



**SOUTH CENTRAL
MISSISSIPPI WORKS**

Appendices

Local Workforce Development Area Four-Year Local Plan
Program Years 2024–2028
2026 Modification

Submitted by the South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Board
Central Mississippi Planning and Development District • Administrative Entity & Fiscal Agent

Appendices

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APPENDIX A

Local Workforce Development Area Re-Designation Approval Letter

Appendix A



PHIL BRYANT
GOVERNOR

May 10, 2017

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central Mississippi Planning and Development District
Post Office Box 4935
Jackson, Mississippi 39296-4935

Dear Mr. Monk:

Because of a U.S. Department of Labor regulation, I am extending the initial designation of Southcentral Mississippi Works as a local workforce development area (LWDA) under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) for an additional program year until June 30, 2018.

As you will recall, WIOA creates a two-step process for designating a LWDA. First, WIOA Section 106(b)(2) provides for an "initial designation" for "the first 2 full program years following the enactment of this Act," to allow for a transition to the new requirements of WIOA. Then at the end of the initial designation, Section 106(b)(3) calls for a "subsequent designation," based on a review of the performance of the LWDA during the initial designation period.

In accordance with those statutory requirements, on May 14, 2015, I approved your request for the initial designation of Southcentral Mississippi Works to continue as a LWDA through June 30, 2017, which was the end of the first two full program years after the enactment of WIOA on July 22, 2014.

Recently, however, the U.S. Department of Labor issued a regulation, 20 CFR 679.250(c), mandating that "no determination of subsequent eligibility may be made before the conclusion of Program Year (PY) 2017." Because Program Year 2017 will end June 30, 2018, that regulation has the effect of extending the initial designation period until that date.

For those reasons, I hereby approve the continued initial designation of Southcentral Mississippi Works as a LWDA through June 30, 2018.

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI • OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Mr. Michael Monk
May 10, 2017
Page 2

The Southcentral Mississippi Works LWDA is an essential partner in the successful implementation of our innovative WIOA state plan. By working together to strengthen the alignment of our workforce, education, and economic development initiatives, we can make our state a better place to live where every Mississippian who wants a job can get a job. I appreciate your commitment to this exciting opportunity.

Sincerely,

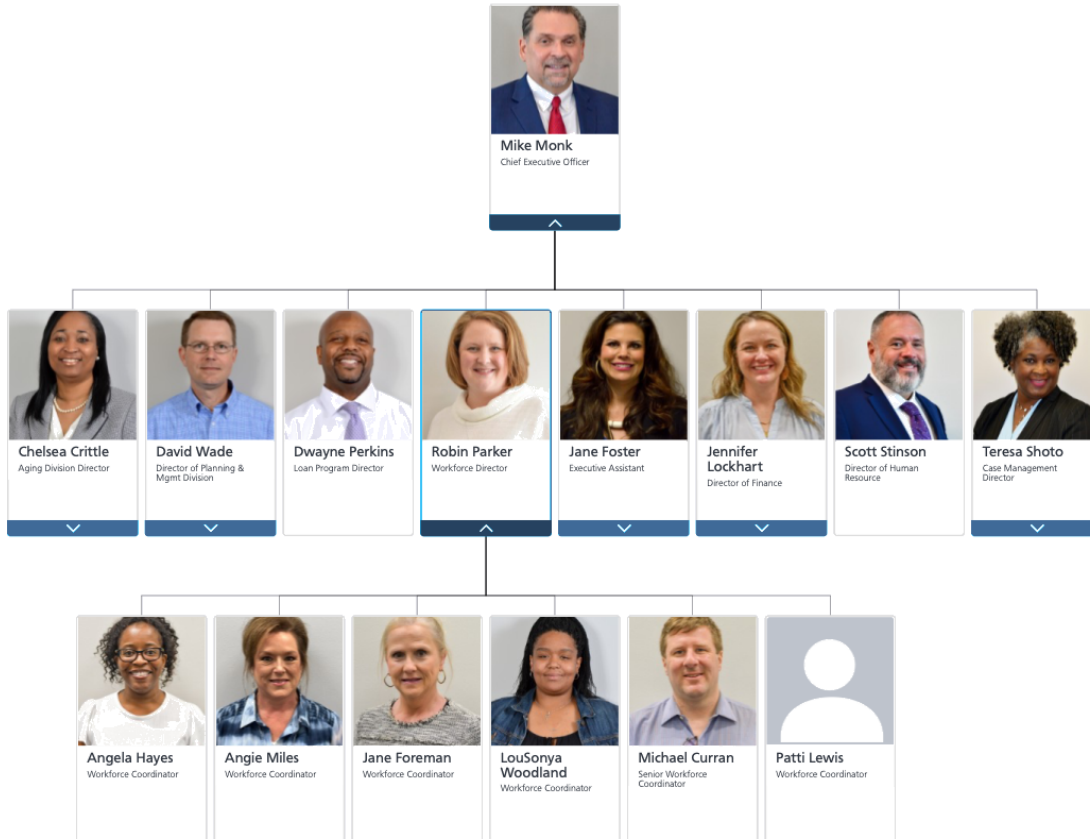


Phil Bryant
Governor

APPENDIX B

Organizational Chart

Administrative Entity / Local Workforce Development Area / Fiscal Agent – Central Mississippi Planning and Development District



APPENDIX C

Local Workforce Development Board Membership List

South Central Mississippi Works – Local Plan 2024–2028 (2026 Modification) • Roster as of December 2025

#	Seat / Category	Member	Employer / Association	Title	Date Appointed	Term Expires	Nominated By
Representatives of Business in the Local Area (Majority Required)							
1	Business	Casey Anderson	Mississippi Forestry Association	Executive Director	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Mississippi Forestry Association
2	Business	Chris Bass	Engineering Service / ACEC of Mississippi	Vice President	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	American Council of Engineering Companies of MS
3	Business	Jill Busby	Pike County Economic Development District	Executive Director	9/12/2024	9/12/2026	Pike County Economic Development District
4	Business	Garrick Combs	Brookhaven-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce	Executive Director	9/12/2024	9/12/2026	Brookhaven-Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce
5	Business	Lauren Gurtowski	Entergy Mississippi	Project Manager, Business & Economic Development	9/25/2025	9/25/2027	Entergy Mississippi
6	Business	Benny Hubbard	Hubbard Financial Services	Owner	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Rankin First Economic Development Authority
7	Business	Francis Jackson	Midsouth Lease & Sales, Inc.	President	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Copiah County Board of Supervisors
8	Business	Larkin Simpson	Madison County Economic Development Authority	Chief Operating Officer	9/19/2024	9/19/2026	Madison County Economic Development Authority
9	Business	Debra Smith	BankPlus	Vice President	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Yazoo County Chamber of Commerce
10	Business	Kemsye Smith	Hinds County Economic Development Authority	Director of Workforce & Assistant Business Development	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Hinds County Economic Development Authority
11	Business	Regina Todd	Rankin First Economic Development Authority	Assistant Director	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Rankin First Economic Development Authority
12	Business – Manufacturing & Transportation	Daren Vandevender	Victory Marketing / Sprint Mart	Chief Human Resources Officer	9/12/2024	9/12/2026	Mississippi Manufacturers Association
13	Business	Earl Washington	U.S. Coating Specialties & Supplies, LLC	President	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Hinds County Economic Development Authority
Workforce Representatives (20% Required – Labor Organizations [2], Apprenticeship [1], Community-Based Organization [1], Out-of-School Youth [1])							
14	Labor & Apprenticeship	John Graves	IBEW Local 2164	President	9/12/2024	9/12/2026	MS AFL-CIO

#	Seat / Category	Member	Employer / Association	Title	Date Appointed	Term Expires	Nominated By
15	Labor & Apprenticeship	C. Jim Stephens	Jackson Electrical JATC (IBEW-NECA)	Training Director	9/12/2024	9/12/2026	MS AFL-CIO
16	Community-Based Organization	Dr. Mary Sims-Johnson	Madison County Citizens Services Agency	Executive Director	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Madison County Citizens Services Agency
17	Youth (Out-of-School)	Myrle Grate	Sunnybrook Children's Home	Executive Director	9/12/2024	9/12/2026	Sunnybrook Children's Home
18	Youth	Dr. Shakira Cain	Hinds Community College	Dean	9/12/2024	9/12/2026	Hinds Community College
Required Representatives (Adult Education; Higher Education; Economic & Community Development; Vocational Rehabilitation)							
19	Adult Education	Cheryl Henry	Southwest Mississippi Community College	Assistant Director of Adult Education	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Southwest Mississippi Community College
20	Higher Education	Tuwanna Williams	Copiah-Lincoln Community College	Executive Director of Workforce Education	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Copiah-Lincoln Community College
21	Economic & Community Development	Arthur L. "Pokie" Evans, Jr.	Copiah County Economic Development District	Executive Director	12/11/2025	12/11/2027	Copiah County Board of Supervisors
22	Vocational Rehabilitation (MDRS)	Katelyn Langford	MS Department of Rehabilitation Services	Business Relations Specialist	6/2025	6/2027	MS Department of Rehabilitation Services
May-Include Representatives (Individuals with Barriers; Public Assistance; Philanthropic Organizations; Other)							
23	Public Assistance	Sarah Bridge	MS Department of Human Services	Social Services Program Supervisor	10/29/2024	10/29/2026	MS Department of Human Services
24	Individuals with Barriers (SCSEP)	James Hester	MS Department of Employment Security	Grant Manager	9/19/2024	9/19/2026	MS Department of Employment Security
25	Individuals with Barriers*	Tara Barnes	Goodwill Industries of Mississippi*	—	9/12/2024	9/12/2026	MDRS

* Affiliation update pending confirmation: Tara Barnes has transitioned from MDRS to Goodwill Industries of Mississippi; MDRS representation is provided by Katelyn Langford. Appointment dates shown for members renominated in December 2025 reflect the December 11, 2025 board meeting.

Board Composition Summary

Category	Members	Share
Business	13	52%
Workforce	5	20%
Required	4	16%
May-Include	3	12%
Total	25	100%

APPENDIX D

Local Workforce Development Board Operating Procedures (By-Laws)

South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Board

Adopted and approved by majority vote of the Local Board

Revised June 10, 2021

Submitted with the SCMW Local Plan, Program Years 2024–2028 (2026 Modification). The adopted, signed instrument follows this cover page in its original form.

OPERATING PROCEDURES
SOUTHCENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS
LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
 REVISED, JUNE 10, 2021

INTRODUCTION: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (**WIOA**) of **2014** requires the Governor to designate local workforce areas within the State through consultation with the State Workforce Development Board, after consultation with chief elected officials, and after consideration of comments received through the public comment period.

On May 14, 2015, the Governor issued a designation of the Southcentral Mississippi Works local workforce development area.

The county boards of supervisors of the seventeen-county Local Workforce Development Area joined together and entered into a Cooperative Service Agreement according to the provisions of *section 19-3-101 through 19-3-115 of the Mississippi Code*. A Board of Commissioners consisting of one member appointed by the Board of Supervisors of each of the seventeen counties was created according to State statute. The Board of Commissioners has the sole authority to appoint the Local Workforce Development Board according to the provisions of the WIOA.

ARTICLE I
NAME, SERVICE AREA, OFFICE LOCATION

Section 1. Name

The name of this organization shall be the Southcentral Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Board, hereinafter referred to as the "Local Board" or "LWDB".

Section 2. Service Area

The LWDB shall serve the residents of Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Copiah, Franklin, Hinds, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Madison, Pike, Rankin, Simpson, Walthall, Warren, Wilkinson and Yazoo Counties.

Section 3. Office Location

The official office location and mailing address shall be Central MS Planning and Development District; 1020 Centre Pointe Blvd; Pearl, MS 39208.

ARTICLE II
RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1. Policy Guidance

It shall be the responsibility of the Local Board to provide policy guidance for, and exercise oversight with respect to, activities under the local workforce development plan for Southcentral Mississippi Works in partnership with the Board of Commissioners serving as Chief Elected Official (hereinafter referred to as the "BOC" or "Commissioners") of local government within the area.

Section 2. Specific Duties

In accordance with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (hereinafter referred to as "WIOA" or the "Act"), the Board shall be charged with the following duties and responsibilities, although not necessarily limited to:

- Develop the local workforce development plan
- Carry out workforce research and regional labor market analyses, including assisting in developing statewide employment statistics system
- Convene local workforce development system stakeholders to assist in the development of the local plan
- Lead efforts to engage with a diverse range of employers and other entities, including economic development organizations, involved in workforce development
- Lead efforts in the local area to develop and implement career pathways
- Lead efforts in the local area to identify and promote proven and promising workforce strategies and initiatives
- Develop strategies for using technology to maximize accessibility and effectiveness of the workforce development system.
- Conduct program oversight
- Negotiate local performance accountability measures
- Select and certify one-stop operators and youth providers on a competitive basis; Identify eligible providers of training and career services
- Coordinate activities with education and training providers
- Develop a local board budget
- Assess the physical and programmatic activity accessibility in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Make information regarding workforce development activities available to the public
- Direct disbursement of funds by the local grant recipient or fiscal agent
- Appoint youth committee

**ARTICLE III
CODE OF CONDUCT**

This Code of Conduct sets forth standards governing the performance of members of the Local Board, its officers and agents who are engaged in the deliberation of LWDB business.

For purposes of this policy, "immediate family" includes the spouse, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, step-parent, step-child, grandparent and grandchild.

Section 1. Acceptance of Gratuities

No LWDB member, Commissioner, or CMPDD/SWMPDD staff shall solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from vendors, subrecipients, subawardees or potential vendors, subrecipients, subawardees or parties to any subagreements/subawards.

Section 2. Declarations of Possible Conflicts

LWDB, BOC or Youth Committee members must declare, on the record, possible conflicts when:

- a. The member or an immediate family member is a volunteer board member of a nonprofit bidding organization;
- b. The member is voting on an indirect affirmation of a contract relationship, such as a vote on the Local Workforce Plan; or
- c. The member is voting on a rival proposal, though there is no direct competition.

Section 3. Abstention and Recusal from Voting

No Local Board member shall cast a vote on the provision of services by that member (or any organization which that member directly represents) or vote on any matter which would provide direct financial benefit to that member (or any organization which that member directly represents). No Local Board member shall cast a vote on the provision of services by any person or organization who is in direct competition with a proposal or bid which would provide a direct financial benefit to the member. Abstention from voting does not satisfy the requirements of this section. The Local Board member must recuse themselves from the room prior to any discussion and may not return to the room until after the vote regarding the issue has been taken.

Section 4. Prohibition from Participation

No Local Board member shall participate in recommendations about contracts or subawards with the organization he or she represents or from which they receive direct financial benefit, including any of their immediate family members. Participation includes discussion, lobbying, rating, scoring, recommending, explaining, or assisting in the design or approval of the procurement process.

Section 5. Sanctions

- a. Violations of this Code shall be determined by the Executive Committee of the Local Board. After hearing, the Executive Committee will recommend appropriate disciplinary actions.
- b. Willful violations by a Local Board member shall result in recommendations for removal from the Local Board; and, if the Executive Committee decides it is in the best interest of the Local Board, termination of the questioned contract or subaward.
- c. Any member who is dissatisfied with the conduct of a procurement action may file a grievance, and may be entitled to remedies available through a grievance process.

**ARTICLE IV
MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Composition

- a. Members of the local workforce board who are private sector representatives shall be selected from among individuals nominated by general purpose business organizations and trade associations after consulting with and receiving recommendations from other business organizations in Southcentral Mississippi Works area. Such nominations, and the individuals selected from such nominations, shall reasonably represent the industrial and demographic composition of the business community.

The Local Workforce Development Board shall include representatives of businesses in the area, who:

- 1. Are owners of businesses, chief executives or employer representatives with optimum policy-making or hiring authority;
- 2. Represent businesses with employment opportunities that reflect the employment opportunities of the local area;

3. Are appointed from among individuals nominated by local business organizations and business trade associations; and
 4. Make up a majority of the local board.
- b. Public sector representatives shall be selected from individuals nominated by appropriate agencies or organizations. Public sector membership shall be composed of representatives of the public sector as follows:

<i>Public Sector Represented</i>
Board of Commissioners (Local Elected Official) Grant recipient & Fiscal Agent Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Programs
Mississippi Department of Employment Security Wagner Peyser Trade Act Veterans Unemployment Insurance
State Community College Board Adult Education/Literacy
Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services Vocational Rehabilitation
Mississippi Department of Human Services Community Services Block Grant Senior Community Service Employment
Local Community Colleges Postsecondary Vocational Education & Applied Technology Education
Regional and Local Housing Authorities HUD Employment & Training Activities
Economic Development representative
Community-based Organization representative
Organized Labor representative
Local Education representative

Section 2. Term

- a. The number of members of the Local Board shall be determined by the Board of Commissioners.
- b. Members shall be appointed for fixed and staggered terms of one and two years, and may serve until their successors are appointed.

- c. If a member vacates a position prior to the expiration date of his/her term in office, recommendations shall be made by the Executive Committee for replacement members. Upon appointment by the BOC, the appointee shall serve the unexpired term.
- d. Any vacancy in the membership of the Local Board shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. Any member of the Local Board may be removed for cause in accordance with procedures established by the Local Board and recommended to the BOC.

Section 3. Attendance Policy

If a member misses three (3) consecutive regularly scheduled meetings of the LWDB, a recommendation **may** be made to the Board of Commissioners to remove the member from the Board.

Section 4. Voting

- a. Appointed members shall have one vote except a member may not vote on an issue before the Local Board or before a Committee which has a direct or indirect bearing on services to be provided by that member or any organization which such member represents, or any matter which would financially benefit such member or any organization such member represents. Voting is subject to Section 3 above.
- b. LWDB members shall personally attend LWDB meetings where at all possible, but in those isolated cases where attendance is impossible, members may designate another person who holds a leadership and/or decision-making position in the entity which the member represents, by sending a written authorization to the LWDB meeting with the designated representative. Said designee shall be counted for the purposes of determining the presence of a quorum at LWDB meetings and shall have the power to vote on behalf of the member he/she represents.

ARTICLE V EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

In accordance with §25-41-7 of the Mississippi Code 1972 Annotated, the LWDB and/or its committees, may enter into executive session for the transaction of public business; provided, however, all meetings shall commence as open meetings and an affirmative vote of three-fifths (3/5) of all members present shall be required to declare an executive session.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

Section 1. Types and Schedule of Meetings

- a. The Local Board shall meet as it deems necessary. Regular meetings of the Local Board shall be held as established by the Chairperson or Local Board. At a minimum, however, the Local Board shall adopt a schedule of meetings for the upcoming Program Year at the last meeting of the current Program Year. Such schedules shall include the times and places of the meetings. Each member shall be notified (reminded) in writing of each regular meeting a minimum of ten days in advance.
- b. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chair or upon the request of one-third of the Local Board's membership. Where practical, each member shall be notified in writing of

each special meeting a minimum of five days in advance.

- c. Telephone Conference Call meetings may be called at any time by the Chair where an emergency situation exists. In such situations, the Executive Committee shall act on behalf of the Local Board in the conduct of Local Board business. Accommodations shall be made for interested parties to meet at the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District and the Southwest Mississippi Planning and Development District to hear meeting proceedings via the conference feature on agency telephones. Public notice of Telephone Conference Calls shall be given in accordance with paragraph two of Section 3.

Section 2. Open Meetings

All meetings of the Local Board shall be open and accessible to the general public in accordance with §25-41 1-17 of the Mississippi Code, Annotated, as applicable. **Special meetings** may be called at any time by the Chair or upon the request of one-third of the Local Board's membership. Where practical, each member shall be notified in writing of each special meeting a minimum of five days in advance.

Section 3. Public Notice of Meetings

- a. Regular meetings of the Local Board shall be published in newspapers of general circulation. Such announcements shall include the time, date and place of the meetings and a telephone number to call for additional information.
- b. Notice of Special or emergency meetings such as telephone conference calls shall be posted on the Bulletin Board of the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District and the Southwest Mississippi Planning and Development District within one hour after such meetings are called.

Section 4. Conduct of Meetings

- a. The Local Board mandates in Section 2 of this article that all LWDB meetings shall be open and accessible to the general public. This article reflects the Local Board's belief that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and its programs can greatly affect the economy and workforce of the local area and, thus, the discussions and deliberations which go into the Local Board's decisions should take place in an open and public manner in order that the people of the workforce area can be advised of and become aware of the Local Board's actions.
- b. However, state law also provides that a public body such as the LWDB may make and enforce reasonable rules for the conduct of persons attending its meetings. Therefore, the following rules will govern the conduct of all public persons and parties attending any LWDB committee or full LWDB meeting.
 1. "Public person" or "Interested public party" is defined as any person or party who is not a member of the LWDB or a staff person of the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District or the Southwest Mississippi Planning and Development District.
 2. In order to facilitate discussion among Local Board members and to aid in the accurate recording of Local Board actions, members of the public will sit in designated areas separated from Local Board and staff.
 3. Participation and discussion of projects and issues will be limited to Local Board members. Consideration of a matter will begin with a staff summary, if so requested by the Local Board, and will be followed by Local Board deliberations. If the Local Board deems it necessary and appropriate, members may address questions to an interested public party. If this situation arises, the Chair of the Local Board or Committee may designate the spokesperson to respond. The spokesperson must confine his or her response to the question raised. The spokesperson must also clearly identify himself or herself and the interested party or organization he or she represents.
 4. Members of the general public wishing to address the LWDB must make a request in writing to the LWDB Chair. This request should contain the topic to be covered by the address, the relevance of the address to Local Board business, and the amount of time requested. The request must be received at least ten working days prior to the meeting date. A response, in writing, will be made to all such requests. The nature of the response will be based on such considerations as time available on the agenda; amount of LWDB business to be covered at the meeting; relevance of the topic of the request to agenda material; and other pertinent factors.
 5. A member of the Local Board may move to **"suspend the policy"**. Upon a second and approval by a two-thirds vote of the LWDB members present and voting, this policy on conduct of meetings will be suspended for the discussion of a particular issue.

ARTICLE VII REIMBURSEMENT FOR COSTS INCURRED

The members of this Local Board and its committees, and representatives of LWDB members attending meetings in his/her absence, shall receive reimbursement for costs incurred in the

performance of their duties as Local Board members at a rate and in the manner established and/or approved by the State of Mississippi, its agencies, and officials.

ARTICLE VIII QUORUM

A Quorum shall consist of a majority of the members, present and voting.

ARTICLE IX MINUTES

The minutes of each Local Board or Committee meeting shall be recorded and distributed to the LWDB members within a reasonable time not to exceed 30 days after recess or adjournment and shall be open to public inspection during regular business hours.

ARTICLE X LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Local Workforce Development Plan developed by the fiscal agent shall be reviewed by the Local Board. The Local Board may make such recommendations and require such revisions as it deems appropriate. The Local Workforce Development Plan shall require the approval of the Local Board and must be signed by the Chairperson of the Local Board upon approval. Upon approval, the plan will be presented to the Board of Commissioners for ratification.

ARTICLE XI OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers

- a. The LWDB shall have a Chairperson who shall be elected from among the representatives of business and industry.

The Chairperson shall be elected for a two year term by a majority of the LWDB membership at the last meeting of the program year and shall take office in July. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the LWDB and shall, in general, perform all duties incident to the office of the chairperson.

- b. The LWDB shall have a Vice-Chairperson who shall be elected from among the representatives of business and industry.

The Vice-Chairperson shall be elected for a two year term by a majority vote of the LWDB membership at the last meeting of the program year and shall take office in July.

Section 2. Term

The term of office for the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be for two years. If an officer vacates his/her position on the LWDB, a replacement shall be elected to serve the unexpired term.

ARTICLE XII COMMITTEES

The LWDB shall be served by such Standing Committees and such other Ad Hoc Committees as may be deemed necessary. These committees shall be appointed by the Chairperson when needed.

Section 1. Executive Committee

- a. The LWDB shall have an Executive Committee consisting of the LWDB Chairperson, LWDB Vice-Chairperson, the Immediate Past Chairperson and Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of any standing committee.
- b. The Executive Committee shall be presided over by the LWDB Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson, the LWDB Vice-Chairperson shall assume the Chairperson's duties and responsibilities.
- c. The Executive Committee shall meet in accordance with the determination of the Chairperson, the Executive Committee or the Local Board.
- d. The Executive Committee is authorized to meet and act on behalf of the Local Board in the conduct of Local Board business, provided that such actions taken by the Executive Committee shall be ratified by the Local Board at its next meeting.
- e. The Executive Committee shall provide the Local Board overall leadership and guidance and shall advise the Local Board in the operation of the Local Board's activities and affairs. The Committee may assist in the development of the agenda for the Local Board. The Committee shall assign tasks or request projects from any standing committees and coordinate decisions from these committees.
- f. Minutes of each Executive Committee meeting will be provided to the Committee and Local Board. A quorum of the committee shall consist of a majority of the Executive Committee members. A majority vote will be necessary for approval of a motion. Only on occasions when there is a tie, the Chairperson of the Committee will vote.

ARTICLE XIII YOUTH COMMITTEE

Section 1. Establishment

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires the establishment of a youth committee as a subgroup within the Local Workforce Development Board. The youth committee will be appointed by the Local Board, in cooperation with the BOC for the workforce area.

Section 2. Membership

Members of the Youth Committee shall be appointed from individuals nominated by appropriate agencies or organizations. Membership of the youth committee may include:

- members of the Local Board with special interest or expertise in youth policy including private sector members;
- representatives of youth service agencies, including juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies;
- representatives of local public housing authorities;
- parents of eligible youth seeking assistance under this program;

- individuals, including former participants, and representatives of organizations, that have experience relating to youth activities; and
- representatives of the Job Corps program, as appropriate.

The Youth Committee shall be chaired by a member of the LWDB. Members of the Youth Committee who are not members of the LWDB shall be voting members of the Youth Committee and nonvoting members of the LWDB.

Section 3. Duties

The Youth Committee will provide information and assist with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth, which shall include community-based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth.

Section 4. Minutes

The minutes of each Youth Committee meeting shall be recorded and distributed to the Youth Committee and LWDB members within a reasonable time not to exceed 30 days after recess or adjournment and shall be open to public inspection during regular business hours.

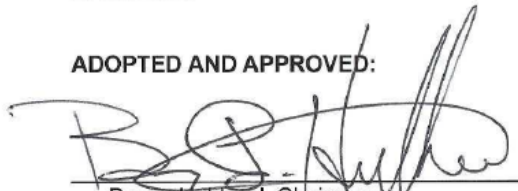
ARTICLE XIV AMENDMENTS

These Operating Procedures shall be amended at any time provided that such amendment is forwarded in writing to the members prior to the meeting at which action shall be taken. Approval of an amendment shall be by majority vote of the membership in a full Local Board meeting.

ARTICLE XV ADOPTION

These Operating Procedures shall be adopted when ratified and approved by a majority vote of the Local Board.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED:


Benny Hubbard, Chairman

6/10/21
Date

APPENDIX E

Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion

Lower Tier Covered Transaction • Central Mississippi Planning & Development District

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive Orders 12549 and 12689, Debarment and Suspension: the OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Non procurement) at **2 CFR part 180**, as adopted by the U.S. Department of Labor at **2 CFR part 2998** (formerly 29 CFR part 98), and consistent with **2 CFR 200.214** (suspension and debarment).

THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CERTIFICATION

The Central Mississippi Planning & Development District, as recipient of Federal assistance funds, certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in any transaction by any Federal department or agency.

Michael Monk, Chief Executive Officer

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature

Date

Instructions for Certification

1. By signing this certification, the recipient of Federal assistance funds is providing the certification as set out below.
2. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when the federal transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the recipient of Federal assistance funds knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
3. The recipient of Federal assistance funds shall provide immediate written notice if at any time the recipient of Federal assistance funds learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
4. The terms "covered transaction," "debarred," "suspended," "ineligible," "lower tier covered transaction," "participant," "person," "primary covered transaction," "principal," and "voluntarily excluded," as used in this clause, have the meanings set out in the definitions and coverage provisions of 2 CFR part 180, subparts A and B, implementing Executive Orders 12549 and 12689.
5. The recipient of Federal assistance funds agrees that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the DOL.
6. The recipient of Federal assistance funds further agrees that it will include the clause titled "Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion – Lower Tier Covered Transactions," without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.
7. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. Each participant may, but is not required to, check the exclusion records maintained in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) in accordance with 2 CFR 180.300.
8. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
9. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the DOL may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.



**SOUTH CENTRAL
MISSISSIPPI WORKS**

APPENDIX F

Local Area Plan Signatory Submission Page

South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Area • Local Plan 2024–2028 (2026 Modification)

Approved by Local Chief Elected Official or Designee: Honorable Daryl McMillian, Sr. Date	Local Chief Elected Official Mailing Address: The Honorable Daryl McMillian, Sr. SCMW Board of Commissioners Chairperson Copiah County Board of Supervisors 117 West Street, Hazlehurst, MS 39083 Phone: 601-953-9901 Email: dmcmillian40@icloud.com
Approved by the Local Workforce Development Board Chair or Designee: Benny Hubbard Date	Local Workforce Development Board Chair Mailing Address: Mr. Benny Hubbard Hubbard Financial Services, Owner 702 Prominence Drive, Flowood, MS 39232 Phone: 601-260-5449 Email: bhubbard44@hotmail.com
Signature of Local Grant Recipient and Fiscal Agent: Michael Monk, Chief Executive Officer Date	Local Grant Recipient and Fiscal Agent Mailing Address: Mr. Michael Monk, Chief Executive Officer Central Mississippi Planning & Development District 1020 Centre Pointe Blvd., Pearl, MS 39208 Phone: 601-981-1511 Email: mmonk@cmpdd.org
Signature of Governor's Designee: Date	Governor's Designee Mailing Address: MS Department of Employment Security 1235 Echelon Parkway P.O. Box 1699, Jackson, MS 39215-1699 Phone: 601-321-6000 Email: lring@mdes.ms.gov

**APPENDIX G****WIN Job Center Locations**

South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Area

WIN Job Center	Address	Telephone
Jackson WIN Job Center	3925 Sunset Drive Jackson, MS 39213	601-414-7796
Pearl WIN Job Center	3805 US-80 East Pearl, MS 39208	601-936-1903
Vicksburg WIN Job Center	755 Highway 27 South Vicksburg, MS 39180	601-619-2841
Brookhaven WIN Job Center	201 Hwy 51 N Brookhaven, MS 39601	601-643-8730
Natchez WIN Job Center	Howell C. Garner Instructional Center 33 Campus Drive Natchez, MS 39120	601-446-1130
McComb WIN Job Center	1400-A Harrison Avenue McComb, MS 39648	601-684-4421

Locations current as of July 2026 (scmw.info/win-locations). Job seekers may also access services virtually through Mississippi Works (mississippiworks.org) and the SCMW virtual Career Coach program.



APPENDIX H

Local Area Memorandum of Understanding

South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Area

Core Partners Memorandum of Understanding • Updated with the 2026 Modification

Memorandum of Understanding between the South Central Mississippi Works Workforce Development Board and WIOA One-Stop System Partners

I. Introduction

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to outline the framework, roles, and collaborative partnerships within the South Central Mississippi Works (SCMW) Workforce Development Area One-Stop Delivery System, hereafter referred to as the “System.” While fulfilling a requirement of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and aligning with the Mississippi WIOA Combined State Plan, 2024–2028, the MOU’s primary goal is to foster a spirit of cooperation, collaboration, and shared commitment among the partners.

Through collective efforts, the partners aim to identify both current and emerging in-demand workforce skills, support post-secondary education, and promote lifelong learning. These strategies will actively engage SCMW citizens in career pathways that lead to permanent, unsubsidized employment and a self-sufficient standard of living. This MOU is entered into by the SCMW Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) and WIOA One-Stop System Partners, establishing the roles and responsibilities of each partner.

A list of the partners and their respective programs can be found in Section IV of this MOU. This agreement sets forth guidelines that promote cooperative working.

II. Strategic Vision and Goals

The strategic vision of the South Central Mississippi Works (SCMW) One-Stop Delivery System is to create a seamless, customer-centered network that integrates workforce development, education, and other related services. The goal is to enhance access to these services, enabling individuals to secure suitable employment, helping employers find qualified employees, and improving long-term employment outcomes for all SCMW citizens.

To achieve this vision, the partners will collaborate to:

- Identify and address barriers to employment and service delivery.
- Eliminate duplication of services and reduce delivery costs.
- Align technology and data systems for greater efficiency.
- Increase participation, engagement, and performance of individuals and employers served by the System.
- Continuously improve customer satisfaction for both job seekers and employers.

This MOU, developed in alignment with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), sets the foundation for an integrated and collaborative service delivery system. All partners listed in this MOU will work together to ensure the successful implementation of this system, focusing on continuous improvement and innovation.

III. The System

The other characteristics of the System define key operational principles and collaborative efforts that guide how partners work together to deliver integrated workforce services. These characteristics ensure that both job seekers and employers receive comprehensive, accessible, and high-quality support through a seamless and efficient system.

1. The System is designed to serve both job seekers and employers equally, ensuring a balanced approach to workforce development.
2. All partners will make their workforce-related programs and services accessible through the System, enhancing the range and reach of services offered to customers.
3. Partners will contribute a portion of their available funds to collaboratively establish, maintain, and support the infrastructure of the System, including WIN Job Centers where physical co-location occurs. Cost-sharing will be based on a reasonable allocation, reflecting the proportional benefit to each partner's program and clientele.
4. Partner services will be available both electronically and at appropriate physical locations, enabling broader access and flexibility for customers.
5. A centralized referral system will be utilized by all partners to streamline customer access to programs and services across the System.
6. Partners will operate their workforce-related programs in alignment with the System's objectives, the State Plan, and the terms outlined in this MOU, fostering a cohesive and unified delivery model.

IV. SCMW Partner Programs and Activities

The parties to this MOU include the partners listed below. As mandated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), all partners must participate in the SCMW One-Stop Delivery System, be signatories to this MOU, and adhere to its terms. Additionally, partners must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local rules, plans, and policies authorized under their respective programs and in accordance with federal guidelines.

SCMW Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) and Chief Local Elected Officials Board (Board of Commissioners)

- WIOA Title I Programs: Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Career and Training Services, providing employment, training, and career development resources.

Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES)

- Wagner-Peyser Act Program: The state's labor exchange system, allowing customers to register for career services, create/post resumes, create/post job orders, perform job and candidate searches, access labor market and training data, and participate in automated job matching and referrals.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Workers Program: Federal program offering training and support to workers adversely affected by foreign trade, helping them re-enter the workforce.
- Jobs for Veterans Program: Assisting veterans, service members, and their spouses with employment resources, career opportunities, and employment rights protection.
- Unemployment Insurance Program: Providing unemployment benefits to eligible workers who meet specific criteria after becoming unemployed.
- MS Works: An electronic system that enables employers and jobseekers to make informed employment and training decisions, facilitating job matching and referrals.

- Referral Mechanism: Centralized system connecting customers to partner programs and services.
- Performance Reporting: Assisting partners in reporting common performance measures as per the Combined State Plan, WIOA regulations, and guidance.

Hinds Community College, Holmes Community College, Copiah-Lincoln Community College, Southwest Mississippi Community College

- Adult Education & Family Literacy Act Program: Provides adult basic education, literacy instruction, and high school equivalency programs for adults lacking foundational skills or English proficiency.
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) (Copiah-Lincoln Community College only): Offers training and community service opportunities for older adults, preparing them for unsubsidized employment.

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS)

- Vocational Rehabilitation Program: Delivers services to individuals with disabilities, tailored to their unique needs and goals, to help them achieve competitive employment and financial independence.

Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS)

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): Provides financial assistance to families with children under 18.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): Offers monthly benefits to low-income households for purchasing essential food items.

Central Mississippi Planning & Development District

- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP): Helps older adults with limited employment prospects gain experience through community service work, preparing them for unsubsidized employment.

Mississippi Job Corps Center

- Offers career technical training, high school diploma equivalency programs, and job placement services to Job Corps enrollees.

V. WIN Job Centers and Partner Service Provision

The SCMW local workforce area currently certifies WIN Job Centers, strategically located to provide easy access to workforce development services. The WIN Job Center Operator(s) are selected through a competitive procurement process and are responsible for coordinating the service delivery among all partners within the system. This includes convening partners regularly to ensure continuous communication and the ongoing improvement of service delivery.

A portion of the WIOA Title I Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs is delivered through these centers. Additionally, the SCMW area offers programmatic services at partner Community Colleges and operates a specialized center dedicated to serving adjudicated youth.

Partner services are offered through a network of comprehensive, affiliate, digital access sites and partner sites, ensuring broad access to workforce resources. Job seekers and employers can also access services electronically at any time via www.mdes.ms.gov. At least one Sector Training Plus Comprehensive One-Stop Center in the SCMW Local Area houses all partners and their services under one roof. Sector Training Plus Comprehensive One-Stop Centers will provide access to all the services represented in the comprehensive centers as well as sector-focused workforce training.

Affiliate WIN Job Centers feature staff from at least two (2) partners, providing direct services from those partners while offering access to programs and services of other partners through electronic means or referrals. Beyond comprehensive and affiliate centers, services, information, and referrals are also available at other partner locations.

Digital One-Stop Centers will be equipped with cutting-edge communication technologies and offer participants convenient access to workforce services with efficiency in mind. The implementation of digital

offices is expected to yield several benefits, including reduced infrastructure cost, optimized staffing requirements, increased accessibility, and improved coordination of services.

VI. One-Stop Partner Cost Sharing

Each WIN Job Center hosting multiple partner staff must have an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA). This agreement outlines how partners will share the costs of maintaining the center's infrastructure, including but not limited to expenses related to the Resource Room, facility rent, utilities, and shared equipment and facility maintenance. The WIN Job Center Operator, in collaboration with the SCMW LWDB, is responsible for developing and maintaining the IFA for each center. IFAs are reviewed annually, and necessary modifications are made to reflect any changes.

The costs of career and training services for customers deemed eligible for and best served by a specific partner's programs will be borne by the partner authorized and funded to deliver those services.

VII. One-Stop Partner Referral Process

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) manages the online labor exchange and participant data system (MSWORKS), which serves as a tool for job placement and a tool for tracking career and training services provided to customers. This system collects data on common performance measures, connects employers and job seekers, and facilitates access to career services. All partners are required to use the registration and job matching functions of the system for work-ready customers unless otherwise specified in this MOU. A customer's job readiness is determined by each partner based on the goals of their specific program.

To ensure seamless coordination, all partners will utilize the common data system to track referrals between and among partners. This allows for effective service coordination and ensures that all partners have access to an individual's Career/Employment Plan and information on the services needed or provided.

Each partner is responsible for delivering the career services authorized under their respective programs, as outlined in Section 134(c)(2) of WIOA. Staff training will be available, and all partner staff are expected to be knowledgeable about the full range of services available within the system. Partners are also responsible for providing technical assistance and training to other partner staff as needed.

The MDES Office of Grant Management (OGM) and the State Workforce Development Board have developed and implemented a standardized referral process for system operations. All partners agree to use this referral process, which ensures that any individual seeking services from one partner is also informed about and referred to the services of other partners. This is based on a series of diagnostic assessment questions designed to match customers with appropriate services.

Each partner retains responsibility for determining the eligibility of individuals for their respective programs, whether co-located or connected through other means. If eligible, customers may receive non-duplicated services from multiple partners as appropriate to their needs.

Finally, all partner staff, supervisors, and administrators must adhere to all Federal and State confidentiality regulations to protect customer information.

VIII. MOU Term and Modification

The term of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) shall commence upon the approval of the 2026 Modification of the SCMW Local Workforce Area Plan and will remain in effect until a revised plan or modification is submitted to the MDES Office of Grant Management. The MOU will continue unless any party initiates a written request to amend its content.

Modifications to this MOU may occur as needed to reflect changes in the system, partner activities, or operational adjustments. Any amendments must be made by mutual consent of all parties, following the same process and procedures used for the original agreement.

IX. Certification

By signing this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), all parties agree to comply with all applicable Federal, State, and Local laws, regulations, and guidelines related to nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, participant privacy rights, displacement, and the maintenance of records and other confidential information pertaining to system customers.

This MOU is entered into by and between the partners for the operation and management of the SCMW Workforce Development Area system. This includes the coordination of service delivery and the sharing of infrastructure costs to ensure the effective functioning of the system.

By affixing their signatures, the partners commit to working collaboratively to fulfill the terms of this MOU and support the implementation of the SCMW Local Workforce Area Plan.

South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Area

Mr. Benny Hubbard
Chairman, SCMW Local Workforce Development Board

Date

Honorable Daryl McMillian
Chairman, SCMW Board of Commissioners

Date

Mississippi Department of Employment Security

Dr. William J. Ashley
Executive Director

Date

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services

Mr. Billy Taylor
Executive Director

Date

Mississippi Department of Human Services

Mr. Robert G. Anderson
Executive Director

Date

Copiah-Lincoln Community College

Dr. Dewayne Middleton
President

Date

Hinds Community College

Dr. Stephen Vacik
President

Date

Holmes Community College

Dr. Jim Haffey
President

Date

Southwest Mississippi Community College

Dr. Steven Bishop
President

Date

Senior Community Service Employment Program

Mr. Michael Monk
Chief Executive Officer
Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

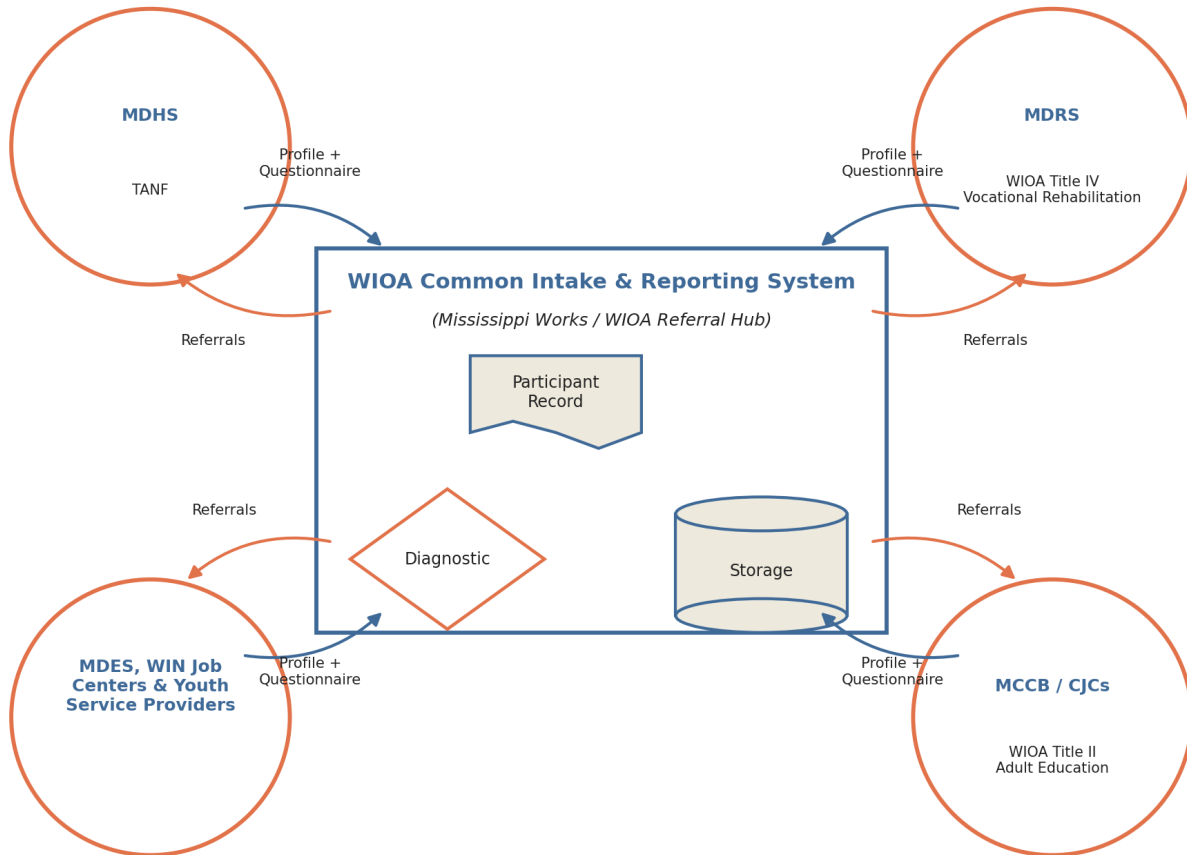
Date

This Memorandum of Understanding is presented unsigned with the 2026 Modification of the SCMW Local Plan; execution by all parties follows the conclusion of the 30-day public comment period.

APPENDIX I

Local Area Services Flow Chart

Common intake, diagnostic, and referral flow among WIOA Combined Plan partners



Combined Plan partners route participants into the WIOA common intake and reporting system through the Mississippi Works profile and diagnostic questionnaire; the system generates automated referrals back to the appropriate partner programs, supporting the no-wrong-door approach described in Sections C and D of the Local Plan.



APPENDIX J

Youth Standing Committee

South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Area

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act eliminated the former statutory requirement, carried over from the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, that each local workforce board establish a youth council. Under WIOA Section 107(b)(4)(A)(ii) and its implementing regulations at 20 CFR 681.100 and 20 CFR 681.120, the establishment of a standing youth committee is **discretionary**, not mandatory. Where a local board elects not to designate a standing youth committee, the regulations provide that the local board retains and exercises all responsibilities for youth workforce investment activities otherwise assignable to such a committee.

Pursuant to this authority, the South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Board has elected not to establish a separate standing youth committee. **The full membership of the SCMW LWDB serves in that capacity and retains direct responsibility for all aspects of the WIOA youth formula program**, including planning and operational oversight; provider selection and evaluation; compliance with the out-of-school youth and work-experience expenditure requirements of WIOA Section 129 and 20 CFR Part 681; and alignment of youth services with the fourteen program elements enumerated at 20 CFR 681.460.

This structure ensures that decisions affecting youth services are made by the full board — including its business majority, its youth-serving members, and its education and community-based organization representatives — rather than by a subset of the membership, and it is reflected in the youth-services provisions of Section D of the Local Plan.



SOUTH CENTRAL
MISSISSIPPI WORKS

SOUTH CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA

PUTTING OPPORTUNITY TO WORK

SECTOR STRATEGY PLAN

2026 Update

Originally adopted 2017 • Updated with the 2026 Modification of the SCMW Local Plan

*In alignment with the Mississippi WIOA Combined State Plan, 2024–2028,
and America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age*

Introduction

At the direction of the Mississippi State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) and in furtherance of the State's vision of economic development and skill growth, South Central Mississippi Works (SCMW) presents this update of its Sector Strategy Plan. The original plan, adopted in 2017, presented strategies for the region's three major employment sectors: Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics. This 2026 Update expands the plan to the six target sectors identified in the 2026 Modification of the SCMW Local Plan — Advanced Manufacturing; Agriculture, Food & Beverage; Automotive & Related Manufacturing; Energy & Related; Forestry, Chemicals & Related; and Healthcare & Support — together with the emerging Information Infrastructure sector driven by data-center investment. The plan identifies and addresses current and emerging skill gaps through the partnership of industry, government, education, training, economic development, and community organizations, and aligns local resources with the Mississippi WIOA Combined State Plan and the five pillars of America's Talent Strategy.

The South Central Mississippi Works Workforce Development Area is a seventeen-county area located in the west-central and southwestern quadrant of the state, comprising Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Copiah, Franklin, Hinds, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lincoln, Madison, Pike, Rankin, Simpson, Walthall, Warren, Wilkinson, and Yazoo counties. The area was established under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and re-designated under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The workforce area is administered by its fiscal agent, the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD), in coordination with the Southwest Mississippi Planning and Development District (SWMPDD), and its WIOA-funded programs are overseen by the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) and the Board of Commissioners (BOC). Under the ecosystem framework established by AccelerateMS, the State's Office of Workforce Development, SCMW's counties fall primarily within Ecosystems 5 and 7, each served by a designated Ecosystem Coordinator.

The area is served by four community colleges — Copiah-Lincoln, Hinds, Holmes, and Southwest Mississippi — and by regional economic development organizations including the Greater Jackson Alliance and the Southwest Mississippi Partnership. The Jackson Metropolitan Statistical Area anchors the northern portion of the workforce area and encompasses the capital city; the remainder of the area is largely rural. The region includes the state's only academic medical center and is the state's principal hub for healthcare, manufacturing, transportation and logistics, and a rapidly emerging information-infrastructure sector led by data-center investment in Madison County.

Executive Summary

Objectives and Purpose

Sector strategies address current and emerging skills gaps; provide a means to engage directly with industry across traditional and non-traditional boundaries; better align state and federal programs and resources serving employers and workers; and meet the needs of employers. This 2026 Update carries those objectives forward and aligns them with the five pillars of America's Talent Strategy — industry-driven strategies, worker mobility, integrated systems, accountability, and flexibility and innovation — as operationalized through Mississippi's Combined State Plan and the SCMW Local Plan.

Mission, Vision and Goal

The Mission of the South Central Mississippi Works Workforce Development Area is to serve as a leader in workforce development with the capability to bring various partners and resources to the table and to serve as a catalyst for change in the State of Mississippi's workforce and industry.

Our Vision is to improve the quality of the workforce; the quantity of appropriately trained workers; meet targeted industry needs, both current and future; fill the industry pipelines with qualified workers; and thereby improve the livelihood of Mississippi employers and workers.

Achieving this Vision, with the ultimate Goal of making Mississippi a sought-after location for industry with a reputation for providing a well-trained, ready-to-work pool of employees, requires a strong plan, an ongoing process of review and improvement, and the ability and willingness of all workforce partners to design programs and activities to meet the challenges.

Progress Since 2017

The 2017 plan committed the region to specific actions, and much has been accomplished:

- **A statewide single front door.** The workforce-information fragmentation identified by all three 2017 leadership teams has been substantially addressed through Mississippi Works (mississippiworks.org), the WIOA Referral Hub, and the creation of AccelerateMS as the State's coordinating office for workforce development.
- **Sector Training Plus Comprehensive One-Stop Center.** The center envisioned in 2017 is operational in the Jackson metropolitan area, housing all required partner programs alongside sector-focused training delivered by Hinds Community College, and SCMW is committed to expanding the model across the region.
- **Nurse Externship Program.** The signature healthcare initiative has measurably improved nurse recruitment and retention among regional hospitals and providers and continues today.
- **Work-ready pipeline.** The Smart Start Pathway and NCRC credentials are embedded in SCMW training policy; Career Coaches now serve 47 area high schools; and Perkins V is formally included in the Combined State Plan, aligning secondary CTE with workforce training.
- **Work-Ready Communities.** SCMW counties have continued to pursue and achieve ACT Work-Ready Community designation, strengthening the region's competitiveness for industrial recruitment.

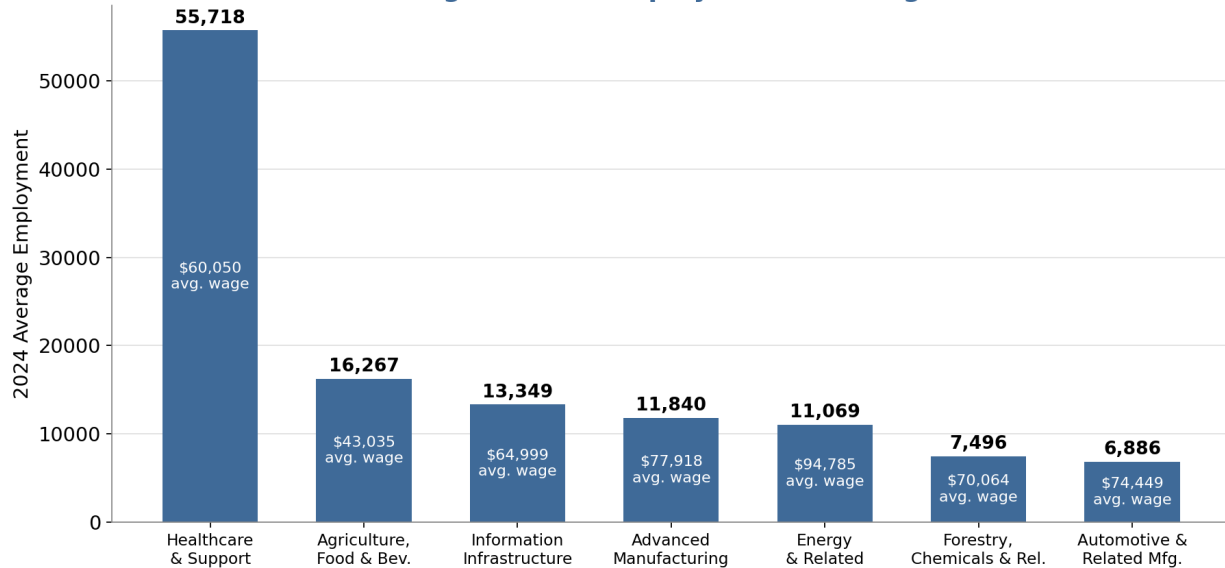
Statistical Overview

The SCMW economy supported total average employment of 327,055 in 2024 across all industries, with an overall average annual wage of \$53,826. Regional employment is projected to grow from 356,409 jobs in 2022 to 380,964 by 2032 — a gain of 24,555 jobs (6.9%), among the strongest projected growth in the state. The target sectors below were selected in partnership with AccelerateMS, the Mississippi Development Authority, and regional economic developers, based on employment scale, wages, growth, and strategic importance to the regional economy.

Target Sector	Avg. Employment (2024)	Avg. Annual Wage	Establishments (Q4 2024)
Healthcare & Support	55,718	\$60,050	1,990
Agriculture, Food & Beverage	16,267	\$43,035	770
Advanced Manufacturing	11,840	\$77,918	156
Energy & Related	11,069	\$94,785	591
Forestry, Chemicals & Related	7,496	\$70,064	340
Automotive & Related Mfg.	6,886	\$74,449	21
Information Infrastructure (emerging)	13,349	\$64,999	1,321

Source: MS Department of Employment Security, Census of Employment & Wages, 2024 Annual Averages. One NAICS code may appear in multiple groups.

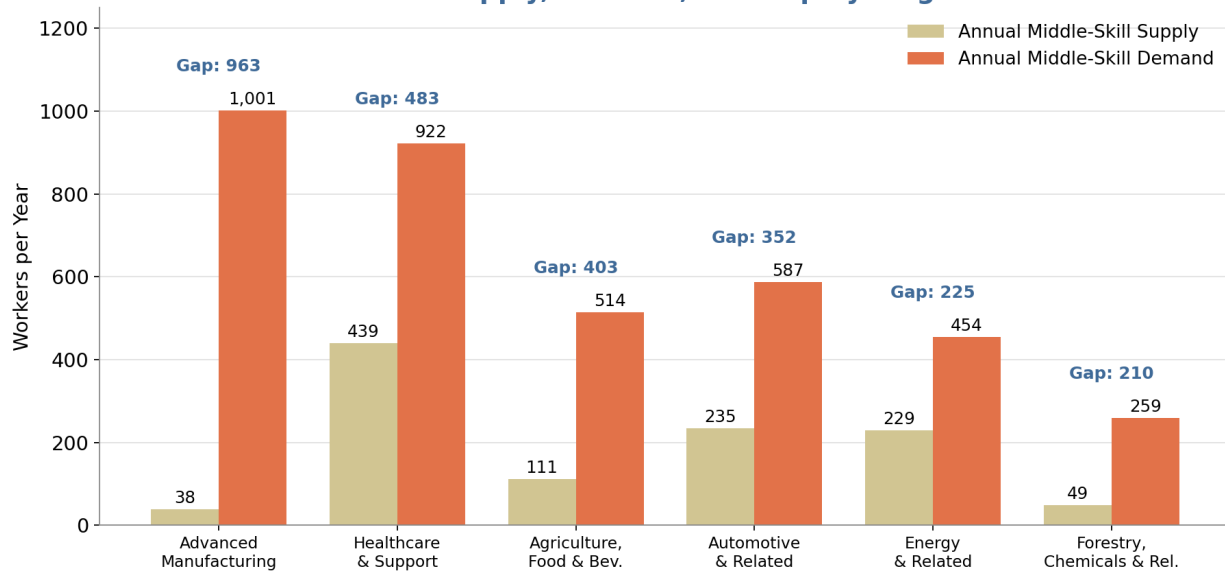
SCMW Target Sector Employment and Wages, 2024



The Middle-Skill Gap

The region's defining workforce challenge is the middle-skill gap. Across the six target sectors, current annual demand for middle-skill workers (3,737) far outstrips annual supply (1,101) — a gap of 2,636 workers per year — with Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare & Support showing the largest gaps. SCMW concentrates WIOA training investments where these gaps are greatest, directly advancing the industry-driven-strategies pillar of America's Talent Strategy.

Middle-Skill Supply, Demand, and Gap by Target Sector



Source: MS Department of Employment Security, 2025; MS State Longitudinal Data System, 2025; MS Works, 2025; MS Community College Board, 2025.

Alignment with America's Talent Strategy and the Combined State Plan

Mississippi's Combined State Plan, submitted April 30, 2026, is organized around the five pillars of America's Talent Strategy: Building the Workforce for the Golden Age, the joint workforce strategy of the U.S. Departments of Labor, Commerce, and Education. This Sector Strategy Plan is the region's principal instrument for the first pillar — industry-driven strategies — and advances the remaining pillars as follows:

- **Industry-Driven Strategies.** WIOA training investments are directed to a Priority Occupation list built from the sector analyses in this plan, validated by employer demand and reviewed annually with the SWIB and AccelerateMS.
- **Worker Mobility.** Earn-and-learn pathways — registered apprenticeship, OJT, internships, and the Nurse Externship Program — move residents into and up within sector careers, supported by virtual service delivery and supportive services.
- **Integrated Systems.** Sector pathways connect K-12 CTE (Perkins V), adult education, the community colleges, and WIN Job Center services through the Mississippi Works Smart Start Career Pathway Model.
- **Accountability.** Sector initiatives are evaluated through WIOA performance measures, state-defined metrics, and the State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS), with results reported to the LWDB quarterly.
- **Flexibility & Innovation.** SCMW invests in short-term credentialing (including Workforce Pell-eligible programs as certified by AccelerateMS), AI-enabled job matching, digital literacy, and rapid-reskilling pilots responsive to sector needs.

Planning Process

The original plan was developed through sector leadership teams comprising business representatives, educators, workforce system members, workforce associations, and economic development professionals, supported by employer surveys across the three original industries. Those relationships endure, and this update was developed through the structures that succeeded them: the SCMW LWDB and its majority-private-sector membership; ecosystem round tables convened with AccelerateMS Ecosystem Coordinators for Ecosystems 5 and 7; continuing engagement with lead conveners including the Mississippi Hospital Association, Hinds Community College, and the Greater Jackson Alliance; and the comprehensive economic and workforce analysis prepared for the 2026 Modification of the SCMW Local Plan. Action plans in this update carry evaluation methodologies, and the sector partnerships will continue to function with updates presented to the LWDB.

Education System Involvement

Educational pathways leading to employment in the targeted sectors are defined and aligned across K-12, community college, and university programs. Through the legislatively funded Career Coach program, SCMW administers 48 Career Coaches serving 47 area high schools, who disseminate career information, facilitate job shadowing and internships, and support pathway planning aligned to the K-12 career clusters. With Perkins V formally included in the Combined State Plan, secondary and postsecondary CTE are aligned with workforce training so participants progress through clearly defined pathways. The four community colleges deliver credit and non-credit sector training, dual enrollment, MI-BEST integrated pathways, and apprenticeship-related instruction, and four WIN Job Centers are co-located on community college campuses.

Existing Available Training

Training is available for occupations within each targeted sector through providers on the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), accessible through Mississippi Works and MDES. As implementation progresses, SCMW, the community colleges, industry representatives, and other stakeholders continue to

develop training designed to meet specific industry needs — including short-term, high-quality programs eligible for Workforce Pell as certified by the State’s designee, AccelerateMS.

Business Services

The facilitation role envisioned in 2017 is now performed through a layered structure: AccelerateMS Ecosystem Coordinators serve as single points of contact for Ecosystems 5 and 7; economic-development representatives on the LWDB keep sector needs before the board; and SCMW business services — no-cost candidate connection through Mississippi Works, OJT and Work Experience agreements, WET-funded customized training, incumbent-worker training, and layoff-aversion services — are coordinated through the WIN Job Center system. SCMW continues to support counties in achieving and maintaining ACT Work-Ready Community designation.

WIOA Response to Sector Strategy Efforts

SCMW has implemented — and maintains — the following actions specific to the use of WIOA resources to address deficiencies identified through sector strategy work. These actions benefit all target sectors:

- Priority is given to funding WIOA On-the-Job Training (OJT) with employers offering employment in target-sector occupations.
- The ITA policy provides higher maximum awards for training leading to target-sector occupations, permits multiple ITAs for individuals following a career pathway (encouraging stackable credentials), and covers tuition, books, fees, certifications and licenses, tools, uniforms, and equipment.
- All ITA applicants complete work-readiness preparation and attain the National Career Readiness Certificate (bronze or higher) before approval, consistent with employer feedback and WIOA credential-attainment measures.
- Incumbent-worker training is available for skill upgrading and retraining in target-sector occupations.
- Priority for internship and work-experience opportunities is given to target-sector occupations, with placements of 160–480 hours at no cost to the employer and the goal of permanent, unsubsidized employment.
- Emphasis is placed on training of any type that is part of a career pathway, and on serving individuals facing barriers to employment.
- SCMW participates in and supports the Mississippi Apprenticeship Program (MAP) and the DOL Office of Apprenticeship in establishing registered apprenticeship programs, with pre-apprenticeship supported by WIOA ITAs.
- SCMW solicits employer feedback on an ongoing basis and earmarks WIOA funds annually to implement the actions in this plan through internships, OJT, ITAs, and related needs.

Plans for programs and activities to meet targeted industry skill gaps take into account how they will affect and benefit individuals with barriers to employment, including low-income individuals, pregnant and parenting youth, ex-offenders, English language learners, the long-term unemployed, individuals with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, homeless individuals, displaced homemakers, and older workers.

Pipeline

Education remains the most important key to increasing the pipeline of individuals entering target-sector employment. Career awareness is built through the Career Coach program, job shadowing for students and educators, sector participation in career fairs, dual enrollment for credit and non-credit workforce training, and the Mississippi Works platforms — including MSGradJobs.com and MSTechJobs.com, which connect

college and technical students with regional employers. Industry employers and incumbent workers are engaged through their associations, ecosystem round tables, and on-site meetings, where training opportunities and their benefits are shared.

Statewide Workforce System Gaps: 2017 Findings and Current Priorities

2017 Finding: Workforce Information System Fragmentation – Substantially Addressed

All three 2017 leadership teams identified the absence of a single “one-stop” resource website as a systemic weakness. Since then, the State has consolidated its front door through Mississippi Works, established AccelerateMS as the coordinating office for workforce development, and deployed the WIOA Referral Hub connecting Combined Plan partner systems for shared intake and referral. SCMW continues to contribute regional data and employer feedback to these platforms and to press for continued simplification of employer-facing processes.

2017 Finding: Continual Workforce Partner Staff Cross-Training – Institutionalized and Ongoing

The 2017 teams identified continual cross-training of front-line workforce staff as essential. The Sector Training Plus Comprehensive One-Stop Center envisioned in that plan is now operational in the Jackson metropolitan area, housing all required partner programs with sector-focused training by Hinds Community College and ample training space for continual staff development. Cross-training is now delivered on an ongoing basis by SCMW staff and the MDES Office of Grant Management, and staff are cross-trained across Combined Plan partner programs. This work is never finished; it remains a standing commitment.

Current Systemic Priorities, 2026–2028

- **The middle-skill gap.** An annual shortfall of 2,636 middle-skill workers across the six target sectors is the region’s central constraint on growth; closing it drives every sector action plan in this document.
- **Labor force participation.** Regional LFPR of 56.4% — though second highest among the LWDA’s — leaves thousands of working-age residents outside the labor force; sector pathways must reach barrier populations, supported by childcare, transportation, and virtual service access.
- **Digital and AI readiness.** Data-center investment and the diffusion of AI across every sector require digital literacy and AI-skills investment for both job seekers and incumbent workers, consistent with the Combined State Plan’s technology goals.
- **Sector talent competition.** The same middle-skill trades — electricians, industrial maintenance, construction — are demanded simultaneously by manufacturing, energy, and information-infrastructure growth, requiring coordinated pipeline planning rather than sector-by-sector competition.

Advanced Manufacturing in South Central Mississippi Works

Advanced Manufacturing is among the region’s highest-wage sectors, anchored by transportation-equipment manufacturing (52.3% of sector employment, average wage \$74,992) and supported by electrical equipment, general purpose machinery, and commercial and service industry machinery manufacturing. The sector presents the region’s single largest middle-skill gap.

Sector Profile

Avg. Employment (2024)	Avg. Annual Wage	Establishments	Annual Middle-Skill Gap
11,840	\$77,918	156	963 (supply 38 vs. demand 1,001)

Source: SCMW Local Plan 2024–2028 (2026 Modification), Tables 5 and 15; MS Department of Employment Security, 2024–2025.

Leading Occupations

Occupation	Employment	Median Hourly Wage
Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators	1,956	\$23.76
Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers	764	\$23.45
First-Line Supervisors of Production Workers	696	\$32.06
Electrical & Electromechanical Assemblers	456	\$18.01
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	444	\$17.53

Occupations with the Highest Projected Growth, 2022–2032

Occupation	10-Year Projected Growth	FY2025 Job Openings
Electrical, Electronic & Electromechanical Assemblers	309	10
Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers	93	146
Electricians	78	23
Industrial Engineers	66	63
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	61	<10

Source: MS Department of Employment Security, Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, 2024; Occupational Projections, 2022–2032; MS Works Job Openings, FY2025.

Gaps, Weaknesses and Action Plans

1. Recruitment and retention of qualified people to fill the manufacturing pipeline

Goal. The 2017 finding remains the sector’s central challenge, sharpened by growth in transportation-equipment manufacturing and data-center-driven demand for electrical trades. With an annual middle-skill gap of 963 workers, recruitment must reach middle and high school students, low-skilled and underemployed adults, and non-traditional employees for high-demand occupations.

Actions.

- Fund manufacturing internships, OJT, and Work Experience with priority in target-sector occupations
- Expand registered and pre-apprenticeship through the Mississippi Apprenticeship Program (MAP) and the DOL Office of Apprenticeship
- Deploy the 48 Career Coaches in 47 area high schools to promote manufacturing pathways, job shadowing, and plant tours aligned to Perkins V career clusters

2. Employability skills of current and potential employees

Goal. Employers continue to report that essential workplace skills — attendance, communication, reliability — limit hiring and retention. The Smart Start Pathway remains the State’s foundational work-readiness credential and is now integrated with the Mississippi Works Smart Start Career Pathway Model.

Actions.

- Maintain Smart Start and NCRC (bronze or higher) as prerequisites for ITA- and OJT-funded manufacturing training
- Build “work-ready” expectations into training provider agreements
- Prioritize internship awards for Smart Start Credential completers

3. Tiered technical-skills capacity (basic, middle, and advanced)

Goal. The region needs continued growth in basic production, middle-skill technician, and advanced programs (mechatronics, engineering technology, CNC and PLC programming), consistent with the tiered pathway established in the 2017 plan and the projected concentration of demand at the middle-skill level (75%+ of projected demand).

Actions.

- Partner with the four community colleges to expand short-term credit and non-credit manufacturing programs, including Workforce Pell-eligible offerings certified by AccelerateMS
- Use WET-funded customized training for industry-specific needs
- Support incumbent-worker training for skill upgrading on new technology, including automation and AI-enabled production systems

Agriculture, Food & Beverage in South Central Mississippi Works

The Agriculture, Food & Beverage sector spans food manufacturing (36.9% of sector employment), food and beverage retail, wholesale distribution, forestry and logging, and crop and animal production. It is the region's most establishment-rich target sector and a cornerstone of the rural economy.

Sector Profile

Avg. Employment (2024)	Avg. Annual Wage	Establishments	Annual Middle-Skill Gap
16,267	\$43,035	770	403 (supply 111 vs. demand 514)

Source: SCMW Local Plan 2024–2028 (2026 Modification), Tables 5 and 15; MS Department of Employment Security, 2024–2025.

Leading Occupations

Occupation	Employment	Median Hourly Wage
Cashiers	1,603	\$11.09
Meat, Poultry & Fish Cutters & Trimmers	1,344	\$16.17
Stockers & Order Fillers	1,069	\$16.73
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	751	\$17.53
Slaughterers & Meat Packers	585	\$16.81

Occupations with the Highest Projected Growth, 2022–2032

Occupation	10-Year Projected Growth	FY2025 Job Openings
Stockers & Order Fillers	125	28
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	86	<10
Meat, Poultry & Fish Cutters & Trimmers	68	775
Farmworkers (Farm, Ranch & Aquacultural Animals)	50	126
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	45	43

Source: MS Department of Employment Security, Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, 2024; Occupational Projections, 2022–2032; MS Works Job Openings, FY2025.

Gaps, Weaknesses and Action Plans

1. Food-manufacturing workforce recruitment and retention

Goal. Food manufacturers report persistent turnover and large current openings (775 open positions for meat, poultry, and fish cutters and trimmers alone). Entry-level recruitment, retention incentives, and safety training are the sector's most immediate needs.

Actions.

- Prioritize OJT and Work Experience agreements with regional food manufacturers
- Fund short-term food-safety and production credentials through ITAs and WET customized training
- Coordinate with MDES and community colleges on targeted recruitment from underemployed and barrier populations

2. Skilled equipment operation and transportation

Goal. Modern agriculture increasingly requires certified equipment operators, CDL drivers, and technicians for precision-agriculture technology.

Actions.

- Expand CDL and agricultural equipment operator training through the community colleges
- Support employer-based incumbent-worker training on precision-agriculture systems
- Connect graduating CTE students to agricultural employers through the Career Coach program and Mississippi Works

Automotive & Related Manufacturing in South Central Mississippi Works

The Automotive & Related Manufacturing sector is concentrated in motor-vehicle parts and body manufacturing and offers strong wages (\$74,449 average). Assemblers account for nearly a third of sector employment, and demand for electromechanical assemblers, industrial machinery mechanics, and production supervisors continues to grow as the industry modernizes.

Sector Profile

Avg. Employment (2024)	Avg. Annual Wage	Establishments	Annual Middle-Skill Gap
6,886	\$74,449	21	352 (supply 235 vs. demand 587)

Source: SCMW Local Plan 2024–2028 (2026 Modification), Tables 5 and 15; MS Department of Employment Security, 2024–2025.

Leading Occupations

Occupation	Employment	Median Hourly Wage
Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators	2,216	\$23.76
First-Line Supervisors of Production Workers	591	\$32.06
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters & Samplers	308	\$18.92
Tire Builders	272	—

Occupations with the Highest Projected Growth, 2022–2032

Occupation	10-Year Projected Growth	FY2025 Job Openings
Electrical, Electronic & Electromechanical Assemblers	131	<10
Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators	57	<10
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	54	<10
First-Line Supervisors of Production Workers	48	<10

Occupation	10-Year Projected Growth	FY2025 Job Openings
Industrial Engineers	42	<10

Source: MS Department of Employment Security, Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, 2024; Occupational Projections, 2022–2032; MS Works Job Openings, FY2025.

Gaps, Weaknesses and Action Plans

1. Assembler and technician pipeline

Goal. The sector’s reliance on skilled assembly and maintenance occupations — combined with an annual middle-skill gap of 352 — requires a dependable pipeline from area high schools and community colleges into automotive employers and their supplier networks.

Actions.

- Prioritize OJT and internships with automotive manufacturers and suppliers
- Expand mechatronics, industrial maintenance, and quality-control programs with the community colleges
- Promote automotive careers through Career Coaches and Perkins V-aligned CTE pathways

2. Technology transition readiness

Goal. Automation, advanced materials, and the industry-wide transition toward electrification are changing skill requirements for incumbent workers.

Actions.

- Use incumbent-worker training funds for upskilling on automation, robotics, and new production technology
- Engage the Mississippi Manufacturers Association and MDA in monitoring emerging supplier requirements
- Review the Priority Occupation list annually to capture emerging automotive occupations

Energy & Related in South Central Mississippi Works

The Energy & Related sector — anchored by engineering services (36.5% of sector employment) and utilities — offers the region’s highest average wages among target sectors at \$94,785. Demand is intensifying as data-center and information-infrastructure investment increases the region’s electrical generation, transmission, and construction workload.

Sector Profile

Avg. Employment (2024)	Avg. Annual Wage	Establishments	Annual Middle-Skill Gap
11,069	\$94,785	591	225 (supply 229 vs. demand 454)

Source: SCMW Local Plan 2024–2028 (2026 Modification), Tables 5 and 15; MS Department of Employment Security, 2024–2025.

Leading Occupations

Occupation	Employment	Median Hourly Wage
Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators	477	\$23.76
Electrical Power-Line Installers & Repairers	438	\$35.98
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	369	\$17.53
Construction Laborers	342	\$17.98

Occupation	Employment	Median Hourly Wage
Civil Engineers	306	\$49.49

Occupations with the Highest Projected Growth, 2022–2032

Occupation	10-Year Projected Growth	FY2025 Job Openings
Electrical, Electronic & Electromechanical Assemblers	177	10
Construction Laborers	73	22
Electrical Power-Line Installers & Repairers	67	<10
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	42	<10

Source: MS Department of Employment Security, Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, 2024; Occupational Projections, 2022–2032; MS Works Job Openings, FY2025.

Gaps, Weaknesses and Action Plans

1. Line-worker and skilled-trades pipeline

Goal. Utilities face an aging workforce in line installation and repair at the same time that data-center construction is expanding demand for electricians, HVAC technicians, and construction trades across the region.

Actions.

- Expand lineworker and electrical trades programs with the community colleges and utility partners (Entergy, Cooperative Energy)
- Support pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship in the electrical and construction trades through MAP
- Continue energy-career awareness through industry resources such as “Get on the Grid” and the Career Coach program

2. Engineering-support and technician occupations

Goal. Engineering services firms need engineering technicians, CAD/drafting capability, and project-support occupations that can be developed through two-year and short-term programs.

Actions.

- Prioritize ITAs for engineering technology and related middle-skill programs
- Use WET customized training for firm-specific technical needs
- Track energy-sector demand annually through the SLDS and Lightcast analytics

Forestry, Chemicals & Related in South Central Mississippi Works

The Forestry, Chemicals & Related sector includes wood-product manufacturing (30.1% of sector employment), paper manufacturing, chemical manufacturing, plastics, and forestry and logging. Sector wages are strong – paper manufacturing averages \$92,222 – and demand is concentrated in machine operation, industrial maintenance, and production supervision.

Sector Profile

Avg. Employment (2024)	Avg. Annual Wage	Establishments	Annual Middle-Skill Gap
7,496	\$70,064	340	210 (supply 49 vs. demand 259)

Source: SCMW Local Plan 2024–2028 (2026 Modification), Tables 5 and 15; MS Department of Employment Security, 2024–2025.

Leading Occupations

Occupation	Employment	Median Hourly Wage
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	418	\$17.53
Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators	389	\$23.76
Upholsterers	388	—
First-Line Supervisors of Production Workers	373	\$32.06

Occupations with the Highest Projected Growth, 2022–2032

Occupation	10-Year Projected Growth	FY2025 Job Openings
Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	48	19
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	47	12
First-Line Supervisors of Production Workers	30	35
Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	22	14
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	20	29

Source: MS Department of Employment Security, Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, 2024; Occupational Projections, 2022–2032; MS Works Job Openings, FY2025.

Gaps, Weaknesses and Action Plans

1. Machine operation and industrial maintenance capacity

Goal. Mills and chemical plants require certified machine operators, industrial machinery mechanics, and safety-credentialed production workers; the sector’s middle-skill gap is 210 workers annually.

Actions.

- Fund short-term machine-operation and industrial-maintenance credentials through ITAs and WET customized training
- Prioritize OJT with wood-product, paper, and chemical manufacturers
- Support incumbent-worker safety and process-technology training

2. Logging and transport workforce

Goal. Forestry and logging operations and their trucking networks face recruitment challenges in rural counties.

Actions.

- Expand CDL and logging-equipment training access in the southern counties
- Coordinate with the Mississippi Loggers Association and forestry employers on recruitment
- Use supportive services to address rural transportation barriers for trainees

Healthcare & Support in South Central Mississippi Works

Healthcare & Support is the region’s largest target sector, anchored by hospitals (35.8% of sector employment) and ambulatory care, and home to the state’s only academic medical center. Registered nurses alone account for 7,684 jobs, and the sector generates the region’s largest volume of current openings — more than 1,200 posted RN openings in FY2025.

Sector Profile

Avg. Employment (2024)	Avg. Annual Wage	Establishments	Annual Middle-Skill Gap
55,718	\$60,050	1,990	483 (supply 439 vs. demand 922)

Source: SCMW Local Plan 2024–2028 (2026 Modification), Tables 5 and 15; MS Department of Employment Security, 2024–2025.

Leading Occupations

Occupation	Employment	Median Hourly Wage
Registered Nurses	7,684	\$37.24
Nursing Assistants	3,301	\$14.81
Licensed Practical & Vocational Nurses	2,588	\$24.04
Stockers & Order Fillers	1,838	\$16.73
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	1,801	\$11.55

Occupations with the Highest Projected Growth, 2022–2032

Occupation	10-Year Projected Growth	FY2025 Job Openings
Registered Nurses	505	1,201
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	489	<10
Nurse Practitioners	485	22
Medical & Health Services Managers	355	124
Nursing Assistants	260	160

Source: MS Department of Employment Security, Occupational Employment & Wage Statistics, 2024; Occupational Projections, 2022–2032; MS Works Job Openings, FY2025.

Gaps, Weaknesses and Action Plans

1. Recruitment and retention of registered nurses

Goal. RN recruitment and retention remains the sector’s defining challenge, as it was in 2017. The SCMW Nurse Externship Program — the signature initiative of the original plan — has proven to be the sector’s most effective recruitment and retention tool and has measurably improved recruitment and retention among regional hospitals and providers. Projected growth of 505 RN jobs and more than 1,200 current openings require continued expansion.

Actions.

- Continue and expand the Nurse Externship Program, including additional positions at rural hospitals
- Fund ITAs along stackable nursing pathways (CNA → LPN → RN → NP) with multiple-ITA awards for career-pathway participants
- Track externship completers’ employment and wages through the SLDS

2. Incumbent-worker specialization

Goal. Reimbursement and care models continue to shift toward specialized, technology-enabled care — telehealth, care and case management, cybersecurity, and quality measurement — requiring continual incumbent-worker training.

Actions.

- Fund specialized incumbent-worker training through ITAs, WET funds, and grants
- Pursue train-the-trainer models with community college and hospital partners
- Expand telehealth-enabled training delivery to rural facilities

3. Clinical capacity and allied-health pipeline

Goal. Clinical placement capacity remains a constraint for nursing and allied-health programs, and the sector's middle-skill gap (483 annually) is the region's second largest.

Actions.

- Support coordinated clinical scheduling among schools of nursing and healthcare facilities
- Expand allied-health and MI-BEST healthcare pathways at the community colleges
- Prioritize healthcare occupations on the Priority Occupation list and in Workforce Pell-eligible program development

Emerging Sector: Information Infrastructure

Information Infrastructure — encompassing fiber construction and maintenance, data-center construction and operations, and related information-technology services — has emerged since the 2017 plan as a transformative force in the regional economy, led by major data-center investment in Madison County undertaken with the Madison County Economic Development Authority and coordinated workforce preparation by SCMW and local training providers. The sector supported 13,349 jobs at an average wage of \$64,999 across 1,321 establishments in 2024, and data processing and hosting is among the region's fastest-growing traded industries.

Priorities and Actions

- **Construction-phase trades.** Coordinate with the Energy & Related and Advanced Manufacturing pipelines to supply electricians, HVAC technicians, and construction trades for data-center construction, using MAP apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship ITAs.
- **Operations workforce.** Develop data-center operations technician pathways with the community colleges, incorporating industry certifications and Workforce Pell-eligible short-term programs.
- **Digital and AI literacy.** Invest in digital-skills and AI-literacy training for job seekers and incumbent workers, consistent with the Combined State Plan's integrated-technology goals.
- **Priority occupations.** Incorporate information-infrastructure occupations into the SCMW Priority Occupation list and monitor demand annually through the SLDS and labor-market analytics.

Public Comment

This Sector Strategy Plan update has been approved by the SCMW Local Workforce Development Board and the Local Elected Officials' Board of Commissioners and is made available for public comment through the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District website (www.cmpdd.org) concurrently with the 30-day public comment period for the 2026 Modification of the SCMW Local Plan.

Implementation and Accountability

Consistent with the accountability pillar of America's Talent Strategy, SCMW evaluates the actions in this plan using federally prescribed WIOA performance measures and state-defined metrics, supported by the State Longitudinal Data System. The Priority Occupation list is updated annually with the SWIB and AccelerateMS; the Sector Strategy Plan and target industries are reviewed annually with partners; and progress is reported to the LWDB quarterly. The original 2017 sector leadership teams, their contributors, and the industry letters of support that accompanied the original plan are gratefully acknowledged and retained on file at CMPDD; ongoing industry engagement is carried out through the LWDB and the ecosystem round tables.

Assessment Tool

The assessment below reflects the core competencies for effective industry partnerships from the SWIB Sector Strategy Planning Guide, as updated for this 2026 plan.

Core Competencies for Effective Industry Partnerships	Present	Non-Existent	Need Technical Assistance
Sector Selection			
Data analysis was used to select sectors	X		
Consensus-based decision process used to select sectors	X		
Industry Analysis			
Survey of employers to determine workforce needs and priorities	X		
Gap analysis of specific needs of industry	X		
Analysis of skill gap of incumbent workers	X		
Root causes of gaps have been identified	X		
Barriers for employees/new hires are identified and understood	X		
Capacity Building			
Written objectives including mission, vision, and goal statement	X		
Employers have leadership role in industry partnership	X		
Formal decision-making protocols are established	X		
Written governance principles are established	X		
Meetings are scheduled and agendas distributed in advance; minutes disseminated	X		
Planning, Evaluation and Business Impact			
Goals and objectives are clearly identified	X		
Action plans of strategies are in place to achieve goals	X		
Public meetings were used to share strategies and solicit input	X		
Formal evaluation methods to gauge effectiveness are in place (SLDS, WIOA measures)	X		
Evaluation results are presented to key stakeholders	X		
Education			
Defined and clearly articulated pathways that lead to employment	X		
K-12 programs and curricula are aligned (Perkins V)	X		
Career-technical programs award national credentials	X		
Community college career/technical programs and curricula aligned	X		
Apprenticeships, internships, work experience in place for pathways	X		
Business Services and Pipeline			
Plan for coordination between public workforce partners and industry	X		
Barriers to employment for special populations are identified	X		
Activities to create career awareness for students at all levels	X		
Strategies to recruit incumbent workers into training pathways	X		

Core Competencies for Effective Industry Partnerships	Present	Non-Existent	Need Technical Assistance
Dual enrollment and dual credit for career/technical training in place	X		



Local Area Oversight Monitoring Policies and Tools

South Central Mississippi Works • Policy Number 21

WIOA Programmatic and Fiscal Monitoring

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

I. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This policy sets forth requirements for the monitoring of all subawardees receiving Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds in accordance with Sections 183(a–c) of the Act and Federal regulations 2 CFR 200.330–200.332, and Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 31.2 of the Final Rule.

Audit Regulations, 2 CFR 200.501–512, shall be applicable for non-profit and for-profit entities who expend \$750,000 a year in federal awards from all sources.

II. LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA REQUIREMENTS

A. Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Monitoring Policy

WIOA Section 107(d)(8) requires the local board, in partnership with the chief elected official, to conduct monitoring with respect to local programs of youth activities authorized under Section 129(c), adult and dislocated worker local employment and training activities authorized under Section 134(b), (c), and (d), and the one-stop delivery system in the local area.

WIOA Section 184(a)(3–4) and 2 CFR 200.330–332 of the Federal regulations require each LWDA to conduct monitoring of the WIOA activities of its subawardees in order to:

- Determine whether expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in WIOA, the subaward budget, and Federal regulations;
- Determine whether there is compliance with all applicable requirements; and
- Provide technical assistance as necessary and appropriate.

1. Scope

Local fiscal monitoring of subawardees may consist of one of the following: (1) on-site; (2) desk review; or (3) both on-site and desk review for the same period. The method used to conduct the monitoring and the frequency required for each shall be based on the LWDA's determination of "risk" and other factors, which considers whether the subawardee is subject to the Single Audit Act; when the most recent previous on-site review was conducted; previous findings or corrective actions required; etc. The determination of "risk" will be performed on a case-by-case basis for each subawardee.

LWDA programmatic compliance and equal opportunity monitoring of subawardees may consist of one of the following: (1) on-site; (2) desk review; or (3) both on-site and desk review for the same period. The method used to conduct the monitoring and the frequency required for each shall be based on the LWDA's determination of "risk" and other factors, which considers the type of WIOA activity performed by the subawardees; when the most recent previous on-site review was conducted; previous findings or corrective actions required; and the existence of current reviews

conducted by the state or its authorized representative that adequately address all criteria in the LWDA monitoring instrument, etc.

The following will be included in the monitoring, as applicable:

- Program goals and objectives
- Program quality
- Procurement
- Fiscal accountability
- Labor standards
- Audit / audit resolution
- Actual expenditures against cost categories and limitations
- Grievance procedures
- Equal opportunity
- Provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Eligibility verification, as applicable
- Property management
- Internal monitoring of the entity's subawardees, if any
- Administrative procedures
- Program performance
- Programmatic accountability
- Other programmatic areas

2. Frequency

Monitoring will be completed in a timely manner. Each subawardee shall be monitored for both fiscal and programmatic compliance at least once per year during the program year or during the sub-award period, using one or more of the methods outlined above.

B. Local Workforce Development Area Monitoring Procedures

1. Annual Monitoring Schedule

An annual monitoring schedule will be prepared. The schedule will include subawardee names and addresses, contact numbers, planned dates of reviews, and names of individuals to perform the reviews. Annual monitoring schedules shall be submitted to OGM, as required.

2. Review Notification

Written notification of the scheduled review will be provided to the entity in advance of the actual review, except when unannounced monitoring visits are deemed necessary.

3. Desk Review Instrument

A written desk review monitoring instrument must be prepared and should precede an on-site monitoring visit. This process will ensure that all pertinent records are reviewed prior to each visit. A desk review instrument will be completed before the on-site visit.

4. Monitoring Instrument

An objective monitoring instrument shall be used for monitoring reviews to ensure that pertinent data can be collected and analyzed for all program activities.

5. Documentation of Findings

Any findings resulting from the monitoring process will be adequately documented and will include a written description of the deficiency or violation.

6. Monitoring Report

A monitoring report will be prepared following each on-site or desk review. The report should be completed within three weeks of completion of the test work for the review and should include the following elements:

- A face page signed by the monitor(s) and the signature of supervisory-level staff or the executive director (applicable to on-site visits only);
- The dates of the review and areas covered during the review;
- A listing of findings, if applicable, that consists of a narrative description of the deficiency or violation noted; and
- For each finding, a recommendation which sets forth the most appropriate action to correct the deficiency or violation noted.

7. Corrective Action

Monitoring reports will be forwarded to the subawardee with a transmittal letter. If findings were noted in the report, the transmittal letter shall require a written corrective action plan from the subawardee. The corrective action plan shall be due from the subawardee within 14 to 45 days from the date of the report, depending on the number and/or severity of the findings.

8. Acceptance / Non-acceptance of Corrective Action

Acceptance or non-acceptance of the subawardee corrective action plan will be determined after consultation with the appropriate staff performing the monitoring and the SMW Workforce Director. Notification of the determination shall be provided to the subawardee within 30 working days of receipt of the proposed corrective action plan.

9. Follow-up Monitoring and Verification of Corrective Action

If necessary, follow-up monitoring reviews will be conducted as determined appropriate based on the nature and risk of the finding and the subawardee's response to the finding, and a determination will subsequently be made as to whether the corrective action measures taken were adequate to resolve the noted deficiencies.

10. Unannounced Visits

Unannounced visits of subawardees may be made at any time such visits are deemed necessary.

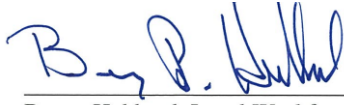
11. Monitoring Files

A separate file shall be maintained for each monitoring review. At a minimum, the files shall contain the following records:

- Notification of monitoring dates;
- Completed desk review instrument;
- Signed monitoring report;
- Completed monitoring instrument;
- Transmittal letter and, if applicable, request for a corrective action plan;
- Response from subawardee, when appropriate;
- Letter to subawardee accepting/rejecting corrective action; and
- Working paper file to include supporting documentation.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective February 1, 2018.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Benny Hubbard", is positioned above a horizontal line.

Benny Hubbard, Local Workforce Development Board Chair

This appendix presents the full text of SCMW Policy Number 21 as adopted, with the executed signature of the Local Workforce Development Board Chair reproduced from the original instrument. The annual monitoring schedule, desk review instrument, and monitoring instruments referenced in Section II.B are maintained by CMPDD and available for review.



Local Area Equal Opportunity Procedures

WIOA Complaint Procedure for Discrimination Complaints

South Central Mississippi Works • Revised 2024

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IS THE LAW

It is against the law for this recipient of federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases:

- Against any individual in the United States on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief; and
- Against any beneficiary of programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), on the basis of the beneficiary's citizenship/status as a lawfully-admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States, or his or her participation in any WIOA Title I financially-assisted program or activity.

The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas:

- Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I financially-assisted program or activity;
- Providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or
- Making employment decisions in the administration of or in connection with such a program or activity.

DEFINITIONS

A. Recipient — For the context of this form, recipient refers to any entity to which financial assistance under WIOA Title I is extended, and may be a WIN Job Center, Youth Provider, or Training Provider.

B. Discrimination Complaint — Complaints filed on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, political affiliation or belief.

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT

A. Filing Written Complaints

Discrimination complaints must be filed within 180 days of the alleged discrimination, and may be filed with a Local Administrative Entity, CMPDD, Service Provider, One-Stop Operator, or with the Civil Rights Center (CRC). Discrimination complaint processing procedures must be completed and a Notice of Final Action issued within 90 calendar days from the date the written complaint was filed.

B. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) — Service Provider Level

ADR is an alternative to filing a written complaint. It can be as informal as discussing an issue with a representative of the offending entity and agreeing on a resolution. It may involve a formal mediation process, such as having a neutral party (or a panel of neutral persons) decide a dispute after hearing each party's presentation of evidence and argument. You must agree in advance that the decision of the neutral party is to be final. A party to any agreement reached under a formal ADR process may file a complaint with the CRC in the event the agreement is breached.

C. Written Complaint – LWDA Level

1. If you do not choose ADR/mediation or the complaint is not settled through ADR, you must submit your complaint in writing to the recipient's Equal Opportunity Officer (EO) or the CRC. In the written presentation, you must provide your full name, current mailing address, home telephone number and social security number. You must identify the individual or entity that you allege is responsible for the discrimination, give a brief summary of the facts, grounds for the complaint, any other relevant material or information, and describe the corrective action or remedy sought.

2. You have the right to receive a Notice of Final Action within 90 calendar days of filing the written complaint.

3. You may file your complaint with the CRC within 30 calendar days from the date the Notice of Final Action is issued if: (a) you are not satisfied with the written decision, or (b) the Recipient failed to issue a Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the date on which the written complaint was filed.

A copy of the complaint and all related documentation must be sent to: Director, Civil Rights Center, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Room N-4123, Washington, D.C. 20210.

RETENTION AND CERTIFICATION

A copy of this document should be kept in a safe place for reference if the need arises. Also, a copy of this document will be placed in the participant's WIOA file folder or the employee's personnel folder.

This is to certify that these complaint procedures have been explained to me and that I understand my rights.

Participant/Employee Signature

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian (Youth under 18)

Date

This is to certify that I have explained the complaint procedure to the above individual(s).

Subgrantee Official's Signature

Date

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions concerning WIOA discrimination complaint procedures, you may contact:

LouSonya Woodland
 Central Mississippi Planning and Development District
 1020 Centre Pointe Boulevard, Pearl, MS 39208
 Phone: 601-981-1511 • Fax: 601-981-1515



Local Area Complaint Grievance Form

WIOA Grievance Procedure for Non-Discrimination Grievances

South Central Mississippi Works • Revised March 2024

RIGHT TO FILE A GRIEVANCE

- As an applicant, participant, WIOA staff person or other interested person, you have the right, without fear of interference, coercion, restraint, discrimination or reprisal, to present a grievance or appeal.

DEFINITIONS

- A. Grievance** — Program grievances (or programmatic issues) related to WIOA-funded programs or activities based on grounds other than discrimination.
- B. Subgrantee, contractor, provider** — For the context of this form, these terms refer to the applicable Service Provider funded by or through the CMPDD for the South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Area, and may be a WIN Job Center, Youth Provider, or Training Provider.
- C. Recipient** — For the context of this form, recipient refers to the CMPDD.
- D. Governor** — For the context of this form, Governor refers to the state agency designated to administer WIOA programs, the Office of Grant Management division of the Mississippi Department of Employment Security.

PROCESSING GRIEVANCES

Alleged grievances must be filed at the Subgrantee level within one year of occurrence. If you are dissatisfied with the informal resolution, you have the right to request a Formal Resolution by submitting a written grievance, have a hearing, and receive a written decision within sixty (60) days after filing the initial grievance. If you are dissatisfied with the written decision, you may file an appeal at the State Level.

HOW TO FILE A GRIEVANCE

A. Step 1 (Informal Resolution — Local Level)

You may request an informal meeting with your supervisor, counselor, or instructor and indicate the general nature of your grievance. The grievance may be settled informally in a prompt manner at or near the place of occurrence. Every effort shall be made to reach a settlement in this manner within ten (10) calendar days of the request.

B. Step 2 (Formal Resolution — Local Level)

If the grievance is not settled informally, you must submit the grievance in writing to the Recipient CMPDD within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the decision from the Subgrantee Level. In the written request you must provide your full name, your current mailing address, home telephone number and social security number. You should provide a brief summary of the facts, grounds for the complaint including any relevant materials and information, and describe the corrective action or remedy sought. You have the right to a hearing on your grievance, but you must request that hearing in the written grievance document. The written request should be submitted to the CMPDD in a way that provides

proof of receipt. You will be given an opportunity for a hearing within fifteen (15) calendar days of filing the written grievance. The CMPDD will provide you written notice of the date, time and location of the hearing, the manner in which it will be conducted, and the issues to be decided.

The CMPDD will provide you with the following opportunities:

- To withdraw the request for the hearing in writing before the meeting;
- To request rescheduling of the hearing for good cause;
- To be represented by an attorney or other representative of your choice;
- To bring witnesses and documentary evidence;
- To have any record or document relevant to the issues produced by its custodian when such record or document is kept by or for the recipient's Subgrantee;
- To question any witness or party;
- To have an impartial hearing officer or officers; and
- The CMPDD shall make a written determination regarding the grievance within sixty (60) calendar days of the initial filing of the grievance and shall send copies of the determination to the aggrieved party and Subgrantee via certified mail.

C. Step 3 (State Level)

You may file an appeal with the Office of Grant Management (OGM) division of the Mississippi Department of Employment Security within fifteen (15) calendar days of the CMPDD decision if: (1) you are not satisfied with the CMPDD written decision, or (2) no decision was reached within sixty (60) calendar days of the initial complaint with the local area.

Should you choose to appeal to the OGM, a copy of the grievance and all related documentation must be sent to the Office of Grant Management, P.O. Box 1699, Jackson, MS 39215-1699. The OGM shall make a written determination regarding the grievance within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the appeal and shall send copies to the CMPDD, the aggrieved party, and the Subgrantee.

D. Appeal to the Secretary of Labor

Should the OGM fail to provide a decision within sixty (60) calendar days of the receipt of the appeal, or you are not satisfied with the written decision, you may then request from the Secretary of Labor a determination whether reasonable cause exists to believe that the WIOA or its regulations have been violated. Such a request must be filed at the address below no later than sixty (60) days from the date on which you should have received a decision from the OGM.

Regional Administrator, U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, 1371 Peachtree St., N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30367.

RETENTION AND CERTIFICATION

A copy of this document should be kept in a safe place for reference if the need arises. Also, a copy of this document will be placed in the participant's WIOA file folder or the employee's personnel folder.

This is to certify that these grievance procedures have been explained to me and that I understand my rights.

Participant/Employee Signature

Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian (Youth under 18)

Date

This is to certify that I have explained the grievance procedure to the above named individual(s).

Subgrantee Official's Signature

Date

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions concerning WIOA grievance procedures, you may contact:

LouSonya Woodland

Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

1020 Centre Pointe Boulevard, Pearl, MS 39208

Phone: 601-981-1511 • Fax: 601-981-1515



Local Area Supportive Services Policy

South Central Mississippi Works • Policy Number 4 • Revised July 2015

Supportive Services Policy for Youth (Out of School), Adults and Dislocated Workers

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

I. INTRODUCTION

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act allows funds allocated to a local area to be used for the provision of supportive services to out-of-school youth, adults, and dislocated workers. Further, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act recognizes the need to assist participants in obtaining services and training and in retaining employment. Consequently, WIOA funds may be used to provide needed supportive services to participants when the needed assistance is not available through non-WIOA sources. Supportive services may include assistance with transportation, child or dependent care, housing, and other necessities required for participation in WIOA services.

Supportive services are available to participants ONLY when included in budgets that have been specifically approved by the Local Workforce Development Board and the Board of Commissioners. When approved, the following criteria will be applicable.

II. SPECIFICATIONS

Determination of Supportive Services Needs

WIOA identifies supportive services as services that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under this law. At WIOA registration and at regular intervals thereafter, WIN Job Center staff shall review the participant's needs to determine whether supportive services are necessary. The first option shall always be to refer the participant to other agencies or programs providing the needed services through non-WIOA sources.

Eligibility for Supportive Services

WIOA-funded supportive services shall be available to participants only while enrolled in WIOA.

Veteran's Preference

Should a priority of service become necessary for determining allocation of Supportive Services, veterans as described by the Jobs For Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288) will receive priority status when all eligibility and competitive factors required by law are met and equal. Veterans shall receive priority over other groups when preferential factors are optional and/or do not specifically mandate that a particular group be served before another.

Authorized Supportive Services

WIOA-funded supportive services shall be limited to the following:

1. Test fees or costs related to licensure and/or certification resulting from completion of an approved training program.
2. Test fees or costs related to licensure and/or certification as needed in order to obtain or retain employment. The individual must be enrolled in WIOA; however, it is not a requirement that the individual was or is enrolled in ITA training.

3. Transportation assistance may be made available to participants enrolled in WIOA-approved MI-BEST training programs provided that SMW has contracted with the applicable community college to provide such assistance. This transportation assistance for MI-BEST participants is allowable in the form of pre-paid gas cards or public transportation passes only when non-WIOA sources are not available; the maximum to be paid is limited to \$25.00 per week while the individual is attending training.
4. Other Supportive Services: Other supportive service assistance may be authorized by SMW staff in extenuating circumstances related to an approved training program. The request for such assistance, including a detailed explanation of the extenuating circumstances, must be presented to SMW staff for review and approval. Further approval by the LWDB and BOC, as noted above, will be necessary before any payments may be provided.
5. Emergency Support Services: Should a layoff or business closure result in a significant negative impact on a local labor market, SMW staff may authorize Emergency Support Services for a period not to exceed 90 days.

III. REQUIREMENTS (DOCUMENTATION)

Documentation shall be maintained in individual participant files to support the provision of supportive services. All other reasonably available sources must be exhausted prior to any expenditure of WIOA funds. At a minimum, the participant files shall include the following types of documentation:

- Staff notes determining individual need for all supportive services; and
- Staff notes showing why non-WIOA resources are unable or insufficient to meet the participant's need; and
- A log tracking disbursement of all non-cash supportive services.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective July 1, 2015.

Approved by the Local Workforce Development Board.



Balfour Lipscomb, Chairman

This appendix presents the full text of SCMW Policy Number 4 as adopted, with the executed signature of the Local Workforce Development Board Chairman reproduced from the original instrument.

SOUTH CENTRAL
MISSISSIPPI WORKS

APPENDIX P

Local Area Needs-Related Payment Policy

Not Applicable

South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Area

Needs-related payments are a form of financial assistance authorized — but not required — under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. WIOA Section 134(d)(3) provides that local funds *may* be used to provide needs-related payments to adults and dislocated workers who are unemployed and do not qualify for, or have ceased to qualify for, unemployment compensation, for the purpose of enabling such individuals to participate in training services. The implementing regulations at 20 CFR 680.930 through 680.970 likewise define needs-related payments as a permissive supportive service that a local area *may* elect to provide, subject to eligibility and payment-level requirements established under 20 CFR 680.940 through 680.960.

Because the provision of needs-related payments is discretionary with the local area, the South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Board, in partnership with the Board of Commissioners, has elected not to provide needs-related payments in the South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Area. Accordingly, no Needs-Related Payments policy has been adopted, and this appendix is designated Not Applicable.

This election does not diminish the support available to participants. Financial barriers to training participation are addressed through the SCMW Supportive Services Policy (Appendix O), through referral to Combined Plan partner programs and community resources for needs that cannot be met with WIOA funds, and through coordination with agencies administering income-support programs, consistent with WIOA Section 134(d)(2) and 20 CFR 680.900 through 680.920. The LWDB reviews its policies annually and retains the discretion to adopt a needs-related payments policy in the future should labor-market conditions or participant needs warrant.

References: WIOA § 134(d)(3), 29 U.S.C. § 3174(d)(3); 20 CFR 680.930–680.970; SCMW Local Plan 2024–2028 (2026 Modification), Section G.



Local Area Incumbent Worker Training Policy

SCMW Policy Number 25 – Incumbent Worker Policy • July 2021

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

I. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

Incumbent worker training (IWT) under WIOA provides both workers and employers with the opportunity to build and maintain a quality workforce and increase both participants' and companies' competitiveness. Work-based training and upskilling is designed to ensure that employees of a company can acquire the skills necessary to retain employment and advance within the company, or to acquire the skills necessary to avert a layoff. Incumbent worker training is responsive to the special requirements of an employer or a group of employers for the purposes of delivering training to:

1. Help avert potential layoffs of employees, or
2. Increase the skill levels of employees for promotional opportunities within the company and create backfill opportunities for other employees.

II. REQUIREMENTS

A. Incumbent Worker Definition

An "incumbent worker" is defined a worker who is:

- Employed,
- Meets the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requirements for an employer-employee relationship, **and**
- Has an established employment history with the employer for 6-months or more, with the following exception:

Exception: In the event that the incumbent worker training is being provided to a cohort of employees, not every employee in the cohort must have an established employment history for 6-months or more as long as a majority of those employees in the cohort and being trained do meet the employment requirement.

B. Participant Eligibility

To receive IWT, an incumbent worker must meet WIOA eligibility criteria and be enrolled in WIOA.

Incumbent worker training can also be used for underemployed workers – e.g., workers who would prefer full-time work but are working part-time. The use of this strategy may focus on increasing skills for underemployed frontline workers to advance workers to more skilled positions with the same employer or industry sector leading to an increase in earnings through more work hours or an increase in pay.

C. Employer Eligibility

The Southcentral MS Works (SMW) Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) will determine an employer's eligibility for participating in IWT based on the following factors which help to evaluate whether training would increase the competitiveness of the employees and/or employers:

- The characteristics of the individuals in the program (e.g., "individuals with barriers to employment" (WIOA section 3(24)));
- The relationship of the training to the competitiveness of the individual and the employer;

- Other factors may include:
 - the number of employees participating in the training;
 - the employees' advancement opportunities along with wages and benefits (both pre- and post-training earnings);
 - existence of other training and advancement opportunities provided by the employer;
 - credentials and skills gained as a result of the training;
 - layoffs averted as a result of the training;
 - utilization as part of a larger sector and/or career pathway strategy; and/or
 - employer size.

D. Use of Training Funds

The SMW LWDA can use up to 20 percent of its adult and dislocated worker allocations to provide for the federal share of the cost of providing Incumbent Worker training (see WIOA section 134(d)(4)). Generally, the employer will select and procure the training provider, however, the SMW LWDA may help identify training providers, such as those on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

The SMW LWDA may fund up to 90% of the cost of incumbent worker training which is considered the Federal share of the cost, based on the criteria indicated below. Participating employers must pay the non-Federal share of the cost of providing training to their incumbent workers.

Participating employers must pay a percentage of the cost of training per the following guidelines:

- 10 percent of the cost of training for employers with 50 or less full-time employees; or
- 25 percent of the cost of training for employers with 51-100 full-time employees; **or**
- 50 percent of the cost for employers with more than 100 full-time employees.

The non-Federal share provided by an employer participating in the program may include the amount of the wages paid by the employer to a worker while the worker is attending an IWT program. The employer may provide its share in cash or in-kind. Funds may be used to support training by a single employer or a group of employers. Employers must show a commitment to retain or avert the layoffs of the incumbent worker(s) trained.

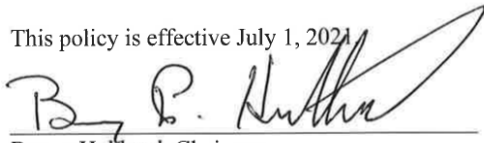
IWT will be provided under the guidelines applicable to WIOA funded On-the-Job Training, using the reimbursement percentages contained in this policy. The employer will be reimbursed at the conclusion of the IWT. No reimbursement will be made for individuals who do not complete the training.

E. Data Collection and Participant Tracking

Incumbent worker participants who only receive Incumbent Worker Training and are not co-enrolled will not be included in the WIOA performance accountability calculations but will be reported in the primary indicators of performance (employed second quarter after exit, employed fourth quarter after exit, median earnings, measurable skills gain, and credential attainment). The exit date for an incumbent worker will be the last date of training as indicated in the training contract.

III. APPROVAL

This policy is effective July 1, 2021


 Benny Hubbard, Chairman
 Local Workforce Development Board

This appendix presents the full text of the policy as adopted, with the executed signature(s) reproduced from the original instrument.



Local Area Transitional Jobs Policy (Internship)

SCMW Policy Number 17 – Internship Policy • Revised May 2023

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to detail the requirements and eligibility for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Internship program. The goal of the internship program is to help eligible individuals gain practical work history and obtain job-specific skills during a prescribed period of paid employment with the goal of continuing in unsubsidized employment with the employer following the internship period.

No internship shall be established unless there is reasonable expectation of long-term unsubsidized employment following the internship employment period, except in the case of In-School Youth who are participating in an Internship while attending school. SMW staff reserve the right to reject any occupation or worksite request that is not in the best interest of the participant or of the Internship program.

Participant Eligibility

Participants must meet WIOA eligibility and be enrolled into WIOA in accordance with SMW Policy. Individuals considered for the internship program must be in one of the following categories:

- An individual, age 17 and older, who meets Adult or Dislocated Worker eligibility criteria and 1) is ready for employment; 2) possesses some degree of appropriate job-related and basic skills(s) necessary for success on the job, AND 3) is prepared to commit to employment.
- An individual, age 17 – 24, who meets Out-of-School Youth eligibility criteria and who 1) is ready for employment; 2) possesses some degree of appropriate job-related and basic skill(s) necessary for success on the job; AND 3) is prepared to commit to employment.
- An individual, age 17 – 21, who meets In-School Youth eligibility criteria, has completed at least one semester of post-secondary career tech education and 1) is ready for full-time employment or in need of part-time employment; 2) possesses some degree of appropriate job-related and basic skill(s) necessary for success on the job; AND 3) is prepared to commit to employment

Employer Eligibility

Any employer who offers a part-time internship of at least 15 hours per week but not more than 40 hours per week AND offers reasonable assurance of full-time employment upon completion of the internship period of employment is eligible to participate. Employers must be allowed the opportunity to interview the prospective intern and prospective interns must meet the employer's qualifications and application requirements. Employers must agree to the terms and conditions outlined in the Internship Worksite Agreement.

Public, private and non-profit worksites are allowable, provided that they meet other employer eligibility requirements; however, state agencies are not allowable Internship worksites. WIN Job Centers, salons, spas, childcare facilities, grocery stores, retail, and fast-food establishments are not allowable worksites, regardless of the occupation. In addition, there may be other worksites/occupations that are not acceptable to the entity responsible for paying interns' wages due to Workers' Compensation prohibitions.

The worksite supervisor has the job of instructing the participant on the work to be done and how to do it in the best and safest way. Participants are not allowed to perform any job that is unhealthy, unsafe, illegal, or dangerous during the period of internship.

The worksite employer is responsible for providing any items necessary for job performance such as tools, desktop supplies, computer, etc. Participants should not be required to provide these type items in order to work during the period of internship.

Employer Priority

Priority will be given to Internship opportunities in occupations and with employers that are within the SMW targeted sector industries of Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics in accordance with the SMW Sector Strategy Plan.

Employer/Worksite Prohibition

Participants cannot climb on roofs, operate lawn mowers, power tools, or any heavy equipment; carry firearms, or perform any other job that is unhealthy, unsafe, illegal, or dangerous (unless they have been properly trained and certified) during the period of internship.

Jobs that are not allowable internship occupations include grocery store checkers and baggers, stock persons, retail associates, child-care workers/teachers, jobs dependent on commission, fast food workers, janitors/housekeepers, salon and spa workers, or any other type occupation or position that does not serve to fulfill the goals of the program by providing long-term career employment at a self-sufficient wage level. SMW staff will review each occupation/job description and worksite for acceptability to ensure that it meets the intended purpose of the program. Employers must provide a job description for the position to be filled by the intern.

Parameters of Internship Program

Anticipated maximum duration for an Internship is 320 hours of employment. Participants must work at least 15 hours per week and cannot exceed 40 hours per week.

The wage to be paid to the participant during the internship employment must be equal to the wage that the employer would ordinarily pay a new hire in the same level position, OR according to an internship job description and wage level determined by the business which maybe different than a regular employee. The minimum allowable wage rate shall match the existing starting wage offered by the employer for the selected positions, with the maximum being \$20.00 per hour. Internship wages may be increased with prior CMPDD approval. Appropriate taxes and withholdings shall apply to the gross amount paid to the intern.

Any employer who has indicated that the intern will not be retained, whose wage will be reduced at employees will not be allowed to continue to utilize interns.

SMW has contracted with a service provider who is responsible for the payment of wages to Internship participants. The service provider is considered to be the employer of record. The service provider may assist with marketing the program to employers and recruiting employers for participation in the Internship Program; however, the primary responsibility for marketing and recruiting of worksite employers rests with the SMW Internship program operator, not the employer of record.

The employer of record is responsible for determining worksite and occupation allowability and for developing any appropriate worksite agreements that are necessary. The employer of record shall maintain Workers' Compensation coverage for participants during the period of internship.

An internship may be combined with On-the-Job Training for the same individual ONLY if the OJT is with the same employer as the Internship and ONLY if the occupation is within the SMW targeted industry sectors of healthcare manufacturing and transportation and ONLY with case-by-case approval of SMW staff. An internship may NOT be combined with On-the-Job Training for the same individual if it does not meet this criteria unless specifically approved by SMW staff.

Conflict of Interest

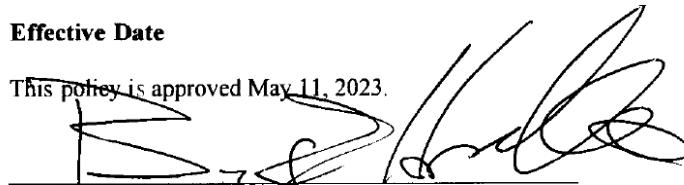
Individuals or representatives of organizations entrusted with public funds are prohibited from receiving any personal or professional benefit from the award or expenditure of such funds. Individuals or representatives of organizations entrusted with public funds as referenced above, are understood to include a Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) member. Internships may not be provided with any employer whose representative is a current member of the SMW LWDB. This prohibition applies during the LWDB member's term and for one year after the member's term expires. This does not apply to representatives of any public entity/government.

A business may not utilize Internships for any family member, whether related by blood or marriage, of the business's owners, partners, board of directors or a direct supervisor, unless the intern's direct supervisor is an individual who is unrelated to the intern. There must be an arm's length relationship between the intern and the supervisor.

Effective Date

Effective Date

This policy is approved May 11, 2023.



Benny Hubbard, Chairman
SMW Local Workforce Development Board

This appendix presents the full text of the policy as adopted, with the executed signature(s) reproduced from the original instrument.



On-the-Job Training (OJT) Policy

SCMW Policy Number 9 – On-the-Job Training Policy • Revised May 2023

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

I. INTRODUCTION

On-the-Job Training (OJT) is defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as training, provided by an employer to a paid employee while engaged in productive work in a job. OJT shall be allowed in accordance with the following criteria:

1. training must provide knowledge or skills to the employee essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;
2. reimbursement to the employer will be provided in an amount not to exceed 50 percent of the regular (not overtime or other premium rate) wage rate of the employee, in consideration of the extraordinary costs of providing training and additional supervision and as compensation for lower productivity related to the OJT;
3. WIOA reimbursement to the employer shall not exceed \$15.00 per hour regardless of the employer's compensation rate to the employee;
4. reimbursement to the employer will occur ONLY after completion of training as stated in the training outline AND after an additional 40 hours of retention of the participant; no interim or partial reimbursements to employers will be made;
5. total reimbursement to the employer shall not exceed \$30,000 during any program year without prior approval of Southcentral Mississippi Works (SMW) staff;
6. training shall be limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the employee is being trained, taking into account the skills requirements of the occupation, the academic level and prior work experience of the employee, and the Individual Employment Plan of the employee;
7. training must include a good faith expectation of continued permanent employment of the individual upon successful completion of the training;
8. training agreements must be written for a minimum of 35 hours per week;
9. participants' starting pay shall match the existing starting wage offered by the employer for the selected positions. OJT wages may be increased with prior CMPDD approval
10. OJT is available to WIOA-eligible Adults, Dislocated Workers and Out-of-School Youth, ages 18 and older, who meet the eligibility requirements of WIOA and SMW.

II. SPECIFICATIONS

SMW will utilize OJT to assist employees to learn the skills necessary to adequately perform the job for which they are hired.

In addition to the requirements and limitations stated in WIOA and its regulations, the following local area requirements shall apply to the use of OJT.

Industry Sector Emphasis:

11. Priority for funds expended for OJT services within the SMW local area will be placed on those targeted industry sectors identified in the SMW Sector Strategy Plan.

OJT for Current Employees:

12. Incumbent worker training is allowable ONLY for occupations within the SMW targeted industry sectors and ONLY in accordance with Policy # 25 and ONLY with prior approval by Central Mississippi Planning and Development District (CMPDD) on a case-by-case basis.

OJT for Former Employees:

OJT may be used to train new employees who previously worked for the employer only when the following conditions are met:

13. The former employee has not worked for the employer for the past six months immediately preceding the new employment; and
14. The former employee is being hired for a different job or occupation which requires substantially different skills from the prior employment or where the employer has introduced new technologies, production or service procedures since the employee worked for that employer previously.

OJT for Temporary Employees

Workers initially placed with an employer through a temporary employment agency may be trained under OJT training only:

15. When they have been permanently hired by the worksite employer and are paid directly by that employer;
16. When additional training (beyond that acquired during the temporary employment period) is needed to adequately perform the job for which the employee is being permanently hired. Only the number of hours equal to the difference between the total training hours that would be allowed for that occupation and the number of hours the individual has already been working during the temporary employment period shall be allowed; and,
17. When the job for which the employee is permanently hired results in a wage increase for the employee over that which they were paid by the temporary employment agency.

OJT with State Agencies

OJT may not be provided for employees of state agencies, regardless of whether the agency is funded by state or federal funds.

Conflict of Interest

Individuals or representatives of organizations entrusted with public funds are prohibited from receiving any personal or professional benefit from the award or expenditure of such funds. Individuals or representatives of organizations entrusted with public funds, as referenced above, are understood to include a Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) member. OJT may not be provided for any employer whose representative is a current member of the SMW LWDB. This prohibition applies during the LWDB member's term and for one year after the member's term expires. This does not apply to representatives of any public entity/government.

A business may not utilize OJT for any family member, whether related by blood or marriage, of the business's owners, partners, board of directors or a direct supervisor, unless the intern's direct supervisor is an individual who is unrelated to the intern. There must be an arm's length relationship between the OJT trainee and the supervisor.

Veteran's Preference

Veterans as described by the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288) will receive priority status when all eligibility and competitive factors required by law are met and equal.

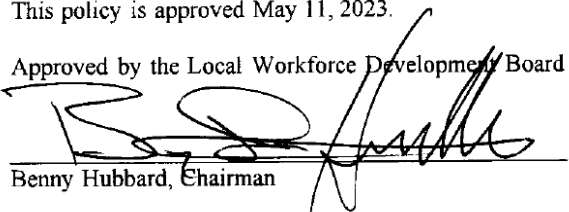
Persons with Disabilities Preference

Persons with disabilities will receive priority status when all eligibility and competitive factors required by law are met and equal.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is approved May 11, 2023.

Approved by the Local Workforce Development Board


Benny Hubbard, Chairman

This appendix presents the full text of the policy as adopted, with the executed signature(s) reproduced from the original instrument.



Local Area Priority of Service Policy

SCMW Policy Number 19 – Adult Priority of Service Policy • May 2023

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

I. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines to prioritize WIOA Title I adult funds as described and required in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). TEGL 3-15 states that under WIOA, priority must be provided regardless of the level of funding, for adult participants receiving WIOA career services described in Sec. 134 (2)(A)(xii) and training assistance.

It is the intent of the SMW to implement these guidelines so as not to preclude providing career and training services to individuals who are not recipients of public assistance or otherwise considered low-income adults or individuals who are not basic skills deficient.

II. Priority of Service Guidelines

Priority for funds expended for all training services within the SMW local area will be placed on those targeted industry sectors identified in the SMW Sector Strategy Plan.

The SMW will prioritize services to those adults who most need assistance, with particular emphasis on low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all DOL-funded job training programs, which include WIOA programs. However, as described in TEGL 10-09, when programs are statutorily required to provide priority for a particular group of individuals, such as the WIOA priority described above, priority must be provided in the following order:

1. First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds.
2. Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds, including persons with disabilities.
3. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
4. Fourth, priority populations established by the Governor and or Local Workforce Development Board.
5. Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

Note: Military earnings or allowances are not to be included when calculating income for veterans or transitioning service members for this priority, in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4213.

III. Rating Scale

The system designed for use in the SMW counties shall consist of a simple rating scale where those individuals who seek WIOA career services described in Sec. 134 (2)(A)(xii) and training assistance under WIOA Title I adult funding are assigned points based on their current circumstances.

A. This determination is to be made at the date and time that ~~career or~~ training services are requested once remaining available Adult training funds drop to 20% of budgetary allocation. B. A person may request a new determination every two weeks, if necessary. C. Separate determinations must be made when the same individual requests career services and then requests training services at a later date.

The scale follows below:

Characteristic or Circumstance Points given if "yes" answer

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TANF Recipient 5

Requested training relates to an SMW Sector Strategy industry 5

SNAP Recipient 3

For the most recent six month period, family income is at or below poverty line or 70% of lower living standard income level 3

Basic Skills Deficient 3

Homeless 3

Disabled individual whose own income does not meet the requirements of #3 above 3

IV. Scoring

Once remaining available Adult training funds drop to 20% of budgetary allocation, administering agency staff will be responsible for completing the rating scale for all adults requesting WIOA Title I adult funded career services listed in Sec. 134 (2)(A)(xii) or training level services within their county(ies) of service.

A. Those persons who score five (5) or more points on this scale shall be given top priority for these services. They shall be given top priority and immediately moved to the front of any waiting lists that may exist at the time. B. Those persons who score at least three (3) points but less than five (5) points shall be immediately placed on any waiting lists that may exist at the time after those persons who have been given top priority but ahead of all persons having been assigned no priority. C. All placements for priority will be made on a "first-come, first-served" basis for those persons receiving equal points. D. If no waiting list exists, those persons who receive any points on the rating scale must immediately receive appropriate WIOA Title I adult career or training services.

V. Documentation

A copy of all completed rating scale forms must be placed in the appropriate individual's file, be scanned to WebXtender, and be available for monitoring review.

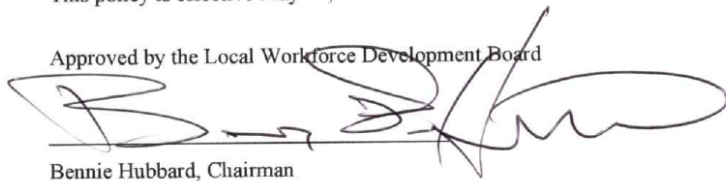
VI. Service to Non-Rated Individuals

These procedures for determining priority of service do not limit services to specific groups but give priority to low-income individuals, public assistance, recipients, and basic skills deficient individuals while allowing service to other individuals who meet eligibility requirements.

VII. Effective Date

This policy is effective May 11, 2023.

Approved by the Local Workforce Development Board



Bennie Hubbard, Chairman



Local Area Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy

SCMW Policy Number 2 – Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) Policy • Revised May 2023

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

I. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Federal Regulations, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) may be established for eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth to finance training services. ITAs offer WIOA-eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth access to training they need to obtain permanent employment and achieve self-sufficiency. ITAs should be used when an individual needs specific training to achieve his/her employment goal. This policy provides guidelines for administering ITAs.

II. SPECIFICATIONS FOR ITAs

Training services may be made available to employed and unemployed adults, dislocated workers and youth who have met the eligibility requirements and have been determined unable to obtain or retain employment providing a suitable or self-sufficient wage (See SMW Policy #3) through other services. Individuals may be approved for an ITA to purchase approved training programs offered by eligible training providers which are included on the Mississippi statewide WIOA Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) as compiled and maintained by the Office of Grant Management (OGM) of the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES). ITAs are subject to the following conditions:

A. Staff of the administering agency shall consult with the participant regarding his her training needs and desires. This consultation should include a review or assessment of the participant's interests, aptitudes, skills, and needs and must include a determination of WIOA eligibility. The participant must complete the SMW ITA application process and thereafter may be approved for an occupational training course listed on the Mississippi ETPL that is likely to result in employment in the SMW area (or an area where the trainee will relocate) at a wage rate suitable to and consistent with the participant's needs, skills and earning capacity. Participants may be approved only for training in which they certify a commitment to attend classes, complete training and cooperate with follow-up requirements

Participants who qualify for an ITA but desire training in an occupation not included on the ETPL must document actual employment vacancies in the SMW area for which completion of the training would qualify him her. The participant also must document that the wage rate for the position is adequate to meet the participant's needs and justify the training cost. The training provider must then submit to SMW all information required for inclusion on the ETPL and be approved by both SMW and the MDES OGM before an ITA can be granted. SMW will not certify to the statewide list any in-state training programs outside its 17-county area.

B. WIOA ITA total funding for an occupational training program is limited to:

1. A maximum of \$2,500 for a short-term course of training that is 6 months or less in duration as defined for a full-time student by the training provider.
2. A maximum of \$7,000 for an entire course of study, not to exceed a maximum of three total semesters; or five total semesters for students enrolled in MI-BEST Career Pathway programs or programs within the SMW targeted industry sectors of healthcare, manufacturing, and transportation/logistics SMW reserves the right to increase ITAs, with preapproval, in amount and duration in certain circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

3. The first semester cost of a multi-semester course must be borne by the student, with the exception of MI-BEST Career Pathway program trainees or youth previously or currently enrolled in non-training WIOA or ARPA funded services..
4. A maximum \$4,200 for Truck Driving/CDL.

WIOA ITA funding is dedicated to qualified adults, dislocated workers and youth who are unable to obtain assistance from other sources to pay for their training or require assistance beyond that available from other sources. Staff of the administering agency, in coordination with the participant, training provider, and partner agencies, must consider the availability of non-WIOA funds in developing the training plan. All participants seeking an ITA must apply for a PELL grant (except when the training program selected is not eligible for PELL participation) and all other known available financial assistance. No fees will be paid by WIOA for the processing of PELL or other financial assistance. Staff of the administering agency should document this coordination in the participant's employment plan or service strategy. No WIOA funds will be used to pay for training costs covered by any other funding source, including PELL.

The participant must agree to provide attendance information, grades and or progress reports while enrolled in WIOA-approved training activities or agree to allow the training provider to release such information to the administering agency. Upon completion of training, the participant must agree to provide or authorize the provision of documentation of completion of training. When hired, the participant must agree to provide the name of employer and wage salary information to the administering agency. The participant must also agree to participate in follow-up activities after completion of training to determine employment retention and wages at designated intervals.

No Out-of-School Youth will be awarded an ITA that does not result in the attainment of an acceptable credential as described by State Policy and USDOL regulations.

Participants should be provided maximum choice in selecting a training program and training provider from the state-maintained approved list.

An ITA SHALL be denied for the following reasons:

5. The ITA cost exceeds the above-stated maximum amounts, and the participant has no resources from which to pay the cost of the training over and above the amount paid by WIOA.
6. The participant, whether adult, dislocated worker or youth, has not met the required SMW eligibility criteria, has not indicated existing skills at the level indicated as that necessary to succeed in the selected occupation.
7. If there are no or a limited number of employment opportunities available in the area in the participant's desired training occupation.
8. The participant is unlikely to succeed in training based on an in-depth or objective assessment of needs or abilities as documented in the case notes.
9. The participant is unlikely to succeed in training based on staff assessment of the individual's personal circumstances.
10. The training is unlikely to result in stable employment at an income level consistent with the participant's needs, skills and earning capacity.
11. The participant has previously received WIA or WIOA funded ITA training. (MI- BEST program participants or participants receiving training in any of the SMW targeted sector industries may receive multiple ITAs for the various levels of training provided they follow the same career pathway.)
12. The training being requested is the first semester or requisite course of a total program of more than one semester or course in duration. This does not apply to MI-BEST Career Pathway programs or to youth previously or currently enrolled in non-training WIOA or ARPA funded services.
13. The participant or training provider refuses to comply with reasonable requirements and conditions regarding enrollment, payments, follow up and information sharing.

14. The participant does not meet the entrance requirements for the specified training program.
15. The selected course of training results in a singular certification in CNA, or if the selected course of training is cosmetology, phlebotomy, barbering and related; manicuring and related or massage and related. NOTE: Training in CNA and phlebotomy is ONLY allowable as a part of an overall career pathway that leads to a more inclusive, higher-wage certification such as CMA (Certified Medical Assistant) or better.
16. The ITA cost requested to be paid for a participant includes items other than tuition, books and required fees. (See exceptions to this item applicable to MI-BEST or SMW targeted sector industry training.)
17. The participant refuses to apply for PELL assistance.
18. The course is conducted online only without classroom oversight and/or proctored exams.

An ITA MAY be denied for the following reasons:

19. The individual already possesses one or more post-secondary degree(s). ITA training for an individual who already possesses one or more post-secondary degree(s) requires approval by SMW on a case-by-case basis.
20. The ITA being requested is not a part of the participant's career path as documented in the case notes.

*Note: An ITA may not be refused solely because a training program is offered outside the local area.

An ITA may be revoked or suspended if at any time during the training the participant is not meeting the criteria for successful performance as established by the training provider or as determined acceptable by SMW.

Southcentral Mississippi Works reserves the right to establish performance standards for training providers and individual training programs which are more restrictive than those imposed by the State

III. MI-BEST CAREER PATHWAY, MSFA, AND WORK-BASED LEARNING RELATED TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

MI-BEST Career Pathway

The design and delivery of MI-BEST Career Pathway Programs available from the state's community colleges offers participants the optimum opportunity for success in an in-demand career pathway. The following criteria/exceptions are applicable to MI-BEST participants.

The requirement that the cost of the first semester must be borne by the participant DOES NOT apply to MI-BEST participants or to youth previously or currently enrolled in non-training WIOA or ARPA funded services.

Multiple ITAs will be issued for MI-BEST participants for the MI-BEST Essential Skills course, the MI-BEST Career Certificate course; the MI-BEST Technical Certificate course; and the MI-BEST Associate of Applied Science Degree course.

Approved costs for MI-BEST participants include tuition, books, fees, tools, supplies, uniforms, certification costs and any other required costs.

All other ITA requirements criteria apply to MI-BEST participants.

MS State Fire Academy

MSFA (Mississippi State Fire Academy) courses are designed to train both persons new to the field of firefighting and those seeking upward mobility within their departments. The following criteria apply to MSFA participants:

- The firefighter applicant must be an employee of a city or county in the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Area.

- Applicants must have a signed letter from their fire chief stating they are a full-time employee.
- The ITA will cover the cost of tuition, books and fees only. No travel, meals or lodging cost is allowed.
- There is no limitation on the number of courses (ITAs) issued to any one individual nor is there a limitation on the number of individuals who may be awarded an ITA; however, funding is subject to availability at the time of application.
- The ITA applicant will be given an award letter by the WIJC staff to be taken to the MSFA as proof they have been approved to receive an ITA.

Work-based Learning Related Technical Instruction (RTI)

RTI includes required courses and technical training for apprenticeships, non-registered apprenticeships (industry-recognized apprenticeships), and other types of work-based training programs that combine work experience with technical or classroom study courses. This type of training is designed for people new to the industry and those seeking upward mobility within their company. The requirement that the cost of the first semester of coursework must be borne by the participant DOES NOT apply to RTI participants or to youth previously or currently enrolled in non-training WIOA or ARPA funded services.

The following criteria apply to Work-based Learning RTI Programs:

- The program must obtain approval from the SMW workforce area.
- The program must combine work experience and technical or classroom instruction designed to develop useful job skills in individuals entering the workforce or pursuing additional training for upward mobility within a company
- The program must be listed on the ETPL.
- The program must prepare participants for a license, credential, certificate, or degree.

The following criteria apply to RTI participants:

- The participant must meet WIOA eligibility requirements.
- The participant must be employed by industry in the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Area.
- Participants must have a signed letter from their employer stating the following:
 - The participant is employed by the company.
 - Successful completion of the RTI instruction will result in opportunities for upward mobility for the participant within the company.
- There is no limitation on the number of courses (ITAs) issued to any one individual nor is there a limitation on the number of individuals who may be awarded an ITA; however, funding is subject to availability at the time of application.
- The ITA applicant will be given an award letter by the WJC staff to be taken to the Industry as Proof that they have been approved to receive an ITA.

IV. SMW TARGETED INDUSTRY SECTOR PROGRAMS

The SMW defines in-demand sectors in the SMW Local Workforce Development Strategic Plan. This plan is developed every four years and modified every two years. . Implementation of the plan is critical to meet industry needs and to connect individuals with training and employment with these in-demand occupations. The following criteria/exceptions are applicable to training within these targeted industry sectors.

- Multiple ITAs may be issued for individuals wishing to advance along a career pathway within the targeted industry sectors.
- Approved costs for participants receiving training within the targeted industry sectors include tuition, books, fees, tools, supplies, uniforms, certifications and any other required costs.
- All other ITA requirements/criteria apply to training within the targeted industry sectors.

V. PRIORITY OF SERVICE

Past history indicates that employment and training allocations are sufficient to serve approximately 3% to 5% of economically disadvantaged individuals. Consequently, it is assumed that WIOA allocations will be insufficient to meet the total demand for assistance. Southcentral Mississippi Works will prioritize ITA awards to those adults, dislocated workers and youth who most need assistance according to the following criteria:

- A. The individual is receiving a form of public assistance or has income below the self-sufficiency standards outlined in SMW Policy #3 for the particular family situation.
- B. The individual's skills, following receipt of basic WIOA and other services through the WIN Job Center or a partner agency, are determined insufficient to secure and hold suitable employment according to the self-sufficiency standards outlined in SMW Policy #3 for the particular family situation.
- C. The individual is a resident of the SMW local area.
- D. The individual is neither qualified for nor receiving other forms of assistance related to the ITA application.
- E. Should a priority of service become necessary for determining allocation of ITAs, veterans as described by the Jobs For Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288) will receive priority status when all above terms and all eligibility and competitive factors required by law are met and equal. Veterans shall receive priority over other groups when preferential factors are optional and/or do not specifically mandate that a particular group be served before another.
- F. Should a priority of service become necessary for determining allocation of ITAs, individuals with disabilities will receive priority status when all above terms and all eligibility and competitive factors required by law are met and equal. Individuals with disabilities shall receive priority over other groups when preferential factors are optional and or do not specifically mandate that a particular group be served before another.
- G. Within the SMW local workforce area, priority will be given to individuals applying for ITAs for training programs related to the targeted industries identified in the SMW Sector Strategy Plan.

VI. REQUIREMENTS (DOCUMENTATION)

ITAs shall be awarded only to WIOA-eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth following the specifications outlined above and who submit a complete and timely application package which is subsequently approved. Extreme care shall be taken to ensure that adequate documentation is maintained on each participant to fully substantiate the ITA process. At a minimum, the administering agency shall use the individual's career plan, case notes or other forms of documentation to show evidence of the following:

- A. Consultation with participant regarding training needs desires; assessment of participant's interests, aptitudes and skills; determination of the likelihood of participant obtaining employment in the local area or area of relocation at an acceptable wage rate; and determination of the likelihood of participant's successfully completing the training. Also, evidence of participant's certification of willingness to attend classes and complete the training program.
- B. Coordination with the participant, training provider and partner agencies on sources of non-WIOA funds in developing training plans and ensuring that such funds are applied for and used prior to WIOA funds, including PELL grant or other financial aid. Coordination shall specify with whom coordination occurred and when coordination took place. Correspondence showing award or denial of PELL grant or other financial assistance may be used to document that participant applied for PELL grant or other financial aid.
- C. Provision of attendance information, grade or progress reports by the participant or by the training provider. Evidence of training completion through certificate, degree, licensure or other documents; employer and wage information and follow-up activities.
- D. Rationale for the selection of the training program, rationale for the amount of the ITA award and associated costs; OR

Evidence of the availability of other funds to cover costs for ITAs that are not to be paid by WIOA; OR

Denial of an ITA for any one of the reasons specified in Section II.D. above.

E. A certification signed by the participant documenting his or her commitment to attend and complete the training program and cooperate fully with the required follow-up activities.

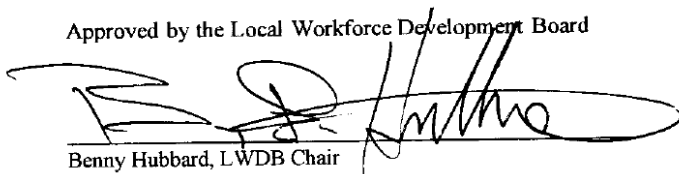
VII. INTERNAL PROCEDURES FOR ITAs

The administering agency shall coordinate the payment, disbursement and tracking of expenditures of ITAs for all training providers through the State's ETPL system. An electronic voucher system is used for payments.

VIII. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is approved May 11, 2023.

Approved by the Local Workforce Development Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Benny Hubbard', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Benny Hubbard, LWDB Chair

This appendix presents the full text of the policy as adopted, with the executed signature(s) reproduced from the original instrument.



Local Area Conflict of Interest Policy

SCMW Policy Number 15 – WIOA Conflict of Interest • Effective June 11, 2026

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

Purpose and Compliance Framework

This policy establishes mandatory standards of conduct ensuring integrity, impartiality, and full compliance with:

- 2 CFR 200.112 (written COI policies; disclosures to awarding agencies)
- 2 CFR 200.318(c)(1) (individual COI standards)
- 2 CFR 200.318(c)(2) (organizational COI standards)
- 2 CFR Part 2900 (DOL exceptions; stricter disclosure rules)
- WIOA Sec. 185(a)(1) (records requirements)
- TEGL 15-16 (one-stop operator procurement and COI protections)

The policy applies to MDES, the SWIB, all LWDBs, and all WIOA subrecipients.

Definitions

- **Apparent COI:** A reasonable person could perceive undue influence.
- **Real COI:** A personal, financial, or organizational interest directly conflicts with duties.
- **Organizational COI (OCI):** Parent/affiliate/subsidiary relationships that impair impartiality or provide unfair advantage.
- **Immediate Family:** Spouse/partner, parents, children, siblings, and in-laws.
- **Business Partner:** Individual/entity with a shared financial venture.
- **Covered Individual:** MDES/SWIB/LWDB staff, board members, subrecipients, evaluators, agents.
- **Recusal:** Complete withdrawal from discussion, evaluation, voting, document access, or communication.
- **Firewall:** Controls that prevent information sharing or influence between conflicted parties.
- **Gratuity:** Any item of value offered by a contractor or applicant.
- **De Minimis Threshold:** MDES default = zero-tolerance (no gratuities).
- **Ethics/Compliance Officer:** Designated official responsible for COI oversight.

Mississippi Ethics Opinions, Statutory, and Constitutional Authorities

In accordance with the Mississippi Ethics in Government Laws and their applicability to members of the SWIB and LWDB, Board members must adhere to Ethics Commission Opinions 06-099-E, 04-076-E, and 13-014-E.

A business whose owner, CEO, or employee serves on an LWDB is prohibited by Section 109, Miss. Const. of 1890 and Section 25-4-105(2), Miss. Code of 1972, from receiving any contract that is funded by the LWDB. This prohibition applies to all contracts funded during the LWDB member's term and for one year after the LWDB member's term.

A recusal will not prevent a violation of Section 109 and Section 25-4-105(2), as these sections do not require any affirmative act by an individual member to give rise to a conflict, but merely action by the board. Accordingly, recusal by the affected SWIB or LWDB member will not prevent a violation of these sections.

Standards of Conduct for Individuals (2 CFR 200.318(c)(1))

4.1 COI Participation Prohibition

Covered Individuals may not participate in any procurement or governance action where they, their immediate family, or their business partners have a financial or material interest. This includes prospective employers.

4.2 Gratuities

- Zero-tolerance standard applies.
- Any offer of a gratuity must be reported within 2 business days.
- Conference meals of general attendance are permitted.

4.3 Disclosure Requirements

- Initial disclosure: Upon hire/appointment.
- Annual disclosure: Completed at start of each year.
- Event-driven: Within 2 business days of COI arising.
- Prospective employment: Immediate written disclosure and recusal.

4.4 Recusal Procedures

(a) Triggering Recusal: Upon identifying a real or apparent COI, the Covered Individual must immediately notify the Ethics/Compliance Officer and, if the Covered Individual is a board member, notify the Board Chair. Recusal must occur before any participation in the affected matter.

(b) Scope of Recusal: Recusal is total and complete. The recused individual must:

- Abstain from all deliberation and discussion, formal or informal, in person, by telephone, or by any other means;
- Abstain from reviewing or signing any related documents;
- Physically leave the meeting room before the matter is introduced and not return until after the vote is complete and recorded; and
- Refrain from attempting to influence the outcome through any means.

(c) Assignment of Substitute: The Ethics/Compliance Officer (or Board Chair, for board matters) must assign a substitute Covered Individual free of the identified COI to perform the affected duties.

(d) Documentation: All recusals must be documented and recorded in meeting minutes, as applicable. Documentation must include: the identity of the recused individual; the procurement action or governance decision affected; the nature of the COI; the date of recusal; and the identity of the substitute assigned.

4.5 Evaluation Team Controls

- Pre-screen all evaluators for real or apparent COI. Must be documented.
- Signed evaluator attestations required.
- External evaluators (not employed by MDES, the SWIB, or the LWDB) must sign the same attestation and a non-disclosure agreement prohibiting disclosure of proprietary offeror information.
- Individuals who develop specifications cannot serve on evaluation teams unless documented and justified.
- Firewalls implemented where mitigation is approved.

4.6 Consequences

Disciplinary action, cost disallowance, contract remedies, federal notification, and referrals to oversight authorities.

Organizational COI Standards (2 CFR 200.318(c)(2))

5.1 Applicability

Required for any non-governmental entity with a parent, affiliate, or subsidiary. MDES extends screening to all offerors regardless of organizational type.

5.2 OCI Screening

For every procurement:

- Assess relationships with parent/affiliate/subsidiary entities.
- Require offeror OCI disclosures.
- Identify risks related to impartiality, access to non-public information, or dual roles.

5.3 Impartiality Test

If an objective observer could not conclude impartiality, OCI must be mitigated or the offeror disqualified.

5.4 Mitigation Options

- Firewalls
- Separate financial/legal reporting
- NDAs
- Independent oversight
- Recusal
- Enhanced monitoring

Mitigation must be documented.

5.5 Disqualification

Required where mitigation is inadequate. Basis must be documented.

5.6 Documentation

Procurement files must include screening results, disclosures, findings, mitigation plans, and approvals.

5.7 Existing Subrecipient OCI Assessment

Annual review required, with documentation and reporting of material OCIs.

Procurement Controls & One-Stop Operator Requirements (TEGL 15-16)

6.1 Procurement Integrity

- Full and open competition required.
- Document all evaluations and award decisions.
- Arm's-length negotiations required.

6.2 One-Stop Operator Requirements

- Competitive procurement at least every 4 years.
- LWDB members representing potential operators must recuse fully.

- Entities serving multiple roles (operator, provider, fiscal agent) require: OCI assessment, documented firewalls, and independent oversight.
- MDES or LWDB must conduct program integrity reviews.

Governance Requirements

7.1 Board Members

Annual disclosures required; update within 5 business days of changes.

7.2 Agenda Management

Advance review required; COI items flagged; COI disclosure included as a standing item.

7.3 Recusal Protocol

Member must publicly disclose COI, leave the room, and not return until the vote is concluded. Abstention alone does not meet requirements.

7.4 Quorum

Recused members are not counted toward a required quorum for affected items.

7.5 Minutes

Minutes must document disclosure, recusal time, return time, and vote counts.

Training, Communication, & Certifications

8.1 Initial Training

Within 30 days of hire/appointment.

8.2 Annual Training

Covers federal requirements, examples, Organizational Conflicts of Interest (OCIs), and state ethics laws.

8.3 Documentation

Training roster will be maintained.

8.4 Board Orientation

COI policy included and signed before first meeting.

8.5 Annual Acknowledgments

All Covered Individuals must sign the COI acknowledgment annually.

Reporting, Investigations, Disclosures

9.1 Reporting Channels

Reports may be submitted to the Ethics/Compliance Officer, anonymous hotline, or designated officials.

9.2 Non-Retaliation

Strict prohibition on retaliation.

9.3 Investigations

- Preliminary review within 5 business days.
- Formal investigation within 45 days.
- Fully documented findings and corrective actions.

9.4 Mandatory Federal Disclosures

- LWDBs must disclose to MDES within 5 business days.
- MDES must disclose to USDOL-ETA within 5 business days.
- Corrective Action Plans are required within 30 days.

Monitoring & Oversight

10.1 Internal Monitoring

Sampling procurements, tracking disclosures, reviewing board minutes.

10.2 Subrecipient Monitoring

Ensures LWDB adoption and implementation, OCI screenings, and board documentation.

10.3 Corrective Actions

Deficiencies must be documented, corrected within 30 days, and verified.

Records Management (WIOA Sec. 185)

11.1 Required Records

Required documentation, investigation files, disclosures, mitigation plans, meeting minutes, and federal notifications.

11.2 Retention

Greater of: 3 years from the final expenditure report, WIOA requirements, or resolution of audits/litigation.

11.3 Storage

Secure physical or electronic formats; litigation holds where required.

11.4 Availability

Records must be accessible to MDES, USDOL, GAO, and authorized oversight entities.

Roles & Responsibilities

- **MDES Executive Director:** Oversees implementation.
- **Ethics/Compliance Officer:** Primary COI authority; training, investigations, tracking, guidance.
- **Procurement Officer:** Implements OCI screening; documents evaluations and disclosures.
- **SWIB Executive Director:** Ensures board compliance and reporting.
- **Board Chairs:** Manage meeting-based COI processes.
- **LWDB Executives:** Implement policy locally; ensure adoption, screening, and reporting.

Implementation

The South Central Mississippi Works Local Workforce Development Board and Board of Commissioners will begin implementing this policy July 11, 2026.



2026-06-12

Benny Hubbard, LWDB Chair

Date



2026-06-12

Daryl McMillian Sr., BOC Chair

Date

This appendix presents the full text of the policy as adopted, with the executed signature(s) reproduced from the original instrument.



Local Area Sunshine Provision Policy

SCMW Policy Number 18 – Sunshine Provision Policy • April 2016

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

I. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the requirements to conduct business in an open manner as mandated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Conducting business in an open manner involves making the activities of the Southcentral Mississippi Works Workforce Development Area (SMW) Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) available to the public, including individuals with disabilities, on a regular basis via electronic means and open meetings.

II. Statutes Governing Sunshine Provisions and Applicable Acts

The SMW LWDB will comply with the legislation outlining the Sunshine Provision under WIOA prescribed for the LWDB, as found in WIOA, 113 P.L. 128, Section 107(e) and with the laws governing open meeting accessibility for the disabled as found at Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

III. Statutes Governing Provisions of the Open Meetings Act

The SMW LWDB will comply with State requirements as prescribed in Mississippi's Open Meetings Acts, Title 25, Chapter 41, Mississippi Code of 1972 and in Mississippi's Public Records Act, Title 25, Chapter 61, Mississippi Code of 1972.

State law defines a "public body" as any executive or administrative board, commission, authority, council, department, agency, bureau or any other policy making entity, or committee thereof, of the State of Mississippi, or any political subdivision or municipal corporation of the state, whether such entity be created by statute or executive order, which is supported wholly or in part by public funds or expends public funds, and any standing, interim or special committee of the Mississippi Legislature.

IV. SMW LWDB Code of Standards and Conduct

State Policy Number 4, Sunshine Provision Policy, is hereby incorporated into the SMW LWDB Sunshine Provision Policy Number 18.

All meetings of the SMW LWDB shall be conducted on a regular basis and as open meetings.

Minutes of all LWDB meetings, whether held in person, via teleconference or video-conference, or any combination of the aforementioned, will be maintained electronically at the offices of the Central MS Planning & Development District (CMPDD), serving as administrative/fiscal agent for the Southcentral MS Works Workforce Development Area. Minutes shall be available to the public at all times upon request.

Information regarding all members of the LWDB, including contact, information, will be maintained electronically at the offices of the CMPDD and shall be available to the public at all times upon request.

Priority will be given to public access and information will be ADA compliant.

The SMW will publicly provide information regarding the designation and certification of one-stop operators; and information regarding the award of grants or contracts to eligible providers of WIOA youth activities.

No meeting shall be held by the LWDB in a closed capacity, or in any way as to deny access to the public. Members of the LWDB will make every effort to comply with the transparency requirements as defined in WIOA with the intent of establishing trust among all individuals, agencies and entities involved in the State of Mississippi's workforce development system.

Penalties, sanctions, or other disciplinary actions shall apply, in accordance with state and local law, for violations of the provisions regarding open meetings and public information.

V. Effective Date

This policy is effective April 14, 2016.

Approved by the Local Workforce Development Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Balfour Lipscomb", is written over a horizontal line.

Balfour Lipscomb, Chairman

This appendix presents the full text of the policy as adopted, with the executed signature(s) reproduced from the original instrument.



Local Area Youth Incentive Policy

SCMW Policy Number 7 – Youth Incentives • May 2017

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act • Central Mississippi Planning and Development District

I. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets forth subgrantee guidelines for the use of incentives to youth enrolled in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program. In accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, funds for youth activities may be used to provide incentives for recognition and achievement to eligible youth.

II. INCENTIVE SPECIFICATIONS

To be allowable, incentives awarded to youth shall adhere to the specifications outlined in this policy. The participant shall meet the incentive criteria specified in Section III of this policy. The subawardee shall provide incentives only to those youth who:

(1) are eligible for and registered in the WIOA youth program; and (2) meet the incentive criteria.

III. REQUIREMENTS

A. DESCRIPTION OF INCENTIVES

1. Incentive Awards

The incentive award shall be directly linked to work readiness activities. The subawardee may award an incentive to WIOA eligible and enrolled individuals for successful completion of required activities as outlined in the subawardee's Statement of Work. Since it is expected that youth are prepared to engage in job search activities or continuing post-secondary education/vocational training, it should be suggested to the participant that the award be used toward the purchase of items necessary in order to interview, accept a valid job offer, or attend post secondary education/training that will lead to a self-sufficient job.

B. CRITERIA FOR INCENTIVES AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The subawardee shall award incentives to participants based on the following criteria:

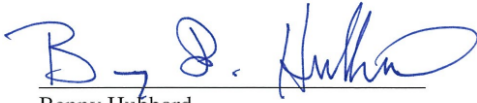
1. A participant may be awarded an incentive ONLY when he/she masters the material and requirements of a SMW Youth WIOA program. The material and requirements for satisfactory completion shall be documented clearly in the subaward for the operation of the program, and in information distributed to the participants.
2. Documentation for Incentive Payment

The subawardee shall maintain sufficient written documentation to substantiate that the required criteria has been met for each participant receiving the incentive.

IV. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective May 31, 2017.

Approved by the Local Workforce Development Board



Benny Hubbard
Chairman

This appendix presents the full text of the policy as adopted, with the executed signature(s) reproduced from the original instrument.