industry with the most growth between 2016 and 2026, in May of 2020, the American Hospital Association predicted major revenue loss within hospitals due to canceled surgeries and increased cost of protective equipment. This loss of revenue may reduce industry growth, at least in the short term.⁷²

Table 12. Top 5 Industries with Projected Growth in the East Bay by 2026⁷³

Industry	Percent Increase	2020 Estimate	2026 Estimate
Healthcare	14%	174,200	198,582
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	10.8%	101,600	112,607
Construction	12.2%	77,200	86,597
Manufacturing	9.1%	99,700	108,760
Leisure and Hospitality	6.9%	120,000	128,306

1.e. Employer Needs

Skills

Average monthly job postings in the Bay Area between March and November 2020 revealed that by far the most in-demand skill is “customer service and contact” which is posted 58% more frequently than the second leading skill (scheduling). Because of the increasing sanitation and public health concerns of the pandemic, skills such as cleaning and patient care have the potential to rise in demand. While some of the highest demand skills appear to be those requiring a limited amount of training, others include highly specific training in a particular kind of computer software, for example. Table 13 below shows the number of job postings in the Bay Area from March to October of 2020 that identified the need for a specific skill, provided by the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research.

⁷¹ “Aligning Contra Costa’s Workforce with the Regional Economy: Labor Market Analysis to Guide Local Workforce Strategies,” *Contra Costa County Workforce Development Board*, September 29, 2020, 7.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/16ljBVGdu_5A4juKOHArhl9kV1ma7QNwh/view

⁷² “Hospitals and Health Systems Face Unprecedented Financial Pressures Due to COVID-19,” *American Hospital Association*, May, 2020 <https://www.aha.org/guidesreports/2020-05-05-hospitals-and-health-systems-face-unprecedented-financial-pressures-due>

⁷³ “East Bay Economic Outlook 2020,” East Bay Economic Development Alliance, published May 21, 2020, <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mB3T8vx56GPxjlonuspUipFvEnvDvpdI/view>

Table 13. Bay Area In-Demand Specialized Skills (Monthly Average Postings March - October 2020)⁷⁴

Skill	# of Postings	Skill	# of Postings
Customer Service and Contact	22,167	Staff Management	4,492
Scheduling	13,978	Accounting	4,342
Sales	10,940	Lifting Ability	3,726
Java / Javascript	10,777	Product Management	3,597
Project Management	9,965	Patient Care	3,577
Budgeting	9,126	Merchandising	3,509
Python	7,100	Linux	3,447
SQL	6,407	Product Sales	3,341
Software Engineering	5,965	Business Development	3,320
Quality Assurance and Control	5,720	Salesforce	3,250
Retail Industry Knowledge	5,436	Data Analysis	3,230
Repair	5,205	Product Development	3,125
Software Development	4,899	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	3,103
Teaching	4,652	Data Entry	3,023
Cleaning	4,633	Administrative Support	2,944

Credentials / Certificates / Licenses

East Bay employers’ requirements vary considerably depending on the specific industry, organization, position, and task needed to be performed.

In manufacturing, there are numerous trainings specifically for welding, machining, hydraulics, pneumatics, electronics, and carpentry. More generally, training in process technology can be completed to assist workers in a range of roles ,such as refinery operator or food equipment operations. At most manufacturing companies in the region, specific credentials are usually not required before entering the organization.

In healthcare, requirements associated with specific positions are more clear. Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), behavioral health technicians, and community health workers, for example, are only required to have a high school diploma. Numerous positions require high school diplomas and certificates based on completion of course work and required clinical hours, such as medical and dental assistants. Respiratory technicians are required to obtain an associate’s degree at a minimum, and are advised to also have a bachelor’s. Pharmacy technicians also require an associate's degrees at a minimum. For imaging positions such as X-

⁷⁴ “San Francisco Bay Region: The Labor Market in 2020,” Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research, accessed March 1, 2021, <https://sites.google.com/bacc.net/coe>

ray technicians, an associates degree is required. A bachelor's degree is required for both nuclear technicians as well as mammography technicians.

More advanced healthcare positions such as clinical lab scientists and physical therapists require both a master’s degree as well as certain high level certifications. In many cases, physical therapists are now also required to have a doctoral degree.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, contact tracer positions have become increasingly in demand. The CDC offers training for those interested in becoming a contact tracer.⁷⁵

Employers

The East Bay is home to a range of different industries and successful private and public sector organizations. The public sector, health, energy, manufacturing, and retail industries are all represented in the region, as shown in the table of major regional employers below.

Table 14. Major East Bay Employers⁷⁶

Alameda County	Contra Costa County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alameda County Law Enforcement ● Alameda County Sheriff's Office ● Alta Bates Summit Medical Center ● BART (San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit) ● Bayer Health Care ● California State University East Bay ● East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) ● Grifols Diagnostic Solutions ● Highland Hospital ● Kaiser Permanente Oakland ● Lawrence Berkeley Lab ● Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory ● Lifescan Incorporated ● Tesla Incorporated ● Transportation Dept-California ● UCSF Benioff Children's Hosp ● University of California Berkeley ● Valley Care Health System ● Washington Hospital Healthcare ● Western Digital Corporation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● BART ● Bio-Rad Laboratories Inc. ● Broadspectrum Americas ● California & Hawaiian Sugar Company, Inc. ● Chevron Corporation ● Chevron Research & Technology ● Chevron Richmond Refinery ● Contra Costa Regional Medical Center ● Job Connections ● John Muir Health Concord Med ● John Muir Medical Center ● Kaiser Permanente Antioch Med ● Kaiser Permanente Walnut Creek ● La Raza Market ● Martinez Medical Offices ● Nordstrom ● Robert Half International ● San Ramon Regional Medical Center ● Santa Fe Pacific Pipelines ● Shell Oil Prod US Martinez ● St Mary's College ● Sutter Delta Medical Center ● Tesoro Golden Eagle Refinery ● US Veterans Medical Center ● USS-Posco Industries

⁷⁵ “Contract Tracing,” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, last modified November 10, 2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/index.html>

⁷⁶ “Major Employers in California,” Employment Development Department State of California, last modified January, 2019, <https://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/majorer/MajorER.asp>

2. Fostering Demand-Driven Skills Attainment Regional Sector Pathways

2.a. Developing Sector Initiatives for In-Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Supporting Sector Initiatives

The EBRPU has played a key role in the development of in-demand industry sector initiatives in the East Bay Region and the Greater Bay Area that have made an impact by facilitating connections between employers in these sectors, fostering communication between employers and the workforce, and developing training opportunities that prepare job-seekers for success. The EBRPU's Regional Organizer functions as a central point of contact between the region's industry partnerships, identifying collaborative opportunities, facilitating coordination and managing grants related to strategic initiatives.

The EBRPU is currently working closely with two mature partnerships in the manufacturing and health sectors: the Association of Manufacturers Bay Area (AMBAYArea) and the East Bay Health Workforce Partnership (EBHWP). As indicated in the narrative that follows, the EBRPU has an extensive history of engagement with both of these partnerships, providing financial and infrastructure support, networking, and thought leadership in the development of these efforts. One of the EBRPU's key contributions to these initiatives has been the development of career navigation tools and the creation of training programs for in-demand occupations. In addition, the EBRPU helps to advance the sector initiatives in the region by providing directors of these partnerships with a forum with career centers to share LMI data, answer questions, and discuss training opportunities.

In addition to these endeavors, the EBRPU has a history of involvement in regional information and communications technology sector initiatives that have the potential for renewed activity. This work is also described below. The EBRPU continues to explore the potential reinvigoration of these initiatives, as well as to seek out new areas in which sector initiatives can be fostered.

Advanced Manufacturing

The **Association of Manufacturers Bay Area** (AMBAYArea) includes approximately 60 dues-paying employer partners from the nine county Bay Area, with many more engaged through events and communications. The primary focus of the collaborative is to ensure that manufacturing thrives in the Bay Area. The EBRPU has been engaged with and actively supported AMBAYArea since its inception. AMBAYArea has pursued an array of strategies and activities focused on increasing awareness of and expanding access to career opportunities in advanced manufacturing, aligning available training activities with employer demand, and linking manufacturing employers with prospective employees.

With the support of the EBRPU, AMBAYArea has developed a Manufacturing Ambassador Program to connect manufacturers with students, parents, and educators and increase public awareness of career opportunities in manufacturing. The program selects manufacturing employees who are comfortable with being in a public role to provide presentations to groups of students and others about the benefits of a career in manufacturing. Ambassadors share the story of their choice to train for their specific job, what kind of post-secondary education and training they pursued, and what their current job includes. They are also trained to provide more general information about the variety of career opportunities in manufacturing and what the job market looks like. The Manufacturing Ambassador Program is funded by the EBRPU,

and conducted in partnership with the region's Workforce Development Boards, Bay Area Community Colleges, Bay Area LEEDS (Linking Education and Economic Development Strategies), The Manufacturing Institute, Earn & Learn, and Bay Area schools.

The regional Earn and Learn initiative, which began as a project of the Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County, also partners with AMBayArea, providing a customer relationship management (CRM) platform that links Local Workforce Boards, K-12 schools and community colleges with work-based learning opportunities in the advanced manufacturing sector.

In the area of access to sector based opportunities, Local Workforce Boards have also participated in a Women in Manufacturing program launched by AMBayArea, which hosted a symposium attended by over 100 participants in February of 2020. The focus of the symposium was on promoting careers in manufacturing to women, sharing career pathway information for these occupations, and offering networking opportunities for professional advancement and entry into the field. AMBayArea has also offered Manufacturing Day and annual Manufacturing Week events to increase awareness of advanced manufacturing careers, which have been participated in by the Local Boards in the East Bay region. AMBayArea sources employers to participate in these events for K12 and community college students.

A key activity of AMBayArea prior to the advent of COVID-19 was the sponsorship of an annual summit that brought together employers and other project partners around employer-driven workshop tracks, which included workforce development. The EBRPU and its Local Boards have played an important role in driving the workforce development-related content of these summit events. AMBayArea is exploring the possibility of future delivery of these summits virtually or through a combination of virtual and in-person.

In 2020, after a highly successful tenure leading the partnership from an idea to a self-sustaining, industry-driven organization in partnership with the region's workforce and economic development entities, AMBayArea's founding Director stepped down. He was succeeded by the Bay Area Community College Consortium's Regional Director of Employer Engagement for advanced manufacturing. The new Director had previously served on the AMBayArea Board and was a long-time collaborator with EBRPU partner Boards, enabling a smooth transition and even deeper partnership between workforce development, industry and community college and high-school partners.

Health

The **East Bay Health Workforce Partnership** (EBHWP) is an employer-led initiative carried out with the support of community and education leaders, which seeks to meet current and future workforce needs of healthcare employers, to expand employment opportunities for local workers, and strengthen the regional economy. The EBHWP employs a range of strategies to achieve these goals:

- Increase and diversify the pool of qualified health workers and secure jobs to meet regional demands
- Align the needs and priorities of employers in health profession education and training programs
- Systematically increase work based learning opportunities for K-16 and health professions students
- Build a data-driven rationale for changing current systems, infrastructure development and sustaining healthcare workforce initiatives
- Develop and advocate for policy solutions that eliminate barriers to increase workforce

and education capacity, investment and sustainability

The EBHWP also seeks to implement more specific internship and training opportunities in the healthcare field. These include: identifying opportunities for youth internships with industry partners; support for growing healthcare training opportunities in behavioral health, medical assistant, dental assistant, phlebotomy, emergency medical technician, and pandemic-related employment; and supporting outreach and recruitment for regional training opportunities. The EBHWP has begun to develop apprenticeship models and has taken leadership in designing training programs for contract tracers and community health workers in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

The EBRPU has provided direct funding to the EBHWP for project staffing and has played an active role in implementation of project activities.

Information and Communications Technology

The EBRPU has had past engagement with the East Bay Information Communication Technology Partnership (EBICTP), now **Bay ICT**, which launched in 2016 and is made up of regional business leaders and community partners focused on promoting economic growth in the East Bay region through the ICT sector. Historically, the partnership has included employer partners that are leaders in their fields and have a commitment to serving as industry champions for the work of the initiative. An important part of the work of what is now Bay ICT has been to document career pathways, with a particular focus on connecting disadvantaged populations and youth to ICT career opportunities. The EBRPU has been a key partner in this work, along with community based organizations, community colleges, and other institutions and organizations that serve job seekers who might not traditionally be exposed to the career opportunities in the ICT sector.

Bay ICT has also collaborated with the California Community Colleges Bay Area Center of Excellence based at San Francisco City College to access Burning Glass data to better understand the diverse sectors in the ICT field. This labor market information is then validated and enhanced by partnership member companies to inform strategy.

Bay ICT has focused on three key initiatives: 1) Defining a new set of skills for the ICT workplace, which includes both technical and non-technical skills, knowledge, and abilities; 2) Shifting to an experiential learning model, that gives students much more workplace experience and a curriculum focused on problem solving and collaboration, which will require a deeper collaboration between ICT-intensive businesses and education and training institutions and programs; and 3) Building new awareness and attracting more people to ICT careers, using creative approaches and representatives to create a much more diverse workforce.

Based on long-standing feedback from stakeholders, including Workforce Boards, Bay ICT's community college partners have begun developing and offering short-term, flexible training programs for in-demand occupations across sectors that are better aligned to the needs of job seekers, career changers, and incumbent workers. This is a promising trend championed by the partnership. To further enable accessibility, these trainings are registered on the State's Eligible Training Provider List, allowing individuals enrolled in WIOA services access to funding for training.

Additional EBRPU Strategies and Activities to Support Sector Pathways

The EBRPU is actively working on strategies in which it has a unique role to play in supporting the growth and development of sector pathways in the region. One key area of this work is related to building systems and infrastructure to connect Career Center referrals to sector opportunities in a timely manner. The number and diversity of the network of EBRPU's workforce-related partners represents a unique resource. The multiple America's Job Center of California (AJCC) sites in the region offer a prime mechanism for direct referrals to training and employment opportunities in manufacturing, health, and other in-demand sectors.

An important area of future support from the EBRPU will be the provision of enhanced data on the outcomes of people referred to sector-related activities, which will be carried out with the next round of Regional Plan Implementation funding. Tracking this data (which includes information such as participant completions, certificates, job placements, etc.) more closely will facilitate review of different components of each sector-based partnership to determine what elements are working effectively and where changes need to be made. By incorporating data related to race and gender, the EBRPU will bring an equity lens to this effort, supporting each partnership in ensuring that women and communities of color are obtaining the same opportunities as other individuals in achieving access to sector-based training and employment.

The EBRPU also intends to expand its contribution to the success of these initiatives by developing a more robust system of conveying LMI data to career systems networks and partners. Through its close collaboration with the California Employment Development Department (EDD), and the qualitative and quantitative data provided by the California Community Colleges-Bay Area Center of Excellence, the EBRPU has the capacity to collect, organize, and share labor market data relevant to employers and job-seekers in a timely fashion, facilitating decisions that are well aligned with market conditions in a rapidly changing economy.

2.b. Increasing Access to Training and Education Aligned with the Regional Labor Market

The EBRPU will continue to provide financial and strategic development support for workforce training and education in sectors with significant demand in the regional labor market, and work to expand participant access to these resources. The EBRPU is well-positioned to pursue this goal, grounded in its access to data regarding trends in the regional labor market and its history of convening and mobilizing partners that include employers, labor, education and training providers, nonprofit service agencies, local government, and economic development entities. The subsections below identify current and anticipated efforts in the key sectors in which the EBRPU is actively engaged.

A key strategy identified by the EBRPU in its Regional Plan Implementation 4.0 framework is the development of mechanisms to *enhance the tracking of data regarding training* developed by or in partnership with regional industry partnerships and other priority sectors across the region. This work could include identifying and implementing mechanisms to verify and capture training activities associated with the Region's industry partnerships; verifying and capturing service network participant referrals; identifying co-enrollment opportunities; and documenting co-enrollments, completions, and employment by sector.

This activity would help to establish benchmarks for the number of individuals who complete training and/or who obtain industry recognized credentials in the region's identified priority sectors and occupations. This will help to support the Regional Plan Implementation 4.0

strategy of better informing the career service network of trainings in general, and early enough for the workforce system to prepare and refer competitive customers. EBRPU partner Boards would work in concert with the advanced manufacturing (AMBAYArea) and health (EBHWP) partnerships described above to implement this data tracking strategy. Additionally, the EBRPU plans to collaborate with the State's technical assistance providers, Jobs for the Future and the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, to explore viable and relevant regional indicators of success as prescribed by the California State Workforce Development Board.

One of the greatest challenges to expanding access to training and education for in-demand sector employment for those with barriers is the lack of opportunity to continue to earn income during the training process. For this reason, the EBRPU and its partners have prioritized supporting education and training opportunities that enable participants to continue to receive income while they learn.

Advanced Manufacturing

In a move to increase program integration, the Director of AMBAYArea also serves as a regional director of employer engagement for the region's community colleges. The EBRPU has contributed Regional Plan Implementation resources to support the implementation of this model, which facilitates a structural integration of industry, workforce development, and community colleges in the region, leading to more efficient, timely systems coordination, alignment, and stakeholder engagement.

In the advanced manufacturing sector, the EBRPU is using Regional Plan Implementation funding to develop and launch a suite of virtual career navigation tools for front line case managers and job seekers. The tools include a career guide that provides rapid access to information on job functions, skill requirements, training and education opportunities, and career options in in-demand manufacturing occupations in the region. The accompanying online course catalogue includes a robust inventory of industry-validated trainings along pathways articulated in the career guide. Its intuitive search functions allow users to filter training by job type, duration, cost, and format, as well as by provider, including community colleges and adult schools.

AMBAYArea is in the process of designing trainings to build workforce system capacity to use these virtual tools. In collaboration with AMBAYArea, EBRPU is also exploring opportunities to register promising virtual trainings on the State's ETPL. These resources were intentionally designed for portability and transfer, to be used in any geography and for any industry sectors.

The Career Guide and Catalogue will serve as a resource and case management tool for workforce development counselors in the region, helping determine if clients are interested in a career in manufacturing, and then enabling them to narrow down their search to a specific job area and the training available. Sector employers will also use the new resources to promote professional development and training for incumbent workers. The Career Guide and Catalogue will help: inform the regional workforce system on the key skills and abilities employers seek for in-demand jobs; provide clear pathways to careers; and offer a clearinghouse of training offerings including those offered virtually or in-person by industry recognized training providers, community colleges, and adult schools.

Health

The EBRPU's work with the EBHWP seeks to advance access to training and education for the health sector in multiple ways. Two of the key priority areas identified by the EBHWP explicitly

address the importance of strengthening access to training and education aligned with the needs of the health field. The first seeks to “increase the alignment of healthcare education and training with employer needs – especially regarding shifting competencies, demand, and new models for delivering care.” This priority is to be carried out through examining the changing competencies in occupational pathways by fostering cross-system discussions on the changing landscape of regional delivery systems and their impact on workforce demand, competencies, and training systems. Educators, Workforce Development Boards, and workforce service providers are essential participants in this conversation.

An additional priority for the EBHWP aims to “systematically increase work-based learning (WBL) opportunities in healthcare for K-16 and health professions students.” Activities to achieve this priority include: mapping and coordinating regional and sub-regional health pathway initiatives and mechanisms for WBL; support for the development of infrastructure to simplify the processes for employers to provide WBL opportunities for K-16 students; fostering a discussion with CEOs and human resources (HR) leadership of health employers to identify WBL incentives and models that could exist inside institutions and facilitate cultural shifts; and identifying emerging promising practices to move community colleges and four-year graduates into health fields using WBL and targeting gaps in the pipeline. These are all strategies in which the EBRPU can make an important contribution.

Supporting Work-Based Learning

The EBRPU has been able to leverage important support for work-based learning opportunities through AMBayArea's Ambassador program, described above, and EBHWP's leadership role in developing robust pathway program partnerships in both Alameda and Contra Costa counties. The Ambassador program sources and trains diverse early career professionals to serve as industry ambassadors for K-12 and community college students and teachers. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the program provided in-class presentations and on-site factory tours, as well as other career exposure opportunities. The program also provides externship opportunities for educators to increase their capacity to provide meaningful, industry-informed and career relevant experiences for their students. Due to the prohibition of in-person engagement during the pandemic, the program has been redesigned to accommodate virtual presentations. The previous programming will resume when schools reopen and employers are sufficiently stabilized to allocate the necessary staffing resources.

The EBHWP has offered leadership by providing education and training partners with up-to-date LMI for the health sector, sourcing work-based learning opportunities, summer internship programs, and other opportunities. The EBHWP has also identified new career path opportunities into healthcare through contact tracing and community ambassadors, and developed robust pathway program partnerships in both Alameda and Contra Costa counties. It has also successfully secured ETP funding for training cohorts in collaboration with health care providers.

Prior to the pandemic, the EBHWP was instrumental in sourcing clinical opportunities to fulfill training requirements for in-demand occupations as part of training pathways supported by the partnership, and sponsored a robust summer internship program. EBHWP has convened other regional industry partnerships to identify points of alignment, pursue programmatic efficiencies, and other opportunities for learning.

The EBRPU also continues to contribute to the Earn and Learn regional work-based learning initiative, specifically to leverage their CRM tool to source work-based learning opportunities

through AMBayArea. The EBRPU will continue to explore opportunities to partner and integrate programs.

2.c. Training and Education Leading to Industry-Recognized Post-Secondary Credentials

There are numerous points of connection between the EBRPU and the regional community college infrastructure, specifically the Bay Area Community College Consortium (BACCC), the Bay Region Center of Excellence, and the California Community College District Regional Directors for Employer Engagement. For the past 10 years, the region has invested heavily in regional industry partnerships. This work began with a Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACT) grant that aligned the collaborative work of the region's community colleges, Workforce Development Boards, economic development entities, and K-12 institutions and continues to anchor and guide their partnerships to this day.

As previously introduced, the EBRPU has provided seed and sustainability funding to several of the region's priority sector industry partnerships in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and ICT. AMBayArea and Bay ICT are both managed by locally hosted California Community College District Regional Directors for Employer Engagement, who also work closely with the Region's Center of Excellence for labor market research and analytics. The EBRPU has played a role in facilitating coordination across these industry and post-secondary partners.

Through these channels, the EBRPU and the regional community college system strive towards regional information sharing, plan coordination, resource alignment, and strategic partnerships. The BACCC hosts monthly Regional Engagement / Adult Career Pathways meetings in which the EBRPU Regional Organizer and Board management staff participate. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these meetings have been a venue for cross-system information sharing, learning, and adaptation. Based on longstanding feedback from workforce and other system partners, the region's community colleges have begun to offer short-term, flexible course offerings, including virtual and asynchronous courses for credit, for in-demand jobs in the region's priority industry sectors. Further, many courses will be qualified for eligible training provider lists, allowing for systems alignment and the removal of barriers for participants to take advantage of critical education and training that can enable access to higher quality jobs and economic mobility.

The EBRPU will seek to continue and expand collaboration with post-secondary workforce training that is fully aligned with the changing needs of employers and job seekers, and ensures the credentials provided by post-secondary institutions are industry-recognized, portable and stackable. An important part of the EBRPU's agenda for this work is supporting the alignment of training commitments in order to move people toward better quality jobs.

The Manufacturing Career Guide and Online Manufacturing Course Catalog are a notable example of EBRPU and community college collaboration. These virtual resources for advanced manufacturing were developed by the Bay Region's Director for Employer Engagement in collaboration with the EBRPU Regional Organizer and key stakeholders with regional workforce funding. The EBRPU intends to use the lessons learned from this very successful work to inform future activities in other sectors.

The EBRPU also supports information sharing through HOTJOBS, an EBRPU-administered communication network connecting over 300 workforce and education professionals in the East Bay. This venue provides the opportunity to share training opportunities, job openings, and other information related to the intersection of workforce, education, and training providers.

Adult Schools

There are four adult education consortia in the East Bay, each of which serves a subset of the full geography of the region and operates with different structures. As a result, EBRPU Local Boards primarily engage the adult schools on a sub-regional and local level. Historically, there has been regional coordination on regional career pathway grants and work-based learning initiatives, and the EBRPU will continue to seek out funding for these efforts.

2.d. Improving Program Alignment and Expanding Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Opportunities

Apprenticeship has been a continuing topic of conversation in the Region's manufacturing and healthcare industry partnerships. The EBHWP has established a new Home Care Aide Apprenticeship program serving Alameda and Contra Costa Counties in collaboration with its long-term care partners including Senior Helpers. It is anticipated that pre-pandemic labor shortages will continue to persist in many occupations, presenting opportunities to invest in talent development pipelines to fill openings especially as baby boomers retire. Apprenticeship represents a particularly promising strategy for immersing job seekers in a new field. The EBRPU will work with the DIR-DAS and regional partners to explore different approaches to the development of regional apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs in in-demand occupations in the region's priority sectors.

Apprenticeship offers substantial opportunities to advance equity in the workforce by providing access to quality, family-sustaining jobs, and income mobility. It can allow individuals who are unable to forego income to continue to earn a salary while they learn a new profession, or to advance in their existing field. This is particularly important during the present COVID-related economic downturn. Apprenticeships can also offer women and persons of color the chance to overcome barriers by demonstrating their skills in a particular field to potential employers, enabling them to be judged and hired on their merits rather than being excluded based on their identification as part of a particular group.

The EBRPU has been funded to procure consulting services to develop and execute a plan for researching the feasibility of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs in association with regional industry partnership and employers. While this funding is limited, the scope of this work could include some of the following activities:

- Facilitating meetings with the EBRPU partner Workforce Boards and with additional key stakeholders, conducting interviews, carrying out research, identifying priority occupations (in collaboration with partner employers), stakeholder engagement, interviews, facilitation, convenings, preparing reports, and making presentations;
- Leveraging the extensive work already taking place in region to explore and develop apprenticeship opportunities in key sectors; and
- Leveraging the activities of the California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI), a project of the Foundation for California Community Colleges in partnership with CA Community Colleges, CA DAS and the California Department of Labor's (DOL) ApprenticeshipUS, which has a particular focus on equitable apprenticeships. The CAI is launching peer learning circles to share best practices related to apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships across the state.

These activities will help the EBRPU achieve the Regional Plan objective of exploring high road career pathways into quality jobs in regional priority industries.

In order to create scalable models for the development of apprenticeships, the EBRPU is collaborating with a new, youth-focused, non-traditional, credit-bearing, paid pre-apprenticeship pilot program called Boatworks 101. The mission of the program is to train the next generation of craftspeople in the marine industry. To achieve this mission, the program will include a traditional classroom component linked to hands-on training that rotates through multiple employers throughout the East Bay. While this apprenticeship is focused on the marine industry, training will include cross-sector skills in multiple occupations including electricians, diesel mechanics, riggers, carpenters, and composites. The program has received DAS approval, and is included on the ETPL list. Collaboration with this innovative pilot effort will offer the EBRPU the opportunity to identify best practices and lessons learned that can be applied to the establishment of apprenticeship programs in other sectors.

In order to carry out a regional apprenticeship strategy, EBRPU partner Boards could pool resources in support of education and training for target populations. Where feasible, the EBRPU would target ETPL-registered programs to enable access to ITA funds for enrolled participants. This would create the opportunity for co-enrollments, requiring the development of a system to track co-enrollees across systems and capture data on training completion and credential attainment. Collection and analysis of this data could serve as a valuable tool for measuring race and gender equity in relationship to access to valuable apprenticeship opportunities in fields with growing opportunities and good wages.

EBRPU partner Boards continue to work with MC3 (Multi-Core Construction Curriculum) programs in all four Local Areas, which serve as pre-apprenticeships to the building and construction trades. These programs have provided significant opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment to access high-quality family sustaining jobs.

3. Enabling Upward Mobility For Californians

Providing workers and job seekers in the East Bay with the opportunity to improve their economic status and achieve long-term financial stability is a driving principle of the EBRPU. All four Local Boards, along with training providers and partners, are committed to creating a workforce system in the East Bay that promotes equity. This section describes some of the programs, policies, and initiatives that will empower workers, families, and the broader community.

3.a. High Road Workforce System

Criteria for Selecting Employers

East Bay Workforce Boards will continue to prioritize employers based on a number of factors including presence in priority sectors, wages, and the options they provide for career advancement. While specific employer criteria are determined at the Local Board level, it is core to the region's economic justice-based mission to align job seekers with organizations that will allow them to obtain their long term career and financial goals.

Incumbent Worker Training

Training of incumbent workers is an important strategy for enabling upward mobility, and is of particular interest to both employers and employees in the EBRPU's advanced manufacturing and health sector partnerships. It is a primary training service offered in both Alameda and

Contra Costa Counties.^{77, 78} Incumbent worker training is an employment retention strategy providing training that will result in progression on a career pathway and income mobility.⁷⁹ A key focus of WIOA incumbent worker training is to train individuals with barriers to employment so that they can remain competitive in their current position and increase their contributions to their employer. By focusing on individuals with barriers to employment, local Workforce Boards strive to improve equity in the workforce by increasing the marketable skills of individuals with identified needs. Training can take place within an organization or externally and often takes place in the classroom, in the lab, on the computer, and through video conferencing.⁸⁰

3.b. Equity and Economic Justice

The EBRPU and its member Boards are engaged in a range of structural and systemic efforts intended to promote equity and economic justice in the region's workforce system. This will be a focus on the current round of regional plan implementation funding in tandem with economic recovery planning activities. The goal is to integrate equity into the emerging strategies that the Board will employ during recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. While the pandemic has required the redirection of resources to address the most urgent issues, it also provides the chance to revisit existing strategies and explore new approaches. Best practices that are identified at the local level will be scaled regionally.

The EBRPU has a number of promising initiatives to draw upon that exist at the local level. In the area of equity in workforce strategies, the Oakland Workforce Development Board is working with the City of Oakland's Department of Race and Equity to develop and integrate equity-focused policies and practices into the local workforce system. On-the-job training is being used by a number of Local Boards as a strategy for enabling training participants with limited income and assets to support themselves while they engage in training. Employment Training Panel (ETP) funds are being used by the Richmond Workforce Development Board (RWDB) to offer paid work experience to students with disabilities, and by the Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County (WDBCCC) to provide medical assistant training in a partnership with the EBHWP. The Alameda County, Oakland, and Richmond Workforce Boards have developed their own equity strategies around First Source and Local Hire agreements in their jurisdictions. All four of the Local Boards are engaged in the Prison to Employment (P2E) project, which builds upon AB109 realignment in both counties to bring paid work experience and customized supportive services to justice-involved individuals returning to the community.

Racial Equity Dialogue, Capacity Building, and Service Delivery

The East Bay region is beset with significant equity challenges, and local areas have historically responded in particular ways that reflect local dynamics and perceived needs. The Black Lives Matter movement has created a new urgency and openings to reckon with structural and

⁷⁷ "Customized & Incumbent Worker Training Program," Alameda Workforce Development Board, accessed February 24, 2021,

<https://www.acwdb.org/acwdb-assets/img/Customized%20Training%20Flyer.pdf>

⁷⁸ "County Local Plan: For the WDBCCC and Contra Costa County Local Area (2017-2020)," Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County, accessed February 24, 2021,

https://www.wdbccc.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/WDBCCC-Local_Plan_2017-2020.pdf

⁷⁹ "Incumbent Worker Training," *Employment Development Department State of California*, July 2, 2019, 3, https://www.edd.ca.gov/Jobs_and_Training/pubs/wsd19-01.pdf

⁸⁰ "Incumbent Worker Training," *Employment Development Department State of California*, July 2, 2019, https://www.edd.ca.gov/Jobs_and_Training/pubs/wsd19-01.pdf

systemic racism and engage in difficult conversations. EBRPU partner Boards are earnestly engaging with these conversations about how to re-envision policies, practices, and programs that address equity more concretely.

The City of Oakland has taken a leadership role as it relates to local government, race, and equity, and the region could learn from its experience and support, particularly in workforce development. The City has established a Department of Race and Equity, whose mission is to work with all City departments to assess and process dimensions of race, equity, and inclusion in policy, practice, and outcomes. The Oakland Workforce Board has engaged with the Department extensively.

Another important effort that the EBRPU has engaged in regionally is Bay Area Workforce Solutions, a WAF 7.0 funded initiative focused on increasing racial equity across the Bay Area. Bay Area Workforce Solutions brought together a very large and diverse array of collaborators to break down silos and increase economic equity across San Francisco, Alameda, and Contra Costa Counties. Project activities included a series of panels including national thought leaders to discuss and respond to questions regarding strategies designed to close racial and gender income and wealth gaps for the most vulnerable members of the community. The WDBCCC was a convening partner for this effort, and the OWDB provided a presentation at one of the panels on the City of Oakland's groundbreaking equity work.

In the first year of 2021-2024 Regional Plan implementation, capacity building work in the area of equity and economic justice could begin with peer-to-peer learning among EBRPU partner Board Directors including convenings of key stakeholders to explore equity in workforce strategies. Partner Boards could also consider identifying existing policies and programs shown to produce positive outcomes. This could lead to the identification of measures to track dimensions of equity in practices and outcomes across the regional workforce system, and could include adopting policies supporting equity and job quality standards or those that emphasize income mobility.

This activity could create spaces for difficult and necessary conversations and processes within local workforce areas and with EBRPU partners and stakeholders. These conversations, inquiries, and learning exchanges could move the region towards policies that support greater equity and strive to improve job quality. Strategic service alignment could take place where opportunities present themselves.

This racial equity work would support the Regional Plan objective of providing regional system capacity building around race and equity. The Region could develop a plan by which progress would be measured, including collecting existing policies and programs designed to address equity, informational presentations with regional leaders on the topic, peer learning exchanges, convenings, and application of inquiry and other tools created by the City of Oakland Department of Race and Equity. Progress on this activity could be measured by process outcomes.

On-the-Job Training (OJT)

The EBRPU has used OJT as a critical equity strategy prior to and during the pandemic, and will continue to promote this model of training as the economy recovers. Participation in unpaid training and education is often not an option for individuals with barriers to employment. Low wages in comparison to the high cost of living in the East Bay region means that workers cannot forego income and sustain themselves. Providing workers with wages while they are training

enables them to focus on learning new skills while not having to sacrifice income for themselves and their families. Workers are guaranteed a minimum of 32 hours per week and must be paid wages at least those of the current industry standard. After completion, the training employers must offer the employee a regular long-term position with the company.⁸¹

On-the-job training allows for employers to be reimbursed for a portion of a worker's wages while they are in a training period. This training period generally lasts about three months, but is based on a dollar cap and varies by Local Board. Employers are reimbursed up to 50% of hourly wages.⁸² When workers participate in on-the-job training, they have the opportunity to earn wages and learn how to perform tasks at their new place of employment at the same time.

Another way in which OJT wage reimbursements can promote equity is by providing incentives to employers to train and hire individuals with barriers who might not otherwise be considered for employment. An added barrier for many of the individuals within these populations is a lack of work history, something which OJT can help to address. OJT incentive programs include individuals in the following groups:

- Justice involved
- Completing substance use treatment
- Experiencing housing instability or homelessness
- Physical / cognitive disability
- Veterans
- Out of school youth
- Native Americans / American Indians / Indigenous Americans
- Migrant workers

Employment Training Panel

California's Employment and Training Panel is made up of union, business, and government representatives and provides financial assistance for training purposes directly to businesses in collaboration with local Workforce Boards in the East Bay.⁸³ Training efforts provide many traditionally unserved / underserved groups with the skills required to remain competitive in the labor market and obtain high paying and stable employment. Among the goals of the Employment Training Panel is to provide training opportunities for the following:⁸⁴

- Individuals in rural California (including the Central and Imperial Valleys)
- Individuals in urban High Unemployment Areas (HUAs)
- Individuals who are veterans
- Individuals who were formerly incarcerated
- Youth who are considered at-risk of becoming involved in criminal activity
- Individuals who are injured or disabled
- Individuals with other barriers to employment

HUAs are incentivized by the Employment Training Panel to provide training opportunities. For example, training providers in these areas can receive funding without meeting certain

⁸¹ Alameda Workforce, "(OJT)," <https://www.acwdb.org/acwdb-assets/img/Updated%20ACWDB%20-%20OJT%20flyer.pdf>

⁸² "On The Job Training Program (OJT)," *Alameda Workforce Development Board*, accessed February 24, 2021, <https://www.acwdb.org/acwdb-assets/img/Updated%20ACWDB%20-%20OJT%20flyer.pdf>

⁸³ "Employment Training Panel," Home Page, Employment Training Panel, accessed February 22, 2021, <https://etp.ca.gov/>

⁸⁴ "Employment Training Panel 2019-2020 Strategic Plan," *Employment Training Panel*, 2019-2020, https://etp.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/70/2019/06/ETP19-20_StrategicPlan_Accessible.pdf

requirements necessary to receive reimbursement in other areas of the state.⁸⁵

EBRPU Local Boards have engaged ETP funds in a variety of ways to promote economic equity and justice. The WDBCCC has partnered with the EBHWP to obtain ETP funding to cover the cost of medical assistant training for Contra Costa County residents. The RWDB has collaborated with the West Contra Costa Unified School District and the Department of Rehabilitation over several years to offer workforce training and paid work experience in local businesses for students with disabilities.

First Source and Local Hire Ordinances

Three of the four Workforce Boards in the region have supported the development of, and are engaged with, local hire ordinances in their communities, which leverage the economic power of local government to expand opportunities for local residents to obtain employment with contractors on city-funded projects. The RichmondBuild pre-apprenticeship construction training program works closely with employers who are subject to this ordinance to provide a pathway to construction employment for program graduates. Also in the construction sector, the Richmond and Contra Costa County Boards partner with providers of the Multi-Core Construction Curriculum (MC3), which offers on-ramps into skilled trades in the building and construction sector.

The City of Richmond, the Port of Oakland, and Alameda County as a whole have local hiring policies which mandate a certain percentage of those employed on government-funded construction projects be filled by qualified local residents.^{86, 87, 88} In Richmond, local hiring policies impact not only construction employment but also retail, office, administrative, and other employment in the city. Along with benefiting the employers by facilitating the provision of qualified applicants in response to their labor needs, local hiring also provides needed employment for local residents. Local hiring can be viewed as an anti-gentrification policy by both providing community residents with incomes which will allow them to continue to reside in the community, while preventing new development from attracting outside workers and displacing existing community residents. By reinvesting public works and other local tax subsidies to fund construction projects, local hiring provides further economic development benefits by reinvesting those funds into jobs for local residents.

Supportive Services

A key to delivering supportive services with an equity lens is developing an equity-centered service delivery system design, ensuring that services are as accessible as possible to those who need them and are allocated to different communities in proportion to the need. The Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative (CCWC) model is an innovative approach to the no-wrong-door model of service delivery, which is being adopted by the Alameda County Workforce

⁸⁵ “Employment Training Panel 2019-2020 Strategic Plan,” *Employment Training Panel*, 2019-2020, https://etp.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/70/2019/06/ETP19-20_StrategicPlan_Accessible.pdf

⁸⁶ “An Ordinance Of The Council Of The City Of Richmond Amending Chapter 2.56 Of The Municipal Code Of The City Of Richmond: Chapter 2.56 Local Employment Program,” The Council of The City of Richmond, accessed february 24, 2021,

<https://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/1374/Local-Employment-Ordinance?bidId=>

⁸⁷ “Maritime And Aviation Project Labor Agreement (MAPLA) 2016 Social Justice Program,” Port of Oakland, last modified November 8, 2018, 1-32.

<https://www.portoakland.com/files/PDF/responsibility/CIP%202018-11.pdf>

⁸⁸ “First Source Program,” About Us, Alameda County, CA, accessed February 22, 2021

<https://www.acgov.org/auditor/sleb/sourceprogram.htm>

Development Board (ACWDB) for their most recent service provider Request For Proposals. The OWDB has also used an equity analysis to identify the most impacted communities and aligned resources to meet the need.

Regional workforce development efforts in the East Bay are predicated around an understanding that all workers have unique challenges and needs. Without vital services and resources, workers will not be successful on the job and will not be able to provide their full potential to their employer and society as a whole. The following supportive services are some of the strategies that the region utilizes to empower the region's job seekers and workers:

- Child Care
- Subsidies
- Transportation
- Work Clothing
- Work tools
- Books
- Health Care
- Costs to cover required medical tests (e.g., TB tests)
- Legal Resources
- Emergency Food
- Shelter
- Costs associated with obtaining required documentation or licensing (e.g., California state ID card, state testing, licensing fees)
- Parking permit fees for training purposes at local community colleges

SparkPoint Centers

SparkPoint Centers, an initiative of the United Way of the Bay Area, provide financial literacy education to individuals and families with the aim of helping participants move towards financial self-sufficiency. The Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County has developed a strong collaboration with SparkPoint to enable individuals who are receiving workforce services to enable them to learn how to improve their income, increase their savings, build assets, and strengthen their credit rating. Because financial literacy is fundamental to the success of so many workforce development program participants, this partnership provides a strategy for other Boards in the region to help participants improve their financial literacy skills.

COVID-19-Specific Supportive Services

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant economic impact which has directly affected the financial stability of East Bay workers and job seekers. The region's Workforce Development Boards offer assistance to individuals during this time of increased economic need.

The digital divide has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Access to computers and broadband service, already a challenge for many low income individuals, has suddenly become essential for job search, interviewing, workforce training, and the performance of job-related tasks in many occupations. Local Boards have established programs to lend equipment and offer training to facilitate virtual access for enrolled participants. Delivery of these services is certain to continue to be important in the post-COVID era, due to shifts in employment and work that will persist even after the return of more in-person engagement.

In the East Bay, job seekers who have had wages negatively impacted by the pandemic or individuals who are collecting unemployment insurance payment can qualify for financial

assistance. This assistance can help with payments for the following:^{89,90,91}

- Utility Bills
- Housing Expenses
- Child Care
- Work-related needs (e.g. tools/technology)

Assessing an Equitable Response to COVID-19 in the East Bay

The COVID-19 pandemic has ruptured assumptions about the nature of work and workplaces. It has resulted in global adoption of remote communications and other virtual resources that dramatically impact how the public workforce system will develop policies, service delivery strategies, investment in digital infrastructure, and partnerships. An equity focus will be vital as these are developed, given the scale of unemployment and pre-pandemic labor market trends.

Progress on an equitable COVID-19 response in policy, strategy, and implementation could be measured by process outcomes. The EBRPU could work with a contractor to project manage an equitable response to the pandemic-driven recession. The partner Workforce Development Boards could develop a scope of work with a timeline and deliverables, which could include research, policy review, interviews, facilitating planning sessions, developing scenario frameworks, and synthesizing the project in a final report to the EBRPU partners.

The development of scenario frameworks would assist East Bay Region Local Boards to navigate the near future, individually and as a region. Scenario frameworks would help the partner Boards think about systems, structures, and strategies; policies and programs to address inequitable labor market outcomes; and how to sustain and embed engagement around matters of race and equity in standard operations. This activity would help the region move towards adopting policies that support equity and improved job quality.

Equity Initiatives with Specific Populations

Individuals with Disabilities

Based in Alameda County, East Bay Innovations operates Project Search, a workforce program with the goal of enhancing the transferable skills of individuals with developmental disabilities. Along with a focus on the individual worker, Project Search serves the business community by allowing an untapped labor pool of workers to find employment in local public and private organizations.⁹² The WDBCCC has partnered with East Bay Innovations on a successful Disability Employment Accelerator grant, funded by the California Employment Development Department, to provide workforce development and work experience opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

⁸⁹ “Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County: Job Seeker Services,” WDBCCC, accessed February 22, 2021, <https://www.wdbccc.com/jobseeker-services/>

⁹⁰ “Laid off? Wages cut? Due to COVID-19 Need help paying Bills?,” Alameda Workforce Development Board, accessed February 24, 2021, <https://www.acwdb.org/acwdb-assets/img/6.%206.15.20%20CERSS%20FLyer%20Final-page-001.jpg>

⁹¹ “Financial Assistance For Eligible Unemployed Oaklanders Impacted by COVID-19,” City of Oakland, accessed February 24, 2021, <https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/Flyers-Financial-assistance-for-eligible-unemployed-oaklanders-eng-spa-SIG.pdf>

⁹² “Project Search,” Our Services, East Bay Innovations, accessed February 22, 2021, <https://www.eastbayinnovations.org/services/project-search/>

Reentry for Justice-Involved Individuals⁹³

In 2017-18, EBRPU enrolled a total of 3,108 individuals into WIOA-funded staff-assisted services. Of those, approximately 250 (8%) self-reported an offender status at program enrollment.⁹⁴ It is very likely that these numbers are not reflective of the full number of current or former offenders served in the region, as individuals are not obligated to disclose offender status and face stigma about sharing this information.

Justice-involved individuals face fundamental barriers to employment that are often not addressed through traditional workforce development programming. These include lack of access to housing or transportation, difficulties in document recovery, and behavioral health needs. There are 135 organizations within the region's network of publicly-funded, community-based providers serving the supervised population, 48 of which are providing some level of workforce-related services. However, only a handful of organizations provide a continuum of workforce services paired with other support services, and few provide Earn and Learn or on-the-job training opportunities. Addressing this gap using Prison to Employment (P2E) funds will offer justice-involved individuals greater incentives to participate in workforce programs, and a path with fewer barriers and challenges to a sustainable career.

Obtaining a job has the potential to provide not only a source of legitimate income to individuals who were formerly incarcerated, but structure in their lives and daily schedules. The East Bay offers several programs and initiatives to attempt to make the reentry process smoother and produce long-term sustainable results for this vulnerable population. All four Boards in the region have developed partnerships with legal advocacy groups and community-based organizations that are committed to assisting formerly incarcerated individuals secure employment. Key among these reentry initiatives are the following:

Prison to Employment (P2E): Along with all four Local Boards in the East Bay, the EBRPU works with County Probation Departments and the California Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections to implement P2E. Each of the East Bay Region WDBs intends to commit WDB business services staff resources to building employer partnerships and creating a strong infrastructure of support and information-sharing among employers and other P2E partners. In addition to developing new partnerships, P2E is an opportunity to enhance existing employer partnerships through the introduction of paid work experience, subsidized employment, and employer training on best practices for working with justice-involved individuals.⁹⁵

The EBRPU recognizes that partnerships with entities who are experts in addressing the unique needs of justice-involved individuals is crucial to P2E success, as is ongoing training, knowledge sharing, and networking. To this end, each partner Board will mobilize existing service providers with this expertise and conduct procurement processes that comply with local and state procurement standards for employment and training services for justice-involved individuals where services will be procured.

⁹³ "Alameda County Workforce Development Board: Job Seeker Services," *Alameda Workforce Development Board*, accessed February 22, 2018, https://www.acwddb.org/_jobseeker_resources.page?

⁹⁴ Each EBRPU Local Board provided data reports from CalJOBS on WIOA clients with formerly incarcerated status.

⁹⁵ "Regional Plan PY17-21 – Two Year Modifications," East Bay Regional Planning Unit, March 15, 2019, 5. <https://www.eastbayworks.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/PY17-21-Regional-Plan-Mods-Narrative-v2.pdf>

EBPRU determined that it could best optimize limited P2E resources for the region's justice-involved population by utilizing funding to: 1) cultivate increased coordination and collaboration among partners throughout the region; and 2) address gaps and scale promising existing services within the region's reentry workforce development landscape, specifically by increasing the availability of wrap-around and support services and furnishing more opportunities for paid training and paid work experience. Data reveals low employment retention rates for justice-involved individuals due to numerous potential causes, such as lack of job readiness or poor matching, poor job quality, lack of post-placement supportive services, lack of post-placement career planning, as well as internal client factors. EBRPU Workforce Board partners will utilize P2E resources to support the strategies described above to meet individual needs.

Through the P2E initiative, the EBRPU plans to increase local Workforce Board staff capacity to coordinate existing P2E partners, including with Probation and Community Correction Partnerships, launch a new regional partnership with California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation Division of Adult Parole Operations, and expand the reentry employer networks that are currently supported by a variety of grants and other funding from federal, state, local, and philanthropic sources. The addition of funding from P2E will help to infuse crucial and timely support that will effectively integrate these efforts into a more coordinated and seamless local and regional service-delivery system that meets the needs of justice-involved populations. Local Board partners have also engaged with an array of programs at the local level to offer workforce services to justice-involved individuals, including:

- Job fairs offered at detention facilities to currently incarcerated individuals. These events include assistance with resume writing, preparation for presentations to employers, and connection of individuals with employers for future employment opportunities.
- AB 2060 Supervised Population Grants have been used to assist individuals transitioning out of prison to “ensure that they have access to training and education, job readiness skills, and job placement assistance.”⁹⁶
- Partnerships with CDCR and County Parole to host monthly Parole and Community Team (PACT) meetings, which include information on available career center resources, WIOA training opportunities, recruitment opportunities, and supportive services.
- Participation by the WDBCCC in the U.S. Department of Labor's Customer-Centered Design Learning Challenge, which included a broad range of partners in the use of a human-centered design approach to developing a pilot tool kit for assisting recently incarcerated individuals.
- The Reentry Success Center, a Richmond-based program that provides workforce development services to justice-impacted individuals and families throughout the county.⁹⁷

Opportunity Youth

The EBRPU recognizes the significant barriers that youth and young adults involved with the foster or justice system, and those who are homeless, experience in connecting to workforce

⁹⁶ “AB 2060 Workforce Bill Signed Into Law,” *PolicyLink*, September 19, 2014,

https://www.policylink.org/Blog/tags?field_blog_tags_tid=1056&items_per_page=10&page=2

⁹⁷ “Reentry Success Center,” Welcome Page, Reentry Success center, accessed February 25, 2021, <https://www.reentrysuccess.org/>

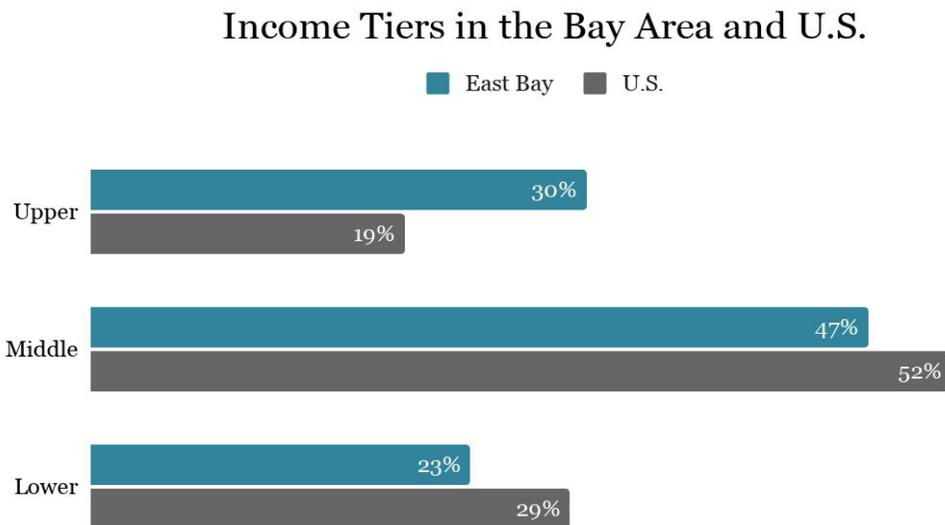
services, career pathways, and employment. As a potential approach, the EBRPU could seek to increase engagement and services for this population, including emerging and innovative strategies, in order to address barriers and enable these opportunity youth to connect with life-sustaining employment.

Creating a Path to the Middle Class

Defining the “middle class” can be challenging due to geographic differences in the cost of living, consideration of assets, wealth, other capital, and income, as well as increasing levels of inequality. Factors associated with income such as health insurance, education beyond high school, and assets for retirement, are the most commonly used metrics for determining middle class status.⁹⁸ The COVID-19 pandemic and economic recession further complicate the criteria for what constitutes middle class status. The EBRPU plans to work with the State’s designated technical assistance providers to pursue measures of success that are tailored to the specific characteristics of each region, including the question of what middle class status represents for the East Bay region.

Figure 16 represents the percentage of San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward residents in the upper, middle, and lower tiers of income, according to the Pew Research Center’s definitions of each.⁹⁹

Figure 16: Income Tiers in the Bay Area and the United States



Factors associated with income such as health insurance, education beyond high school, and assets for retirement, are the most commonly used metrics for determining middle class

⁹⁸ “Defining and Measuring the Middle Class,” American Institute for Economic Research, August, 2015, <https://www.aier.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/WP007-Middle-Class.pdf>

⁹⁹ Jesse Bennett, Richard Fry, and Rakesh Kochhar, “Are You in the American Middle Class? Find out with Our Income Calculator,” *Pew Research Center*, July 30, 2020, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/23/are-you-in-the-american-middle-class/>

status.¹⁰⁰ According to one study, \$52,120 is the minimum income for a family of 2 in the San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward area to be considered middle class.¹⁰¹

In the recent past, the East Bay region has concentrated its workforce efforts on serving individuals with multiple barriers to employment who are often at or below the poverty level. For these individuals to be placed on a path to the middle class, the EBRPU will need to develop innovative education and support strategies that enable participants to fully achieve their potential.

As described in section one, income greatly increases as a person obtains higher levels of education, such as when an individual moves from having some college experience to at least an associate's degree. However, the average median income for both the most common occupations (\$27,647) and the fastest growing occupations (\$40,263) are still well below what the Pew Research Center considers a middle class income for a family of two. Furthermore, many middle skill occupations do not produce an income which would be considered middle class (\$51,412 is the average median wage across top 20 occupations, versus the middle class income of \$52,120 cited above). Out of the top fastest growing and middle skill occupations, the following are the only occupations that produce an average median wage above PEW's threshold:

- Diagnostic Medical Sonographer
- Surgical Technologists
- Respiratory Therapists
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists
- Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
- Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
- Computer User Support Specialists
- Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Paralegals and Legal Assistants
- Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers
- Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians
- Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers
- Web Developers
- Computer Network Support Specialists

Local Boards in the East Bay will seek to include the above occupations as benchmarks when designing trainings and placing job seekers into new employment opportunities.

4. Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services

The EBRPU seeks to continue to strengthen coordination and collaboration across East Bay Regional Workforce development programs and services in order to more effectively support job seekers and employers. As described in Section 2 of this regional plan, the role of aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs has been key to the EBRPU's success co-leading advanced manufacturing and health initiatives. The following section provides an initial framework that can be built upon for future workforce development alignment efforts.

¹⁰⁰ "Defining and Measuring the Middle Class," American Institute for Economic Research, August, 2015, <https://www.aier.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/WP007-Middle-Class.pdf>

¹⁰¹ Bennett, Fry, and Kochhar, "Are You in the American Middle Class?" . <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/07/23/are-you-in-the-american-middle-class/>

4.a System Alignment

Administrative Cost Arrangements for the Region

The annual budget for the EBRPU supports regional communications and functions, including a website with a virtual service locator and a regional events calendar populated by all of the EBRPU's funded partners. The budget contains line items for resource development, strategic planning, and other items as needed when the annual budget is created. In addition, the EBRPU administers the HOTJOBS email listserv that links more than 300 workforce, education, and training professionals and provides a conduit for information sharing in the field. The four Local Boards occasionally share the costs of regional research and planning efforts, and the EBRPU is exploring additional opportunities for expanding coordination of administrative cost sharing.

The regional budget also supports the Regional Organizer (RO). The RO is key to managing all regional initiatives, resource development and grant reporting and serving as a central point of contact between partner systems and regional industry partnerships. The RO convenes and facilitates meetings for numerous staffing levels at Local Boards in the region (directors and business services / service network / youth program / career center managers) to identify best practices, troubleshoot, support the regional EASTBAYWorks brand, and identify opportunities for collaboration and innovation.

Regional Service Strategies, Including Cooperative Agreements and MOUs

The four Workforce Boards in the East Bay have more than two decades' experience of regional cooperation and coordination, which began with the establishment of EASTBAYWorks in 1997. Directors, assistant directors, business service managers, and youth managers of each of the four Boards meet regularly to discuss challenges and brainstorm best practices and solutions to address workforce development obstacles and promote regional solutions.

Existing Regional MOU

Although the four Local Boards have their own MOUs with their local partners, the EASTBAYWorks Partnership serves as the regional workforce MOU. This MOU joins the Counties of Alameda and Contra Costa as well as the municipalities of Oakland and Richmond as the EBRPU to implement regionally funded initiatives, primarily but not limited to subgrants under WIOA.¹⁰²

The EASTBAYWorks Partnership MOU goals include the following:

- Streamline processes, reduce duplication, and manage similar services;
- Receive funding and / or grants for regional planning, plan implementation, staff and workforce system training, and expansion of regional initiatives;
- Coordinate, jointly carry out tasks, and share in the regional funds;
- Lead Subgrantee shall contract with the other parties in a separate services agreement for each WIOA Subgrant in order to allocate current and future WIOA Subgrants and to implement programs on behalf of the EBRPU more efficiently; and
- Establish a "Lead Agent" framework for other regionally funded initiatives to more efficiently implement programs on behalf of the EBRPU.

¹⁰² "Memorandum Of Understanding For The Eastbay Works Partnership / East Bay Regional Planning Unit," County of Alameda, County of Contra Costa, City of Oakland and City of Richmond, January 1, 2020, 1. http://64.166.146.245/docs/2020/BOS/20200121_1445/40653_EBWORKS%20RPU%20MOU%201-21-20.pdf

American Job Centers of California (AJCCs)

The AJCCs of the East Bay Region operate as independent entities but contribute to the regional service strategy by sharing information on the *EASTBAYWorks* website, enabling job seekers across the region to locate the services that are most accessible to them. The geographic distribution of the centers in both Alameda and Contra Costa Counties unifies the region by providing access to one-stop services to all of the region's residents.

Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative (CCWC)

One of the promising best practices for cooperative service delivery in the region is the Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative (CCWC). The CCWC is an innovative public-nonprofit partnership of 12 Contra Costa county education and workforce development organizations that currently operate within the county. The CCWC was developed in response to an identified need for regional collaboration and system alignment to move beyond strategies that prioritize low-wage, immediate employment opportunities and towards pathways to sustainable well-paid employment for diverse job seekers.

The CCWC works to support the expansion of the workforce development system by coordinating with the Employment Development Department (EDD), WDBCCC, WIOA's required AJCC MOU partners, Workforce Integration Network (WIN) members, and other workforce organizations or networks in the design, coordination, and implementation of service delivery and capacity building.

The CCWC leverages WIOA dollars and resources already available in the County to provide services that connect participants to education and training opportunities. These services attempt to enhance essential employability skills and assist in the development and pursuit of educational and career goals that lead to income mobility and quality jobs. Within the region, there is discussion about how the CCWC model could be used as an approach to strengthening workforce system coordination in Alameda County.

Coordination of Services with Regional Economic Development Services and Providers

An important component of the EBRPU's coordination with regional economic development efforts is the representation of the Business Services Manager of each of the four East Bay local Workforce Boards on the East Bay Economic Development Alliance (EDA) Economic Development Director's table. This relationship allows for cooperative conversations about business climate, business closings and openings, and other collaborative opportunities between economic development and workforce development. A key service of the EDA is the development of annual economic outlook reports that provide data and analysis on the important trends impacting the region's economy and its workforce.

The Oakland Workforce Development Board is uniquely situated for collaboration with local economic development initiatives because it is located within the Office of Workforce and Economic Development within the City of Oakland. This structure enables the OWDB to more closely align its policies and programs with the economic development agenda of the city, and to influence city policy related to workforce training and development.

In addition to collaboration with EDA and local economic development in Oakland, the EBRPU benefits from a strong relationship between the WDBCCC and the East Bay Leadership Council (EBLC), as well as the Contra Costa Economic Partnership (CCEP), both of which are based in

Contra Costa County. The EBLC is a public policy advocacy organization whose mission is to increase the economic vitality and quality of life in the East Bay, and whose membership includes many of the region's largest employers. The WDBCCC is currently partnering with the CCEP to lead the Equitable Economic Recovery Task Force, which is focused on creating an equitable recovery and opportunities for those who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic-induced recession.

Coordination of Supportive Services

At present, the four Local Boards in the East Bay have their own internal processes for delivery of supportive services and have not yet developed a strategy for coordination. Models for future coordination of supportive services within the region are under consideration.

Negotiating Local Levels of Performance

As mentioned in the Section 2 discussion of regional sector pathways, a major EBPRU strategy moving forward is to explore development of mechanisms to enhance data tracking on trainings developed by or in partnership with the EBRPU's regional industry partnerships. This could aid the region in establishing benchmarks to track individuals that complete training and/or attain industry-recognized credentials aligned with the Region's priority sectors and occupations. This could be a potential area for negotiation among partners on local levels of performance.

Data tracking would be undertaken by EBRPU partner Boards, the Region's two most mature industry partnerships, Association of Manufacturers, Bay Area and the East Bay Health Workforce Partnership, and the network of workforce services, education and training providers, and CBO partners with whom they collaborate. Outcomes could include identification of tools to capture and communicate training pathways data, and data tracking could inform potential benchmarks for the region.

This activity is contingent on the state of public health and of the economy which impacts the availability of training and job opportunities. As this strategy is implemented, it could help the region meet the objective of better aligning Local Workforce Development Board service delivery networks and customers with the region's industry partnerships. It would also support the Regional Plan objective of achieving enhanced data tracking as it relates to trainings associated with the region's industry partnerships and inform mechanisms to better collect and communicate pathway opportunities, activities and outcomes.

Conclusion

Workforce development efforts in the East Bay are strong, innovative, and committed to promoting equity and ensuring social justice. During the current economic and public health crisis, Local Boards have proven to be extremely resilient, adapting to the rapidly changing and urgent community circumstances. As the pandemic comes to an end, this plan will serve as an invaluable guide for the EBPRU in its short- and long-term strategic development efforts.

Richmond Workforce Development Board



LOCAL PLAN

2021 - 2024

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Introduction

The Richmond Workforce Development Board (RWDB) has a strong history of serving the workforce development needs of job seekers and employers in the city of Richmond and the surrounding region. The economic contraction caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has substantially increased the need for workforce development and supportive services in the local community and nationally, while at the same time requiring an abrupt shift to virtual education, training, job search and support. Changes in the economy resulting from the pandemic mean that large numbers of individuals will need to be trained for new occupations, and will also need to develop digital skills to enable them to seek employment and to function successfully in a transformed workplace. It is also clear that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy has fallen disproportionately on workers who are low-income, female and persons of color. As the economy moves towards recovery, the workforce system will need to focus explicitly on delivering effective services to these populations to ensure that the recovery is equitable. Without an equitable recovery, we face the prospect of ever-widening inequality that undermines our efforts to build a democratic society. The plan that follows provides an outline of the strategies that the RWDB will use to address the interconnected economic and workforce challenges that we face, from a framework of racial equity and economic justice.

(1) Local Overview

Workforce Development Activities in the Local Area

The Local Board and Key Partners

The RWDB local workforce development and education programs and services are designed to meet the needs of job seekers and businesses based in the Richmond Local Area. The RWDB includes a diverse Board membership of employers, labor, community organizations, education, and government who provide guidance, input, and support to workforce development and education needs of the community. These Board members are also deeply rooted, engaged, and committed to helping the Richmond community and the local economy thrive. Key partners include:

- EAST BAY Works One-Stop Career Centers
- Business Community
- Labor Representatives
- Community-Based Organizations
- MOU Partners
- Educational Leaders
- Local Government
- State Government
- Local Economists
- Employment Development Department (EDD)

- Adult Schools
- Community Colleges
- California State Universities (CSUs)
- Economic Development Organizations

Programs and Services

All RWDB activities begin in the local One-Stop Career Centers (AJCC's) and fall under the following WIOA requirements:

Title I (Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth)
Title II (Adult Education and Literacy)
Title III (Wagner-Peyser)
Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation)

Under these titles, the RWDB provides a variety of workforce development services aimed at empowering and promoting economic mobility among the community's most vulnerable residents, such as individuals who are:

- Low Income Youth and Adults
- Skills Deficient
- English Language Learners
- Justice System-Involved
- Dislocated Workers
- Veterans
- Cognitively or Physically Impaired
- Housing Insecure

The RWDB and its partners are engaged in a wide array of programs and services to address the workforce needs of the Local Area. A description of these services is provided below.

Accelerating Careers through Essential Skills Academy (ACES): Professional and personal development focused on soft skills for job seekers with input from the employer community.

Digital training and fluency: Developing and implementing digital training workshops to address the digital divide. This includes digital training workshops at the AJCC as well as collaborating with Adult Education Partners to provide these training workshops.

Career and Technical Education is provided by Contra Costa College: Career education programs through the college provide and prepare residents for careers in high-demand fields. They combine technical, job-specific skills with core academics.

ESL, GED as well as basic skills is provided by Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP) and West Contra Costa Adult Education (WCCAE): Both LEAP and WCCAE provide WIOA Title II services. The programs accelerate achievement of diplomas and credentials for local residents including immigrants and individuals with limited English skills.

Occupational skills training: Training for in-demand occupations is provided through Title I from training providers on the State's Eligible Training Provider list. Occupational skills training provides vocational skills training to adults and youth to help them gain the necessary skills to compete in the job market and gain sustainable wages.

Pre-apprenticeship construction training through RichmondBUILD (RB) for adults: RB is a public private partnership focused on developing talent and skills in high growth, high wage construction and renewable energy fields. RB provides a twelve-week pre-apprenticeship construction training to adults who receive hands-on training as well as industry recognized certifications.

Pre-apprenticeship construction and high school education for youth through YouthBUILD: RB YouthBUILD assists youth ages 16-24 in transforming their lives. Program participants can work toward their GEDs or high school diplomas, learn job skills, and work on community projects. Participants receive hands-on construction training and industry recognized certifications related to the construction field.

Self-Awareness and Recovery (SAR) training: Training that reduces the recidivism rates of incarcerated individuals, focused on helping adult and youth offenders to heal from emotional wounds and trauma. This program has been offered to select participants in RichmondBUILD and other RWDB training programs.

Summer Training and Employment Program for Students (STEPS): Job preparedness, career exploration and paid work experience for youth with disabilities. This program has been operated with state grant funding for several years, in partnership with the West Contra Costa Unified School District and the Department of Rehabilitation.

Paid work experience and work-based learning for adults and youth: Paid work experience is a structured format and designed for adults to gain on-the-job knowledge, experience, and technical skills that otherwise might not be afforded to them. Work-based learning (paid or unpaid) is an educational approach that uses the workplace to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will help them connect school experiences to real-life work activities and future career opportunities.

On-the Job Training (OJT): OJT is provided under contract with an employer or registered apprenticeship program sponsor in the public, non-profit, or private sector. Through the OJT contract, occupational training is provided for WIOA participants in exchange for reimbursement, typically up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and supervision related to the training.

Academic, life skills and career training for youth through Job Corps: Tuition-free training and education focused on basic reading and math as well as providing courses in independent living, employability skills, and career success skills connecting eligible youth with the skills and educational opportunities they need to establish careers.

Financial literacy: For both adults and youth through SparkPoint. SparkPoint is a financial education center that helps individuals and families who are struggling to make ends meet by providing information on developing a budget, achieving financial goals, improving one's credit rating, and reducing debt.

College and career academies programs for youth: Operated by West Contra Costa Unified School District, the career academies include themes such as Health, Information Technology, Law, Media, Engineering, Hospitality, ACET (Architecture, Construction, Engineering and Technology), Biotechnology, GEET (Green Engineering and Energy Technology Pathway), Environmental Studies, and Creative and Performing Arts.

Kaiser Permanente School of Allied Health Sciences: Offers degrees and certificate programs in health and medical careers, including: certificates in Medical Assisting and Phlebotomy, and degrees in Sonography and Radiologic Technology.

Local Adult Education: Provides a co-investment strategy between basic skills upgrading and occupational skills training. The RWDB partners with West Contra Costa Adult Education on a number of workforce training programs.

The FLOW (Forklift, Logistics, Operations, and Warehousing): Offered by Contra Costa College, this program is designed to prepare workers for rapidly growing opportunities in transportation and logistics in the region.

The Contractors Resource Center (CRC): A center for individuals who want to start their own business. The CRC offers a wide range of training opportunities for entrepreneurs in areas that are key to business success, including topics such as bidding, contracting, back-office operations, etc.

Strengths of the Local Workforce System

Commitment to Job Seekers With Barriers to Employment

The RWDB prides itself on impactful workforce development service delivery to individuals with barriers to employment. Providing culturally relevant services at every stage of the training, job search, and career placement process, to position disadvantaged workers for successful long-term employment, is a primary objective of the RWDB.

Justice Involved Youth and Adults

A significant portion of participants (more than 30%) in the RichmondBUILD (RB) and YouthBUILD pre-apprenticeship construction programs are individuals with previous justice system involvement. A high proportion of participants in these programs have gone on to construction employment at sustainable wages. Strong partnerships with unions to employ graduates, and a partnership with SARS Academy, which offers personal development and healing from emotional trauma focused on individuals in reentry, have contributed to this strong record of achievement. In recognition of this level of success, the RichmondBUILD program received an FBI Director's national award for crime prevention. Funding to support these efforts has included Workforce Accelerator grants, the Community Benefits Agreement through the Chevron Corporation, and foundation funding.

The RWDB, through its AJCC, is also operating the "Prison to Employment" grant program. This program provides resources for direct services, supportive services, and earn and learn opportunities to the formerly incarcerated and justice-involved individuals. In addition, components of the ACES Academy focused on personal and professional development are also offered to this population.

Individuals Experiencing Homelessness

The City of Richmond adopted a Tiny Homes Ordinance and is in the planning stages of creating a transitional village for those experiencing homelessness. In addition, RB has received a Workforce Accelerator Fund grant (WAF 8.0) to provide pre-apprenticeship construction training to individuals who are homeless and involved in the justice system, and enable them to participate in the construction of the Tiny Homes. Once the Tiny Homes are complete, RB students may be eligible to live in the Tiny Home.

English Language Learners

Strong partnerships with Adult Education and various CBOs enables the RWDB to serve the diverse population of immigrant and English Language Learners in Richmond. A key emphasis of the program is helping ELLs and immigrants navigate through the education and training systems that would otherwise not be accessible to them. This population is served through co-enrollment in both Title I and Title II programs. A strength of the community is the ability to serve English Language Learners through the ACES Academy, which focuses on personal and professional development before entering into the workforce and during employment.

Individuals with Disabilities

The RWDB is committed to utilizing a human-centered design approach to working with individuals with disabilities. Through a strengths-based perspective, the frontline staff and program administrators focus on the unique talents and skills of program participants instead of physical or mental challenges. The STEPS program, operated in partnership with West Contra Costa Unified School District and the DOR, offers opportunities for employment training and work experience to K-12 youth with disabilities. Strong employer partnerships are an essential part of providing these opportunities to young people.

“The City of Richmond YouthWORKS program has been really great in hiring our students with disabilities, and the STEPS program has served them well. I would of course like for those services to continue” K-12 Education participant, Public Input Session

Adults Who Are Low Income and Basic Skills Deficient

A significant portion of those served by the RWDB are low-income adults and youth who are basic skills deficient. The RWDB offers individuals from this population career planning guidance and workshops. Co-enrollment in LEAP and Adult Education provides the opportunity for workshops on basic skills in language and math and provides programming that leads to a GED or High School diploma. Providing access to supportive services is also critical for this population, which often lacks the resources to pay for things like work clothing or transportation. Participation in Work Experience and Work-Based Learning are important resources for this group, whose lack of previous employment experience can limit their competitiveness as job seekers. The ACES Academy’s focus on soft skills training also addresses the lack of workplace skills that may result from limited experience in the work environment.

Dislocated Workers

Services for dislocated workers are designed to address the loss of a job and wages and have become even more important as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While dislocation from employment has not traditionally been seen as a barrier to employment, the scale of business closures during COVID-19 has created a new priority for these services. The RWDB has received a total of 18 WARN (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification) from businesses, totaling 1,739 layoffs since the start of the pandemic. This does not include the unprecedented number of smaller employers who either went out of business or are continuing to struggle to keep their business afloat. Important services for this population include career planning, since job dislocation may require decisions about preparation for and entry into a new occupation. Once an individual has determined their career direction, they are provided with occupational skills training (including OJTs and in-class training) leading to entry into a new employment sector. Information on financial resources and assistance in filing for Unemployment Insurance are also important services provided to dislocated workers. A key part of the dislocated worker program also includes Rapid Response services provided in advance to workers when RWDB has advance notice of layoffs.

Veterans

Veterans are a high priority for service at the AJCC. The AJCC partners with the EDD's Veterans program and Swords to Plowshares to provide additional Veteran services. The RWDB also partners and refers homeless Veterans' to Shelter-Inc for housing assistance. The RWDB currently provides employment and training services to Veterans under the Veterans' Employment-Related Assistance Program (VEAP) and the other WIOA programs. As mentioned, the RWDB is partnered with Swords to Plowshares and will continue to play an integral role in co-enrolling Veterans in Title I services.

Areas for Improvement

Virtual Service Delivery

It is difficult to predict how long the current COVID-19 pandemic will continue, but there is common agreement that the ability to operate in a virtual setting will be an important part of work and service delivery in the future. It is imperative that the RWDB continue to strengthen its ability to deliver services in a virtual setting to meet the urgent short-term needs of the pandemic and to create a virtual infrastructure for the future. The RWDB is developing training for staff in digital skills such as social media and ensuring that staff have up to date skills needed for digital delivery of services. Digital workshops are being created for resume, application support, and interview preparation. In addition, career counselors are on call and now provide assistance through ZOOM for job search and general customer support. Job and employer search assistance is also being revamped to include virtual recruitments.

The following comment was provided at a Public Input Session by a participant:

“COVID has really changed how we do business, with a lot of things being done virtually, so I think it is essential that we make adjustments to offer more virtual workshops for job seekers. Because we're no longer confined by location, we could also reach out to other AJCC's in the county to collaborate on providing these virtual workshops for job seekers” Workforce System Staff, Public Input Session

Beyond the need for virtual services during the pandemic, the RWDB will need to enhance its digital presence to attract a broader audience. The following comment was provided by a Public Input Session participant from the education sector:

“Creating a social media presence to advertise what services are available is one way for the RWDB to strengthen outreach. In terms of delivery of workshops, the establishment of a YouTube Channel could be a helpful strategy, because a large proportion of residents know how to access YouTube. This could be a good vehicle for service delivery for people who do have the digital skills and need help” K-12 Education participant, Public Input Session

With the onset of the pandemic, the RWDB began to develop its social media presence in the following platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. Trainings are underway to educate staff on the best effective ways to utilize these platforms in order to attract and engage customers. In addition, staff are being trained on how to utilize social media as a means of marketing and advertising events, services, and accomplishments.

Furthermore, the RWDB is looking to its neighboring WDB's to glean best practices in virtual service delivery. Staff are currently collaborating with the regional EASTBAY Works partners to learn and share on different strategies and ways to market and provide services.

The effects of the pandemic on in person service delivery has created opportunities to expand the ways in which the RWDB delivers services. Post COVID-19, the RWDB will continue to provide virtual services along with in-person services. This will allow a diverse means of service delivery focused on the customers' choice.

Diversifying Training Opportunities

Jobseekers who come to RWDB workforce centers do not all have the same training and employment needs, interests, or goals. Therefore, expanding RWDB training, education, and job placement options could provide greater opportunities for program participants.

“The job market is quite different from what it used to be, with many jobs including an information technology component, so it will be important for people to have more data management skills or knowledge of technology, not just retail and warehousing”

Workforce System Staff participant in Public Input Session

RWDB is redesigning the ACES Academy to include digital skills training to address the basic technology skills needed in order to function successfully in the workplace. The RWDB will further advance these efforts by working with Adult Education and Community Colleges to address the skills and training gaps in other areas, based upon business needs. This will be accomplished by bringing together the RWDB's Business Advisory Group. The Business Advisory Group will encompass key business leaders such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Council of Industries. Members will include a wide variety of businesses from small enterprises to large corporations representing the health, technology, logistics, construction, manufacturing, clean energy, and biotechnology sectors. Bringing together all of these partners will be crucial to develop training programs that are in alignment with employer's needs, address gaps in training, industry trends, and job growth, especially as we move into life post-COVID-19.

(2) Strategic Vision

Supporting Economic Growth and Economic Self-Sufficiency

The RWDB’s mission statement reads as follows: “The Richmond Workforce Development Board will, through private industry and public agency **partnerships**, contribute to the **economic growth** of the region by promoting and overseeing a **flexible and responsive** workforce system, which aligns jobseekers’ **skills** with current and future **employer needs.**”

During a time of great social, political, and economic change, the RWDB will work diligently to promote equity through workforce development services. Committed to job seekers, employers, and the broader Richmond Community, the RWDB will ground all of its efforts over the next four years in its vision.

The RWDB will serve the needs of employers and workers in Richmond and the surrounding region by working with key partners from city government, business, industry, education, economic development, organized labor, and community organizations to develop innovative ways to identify and address those needs. The RWDB will ensure a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce, provide education and workforce training to give youth and adults the opportunity to achieve their career goals, and contribute to the success of local businesses through a range of direct services. The RWDB’s goals are to prepare an educated and skilled workforce that will increase economic self-sufficiency while advancing equity within the workforce and education system ensuring greater opportunity for upward mobility for local residents.

Activities that will support RWDB’s goals and vision fall under the following four pillars:

Pillar 1: Building Partnerships

- **Strengthening Partnerships:** The RWDB will collaborate with key/core partners to streamline education and training opportunities for candidates to address basic skills deficiency and support English Language Learners through coordinated services with Title II – Adult Education and Literacy. Collaboration also will include working with community-based organizations that serve individuals who lack basic skills and English language skills.
- **Engaging Industry Leaders:** The RWDB will engage industry leaders to develop training programs and create stronger connections between employers and the workforce system.
- **Strengthening Co-Enrollment:** The RWDB will streamline the process of co-enrollment between Title I and Title II, to co-invest and co-case manage participants in collaboration with partners, in order to address basic skill deficiency and language barriers while the participant is seeking employment and skills training.

Pillar 2: Addressing Community and Employer Needs

- **Engaging Businesses:** The RWDB will collaborate with businesses to determine local hiring needs and design innovative initiatives and trainings that are responsive to those needs, in order to start job candidates on a career path.
- **Engaging Labor Unions:** The RWDB will collaborate with local labor unions to improve employee representation, essential for high-quality jobs, and strengthening apprenticeship programs which are a critical route to developing needed skills.
- **Utilizing Data, Measuring Performance, and Assessing the Labor Market:** The RWDB will set and measure progress toward goals for creating a skilled, inclusive, and competitive workforce. The RWDB will continuously evaluate training, employment, and earnings outcomes to ensure excellent services and positive economic impact. The RWDB will survey business and labor market data to drive in-demand services to businesses and candidates.
- **Increasing Digital Literacy and Fluency:** The RWDB will provide workshops to teach adults and youth on the different digital platforms and how they interconnect with training and employment.

Pillar 3: Flexibility and Responsiveness

- **Increasing Flexibility and Adaptability:** The onset of the pandemic, the ongoing challenges of stay-at-home orders, increased COVID-19 cases in Richmond, high unemployment, and business closures and layoffs have all negatively impacted the workforce system and the economy. The RWDB has adopted and adapted protocols and policies to address new safety and health measures. In addition, distance learning and digital learning are now the new norm and practice by RWDB and partners.
- **Preparing Local Residents:** RWDB will collaborate with community members and prepare them for the current realities of the changing labor market and the future of work by creating new opportunities for low-wage workers and businesses in the changing economy.

Pillar 4: Skills and Training

- **Strengthening Services for Those with Barriers:** RWDB will focus on addressing and determining appropriate pathways for low-income adults and youth who have limited skills, lack work experience, and face other barriers that prevent them from achieving economic success.
- **Earn and Learn:** RWDB will focus on work-based training strategies and employment approaches to benefit low-income individuals. Work-based training provides adults and youth the chance to earn income while also receiving training and developing essential skills that are best learned on the job.

- **Promoting Project ACES (Accelerating Careers through Essential Skills):** RWDB will work with business and educational institutions to design and offer candidates necessary and in-demand work ethic and learning opportunities, contributing to the creation of a pipeline of candidates with the essential skills businesses require.
- **Designing Career Pathways:** RWDB will design and deliver pathways that prepare candidates to reach their full career potential.

Service Delivery Strategies to Ensure Equitable Access

The RWDB will incorporate various ways to strengthen service-delivery to ensure equitable access to sector pathways and industry recognized post-secondary credentials. The RWDB seeks to make the current service delivery system more effective and accessible to those with barriers to accessing services that lead to employment and in-demand occupations, by engaging in the following strategies:

- The AJCC is designing workshops focused on digital literacy to be braided into the ACES Academy Program. ACES primary focus is on work etiquette and now will include digital access and skills.
- The AJCC is collaborating with the local libraries to work on providing hot spots for Wi-Fi in various areas of the community.
- The Business Advisory Council and business members of the Board will help identify areas of improvement to educate employers on how to accommodate those with barriers and provide solutions to empower both the worker and the employer.
- The AJCC is collaborating on joint projects with Adult Education (LEAP) to strategize ways to provide easy seamless access to adult literacy.
- ELL Navigators will provide one-on-one assistance to help navigate those who have difficulty with speaking and understanding English.
- Potential additions to the existing service delivery system include; improving referrals and other linkages between partners and service providers, tracking referrals, and ensuring warm hand-offs between providers.
- Emphasize training that leads to credentials in targeted growth sectors in the East Bay region.
- Connect job seekers with employers by shortening the time from credential to employment and integrating workforce services across program providers for one-stop customers.
- Better collaboration with regional boards to expand existing regional career pathways. Continually review the existing pathways to determine where in-demand pathways exist. Upon identification, target credential training resources to ensure equitable access for individuals, including those with barriers.

The RWDB RichmondWORKS Career Services program strives to provide equitable access and opportunity for placement in state-approved apprenticeships and post-secondary education programs for all program participants.

RWDB staff will develop a memorandum of understanding to build partnerships in an array of local Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) training programs designed to prepare WIOA clients for employment in emergent high-sector occupations in the Richmond area. In addition to establishing strong partnerships with ETPL training providers, RWDB will continue to form partnerships with community-based service providers to provide training services to Richmond residents via the Workforce Accelerator and English Language Learner Pathways grant funded programs.

The RWDB will also continue to pursue a number of strategies to facilitate equitable access to regional sector pathways for individuals with language barriers. These are described below.

Project IMPACTO (Immigrant Participants Accessing Career Training Opportunities)

Project IMPACTO, funded by state of California English Language Learner grant funds, helped address and provide equitable access for customers experiencing English language difficulties. A key component of this program was the use of the Navigator model. Navigators are specifically trained to provide in-depth informational intakes to help individuals navigate services, including; English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, immigration services, as well as access to job search and training avenues offered at the AJCC. Navigators work with individuals to assess their needs and then provide a warm hand off to Title I and/or Title II services. Navigators also follow up with participants to ensure that they are continuing on a career pathway and have opportunities to participate in additional trainings that lead to a recognized post-secondary credential.

Project IMPACTO 2.0

Project IMPACTO 2.0 will build upon the work of the original Project IMPACTO by incorporating an Earn and Learn component through engagement with local businesses that are a part of the Business Advisory Council. Partnering with businesses on this initiative will help provide guidance on additional knowledge and skills that participants need to be successful in employment. Participants will also participate in the ACES Academy, focused on personal, professional development as well technical skills. Employers will assist with input, interviews, and by providing paid work experience to participants.

LEAP (Literacy for Every Adult Program)

LEAP is a highly successful program serving English language learners as well as basic skills deficient WIOA participants. This free literacy program is sponsored by the Richmond Public Library and funded through the Adult Education and Literacy Program administered by the Department of Education under WIOA Title II.

“Technology and remote work have become a priority during the pandemic, yet we have many people in the community who don't have access to a computer or

the skills to work remotely. We need to collectively figure out a way to help them transition into this new workplace . . . whether it be through a computer lab or providing access to Wi-Fi to people that don't have the means.”

“I think we need to look at the conditions of people who are dealing with issues like low literacy, lack of experience in the workforce, and limited knowledge of workplace etiquette...we can address it from two perspectives--we can concentrate on educating the worker so they can come to the table with the skills they need to be able to function, but we also need to educate the employer...we need to empower everyone, empower the worker and the employer to be able to create an equitable game plan for all.”

Public Input Session Participant

(3) Core Program Partner Coordination

Coordination with Adult Education and Literacy Activities Under WIOA Title II

RWDB will continue its strong history of collaboration with its Title II partners including West Contra Costa Adult Education (WCCAE) and Richmond’s Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP), in developing a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce. The existing MOU and resource sharing agreements define how Title II partners refer and collaborate in co-enrolling WIOA participants. These partner services include English language learner (ELL) tutoring and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) to determine a person’s skill level and aptitude. The following are examples of the coordination efforts between the RWDB and adult education and literacy activities:

- The RWDB ELL Project IMPACTO (Immigrant Participants Accessing Career Training Opportunities) grant’s success with client referrals and co-enrollments was primarily due to the strong partnership with its Title II partners, LEAP and the WCCAE.
- RWDB will continue with the robust co-enrollments and co-case management between Title I and Title II programs, which provides a co-investment with the participant, thereby improving outcomes for the participant and both programs.
- Project ACES (Accelerating Careers through Essential Skills) was developed through the Workforce Accelerator fund and modifications were made with the funding of the ELL grant to include a personal development component. The ACES Academy also includes a Business Advisory Group whose members include Title II partners (LEAP and WCCAE), Contra Costa Community College, and employers. The Business Advisory Group serves to help address and create innovative ideas and curriculum for individuals who lack basic skills and have language barriers in order for them to be better prepared for employment.
- RWDB will also collaborate with Contra Costa Community College in the ELL 2.0 grant. The new grant will include cross referrals, information sessions, and career technical education, such as Medical Assistant certification and Forklift, Logistics, Operations, and

Warehouse (FLOW) training. These activities will be in coordination with Title II partners to ensure the success of program participants enrolled in Title I training.

- Through its partnership with West Contra Costa Adult Education, the RWDB is able to ensure access to adult education classes including training in viable careers.
- The RWDB's partnership with LEAP has been highly successful in serving English language learners as well as basic skills deficient WIOA participants. This free literacy program is sponsored by the Richmond Public Library and funded through the Adult Education and Literacy Program administered by the Department of Education under WIOA Title II.

RWDB staff will continue to participate in the review of local applications (as outlined in WSIN19-34 - Local Board Review of the WIOA Title II AEFLA Applications) for adult education providers and provide input on aligning and building stronger partnerships and services to continue to address the needs of residents in the community, thereby creating a better prepared workforce.

The RWDB is in the planning phase with West Contra Costa Adult Education regarding ways to develop occupational skills training based upon employer demand and alignment with regional growth sectors. This will be accomplished by including industry partners and the business community in these conversations, in order to gather input on what is needed to train their workers, keep up with most recent technological advances, and look ahead to future demand, while staying current with immediate needs to be profitable and viable in today's economy.

Coordination with Employment Services Under WIOA Title III

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, RWDB staff has incorporated creative ways to provide critical workforce development services to its customers. These include use of technology and social media. RWDB staff will continue to work very closely with our WIOA Title III partner to provide virtual and online services to our mutual clients while ensuring there is no duplication of services. These services include:

- Providing WIOA Individual & Training Career Service registration that is completed remotely via CalJOBS date tracking system, using an electronic signature process;
- Connecting clients to online job boards, labor exchange information, and virtual EDD Unemployment assistance via CalJOBS; assisting clients to successfully connect with EDD staff via computer-based applications and the telephone;
- RWDB staff provide virtual career advising appointments for individual clients via telephone and online through Zoom webinars.

Once the State's shelter-in-place orders are lifted, and we are able to provide more in-person career services, the RWDB staff will work with EDD staff to coordinate WIOA service delivery strategies including job readiness training, job placement events, and labor exchange services. The coordination of these and other vital workforce development services will alleviate service duplication within the comprehensive career center. RichmondWORKS AJCC staff consistently

coordinate AJCC services with Wagner-Peyser staff to avoid duplication of services. The goal is to streamline services in order to promote efficiency and optimize performance by leveraging resources and cost sharing. RWDB staff will continue to:

- Meet quarterly with AJCC service partners to discuss service delivery, including how to improve WIOA and Wagner-Peyser Act services and ensure access to services for all residents.
- Use the CalJOBS Data Tracking & Reporting System effectively to eliminate duplication of services between WIOA and Wagner-Peyser partners; all client services are tracked in this statewide system, which allows collaborating partners to confirm services being rendered to individual clients prior to providing additional services. Cross referrals of potential program participants within the CalJOBS system and coordination of services will help avoid duplication and assure maximum efficiencies in services being offered.

Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation Programs Under WIOA Title IV

RWDB staff have consistently maintained communications with its Title IV partner, which has allowed them to regularly coordinate service delivery and ensure overall strategic alignment. The RWDB Youth Services Provider has been partnering with the East Bay District of the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR-EB) and the Employment Training Panel on the Summer Training and Employment Program for Students (STEPS) grant program to serve West Contra Costa County Unified School District (WCCUSD) students with disabilities. The STEPS grant collaboration has enabled the RWDB to partner with DOR-EB and WCCUSD to extend the RWDB Youth Program to provide critical workforce readiness training and work experience to students with intellectual or developmental disabilities (ID/DD) in Richmond. Youth and Adult Program participants with disabilities receive pre-employment and transition services (including workshops, shadowing, training, and financial literacy.)

Through the STEPS grant and other collaborations, the DOR district partner works with the RWDB and local businesses to provide internships and permanent employment to ID/DD program participants. In addition, RWDB and DOR staff meet regularly to develop strategies to successfully serve the ID/DD population of youth and adults. The RWDB has worked with the DOR to host annual job fairs for adults with disabilities at the AJCC, where staff worked with participants to review resumes. Employers with a history of hiring people with disabilities interview job candidates at the job fairs.

The RWDB is currently developing its own employer engagement strategy to initiate contacts with employers and provide them with an employer perspective about working with individuals with ID/DD. Training modules for employers and staff will be developed to promote greater understanding of what it means to hire an individual with ID/DD.

(4) AJCC System Partner Coordination

Roles and Resource Contributions of Local Board and AJCC MOU Partners

The RWDB is committed to aligning its core programs to those of the AJCC partner services, thus allowing the AJCC to operate as a unified system. The RWDB Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines current partnership processes for service collaborations for mutual clients.

RWDB has increased its collaboration efforts with core partners such as EDD, Adult Education, and DOR to strengthen its service outreach and provide seamless core program services to Richmond residents. The RWDB Career Service Provider will work with its core partners, using its customer-focused service delivery system, to assist clients referred to RWDB AJCC by effectively assessing their skills, aptitude level, barriers to employment, supportive service needs, and developing an employment and counseling plan that will lead to permanent employment and program completion. This collaboration will include updates to the existing WDB Partner's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to memorialize the terms of staff cross-training, referral processes, client tracking, and client skills development via enrollment in the WIOA training program.

The role and resource contributions of the RWDB members toward the development and maintenance of the Richmond Local Area operation and career services are outlined in the RWDB by-laws and ratified in the Richmond City Council Resolution affirming these by-laws.

The RWDB and City of Richmond's Chief Elected Official entered into a Written Agreement which outlined the roles of each party in the planning, establishment and oversight of the Richmond Local Area comprehensive workforce development system in accordance with WIOA and federal regulations. The Written Agreement was ratified by the Richmond City Council, July 16, 2019.

Ensuring Continual Improvement of Eligible Service Providers

The RWDB and its staff are committed to continuous quality improvement in its AJCC service delivery system for the Richmond Local Area. A wide-range of guidance and direction is provided to AJCC eligible service providers by RWDB staff to ensure that the needs of local employers, workers and job seekers are met. Quarterly meetings take place with eligible service providers and the RWDB to discuss continuous improvement, which encompasses WIOA performance measures, collaboration, challenges, and strategic planning as it relates to the local and regional plans. In addition, training is provided for continuous improvement focusing on customer service, WIOA Regulations, Performance Measures, and the CalJOBS data tracking system.

WIOA Program monitoring and guidance training classes are conducted by RWDB's Management Information System (MIS) Administrator. Semi-annual quality reviews are

conducted to assess the excellence and effectiveness of services provided to all customers (employers, workers, job seekers, and partners). If any issues are identified, a determination of a corrective action plan takes place, specifically outlining areas of improvement and training to correct any shortcomings.

The RWDB will implement a continuous improvement survey to distribute to all customers as a means of evaluating customer satisfaction. The results will be shared at the partner quarterly meetings that include eligible service providers. “What’s working” and “what’s not working” within the AJCC delivery system will be addressed along with a plan of action for continuous improvement of services.

Strengthening Linkages Between the One-Stop Delivery System and Unemployment Insurance Programs

The RWDB AJCC partners have a robust partner relationship with the Employment Development Department (EDD) Unemployment Insurance (UI) program staff. Regional EDD staff services are currently accessible electronically via the telephone, EDD website, and CalJOBS system to assist AJCC clients and UI benefit recipients. Historically, workshops are held weekly at the Contra Costa County, Concord AJCC office location. These workshops are specifically for UI claimants; however, since the COVID-19 pandemic, EDD staff are available to meet virtually with participants regarding their needs. RichmondWORKS AJCC staff have been trained by EDD staff and receive continuous guidance regarding how to assist UI claimants with information on all EDD UI services, including filing UI claims. As of March 2020, these services are also provided virtually and via telephone. Once the State’s shelter-in-place orders are lifted, we will resume in-person WIOA Title III services for the Richmond Local Area.

In order to strengthen the existing collaboration in serving qualified claimants, RichmondWORKS AJCC Career Center offers a full array of reemployment and training services to help UI recipients and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) participants transition back into the workforce. These services range from Wagner-Peyser core services to WIOA individualized services that include skills training in demand occupations. The Wagner-Peyser core services include the use of computers and resource materials, staff-assisted job search, assessments, access to staff-assisted workshops and job clubs, and community referrals.

The City of Richmond conducts a yearly survey of residents and employers in the Local Area to identify needs and areas of improvement. RWDB incorporates and aligns the City of Richmond’s goals in response to the needs of the community and local employers focusing on continuous improvement and providing excellent customer services.

Coordinating Relevant Secondary and Postsecondary Education Programs & Activities

The RWDB will coordinate education and workforce activities in relation to secondary and post-secondary education programs through coordinated efforts in career pathway development

that include West Contra Costa Adult Education and Contra Costa Community College District. Employer and partner input will also be included in these efforts. RWDB will collaborate with AJCC partners and local businesses on the development of the following strategies to enhance certification training activities, while avoiding service duplication:

- Understand the immediate hiring and training needs of regional employers in order to create a pipeline of qualified candidates;
- Identify and map career pathways within each industry sector, in partnership with adult education, community colleges, employers, and other partners.

We seek to expand on the model created with our partners at West Contra Costa Adult Education, Contra Costa Community College, Kaiser Permanente School of Allied Health Sciences, Martinez Adult School, and local training providers. We will work with businesses to ensure that local business needs are met, and will build upon the existing partnership with community colleges and training providers, to ensure that credentials are developed with industry engagement that will benefit the Richmond businesses and those who seek employment in specific sectors.

Existing RWDB “Earn and Learn” strategies will continue to be incorporated into this collaboration:

- Use of On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Work Experience as Earn and Learn models to provide knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job. The OJT curriculum will continue to be designed to be responsive to the needs of business, while giving Earn and Learn opportunities to jobseekers in the city.
- Work Experience will be used as a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period.
- Continue to collaborate with Title II and Carl D. Perkins partners for Youth and Adult program participants who enter certification programs for specific industry sectors; these activities would include:
 - Occupational skills training, with a focus on recognized postsecondary credentials and in-demand occupations; and,
 - Postsecondary preparation including transition activities.

The RWDB will collaborate with its AJCC Partners to support students in conjunction with efforts focused on receiving certifications in identified career pathways, and efforts will be made at the local and regional levels to ensure that services are not duplicated.

Coordinating Workforce Development Programs and Economic Development Activities

The RWDB continues to strengthen its linkages to local and regional economic development entities and activities. Engaging with the City’s Economic Development division to gather and share information that will strengthen the local economy and participation in the Eastbay Planning Unit is important in supporting the RWDB goal of coordinating its local workforce

investment activities with what is happening in the economy in the greater East Bay region. Partnerships with the East Bay Economic Development Alliance and other regional economic development entities, as well as ongoing access to regional economic data, will continually inform the local strategy of the RWDB.

The Business Retention Program, managed by the RWDB, strengthens businesses in Richmond through a comprehensive economic development plan that includes general marketing, focused business attraction, business retention, and business assistance. Ongoing management tasks include:

- Directing businesses to public and private sector resources, including but not limited to Target Employment Area information, RichmondWORKS Program, Revolving Loan Program, Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Administration, and other federal and state resources.
- Collaborating with public and private sector sources, such as the Chambers of Commerce and the Richmond Economic Development Commission, to gather and share information and strengthen the local economy.
- Engaging with the City's Economic Development Administrator to carry out joint planning.

The RWDB will continue to actively pursue opportunities to support training in entrepreneurship and the development of microenterprise as follows:

- Partnering with the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center (REC) in Richmond. The REC provides training on how to start a small business enterprise as well as entrepreneurial skills training.
- Richmond's CoBiz is a business acumen work space which offers an Incubator Program that prepares entrepreneurs (including veterans and individuals interested in starting non-profit organizations) and students with the mindset and skill sets necessary to launch a business, execute a business plan and attain a successful exit.
- Richmond Main Street Initiative is a community-based non-profit dedicated to revitalizing downtown Richmond by building and strengthening relationships with all stakeholders which includes residents, community members and business owners.
- The Richmond Contractor's Resource Center (CRC) builds regional small business development capacity through its partnership with the growing Oakland Contractors Resource Center, a past recipient of a Workforce Accelerator grant. For example, the CRC offers training and support to enable local construction contractors to expand their businesses.
- The RWDB will also continue to expand its partnerships with the WCC Business Development Center to further advance micro-entrepreneurial training in Richmond and West Contra Costa County.

Transitioning to an Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management System

The RWDB continues to use the CalJOBS system to facilitate the process of integrating data systems to improve customer service. In using all aspects of the CalJOBS systems to capture client data, we have successfully streamlined intake, case management, and service delivery and minimized the requirement for duplication of data.

The RWDB Management of Information Systems (MIS) unit provides meaningful information about program participants to inform program operations staff. RWDB strategies for transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA include a detailed technology-based intake system that minimizes client face-to-face time with MIS technicians and allows secure transfer of client documents, including a secure electronic signature encryption process.

The RWDB staff's goal is to ensure that any sharing of data or information with AJCC partners be consistent with the confidentiality requirements in 20 CFR part 603. RWDB staff fully supports any efforts to evaluate the potential for common/shared application or intake forms with its partners to streamline the intake process and better serve our common customers.

RichmondWORKS AJCC partners with access to the CalJOBS data collection system can easily view case notes and services provided to all WIOA-enrolled clients. This shared data system allows other staff who might come into contact with a shared client to see the range of services a particular client is accessing, and enables a Career Counselor to supplement, rather than duplicate, services for those clients who are co-enrolled. The CalJOBS shared data system also allows managers and administrators to see and run real-time reports on multiple aspects of program operations for better efficiency.

Facilitating Access to One Stop Services Through Technology and other Means

The RWDB AJCC Career Service Provider has facilitated the development of a paperless system that will enable AJCC staff to operate more efficiently and with greater accountability. The AJCC's basic career service clients currently access WIOA services via a technology-based platform that will allow AJCC clients to complete various program orientations, including the WIOA Individual services application, online.

RichmondWORKS AJCC career services information is provided to clients at-large via the RichmondWORKS website and through social media (including Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram). Updates to existing clients concerning new job postings, programs, recruiting events, and job fairs, are provided via social media apps, texts, and email.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face meetings with clients have been discouraged; however, RichmondWORKS AJCC Career Service Provider staff members have been able to contact clients via technology such as conference calling and on-line virtual meeting events.

Virtual job search preparedness workshops are currently being developed in both English and Spanish, enabling job seekers to access services that had previously been available only in person.

The need for implementation of these new strategies was confirmed by a participant in the Public Input Session:

“I want to call out the fact that we need to go virtual with a lot of services. We need to apply to offer a combination of in person and virtual services. We need to take into account EPT inclusion and access to resources. Considering all that, how can we ensure that our job seekers have access to the resources to help them apply, interview, and possibly work virtually? That should be a strong conversation to have in this new age.”

Workforce Staff, Public Input Session

Compliance with WIOA Section 188 to Provide Accessible Facilities, Programs and Services

The RWDB provides physical and programmatic accessibility to employment and training services for individuals with disabilities. We make every attempt to provide reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities with regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment, unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship such as a significant expense.

The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DOR) remains a core RWDB partner in services to individuals with disabilities. DOR is represented on the RWDB Board and is an AJCC partner. The RWDB provides auxiliary aids, services, and assistive technology and continues to collaborate with DOR in these efforts.

The RWDB has a designated Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer who coordinates and updates ADA requirement activities with the State. In addition, the RWDB's EO Officer meets and assesses facility access compliance with the City of Richmond's Public Works Department, the owner, or the building. The RWDB works to continually improve facility access and maintain compliance with all federal and state requirements. The RWDB works closely with the State's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Specialist to identify and address ADA accessibility guidelines of our building and facility. The physical and programmatic accessibility of the building will continue to undergo a required assessment at least every three years in order to better focus on the needs of those with disabilities.

Through RWDB's collaboration with the DOR in the Employment Training Panel on the Summer Training and Employment Program for Students (STEPS) grant program, Richmond youth with disabilities receive extensive pre-employment transition services so they can successfully obtain competitive integrated employment.

Annual training is provided to staff and partners on disability etiquette, as well as ensuring that staff and partners are informed and updated on promoting disability access. Staff and partners will be directed to <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/ccda> (California Commission on Disability Access), where they can further educate themselves on Disability Access. The RWDB will also collaborate with the DOR to coordinate future training that DOR will provide to staff and partners.

Providing Indian and Native Americans with Equal Access to AJCC Services

The RWDB and its partners are committed to ensuring equal access to all of Richmond's residents; however, there are currently no WIOA Section 166 grantees located within the City of Richmond.

Once an Indian and Native Americans (INA) organization is located within the City of Richmond, the RWDB AJCC will provide equal access to the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs and will consistently work to provide Indian and Native Americans equal access to AJCC services and WIOA service provider opportunities, and will engage the INA grantees and EDD in discussions about aligning client tracking and reporting systems.

Providing Eligible Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers with Equal Access to AJCC Services

The RWDB and its partners are committed to ensuring equal access to all of Richmond's residents; however, currently there are no WIOA Section 167 grantees located within the City of Richmond. In support of the State's Plan, the RWDB will endeavor to provide all WIOA services and access to partner service providers for any WIOA Section 167 grantees in our Local Area. The RWDB will also ensure equal access to the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

In the event that a WIOA Section 167 grantee is located in the City of Richmond Local Area, the RWDB will carry out the following steps:

- Share employer, labor market information, and job training opportunities within the local region;
- Support growers by listing farm-related job openings within the agricultural community; and
- Co-recruit, co-enroll, and co-case manage Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) who can benefit from workforce development services at the local level and develop opportunities for leveraging funding to acquire the support service needs of MSFWs and other low-income individuals in job training and long-term employment sustainability.

(5) Strategic Partner Coordination

Coordination with County Health and Human Services and Other Local Partners to Serve Local CalFresh Populations

The RWDB's AJCC staff and its Contra Costa County, Employment and Human Services Department (CCC EHSD) service partners continue to be successful in leveraging and braiding funds to provide individual career and training services to CalFresh program participants. AJCC partners in this endeavor include Contra Costa Community College, San Pablo Economic Development Corporation, the City of Richmond Economic Development and Planning Departments, and Rubicon Re-entry Success Center. AJCC partners have developed a strong collaboration to provide the following cross-referral program services:

- Project FLOW (Forklift, Logistics, operations and Warehouse) program.
- ACES (Accelerating Career through Essential Skills), career exploration and job preparedness workshops presented at the Richmond AJCC.
- Continued collaboration between partners surrounding the Strong Workforce Initiative.
- Cooperation regarding community outreach in support of the shared training programs.
- Referral of EHSD clients for participation in AJCC workforce Development services.
- Developing and ensuring access to Adult Education Classes via CalJOBS – ETPL (Employment and Training Provider List).
- Participation in outreach efforts focused on serving the re-entry population.
- Participation in coordinating referrals for career technical training, including RichmondBUILD pre-apprenticeship with RichmondWORKS and RichmondBUILD staff.
- Collaborating on and co-investing co-enrollments and co-case managing strategies to eligible program participants to leverage services, including supportive services as well as facilitating successful outcome and completion of the program.
- Integrating CalFresh program participants into Career Pathways in emergent high-sector occupations for the Richmond area.

Coordination with Local Child Support Agencies and Partner CBOs to Serve Non-Custodial Parents

The RWDB currently coordinates with the Contra Costa's Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) to ensure that WIOA program services are available to noncustodial parents who need training and employment that include a livable wage. DCSS is also a MOU partner and participates in our quarterly partner meetings.

A referral process has been established to track the client's process and progress. Upon referral, the AJCC staff complete basic skills assessment and eligibility verification for WIOA training services for individuals. To ensure a seamless process, the RWDB and DCSS work together with other partners such as CBOs and Adult Education to educate and train on the challenges that non-custodial parents face and to discuss strategies on how to provide employment and training opportunities to this population.

Non-custodial parents have access to and are provided with the following services:

- The AJCC and all service partners.
- Employment opportunities that include employer on-site recruitments.
- WIOA Title I and Title II enrollments that include education, training and supportive services.

Coordination with Local Partners to Improve Services for Jobseekers with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

The California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) Greater East Bay District has been a key source of knowledge regarding service for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (ID/DD) and remains a core partner of the RWDB for providing services to this population. DOR staff serve as board members of the RWDB and also participate in our quarterly MOU partner meetings. DOR has also provided WINDMILLS (Disability Awareness Training), that encompasses and promotes understanding of ID/DD to the RWDB staff, AJCC partners, and other MOU partners and employers. DOR and the RWDB work closely to design tailored services for individuals with disabilities. DOR has also provided guidance on the design of our AJCC to accommodate individuals with disabilities, such as computers with adaptive technology and reasonable modifications to the tools and interior of the AJCC.

Supportive services, Work-Based Learning/Work Experience and employer engagement are all elements and services that are included with the coordination of efforts to improve services for jobseekers with ID/DD. An important RWDB project includes the Summer Training and Employment Program (STEPS) funded through the Employment Training Panel in coordination with DOR. This program has been funded over multiple years, and provided career exploration, job readiness, essential skills such as soft skills, and paid work experience for ID/DD students 16 to 21 years of age in the West Contra Costa County Unified School District (WCCUSD). Employers are educated and informed through employer roundtables by members of the RWDB's Business Advisory Group on the positive impact of hiring individuals with IDD to their companies.

Another project is the Veterans Employment Assistance Program (VEAP). This project has served a substantial portion of disabled veterans in the Local Area. Supportive Services are made available to participants who are experiencing hardships that could prevent them from participating in Title I career or training services. Coordinating support also includes partners, such as Swords to Plowshares in addition to DOR.

Coordination with Local Partners to Improve Services for English Language Learners, Foreign born and/or Refugees

Coordination of efforts by the RWDB to serve ELLs, foreign born and refugee individuals has been supported most recently through an English Language Learner (ELL) grant funded by the State of California. The RWDB has collaborated with two Title II programs: Literacy for Every

Adult Program (LEAP) and the West Contra Costa Adult Education (WCCAE) to deliver this grant-funded program. Coordinated services include a referral process, co-enrollment process, co-case management between Title I and Title II, data sharing, and follow-up services. In addition, partnerships with CBO's include Weigh of Life, Multicultural Institute, Familias Unidas, Catholic Charities, and IM HOPE. These organizations are access points to English Language Learners, foreign born and/or refugees to seek immigration and/or citizenship assistance, training, employment, mental health, ESL, and fitness and nutrition programs.

With the funding from the ELL grant and the development of the partnerships described elsewhere in this plan, the RWDB has instituted a Navigation model that provides ELL, foreign born and/or refugees an access point that includes a comprehensive intake process to ascertain the individuals' barriers to employment as well as their needs for support services offered through one of our community partners. The implementation of a warm hand-off referral process has contributed significantly to the success of the program. It has improved outcomes related to individuals' immigration status, English language skills, obtaining a GED, and occupational skills training and employment.

(6) Title I Services

Type and Availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker Services in the Local Area

The RWDB is the provider of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services in Richmond. All Adult and Dislocated Worker services are designed to start, advance, or transition individuals on a pathway to employment in high-growth and high-skill occupations in the in-demand industries in the region.

The RWDB offers many options to adult and dislocated workers, including emerging and transitional workers who need training in essential skills, career exploration, basic academic skills and life skills. Incumbent workers and transitional workers benefit from skills-upgrade training and retention services. In addition, all services are designed and are flexible to meet the needs of those individuals who have barriers to employment and training.

Services for Adult and Dislocated Workers

Tier 1: Basic Career Services begins in America's Job Center of California

- Outreach, intake, and orientation to the information, services, programs, tools, and resources available through the Local workforce system. Including access to computers/internet for all job search activities.
- Information about job openings, job search workshops, and resume preparation assistance.

- Workshops designed to educate clients on digital and virtual tools, including social media, for job search and job preparation.
- Initial assessments of skill level(s), aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs.
- On-site employer recruitments.
- Access to employment opportunity and labor market information.
- Labor market information including career paths.
- Performance information and program costs for eligible providers of training, education, and workforce services.
- Information on performance of the local workforce system.
- Information and assistance on Unemployment Insurance claim filing.
- Navigation system that includes determination of potential eligibility for workforce partner services, programs, and referral(s).

Tier 2: Individualized Career Services

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs.
- Development of an individual employability development plan to identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the customer to achieve the employment goals.
- Referral to training services.
- Supportive Services such as child care, transportation, housing, uniforms, etc.
- Group counseling.
- Literacy activities related to work readiness.
- Individual counseling and career planning.
- Case management for customers seeking training services, individual in and out of area job search, referral and placement assistance.
- Work experience, transitional jobs, registered apprenticeships, and internships.
- Workforce preparation services - Accelerating Careers Through Essential Skills (ACES): development of learning skills, punctuality, communication skills, interviewing skills, soft skills, personal maintenance, literacy skills, financial literacy skills, and professional conduct) to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.

Tier 3: Training Services

- Occupational skills training for in-demand occupations through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).
- Adult education and literacy activities, including English language acquisition provided in combination with the training services described above.
- On-the-Job Training (OJT).
- Paid work experience training.
- Incumbent Worker Training.
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction which may include cooperative education.

- Training programs operated by the private sector.
- Skill upgrading and retraining.
- Entrepreneurial training.
- Customized training, conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

Coordination of Workforce Investment Activities with Statewide Rapid Response Activities

The RWDB works closely with the established State Boards' Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion workgroup. This workgroup includes representatives from each LWIOA to consolidate various state guidance, which includes recommending policies, proactive business engagement, lay-off aversion strategies, layoff and business closure trends, and potential grant funding availability to transitional workers. It is the policy of the RWDB to provide Rapid Response Services to all employers and impacted employees located within our jurisdiction. The services will be provided utilizing the full resources of the RWDB, the AJCC, and the local community, including cooperative efforts with adjacent Workforce Development Boards.

In partnership with the Employment and Development Department (EDD), the RWDB is fully equipped and educated to provide Rapid Response resources to those covered by the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA). This includes the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) notice announcement received by the City of Richmond and the RWDB. Layoff Aversion focuses on saving jobs, putting people back to work, shortening the length of layoff, and revitalizing the community.

Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion is designed to prevent or minimize unemployment for employees of companies that have announced layoffs or are struggling and at risk for layoffs. Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion also provides early intervention and strategic support to assist businesses faced with closure.

Currently, the RWDB is utilizing Econovue - a digital platform that collects data and uses information gathered from Dun & Bradstreet. The use of Econovue helps to zero in on companies that need help before their situation becomes critical. In addition to the predictive insights it provides, Econovue is also used in business services and employer outreach. The RWDB also works closely with business organizations, such the Chamber of Commerce and the East Bay Economic Development Alliance, in order to gather information regarding local business trends.

Rapid Response Activities

- Examining potential alternatives for averting the closure/layoffs.
- The Rapid Response team provides on-site presentations including pre-layoff services and Dislocated Worker services (career and training services) to all employers and impacted employees located in the City of Richmond and the surrounding region when needed.
- Assessing the employment history and assistance needs of the workforce.
- Examining reemployment prospects for workers in the local community.
- Identifying resources to meet the short and long-term assistance needs of employees
- Provides information on Unemployment Insurance benefits (how to file a claim) including the California Training Benefits (CTB).
- Depending on the employees impacted, the WDB coordinates all Rapid Response activities with organized labor, unions and the Trade Adjustment Act, as appropriate.

Conversations surrounding Rapid Response service delivery during the public input process focused largely on information - both providing information to workers and employers, and receiving information. One participant suggested that detailed information about Rapid Response should be physically on display outside where it is easy for the public to access, particularly for those who are unable to access the information online, and come to the AJCC in person during COVID-19.

Accessing timely information about business closures was commonly discussed as a challenge among public comment participants. When workforce staff are not aware of closures immediately, it is difficult to provide quick outreach and services to workers who are laid off. One participant suggested communicating with employers that, in the event of a layoff, the RWDB could help to provide their employees with information about rapid response services.

One participant emphasized the importance of having Rapid Response team members who could communicate in languages other than English to ensure equitable access to Rapid Response services. The RWDB will explore the availability of funding sources to make services in different languages more widely available.

Type and Availability of Youth Workforce Investment Activities in the Local Area

The RWDB is committed to enabling the youth in our community to grow into productive, skilled adults who are able to pursue meaningful careers. Our YouthWORKS Program offers a variety of programs and services that are especially designed for youth and include the 14 WIOA program elements.

14 Youth WIOA Program Elements

1. Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies.

14 Youth WIOA Program Elements

2. Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services.
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences with academic and an occupational education component
4. Occupational skills training, with a focus on recognized postsecondary credentials and in-demand occupations.
5. Leadership development activities (e.g., community services, peer-centered activities)
6. Supportive Services.
7. Adult Mentoring.
8. Follow-up services for at least 12 months after program completion.
9. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling.
10. Integrated education and training for a specific occupation or cluster.
11. Financial literacy training.
12. Entrepreneurial skills training.
13. Services that provide labor market information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
14. Postsecondary preparation and transition activities.

In addition to these 14 WIOA elements, youth participants receive intensive career, job planning guidance, and case management that include peer to peer workshops addressing barriers to education and employment, and training in soft skills.

Providing information and advocacy related to worker rights for youth was identified as a potential role for the RWDB by a participant in the Public Input Session:

“Young people often are the people that take on the most precarious jobs, since they are likely to do entry level work. I often think about how young folks have managed; how do they navigate this moment as youth workers knowing their rights? Navigating these rights with regard to things like the obligation of employers to provide PPE (personal protective equipment), or safety protocols is certainly challenging. It would be great to be able to look to the Workforce Development Board as a hub for information and advocacy around worker rights for young people.”

Nonprofit Organization Staff, Public Input Session

Additional Youth Strategies and Programs

Increasing Digital Literacy and Fluency of Youth

Digital literacy has become a critical need especially in light of the worldwide pandemic. For instance, students are now required to utilize digital platforms such as Zoom for classroom instruction. YouthWORKS is utilizing a 5 Step Ladder Method to help increase digital literacy and fluency of youth, outlined in the table below.

5 Step Youth Digital Literacy Ladder Method	
Step 1	Teach the basics on how to use a computer and the internet.
Step 2	Teach youth digital communication tools and proper etiquette used to write emails as well as proper behavior for digital communication while on platforms like ZOOM.
Step 3	Help youth become critical consumers because youth are many times susceptible to subliminal messages and misinformation with online news and social media.
Step 4	Teach how to use social media for learning and collaborating and how social media can be used for career networking and job opportunities, such as LinkedIn.
Step 5	Teach youth to manage their online identity, such as using privacy settings to safeguard their privacy, as well as educating them on what the public sees as their online presence.

Youth with Disabilities: Summer Training & Employment Program for Youth (STEPS)

RWDB receives funding from the Employment and Training Panel and Department of Rehabilitation to provide career exploration, work readiness and paid work experience to students with disabilities. Our YouthWORKS program developed a Youth Empowering Skills (YES) strategy utilizing the Person-Centered Team approach to increase positive outcomes in recruitment and retention. YouthWORKS also works collaboratively with the West Contra Costa School District's high schools and often will meet with the students at their high school to promote trust and comfort for the student.

In addition, YouthWORKS has made reasonable adjustments to ensure that youth with disabilities have equal access to the usage of computers and copiers, for example. Furthermore, staff has received sensitivity training to better understand youth who have disabilities. This training was conducted by the Department of Rehabilitation.

Summer Youth Employment and Year-Round Work Experience

The Work Experience Youth Program includes the opportunity for job shadowing, along with workshops focused on job exploration, job preparation, money management, and soft skills.

Self-Assessment tools, such as the Interest Profiler through the California Career Zone, are utilized to help youth discover their interests and how they relate to the world of work. Youth are placed in meaningful Paid Work Experience at a variety of nonprofits, City Departments, and other local businesses. The work experience is a planned, structured learning experience for four weeks to six months, resulting in youth gaining valuable career information and workplace skills.

Richmond Fund for Children and Youth

The RWDB is a partner with the City's Richmond Fund for Children and Youth (RFCY), an initiative approved by Richmond voters. This program provides funding opportunities to address barriers and provide youth with additional support to achieve their goals. YouthWORKS will have the opportunity to obtain additional funding and support for youth through this initiative.

Richmond Promise

The Richmond Promise Collaborative connects local graduating high school seniors with scholarships designed to fund the cost of post-secondary education. As a partner, YouthWORKS supports the Richmond Promise by hosting workshops and participating in outreach efforts.

Public Sector Academy

The YouthWORKS Program, in collaboration with the City of Richmond, is planning to create a Public Sector Academy designed to educate youth on careers in the public sector. A curriculum will be developed that will include a variety of career opportunities in the public sector, along with education and career paths necessary to gain a public sector career. Youth will also have an opportunity to be placed in a city department where they will obtain paid work experience as well as mentoring from a trained supervisor of the department.

K12 Strong Workforce Program (K12SWP)

YouthWORKS is part of a collaborative partnership with the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE) Pathways to College and Careers. YouthWORKS is working in partnership with ACOE to design the K12 Strong Workforce Program, a Work-Based and Earn and Learn program focused on providing paid work experience for youth with barriers to employment.

Providing Training Through Individual Training Accounts

WIOA establishes the requirement that "training services... shall be provided in a manner that maximizes consumer choice in the selection of an eligible provider of such services", (WIOA 134). Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are made available to WIOA participants enrolled in the Adult, Dislocated Worker or Out-of-School Youth. Customers have a choice in the selection of training programs through the California's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ETPL provides customer-focused employment training resources for eligible WIOA participants. The ETPL is a statewide list that includes qualified training providers who offer a wide range of

educational programs, including classroom, correspondence, online, and apprenticeship programs. ITAs may be issued after the following determinations have been made:

- The participant has been assessed and identified as someone who needs training that will lead to self-sufficiency wages and that the participant has the skill level and qualifications to successfully complete the training program.
- The participant has completed research on labor market information to help them make the choice on the type of training that will lead to employment.
- The participant has completed the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that identifies the selected training program.
- The participant is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay for costs of training such as from a Pell Grant.

The RWDB contracts with the Oakland Private Industry Council, which acts as the fiscal agent for ITA payments made to the training providers on behalf of the RWDB.

Addressing the Needs of Former Foster, Homeless and Justice-System Involved Youth

The RWDB recognizes the significant barriers that system-involved youth and young adults experience in connecting to workforce services and career pathways, and eventual entry and advancement in gainful employment. These populations include current and former foster youth, those involved with the justice system, and young adults experiencing homelessness.

The RWDB will seek to increase the engagement of and provide meaningful opportunities to these populations in WIOA and other program services through the application of emerging and innovative strategies and approaches, the adoption and replication of quality practices from across the state and country, and active participation in regional efforts to address challenges faced by these populations.

Ensuring Priority for Adult Career and Training Services will be Given to Recipients of Public Assistance, Low Income Individuals and Those who are Basic Skills Deficient

The RWDB's local partners include CalWORKS (TANF), CalFresh, Employment and Human Services, Adult Education, and veteran's organizations as well as other CBOs that serve these priority groups. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is signed by our local partners establishes these common goals:

1. Ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient;
2. Coordinating efforts between organizations that serve the priority groups and with Title II, Adult Education to promote a seamless referral process and co-enrollment strategies.

The referral process was established to help coordinate services between agencies to add a tracking mechanism to further increase positive outcomes for participants. Furthermore, these collaborations are a commitment to prioritize services for all of those with barriers to employment.

The RWDB will continue to build upon strong current partnerships with our MOU partners, employers, educational systems, unions, and CBOs in order to leverage resources, attract funding, and better serve all the priority groups listed above.

Coordination of Workforce and Education Activities with Provision of Supportive Services

The RWDB provides supportive services that are necessary to enable WIOA eligible individuals enrolled in the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs to complete workforce and education activities. Supportive services are made available to participants who are experiencing hardships and cannot afford to pay for items such as work clothes, tools, transportation, and other necessary items needed and required in order to participate in Title I career services or training activities.

Communicating with those receiving the services is an important aspect when developing a menu of services that is aligned with the needs of residents. As one participant in the Public Input Session indicated:

“I would like to see the Workforce Board give more surveys to Richmond residents to find out what it is that they want, and what kind of services they need to advance their lives.” Literacy Program staff, Public Input Session

The planning process for supportive services must include exploration with the WIOA participant of viable alternative resources or programs available in the community before approval of supportive services funding. Also in the planning process, the supportive service will be outlined in the IEP or case notes identifying the need and barrier of the participant and why the supportive service is necessary for the participant to receive.

All supportive services are additionally contingent upon the customers’ satisfactory performance while participating and completing WIOA career services or training activities, as well as upon available funding.

During a feedback session on the Local Plan, a Board member pointed to the importance of finding ways to help people with multiple supportive service needs also get workforce services:

“We may have community members who are housed at a hotel looking for employment who have mental health, housing, child care, transportation issues, all in the midst of a pandemic. We need to include consideration of all of those things, and figure out how we support access to those other services at the same time that we’re working on employment.”

RWDB Board Member, Public Input Session

An online survey conducted during the Public Input Session asked for participants to rank the effectiveness of Title I services in comparison to one another. The results that follow show that ITAs were considered the most effective, while Adult and Dislocated Worker services were considered the least effective

(7) Title I Administration

Entity Responsible for Disbursal of Grant Funds

As administrative entity for the City of Richmond Workforce Development Board, the City of Richmond is responsible for the disbursal of grant funds.

Competitive Process that will be Used to Award Sub-Grants and Contracts for WIOA Title I Activities

The RWDB shall conduct all procurements in compliance with federal and state regulations governing the Final Rule of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). All provisions of the WIOA Proposed Rule became effective in the summer of 2016. All Richmond Local Area WIOA-funded programs and activities comply with applicable provisions sets forth in the requirements provided by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Final Rule Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations; 2 CFR 200. Further, the City of Richmond Local Area shall conduct all procurements in compliance with the Final Rule governing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant provisions.

The RWDB, in association with the City of Richmond Finance Department/ Purchasing Division, shall develop and maintain a list of qualified vendors and consultants for delivery of core and intensive (and training, where applicable) services and programs, under WIOA guidelines of WIOA grant provisions. Procurements shall be conducted as often as necessary to meet the needs of participants and the requirements of the One-Stop delivery system. All procurements shall be conducted in such a manner as to ensure open and free competition (29 CFR 95.43 and 97.36 (c); (2 CFR 200.321)).

The City of Richmond procurement practices encourage the utilization of small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises whenever possible. The City of Richmond Local Area shall conduct all procurements in accordance with its Conflict-of-Interest Policy.

Procurement records for each funding period are retained for three years following the date on which the City of Richmond Local Area submits its final expenditure report for that funding period. Records for non-expendable property are retained for three years after final disposition of the property.

Responsibility for AJCC Operations

The RWDB and its administrative entity internally fulfill the role of AJCC Operator for the City of Richmond Local Area. This structure was approved by the Secretary of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, on behalf of the Governor through June 30, 2021. In addition to the existing Written Agreement between the Chief Elected Official and the Richmond Workforce Development Board, ratified July 2019, the RWDB and City of Richmond will, as of March 2021, petition the Governor to allow the RWDB and its administrative entity to retain responsibility for AJCC Operations and WIOA Career Services in the Richmond Local Area through June 30, 2023.

Copies of Executed Cooperative Agreements Regarding Service Delivery for the Local One-Stop System

The City of Richmond entered into a written agreement between its Chief Elected Official and the RWDB, ratified by the Richmond City Council, as of July 16, 2019. The agreement was developed to outline the roles of each party in the planning, establishment and oversight of a comprehensive workforce development system according to WIOA and federal regulations promulgated to implement WIOA services that will lead the Area to this vision. Per the ratified document, the agreement shall continue until modified or terminated by a majority vote of both the RWDB and the Richmond City Council.

For three consecutive program years, the RWDB Youth Program has received funding from the Employment and Training Panel (ETP) and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) in support of the Summer Training and Employment Program for Students (STEPS) project which provides job preparation training, including job exploration, workplace readiness skills training, and work-based learning experiences, as well as summer paid work experience to students with disabilities. The program has been very successful in assisting youth with disabilities to receive employment training, as well as permanent employment placements. The RWDB STEPS project is funded through April 2021; however, the RWDB expects the agreement to be extended through April 2022.

(8) Staff Training and Capacity Building

Training and/or Professional Development for Targeted Sectors and Promoting Job Quality

The RWDB and its staff are dedicated to the principles of universal, customer-centered service design, which provides workforce development support, space, and materials to ensure access for all to AJCC employment services regardless of their range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, intelligence, or educational level. RWDB staff and partners receive annual training regarding targeted sectors and promoting equality in the workplace.

RWDB in-service staff development training regularly includes information regarding Local Area sector strategies for in-demand job placements, career pathways training, job quality and the

development of training partnerships. RWDB staff participates in webinars and training sessions designed to consistently relay information regarding the importance of a customer-centered Career Center. Staff is required to review EDD Directives and Information Notices that provide the latest information on Workforce Development service delivery.

A comment from the Public Input Session for the development of the Local Plan emphasized the importance of providing training for staff to enable them to understand the community they're working in:

I think it's important for staff and employers to understand our community, so they know what our culture is, and are able to reach out from one community to another. So we understand each other.

Local Workforce System staff, Public Input Session

Training and/or Professional Development to Ensure Cultural Competency and Understanding of Trauma-Exposed Populations

The RWDB administrative entity will infuse trauma-informed care training into its existing training schedule for the AJCC frontline staff. Trauma-informed practices will be even more critical during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Richmond residents that require workforce development services are more likely to have been working in COVID-19 affected sectors (either as frontline workers or as those who were laid off), have suffered disruptions in employment, and the loss of social support.

RWDB staff will work with non-profit organizations such as the Family Justice Center, RYSE Center, Familias Unidas, and Catholic Charities to provide trauma-informed care training events for frontline staff serving its Adult and Youth program participants. These curricula are specifically designed to teach trauma-informed practices to those serving clients who have been exposed to traumatic life experiences. The training classes are designed to equip staff in providing trauma-informed care activities alongside workforce development services to promote healing from trauma, allowing clients to become successfully reconnected and improve employment related outcomes.

Trainings and/or professional development classes that frontline staff have completed, and are expected to complete in the future, include:

- Department of Rehabilitation - WINDMILLS Training: Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training
- Anti-Harassment Training – California (SB1343) City of Richmond
- Disability Employment Awareness Conference & Training
- The Homeless Emergency Assistance Program: California's Newest Strategy to Address Youth Homelessness
- Family Justice Center - Virtual Learning Opportunity in January: Sex and Labor Trafficking: A Deeper Look at California Crimes and Contra Costa Trends

- Family Justice Center - Immigration 1: Family Preparedness and Removal Defense
- Training collaborations with Contra Costa County Department of Child Support Services, Employment and Human Services, Mental Health Crisis Services, and Probation Administration

The RWDB recognizes the importance of providing these types of training sessions in support of its frontline staff and AJCC partners to ensure that they are informed and updated on cultural competencies, and have a firm understanding of multi-faceted experiences of the trauma-exposed populations we serve. The goals or expected results for frontline staff and AJCC partners who participate in these programs are to:

- Foster an environment of team building and collaborative case management, while assisting them in creating needed change in the lives of the clients they serve.
- Develop a sense of flexibility and willingness to think outside-the-box to tailor WIOA services to the client's needs.
- Build staff capacity through partnerships that support referrals to valuable and trustworthy community resources, and case management approaches to ensure AJCC clients successfully complete WIOA career services.
- Cultivate a welcoming, respectful, and inclusive organizational culture within the RWDB AJCC.

Training and/or Professional Development to Provide Proficiency in Digital Fluency and Distance Learning

The RWDB understands that digital literacy is an important element of providing workforce development services in the 21st century. Since the pandemic, digital demands in providing effective workforce development services have only increased, from workers from frontline staff to management positions being asked to quickly adapt to new tools and technologies. RWDB staff will receive training on administering online computer-based assessments, completing grant eligibility processes and providing workforce development counseling via virtual meetings. Staff regularly participates in EDD Capacity Building webinars and virtual training meetings.

Digital fluency is becoming much more important as our society continues to move toward a more digital world. Most of AJCC staff's daily tasks require the internet, so we will ensure that RWDB staff are prepared to use it wisely. Being digitally competent requires capabilities that go beyond the basic skill level. Being able to manipulate technologies so we can develop and navigate client information successfully is supported by our ability to work collaboratively with AJCC partners within the state's CalJOBS client data tracking system to solve virtual data collection problems creatively, and thus successfully assisting our clients.

Frontline staff will receive training in digital fluency and distance learning which will include web-based training modules, as well as classroom style (Zoom or in-person) courses. Since these tools have become a vital way of connecting, sharing, and learning within workforce development, courses will cover how to utilize various digital tools, including social media. In

addition, the City of Richmond offers additional courses on utilizing web-based and distance learning techniques.

RWDB staff is currently being trained to create and develop digital job preparation workshops in both English and Spanish. These workshops will be available for access via the internet and can also be accessed through emails sent to job seekers. Staff is also receiving training on “how to create webinars” for the business community to access information regarding job hiring assistance, as well as layoff aversion.

The development of skills related to online communication has become an important priority as a result of the shift to online training and work during the COVID-19 pandemic. As one Public Input Session participant indicated:

I would suggest training on things like Zoom etiquette, because it's not something that everybody knows about working on the Internet, and it can be a hard thing to grasp.

Workforce Development professional, Public Input Session

Training and/or Professional Development on Common Case Management and Co-Enrollment Strategies

RWDB staff management team consistently provides training and professional development opportunities for its WIOA services frontline staff. Training webinars are accessed via the CalJOBS Alison Online Training Program, EDD Capacity Building Unit, and other outside agencies. RWDB AJCC Frontline staff also receives annual professional development training opportunities presented by the City of Richmond and the WIOA (Management of Information Systems) MIS unit.

The RWDB AJCC partners share a common mission of assisting mutual clients with employment career pathway services. Annual training sessions are provided to AJCC Partner staff regarding partner services, including techniques on how to effectively serve our mutual clients via co-enrollments. These partners include: Wagner-Peyser, Veterans programs, Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), and Richmond’s Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP). Other AJCC partners, who are not co-located, meet and collaborate on a regular basis regarding serving mutual clients; they include: West Contra Costa County Adult Ed, Job Corps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Rubicon’s Reentry Success Center, Swords to Plowshares’ Veteran’s program, and Contra Costa Community College District.

Additionally, RWDB staff has received City of Richmond support to facilitate training services designed to assist eligible individuals, specifically individuals with barriers to employment. As a result of our partnerships, RWDB staff is well prepared to continue maximizing resources, via co-enrollments, to expand access to activities such as training, supportive services, and career

pathway strategies, that result in attainment of education credentials and permanent employment for the clients they serve.

Two Year Local Plan Modifications PY 2021-24 Richmond Workforce Development Board

I. WIOA Core and Required Partner Coordination

A. Coordination with AJCC MOU Partners

How Local Boards and AJCC partners will coordinate the services and resources identified in their MOU, as outlined in WIOA Memorandums of Understanding (WSD18-12).

The RWDB is committed to aligning its core programs with those of the AJCC partner services, thus allowing the AJCC to operate as a unified system. The RWDB Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines current partnership processes for service collaborations for mutual clients. The RWDB continues to strengthen its collaboration efforts with core partners such as EDD, Adult Education, and DOR to strengthen its service outreach and provide seamless core program services to Richmond residents.

Some of the key AJCC MOU partners include: YouthBuild (a DOL funded construction training and education program); Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP) (a program of the Richmond Library providing educational assessment, basic skills, GED, and ESL instruction); West Contra Costa Adult School (part of the West Contra Costa Unified School District, offering academic enrichment, GED preparation, and skills training); Department of Rehabilitation (a state program serving participants with disabilities); and West Contra Costa Unified School District (high school CTE programs in areas such as sewing, welding, and media).

The RWDB has a well-developed referral system that includes a form to refer any participant to an AJCC partner so participants don't need to repeat the same information multiple times. The form includes name contact information, needs, what they are seeking—a priority of service form for referral to partners. The form includes a list of all the programs the client is working with to facilitate coordination. Prior to the release of information, the client must sign a waiver to permit the information to be provided to another organization.

B. Implementing Co-enrollment and/or Common Case Management

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will work towards co-enrollment and/or common case management as a service delivery strategy, as outlined in Strategic Co-Enrollment – Unified Plan Partners (WSD19-09).

Through an MOU, RWDB currently works with YouthBuild, Rubicon and San Pablo Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to co-enroll participants to provide training resources and supportive services. It is anticipated we will be developing MOUs with additional AJCC and community partners to expand our co-enrollment and co-case management services. To support our collaboration, RWDB holds weekly case conferences with Rubicon and San Pablo EDC to coordinate services for clients. We also hold weekly case conferences with staff from the Literacy for Every Adult Program, and community partner Weigh of Life to discuss service delivery.

Participants in the public input session suggested that the RWDB expand its collaborations with partners such as the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and adult schools to help support the costs of effective service delivery. Coordination with these partners is already underway, and we will continue to strengthen these efforts.

C. Facilitating Access to One-Stop Services

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.

The RWDB has implemented a wide array of strategies using technology and other approaches to facilitate access to one-stop services. The RWDB has provided program orientations via Zoom in partnership with West Contra Costa Adult Education and Literacy for Every Adult Program (LEAP) for ELL participants. In addition, the RWDB has developed a video orientation that introduces participants to the services available at the One Stop AJCC. Richmond YouthWORKS has a strong Internet presence through the use of multiple social media platforms that are more likely to be accessed by young people. The One Stop AJCC is also exploring the use of Virtual Reality as a tool for career exploration. The One Stop uses Career Hub as a tool to provide rapid communication to participants, including texts. During COVID the One Stop expanded the use of electronic signature programs such as DocuSign to facilitate completion of forms when participants could not be present in person.

To provide access to a wide array of online career training, RWDB has subscribed to Metrix Learning, scheduled to launch in February 2023. This resource provides all levels of training online to participants.

The RWDB is also developing a strategy to deliver place-based services in disadvantaged communities, increasing access for those who have difficulty traveling to the One Stop/AJCC to receive services. This new approach will include the assignment

of staff to different communities, who will oversee the delivery of services at local partner sites.

Recommendations from the public input sessions included the use of a text message system for communication with clients, which is already happening through the Career Hub tool. Participants also suggested the expanded use of virtual and telephone appointments for clients—this approach is currently being used by program staff, such as using Zoom and a shared Google Doc to collaborate on resume development. RWDB staff are already implementing the use of online scheduling tools with clients, as recommended by public input participants. Another recommendation suggested expanding resources for people with language barriers—because the majority of RWDB staff are bilingual, and can reach out to colleagues or City of Richmond staff in other departments for translation support, the RWDB already has strong capacity in this area.

D. Coordinating Workforce and Education Activities With Provision Of Supportive Services

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will coordinate workforce and education activities with the provision of appropriate supportive services.

The RWDB is continuing to build on partnerships with its AJCC partners to provide supportive services for participants. New coordination strategies include the following: Expanded co-location of AJCC partners at the AJCC; partnering with LEAP (Literacy for Every Adult Program) in providing academic assessment for all participants; hosting a Community Resource Fair for the community and partners to develop relationships and stronger coordination; and holding monthly partnership meetings. The RWDB has also developed a partnership with John Muir Schools to provide credit recovery for participants. In all of its partnerships, the RWDB seeks to provide clear information to the partner on what services it is able to provide for each client.

Supportive services are commonly the most important item identified by potential clients during the outreach process. The RWDB takes a whole person approach to service planning, identifying what participants need in multiple areas, including education, workforce, health, mental health, housing, and reentry resources. Using the Human Centered Design framework, RWDB staff seek to tailor supportive service provision to the unique needs of each participant.

Due to its relationship with the City of Richmond, the RWDB is able to leverage the City general fund to provide some kinds of support, including providing work experience to individuals through placement in City departments, and connecting people with waiting lists for housing.

In feedback from the public input sessions, participants identified the importance of providing outreach and information on available services to clients and partners. The RWDB provides this through information sessions held at partner sites, such as presentations and intake of participants at the RYSE Youth Center and alternative schools. Youth services has also developed presentations for school district and community events to inform students, parents and the community about WIOA and other services offered through the RWDB. RWDB services are also promoted in public service announcements on KCRT and the local public information channel. A recommendation was also made to strengthen communication with partners related to client needs. RWDB staff currently work with training providers who provide reverse referrals to RWDB to ensure participants receive the supportive services necessary to complete training (e.g. transportation, tuition, work clothes, etc.).

E. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will comply with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, as outlined in Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures (WSD17-01).

The RWDB provides physical and programmatic accessibility to employment and training services for individuals with disabilities. We make every attempt to provide reasonable accommodations for those with disabilities with regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment, unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship such as a significant expense.

The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DOR) remains our core partner in services to individuals with disabilities. DOR is represented on our RWDB and is an AJCC partner. RWDB provides auxiliary aids, services and assistive technology and continues to collaborate with DOR in these efforts.

The RWDB has a designated Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer who coordinates and updates ADA requirement activities with the State. In addition, the RWDB's EO Officer meets and assesses facility access compliance with the City of Richmond's Public Works Department, the owner, or the building. The RWDB works to continually improve facility access and maintain compliance with all federal and state requirements. The RWDB works closely with the State's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Specialist to identify and address ADA accessibility guidelines of our building and facility. The physical and programmatic accessibility of the building will continue to undergo a

required assessment at least every three years in order to better focus on the employment needs of those with disabilities.

Through RWDB's collaboration with the DOR in the Employment Training Panel on the Summer Training and Employment Program for Students (STEPS) grant program, Richmond youth with disabilities receive extensive pre-employment transition services so they can successfully obtain competitive integrated employment.

Annual training is provided to staff and partners on disability etiquette, as well as, ensuring that staff and partners are informed and updated on promoting disability access. Staff and partners will be directed to <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/ccda> (California Commission on Disability Access), where they can further educate themselves on Disability Access. The RWDB will also collaborate with the DOR to coordinate future training that DOR will provide to staff and partners.

II. State Strategic Partner Coordination

A. Coordination with Partners Serving CalFresh E&T Beneficiaries

How the Local Board will coordinate with County Health and Human Services Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who access CalFresh Employment and Training services.

Prior to the pandemic, the RWDB had limited collaboration with partners in the Local Area offering CalFresh E&T services. The RWDB has been invited to collaborate with the CalFresh E&T program and plans to establish relationships with CalFresh E&T partners. Currently, the RWDB helps participants apply for CalFresh E&T through the CalWIN website.

In the public input session, participants suggested the expansion of outreach and marketing for CalFresh E&T programs, which are underutilized by people who are eligible to participate in them—the RWDB plans to do this as it builds relationships with CBO providers of CalFresh E&T, including Rubicon and Opportunity Junction. Participants also suggested that RWDB staff develop a clear understanding of CalFresh E&T and its eligibility requirements to facilitate successful referrals—the RWDB will provide necessary information for staff to ensure that this takes place.

B. Coordination with Local Child Support Agencies Serving Non-Custodial Parents

How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Child Support Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who are non-custodial parents.

As with CalFresh E&T, the RWDB has had limited collaboration with partners in the Local Area that were focused on serving non-custodial parents, and plans to explore building partnerships with organizations that serve this population.

Input from the public input sessions recommended the provision of assessments and referrals for non-custodial parents. This is something that is currently happening, although people are not always clearly identified as non-custodial parents—the RWDB will seek ways to better identify this population so they can be more effectively served. Public input session participants also suggested strengthening engagement with child services organizations, including DCSS, which the RWDB intends to do in order to more effectively serve non-custodial parents and their families.

C. Coordinating with LPA Partners Serving Individuals with Disabilities

How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Partnership Agreement partners, established in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint, and other local partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

The RWDB has built a strong partnership with the DOR. The RWDB regularly invites the DOR to come and provide information for RWDB staff and partners regarding DOR services, assessment, referral process. A key area of collaboration is the DOR grant-funded Student Training and Employment Program (STEP), focused on serving young people with disabilities (ages 16-21) through work experience placements. The relationship has also been strengthened through DOR co-location at the AJCC. Through the STEP program students are given the opportunity to access other services that they need: academic services, supported employment, transportation, digital tools such as laptop computers, and other life-enhancing services. Gaining access to an employment counselor that expands the geographic area of job opportunities. RWDB staff meet with the director of the transitional program at WCCUSD to recruit students to STEP, and also travel to school sites to meet with students and make them aware of resources available. WCCUSD staff also come to YouthWORKS to gain an understanding of what is available to students.

In the public input sessions, participants suggested that the RWDB should ensure that its case managers are familiar with the DOR and other programs that serve this population. The RWDB conducts regular orientations to provide this information to staff. Presentations at schools, as described above, were also recommended. Participants suggested the effective use of assessments to ensure that individuals with disabilities are placed in settings where they have the necessary support. To facilitate this, the

STEP program reviews information in each student's Individual Education Plan to identify strengths and weaknesses, and areas where support may be needed. It was also recommended that STEP graduates be provided with a warm handoff to placement in employment, with continued engagement through Richmond YouthWORKS. STEP participants who are over 21 are currently supported in applying for post-secondary education, and a system is in place to support a warm handoff to both Richmond WORKS and DOR at age 21.

D. Coordinating with Local Partners Serving ELLs, Foreign-Born and Refugees

How the Local Board will coordinate with community-based organizations and other local partners who serve individuals who are English language learners, foreign-born, and/or refugees.

The RWDB has recently secured two English Language Learner (ELL) grants focused on providing workforce training to this population. The RWDB also has established a monthly meeting with CBOs that serve ELLs (Weigh of Life, Familia Unidas, etc.), the majority of whom are partners on these grants. The RWDB also serves youth from these communities who are not participants in these grant funded programs. The RWDB also provides presentations at existing community events, such as the West Contra Costa Concilio Latino, a monthly meeting where organizations present their services, and coordinate activities. The RWDB is working to establish a referral process with partners that serve ELLs, foreign-born and refugees beyond the partners in the ELL grant funding. These organizations include the Latina Center, Catholic Charities, Rescue Mission, International Rescue Committee, Lao Family, and Asian Pacific Environmental Network.

Feedback from the public input sessions suggested continuing to build a list of referral partners that serve these groups, which the RWDB is doing through its current outreach efforts. A recommendation regarding the availability of translation services is something that RWDB provides through its multilingual staff, and a policy of regular access to staff in other City departments who are fluent in additional languages spoken by clients. Regarding the suggestion from the public input session that the RWDB engage these groups in the community at partner locations where they feel most comfortable: the RWDB is implementing the new place-based strategy, described on page 3 above, to provide this kind of community presence.

III. WIOA Title I Coordination

A. Training for Staff in Digital Fluency and Distance Learning

Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to gain and expand proficiency in digital fluency and distance learning.

Staff received training prior to and during the pandemic in digital fluency and distance learning and have been gradually implementing some of the strategies they have learned, including using Zoom for program orientations, classroom instruction, interviews and coaching. The RWDB has also developed a video orientation that introduces participants to the services available at the One Stop AJCC. RWDB staff participate in weekly EDD capacity-building webinars on topics related to digital fluency and distance learning.

Public input session participants suggested that staff receive training in the following online tools: Metrix Learning, Microsoft Suite, Google Docs and Google Sheets, Social Media, and Jamboard. RWDB staff are using many of these tools to serve clients, and will continue to be trained in new tools to build their capacity for remote support.

B. Staff Training in Cultural Competencies and Trauma Responsive Services

Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma-exposed populations.

RWDB staff attended regular training in cultural competency and serving trauma-exposed populations offered through the West Contra Costa Family Justice Center (FJC) prior to the pandemic, but have not been able to participate since that time. The RWDB plans to resume that training through the FJC or another provider. (Contra Costa Mental Health Services and other partner organizations also provide training in trauma response.) The RWDB is also developing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) framework that will be used to structure service delivery, which will be completed within the next six months.

Input from public session participants included the recommendation that cultural competency training include a component that addresses effective outreach to specific target populations. This recommendation will be implemented in the preparation of staff for place-based service delivery in the communities the RWDB serves. The suggestion was also made that trauma informed training address the emotional support needed by staff related to secondary trauma that may result from serving trauma-impacted populations. The RWDB will insure that this component is included in trauma-informed training.

C. Coordination with Statewide Rapid Response Activities

How the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as outlined in Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities (WSD16-04).

RWDB works closely with the established State Boards' Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion workgroup. This workgroup includes representatives from each LWIOA to consolidate various state guidance, that include recommending policies, proactive business engagement, lay-off aversion strategies, layoff and business closure trends, and potential grant funding availability to transitional workers. It is the policy of the WDB to provide Rapid Response Services to all employers and impacted employees located within our jurisdiction. The services will be provided utilizing the full resources of the RWDB, the AJCC, and the local community, including cooperative efforts with adjacent Workforce Development Boards.

In partnership with the Employment and Development Department (EDD), the RWDB is fully equipped and educated to provide Rapid Response resources to those covered by the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA). This includes the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) notice announcement received by the City of Richmond and the RWDB. Layoff aversion focusses on saving jobs, putting people back to work, shortening the length of layoff, and revitalizing the community.

Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion is designed to prevent or minimize unemployment for employees of companies that have announced layoffs or are struggling and at risk for layoffs. Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion also provides early intervention and strategic support to assist businesses faced with closure or layoffs.

D. Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area. This includes how the Local Board will ensure that priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as outlined in WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service (WSD15-14).

Assessment of adult and dislocated workers includes daily one-on-one sessions to determine need for immediate training. Participants are referred to services on the same day to ensure that their needs are met as rapidly as possible. Basic math and reading skills are necessary to participate in training, and those who do not meet the standards are referred for remedial support. The goal is to have someone employed or enrolled in training within 30 days. Training opportunities are provided in high-growth high-wage

sectors, including IT, health, transportation and logistics, advanced manufacturing, and construction. The RWDB Board is also preparing to adopt a definition of a “good job” which will be used to shape kind of training and pathways that are provided for clients.

E. Type and Availability of Youth Workforce Investment Activities

A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the Local Area, as outlined in WIOA Youth Program Requirements (WSD17-07). This includes any strategies the Local Board has regarding how to increase the digital literacy and fluency of youth participants, including youth with disabilities.

The RWDB offers an array of workforce investment activities for youth. Upon entry to the program, young people are able to complete online assessments accessible from anywhere. These are used to identify assets, needs and aptitudes and to determine the unique mix of services that each young person will need.

All Richmond YouthWORKS participants are registered in CalJobs to give them access to resources, training, employment. Staff have knowledge of all WIOA programs available to youth, enabling them to refer participants to appropriate services. Youth may receive referrals to work readiness services, DOR, community colleges, basic literacy skills instruction, community worksites, and work experience.

Richmond YouthWORKS staff are also able to leverage general funds to offer paid work experience to all youth participants within City departments. Information technology apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships are available with partners Bitwise and Love Never Fails through a WAF 10.0 regional grant. YouthWORKS receives support through the Reimagine Richmond program (funded by the City’s general fund) to provide 500 youth with 300 to 500 hours of work experience at a wide array of employers at a wage of \$16.64.

Richmond YouthWORKS administers the STEP program in partnership with DOR and the California Community Colleges, enabling youth with disabilities to participate in job readiness training and obtain placements in work experience settings. Participants can transition to WIOA following participation in STEP.

The RWDB is currently administering two additional grants that serve youth. Through a Dislocated Youth Worker Innovation Challenge grant, the RWDB serves 50 youth ages 18-24 in sectors that include construction, IT, health care, and urban forestry. The RWDB is also serving 150 participants ages 16-30 in paid work experience focused on COVID recovery, food insecurity, climate change with funding from a Californians for All Youth grant.

The RWDB partners with the Richmond Promise (a Richmond program providing scholarships to college for Richmond High School graduates) to support those who've graduated from college and are having difficulty finding employment. The program provides employment within the City in the hope of eventually hiring them to address shortage of city staff.

Participants in the public input sessions suggested strengthening partnerships with IT companies to facilitate opportunities for youth in this sector: this work is already underway through the partnerships with Bitwise and Love Never Fails. Richmond YouthWORKS' extensive work experience programs for young people address the comment that the RWDB should focus on helping youth make connections with key people and opportunities in priority sectors.

F. The Entity Responsible for the Disbursal of Grant Funds

The entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or the Governor and the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

As administrative entity for the City of Richmond Workforce Development Board, the City of Richmond is responsible for the disbursal of grant funds.

The RWDB shall conduct all procurements in compliance with federal and state regulations governing the Final Rule of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). All provisions of the WIOA Proposed Rule became effective in the summer of 2016. All Richmond Local Area WIOA-funded programs and activities comply with applicable provisions sets forth in the requirements provided by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Final Rule Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations; 2 CFR 200. Further, the City of Richmond Local Area shall conduct all procurements in compliance with the Final Rule governing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant provisions.

The RWDB, in association with the City of Richmond Finance Department/ Purchasing Division, shall develop and maintain a list of qualified vendors and consultants for delivery of core and intensive (and training, where applicable) services and programs, under WIOA guidelines of WIOA grant provisions. Procurements shall be conducted as often as necessary to meet the needs of participants and the requirements of the One-Stop delivery system. All procurements shall be conducted in such a manner as to ensure open and free competition (29 CFR 95.43 and 97.36 (c); (2 CFR 200.321)).

The City of Richmond procurement practices encourage the utilization of small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises whenever possible. The City of Richmond Local Area shall conduct all procurements in accordance with its Conflict of Interest Policy.

Procurement records for each funding period are retained for three years following the date on which the City of Richmond Local Area submits its final expenditure report for that funding period. Records for non-expendable property are retained for three years after final disposition of the property.

G. How the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider Roles are Fulfilled

A description of how the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider roles are fulfilled within the Local Area as outlined in Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers (WSD19-13). This should include the name(s) and role(s) of all entities.

The RWDB and its administrative entity internally fulfill the role of AJCC Operator for the City of Richmond Local Area. This position was approved by the Secretary of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, on behalf of the Governor through June 30, 2023. In addition to the existing Written Agreement between the Chief Elected Official and the Richmond Workforce Development Board, ratified July 2021, the RWDB and City of Richmond petitioned the Governor to allow the RWDB and its administrative entity to retain responsibility for AJCC Operations and WIOA Career Services in the Richmond local area through June 30, 2023. A new petition process will be initiated prior to the end of the current period.