

Northwest TN Workforce Board American Job Center (AJC) Committee

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.

Milan Chamber of Commerce, 1069 Main St., Milan, TN or Zoom

Minutes

Committee Members Attending In-Person: Ted Piazza, Sherry Fowler, Sabra Bledsoe; **via Zoom:** Lori Burdine, Jimmy Williamson, Willie Huffman

Staff and Contractors Attending In-Person: Jennifer Bane, Ginger Powell, LeAnn Lundberg, Erica Nance (OSO), Ashley Mayton (OSO); **via Zoom:** Lana Burchfiel, Catherine Vandyke, Gina Johnson, James Starnes (OSO), Connie Stewart (CSP)

Others Attending via Zoom: Gina Abbott

Review and Approval of Minutes of 7/25/23 Meeting: Ted Piazza called the meeting to order and asked the group for comments regarding the prior meeting's minutes.

- **MOTION:** Lori Burdine moved to approve the 7/25/23 minutes as presented and Jimmy Williamson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

AJC Partner Presentation—GROWWTH: Catherine Vandyke reviewed a flier that gave an overview of the Growing Relational and Occupational Wealth in West TN Households (GROWWTH) TANF Pilot program. In partnership with the University of Memphis, the goal is to serve at least 2,500 families across West TN in the 3-year funding period, but there is some talk of extending the funding period for another year. Catherine reviewed the eligibility criteria and the supportive services that are available to assist participants in obtaining a high-quality job, either directly, through short-term credential training, or by starting their own business. Some of the supportive services are only available for employed participants to ease the transition off of benefit programs. Catherine mentioned they have asked for clarification regarding the childcare providers that participants can use as part of the program. The TANF Pilot projects are all part of a study funded by the TN Department of Human Services, so eligible applicants will be randomly selected into one of two groups that receive a different mix of services. As soon as we get to 700 participants the study will end and all eligible participants can receive the full array of GROWWTH services. As of right NW has 31 enrollments, including 8 total academy participants.

American Job Center Services Report: One-Stop Operator (OSO), Erica Nance, presented the attached AJC Services Report for July-September 2023 which details AJC traffic counts, visit reasons, customer survey results, and estimated results for the quarterly Key Performance Indicator (KPI) goals. Erica mentioned that justice-involved numbers do not include the Adult Education, Mobile AJC, or Office of Re-Entry grant enrollments. We are hoping that these numbers will be included in the final KPIs results when they are received from the State. She also reviewed the attached Access Points newsletter. One new Access Point, the TN Rehabilitation Center in Paris, was added during the quarter and a Job / Resource Fair event was held there in September. Training was also conducted with two existing Access Points. An Access Point in Gibson County is assisting in providing Rapid Response services to employees affected by a recent closure announcement.

- **Workforce Services Report:** Gina Abbott, AJC Regional Director-West, reported the Commissioner has challenged Workforce Services staff with developing a business engagement plan to restructure the current system that has changed since the pandemic. Heading that plan is Amy Maberry, who leads the Training, Oversight, and Strategic Support Unit (TOSS) team. The plan focuses on strong relationships between the businesses and the workforce system, creating a consulting relationship, and case managing employers. This will create a statewide model so that there is a consistent approach in serving employers. Gina also reported there is an opening for a Veteran's position. The position will now be stationed in Huntingdon instead of Dyersburg but will continue to serve all the Northwest (NW) counties. Workforce Services staff will be participating in the upcoming NAWDP Youth Symposium and Rural Prosperity Conference. The Apprenticeship TN Office will host its West TN Conference at Dyersburg State on 11/14. All NW and SW training providers completed the required annual Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) reports.

Career & Training Services Report: Connie Stewart presented the attached Training Services Report detailing cumulative enrollments as of September by service type and county, and a breakdown of Individual Training Account (ITA) enrollments by sector and provider, and total ITA investments by provider for all participants this program year. Connie

noted that On-the-Job Training (OJT) enrollments have been down, and Ginger Powell reported that a few employer partners were not renewed due to low performance. Business Services staff are outreaching to new partners and anticipate numbers will soon increase. Most of the ITA enrollments continue to be in healthcare. Connie also reported that the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is helping fund Youth participants due to limited formula funding which will help us to achieve our Youth KPI of 72 new enrollments for the year.

Business Services Report: Ginger Powell, Deputy Director, presented the attached Business Services Report detailing the cumulative OJT contracts and enrollments as of September, the completion rate, and the breakdown of number trained by sector. Ginger noted that the majority of enrollments in the other category are for skilled trades. We will be receiving Consolidated Business Grant (CBG) funds which will be used for Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) and expanding OJT opportunities. The Virtually Speaking webinar held last quarter focused on GROWWTH and all of the employers who participated became GROWWTH certified employers. All recordings are available on the website. The apprenticeship numbers show zero as contracts were just recently issued. Staff also continue issuing Lightcast reports, which now have additional counties available for use in the Southwest area. A new opportunity to apply for sector funds was also announced, allowing us the opportunity to move the apprentices in the applicable sectors off of the original funds and freeing up funds for the ones that could not originally be funded with the small amount of funding received. All requests are based on existing employer need, so we should be in good shape once we get the contracts to begin enrolling apprentices and expending the funds.

Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy Change: Jennifer Bane presented the proposed policy changes to the ITA Policy outlined in red text in the attached handouts. The change allows applicants who file an appeal to provide any type of documentation of applicable employment opportunities rather than only allowing for a pre-hire letter.

- **MOTION: Jimmy Williamson moved to approve ITA policy changes as presented and Lori Burdine seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.**

Other Business: Jennifer Bane presented the following items:

- **Strategy Session Results & Next Steps:** The survey results reviewed at the strategy session and the identified action items are included in the handouts. Jennifer noted that staff will begin working through the action items and bring follow-up items to the Board. We will also move forward with developing a labor force participation taskforce as discussed in the strategy session and would welcome volunteers. Sector-based taskforces will also be developed as part of the new QUEST National Dislocated Worker Grant which will also assist with this work.
- **2024 Meeting Schedules & Locations:** The proposed meeting dates and times are noted on the agenda. The schedule combines all committee meetings onto one day and pushes the meetings back about a week to allow sufficient time for staff to compile data for the reports, particularly the fiscal numbers. Jennifer will request use of the Milan Chamber meeting space for these meetings, and the NW Development District / Human Resource Agency for Board meetings.
- **Officer Elections:** Officers will need to be elected at the next meeting. Both the Chair and Vice-Chair are required to be private-sector representative. Jennifer will send out a reminder email for nominations and volunteers.
- **Other:** Jennifer mentioned the Conflict of Interest Forms will be due soon. An email will be sent and forms will be available at the next Board meeting.

Future Meeting Dates & Upcoming Events: Future meeting dates and upcoming events were listed on the agenda.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lana Burchfiel

Public Information Specialist

Northwest TN Workforce Board
American Job Center (AJC) Committee

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.

Milan Chamber of Commerce
1069 S. Main Street
Milan, TN

Chair - Rita Alexander

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 898 4961 0657
Passcode: 881060

Vice Chair – Lori Burdine

Agenda

- Welcome and Call to Order Ted Piazza
Welcome New Board Member Sabra Bledsoe, TDLWD Lead Regional Director – West TN
- Review and Approval of Minutes – July 25, 2023 meeting **(Vote Required)** Ted Piazza
- AJC Partner Presentation – GROWWTH Catherine VanDyke, GROWWTH Coordinator
- American Job Center Services Report Erica Nance, One-Stop Operator
 - a. Workforce Services Report Gina Abbott, AJC Regional Director-West
- Career & Training Services Report Connie Stewart, CSP Executive Director
- Business Services Report Ginger Powell, Deputy Director
- Individual Training Account Policy Change **(Vote Required)** Jennifer Bane, Executive Director
- Other Business
 - a. Strategy Session Results & Next Steps Jennifer Bane
 - b. 2024 Meeting Schedule Jennifer Bane
 - c. Officer Elections Jennifer Bane
 - d. Other All

Future Meeting Dates & Upcoming Events

Meeting / Event	Date and Time	Location
State Board Meeting	November 3 rd , 8:30 am – 12:00 pm	Nashville / YouTube
Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board Meeting	November 28 th , 10:00 am	NW HRA / DD (Martin)/Zoom
Future Virtually Speaking Webinar	December 7 th , 9:00 am	Zoom
Proposed 2024 Committee Meetings	Thursday, 10:00 am February 1 st May 2 nd August 1 st October 31 st	TBD / Zoom
Proposed 2024 Board Meetings	Tuesday, 10:00 am March 5 th June 4 th Thursday, Sept. 5 th (w/ SW) December 3 rd	TBD / Zoom

Northwest TN Workforce Board American Job Center (AJC) Committee

Tuesday, July 25, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.

Milan Chamber of Commerce, 1069 Main St., Milan, TN or Zoom

Minutes

Committee Members Attending In-Person: Lori Burdine, Janet James, Ted Piazza, Monica Heath; **via Zoom:** Kristy Mercer, Jimmy Williamson, Sherry Fowler, Willie Huffman

Staff and Contractors Attending In-Person: Jennifer Bane, Ginger Powell, LeAnn Lundberg, Laura Speer, Erica Nance (OSO); **via Zoom:** Lana Burchfiel, Kena Hamm, James Starnes (OSO), Connie Stewart (CSP)

Review and Approval of Minutes of 4/25/23 Meeting: Committee Vice-Chair Lori Burdine called the meeting to order and asked the group for comments regarding the prior meeting's minutes.

- **MOTION:** Ted Piazza moved to approve the 4/25/23 minutes as presented and Janet James seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

American Job Center Services Report: One-Stop Operator (OSO), Erica Nance, presented the attached AJC Services Report for April-June 2023 which details AJC traffic counts, visit reasons, customer survey results, and estimated results for the quarterly Key Performance Indicator (KPI) goals. Erica mentioned there are a few more Carroll County visits that are not reflected in the report. Erica also reported that three more Access Point locations have been identified. There will be a training in August for new locations. She will also be meeting with Alternative Choice Counseling Center at a Crockett County Access Point. Ted Piazza inquired about adding trends to the KPI portion of the dashboard. Jennifer stated that the annual report would should the cumulative amounts compared to the annual goal and staff will also look at incorporating trends into the quarterly dashboards.

Workforce Services Report: Erica Nance (OSO) presented the following report for Gina Abbot (TDLWD Assistant Director for West TN):

- **Justice-Involved Unit:** This unit has released a new series of YouTube messages to educate the public on various topics. These can be found on the TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development's YouTube page.
- **Co-Enrollments:** The department is working to increase co-enrollments with Adult Education. SNAP E&T can assist with childcare and transportation assistance.
- **TAA:** There was a statewide training July 19-21, 2023, in Nashville for Team Leads and field Staff.
- **Northwest Hospitality & Tourism Taskforce:** This taskforce held its first listening session at the Discovery Park of America in Union City on June 22nd.
- **Kristie Bennett:** Kristie was promoted to Senior Director for the Workforce Solutions Outreach & Partnership Unit. She will remain the Blue Oval City Project Lead for the TN Department of Labor & Workforce Development. A new Regional Director for the Northwest area will be hired.

Career & Training Services Report: Connie Stewart presented the attached Career and Training Services Report detailing cumulative enrollments as of June, percentage of priority Adult enrollments, a breakdown of Individual Training Account (ITA) enrollments by sector and provider, and total ITA investments by provider for all participants this program year. Connie reported that we missed the Adult and Dislocated Worker annual enrollment goal of 281 by 15 enrollments. The Youth enrollment goal of 80 was exceeded by eight enrollments.

- **Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP):** Connie reported there have been about 25 youth enrolled so far towards the goal of 100. Each youth can be approved for \$3,200 including taxes/benefits. Anyone eligible for Title I can be co-enrolled, however, only one so far has qualified for co-enrollment. Participants have been placed in a wide variety of worksites so far including physical therapy, Auston Mealer, Trudy's Café, Retail Revelation Garden, Hardage Group, animal care settings, and more. There has been a lot of interest in animal care, so Connie is exploring credentials and career options in the field. Connie expects that when school starts, she will see greater interest in the SYEP and will quickly fill the 75 remaining spots.

Business Services Report: Ginger Powell, Deputy Director, presented the attached Business Services Report detailing the cumulative On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts and enrollments as of June, the completion rate, and the breakdown of number trained by sector. Virtually Speaking webinars held were noted and recordings are available on the website. The

next webinar is scheduled for September and we are open to topic ideas. We just wrapped up Incumbent Worker Training Grants with 16 contracts and expended all our allocated funds. At the end we had de-obligated funds that could not be re-obligated for IWT, so the state allowed for us to use them on OJTs instead. The Business Services staff are planning to serve approximately 20 SYEP participants through OJT program with four or five enrolled since July 1st. These will be permanent positions instead of short-term work experiences. Ted asked about the higher rate of OJT individuals who did not complete. Ginger explained that much of the reason for higher incompleteness is due to increased turnover rates. If they did not complete, we did not reimburse, but it does not necessarily negatively affect our performance if they are still employed and just left one employer for another. We did have one employer who had too much turnover for us to renew their contract. Janet James inquired about the employers participating in Henry County. Ginger provided the information and will have the Business Services Representative follow-up with Janet about participating in the program.

Other: Committee members were asked if there were other business items to be addressed, but none were raised. Jennifer mentioned that the GROWWITH program through the TANF Pilot Project started in May and we've had a few enrollments so far. The program seeks to serve low-income parents / guardians. As part of a research requirement of the grant, those who do qualify get randomly put into one of two groups with one group receiving only limited services and referrals to other programs. The research portion will end once we've enrolled 700 participants across West TN. Catherine VanDyke will speak on this program in more detail during the Outreach & Opportunities meeting. There is a training webinar on July 27th at 9:00 am for anyone interested in learning more about the program.

Future Meeting Dates & Upcoming Events: Future meeting dates and upcoming events were listed on the agenda. Jennifer Bane noted that the next Board meeting will be our joint annual meeting with Southwest at 10:30 am and lunch will be served. Members are encouraged to be in-person if at all possible.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lana Burchfiel, Public Information Specialist

American Job Center Services

Customer Visits

Carroll  1043

Dyer  653

Weakley  165

1,861
Visitors Received
PY23 Q1

1,861
Visitors to Date
PY23

AmericanJobCenter
TENNESSEE

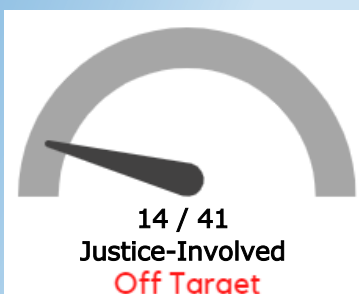
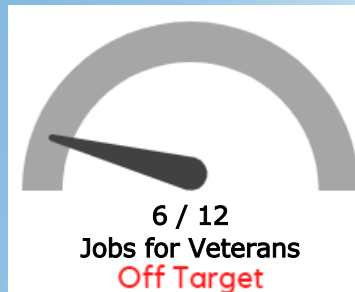
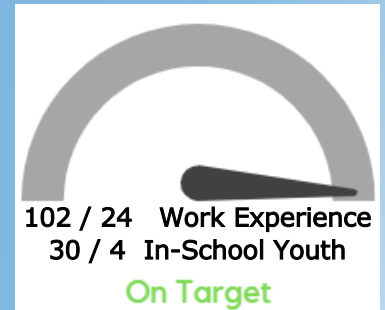
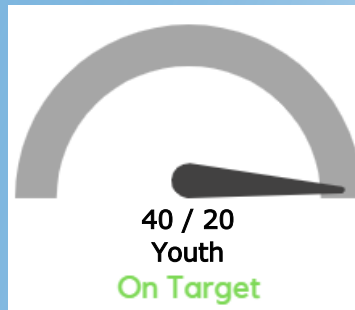
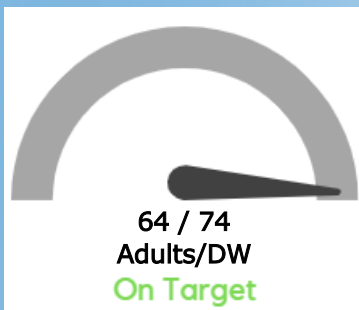


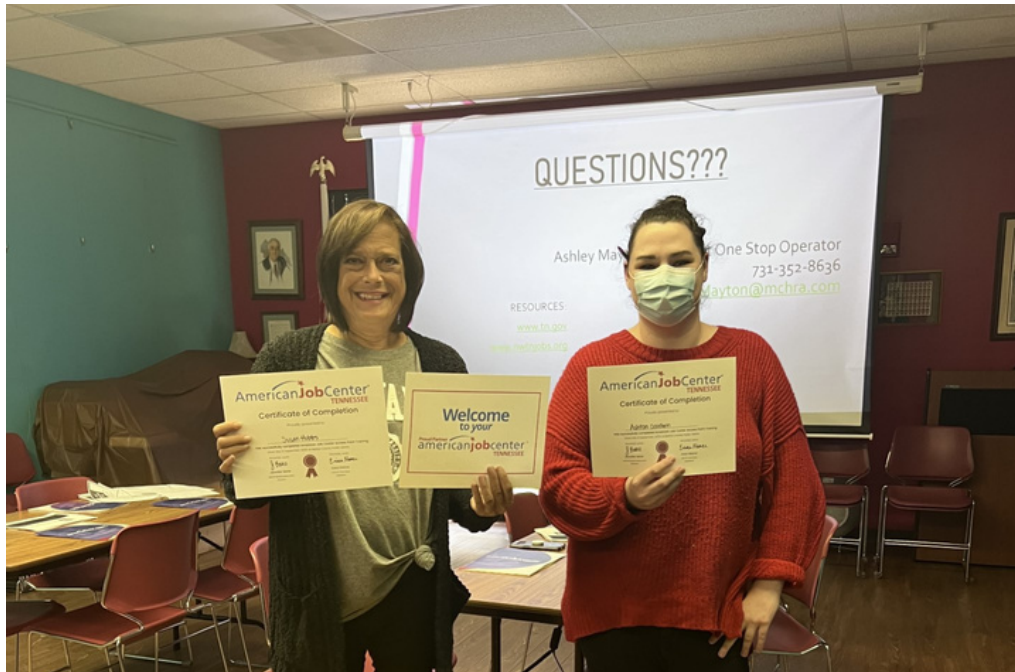
TOP 5 REASONS FOR VISIT

1. Job Search/Resource Room
2. Unemployment
3. Networking Events
4. Title I Career Coaching
5. Job Search Assistance

3,506 Services Provided

Key Performance Indicator Results





BENTON COUNTY MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The American Job Center added one new access point and re-trained staff at two existing access points this quarter. The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center was added to the list of Northwest access points in August. The Benton and Henry County Libraries were added pre-covid and requested additional training as they have added new staff. The Milan and Tiptonville Libraries have been identified as future access points and will receive training in the next quarter.

The American Job Center also hosted a Job/Resource Fair in the Tennessee Rehabilitation Center on Wednesday, September 27th, which included several employers and over 15 job seekers. The American Job Center will be working closely with Access Points to organize AJC events at each Access Point.

Access Points

Benton County Library
121 S Forrest Ave
Camden, TN 38320

**Benton County
ResourceCenter**
145 Hospital Drive
Camden, TN 38320

**McKenzie Memorial
Library**
15 Broadway Str.
McKenzie, TN 38201

Crocket County Library
261 E Church Str
Alamo, TN 38001

Nance Tax Service
339 S Bells Str.
Alamo, TN 38001

Gibson County Library
303 South High Str.
Trenton, TN 38382

W.G. Rhea Library
400 W Washington
Paris, TN 38242

**Henry County Central
School**
55 Jones Bend Rd, Ext
Paris, TN 38242

July-September
2023

AmericanJobCenter® TENNESSEE

VOLUME 1

Access Points Continued

**Tennessee
Rehabilitation Center**
1108 Tyson Ave
Paris, TN 38242

Ridgely Library
134 N Main Str
Ridgely, TN 38080

**Lake County
Government**
229 Church Str.
Tiptonville, TN 38079

Obion County Library
1221 E Reel foot Ave
Union City, TN 38261

Ned McWheter Library
341 Linden Str.
Dresden, TN 38255



Virtual Access Point Information Sessions will be held quarterly. If your organization is interested in partnering with the American Job Center, please contact One Stop Operator Erica Nance at erica.nance@mcchra.com or 731-501-1127.



Training Services

Total Enrollments by Service

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)



49

Work Experience



8

Youth Incentives



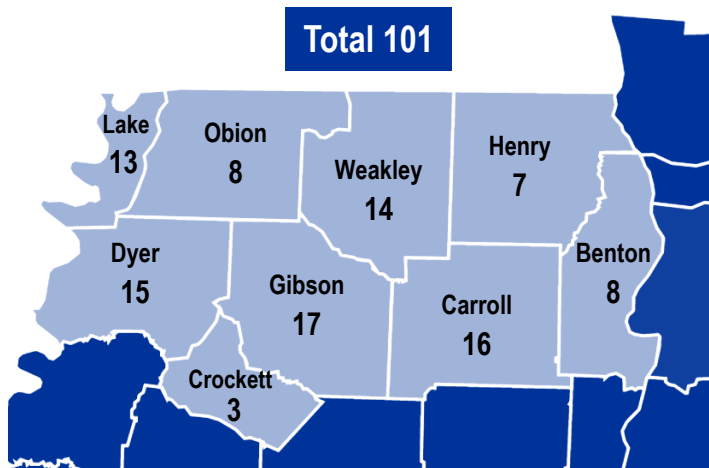
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On-the-Job Training

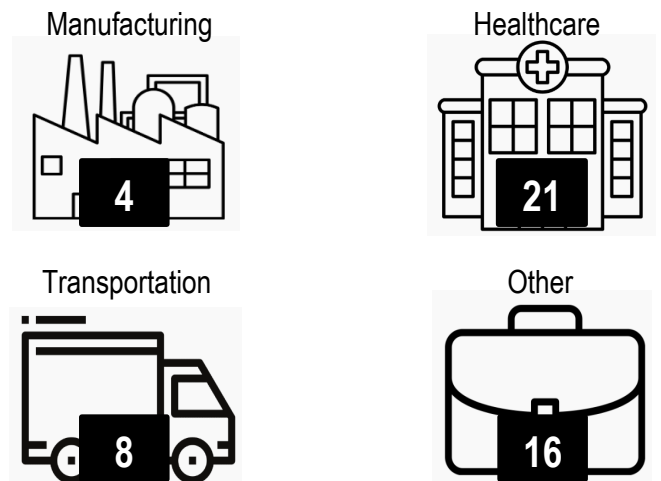


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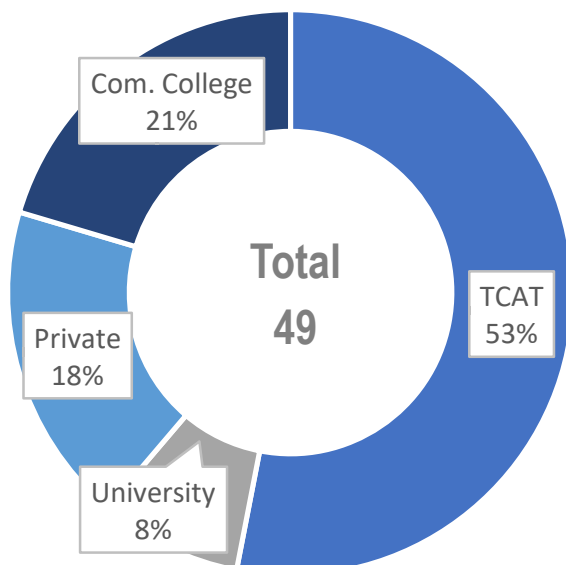
Total Enrollments by County



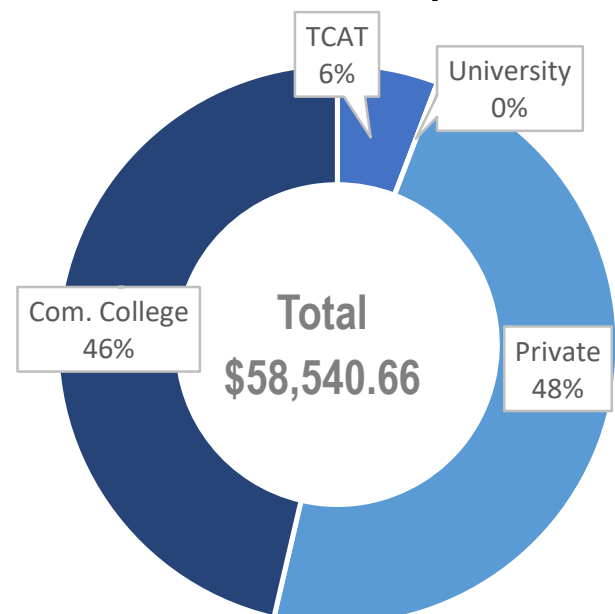
ITAs By Sector



New ITAs By Provider

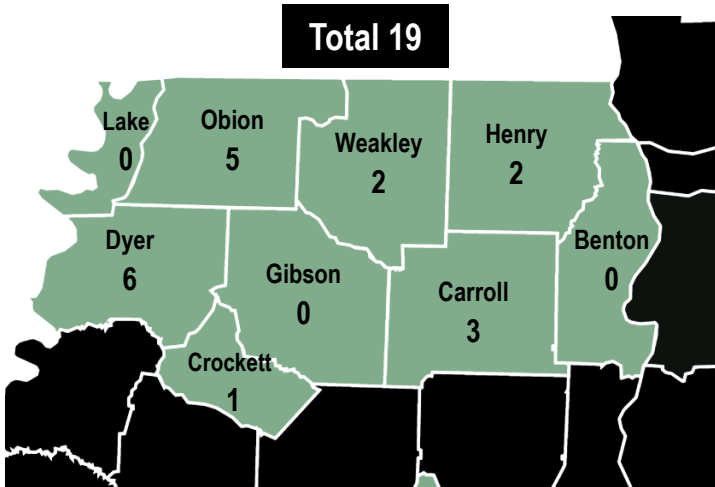


Total ITA Investment by Provider

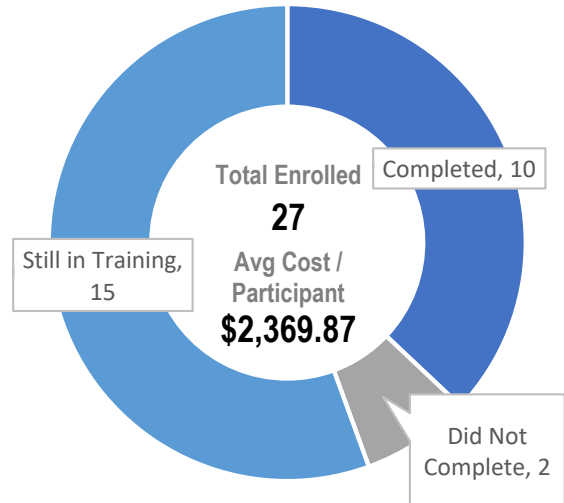


Business Services

OJT Employers by County

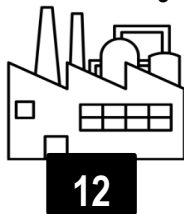


On-the-Job Training Participants

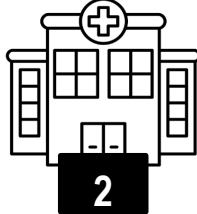


Trained by Sector

Manufacturing



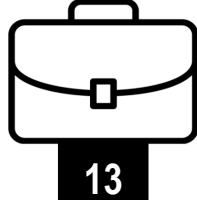
Healthcare



Transportation



Other



Virtually Speaking Webinars

VIRTUALLY SPEAKING
Workforce Webinar Series with the Northwest TN Workforce Board & their Special Guests

✓ **Strengthening Your Talent Pipeline Using the GROWTH Program Graduates**

All webinars are recorded, and may be found by scanning the QR code, or on our website at <https://nwtjobs.org/employers/virtually-speaking>.



Lightcast

16 Reports Produced



Economy Overviews



Industry Reports



Education Reports



Occupation Reports

Apprenticeship Grant



Off Target



Off Target

What is an Apprenticeship?



4. Participants who drop a class, without approval from their Career Advisor, must successfully complete the next term on their own, including travel, before they can receive funding again.
5. Participants attending Pell-eligible training institutions must complete the FAFSA and CANNOT be in default on any federal financial aid (i.e. Pell grants).

Funding Criteria for Licensed Occupations

Clients being considered for licensed professional occupational training should have good prospects for finding and keeping employment in the field. Based on research of area employers, the following conditions must be met for a client to be considered for financial assistance for any unmet need for occupations that require licensure prior to employment in the field. For all Licensure Occupations an applicant should have:

1. No felony convictions for any crime in the past five (5) years. The past five (5) years is calculated from the date they were convicted of the crime. To check for felony convictions AJC Staff must check the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation Felony Offender Search website - <https://apps.tn.gov/foil/search.jsp>.
2. No sex offender registration within the last ten (10) years. To check for sex offender registry status WIOA Staff must check the National Sex Offender Search website - <https://www.nsopw.gov/en-US>.
3. No DUI convictions in the past ten (10) years.

If the conviction occurred in the most recent 5 years, but unique circumstances may allow an applicant to be successfully employed, funding may be considered on a case-by-case basis. An appeal may be filed with the Career Service Provider for consideration for funding in order to evaluate the impact of the conviction on employment opportunities in the selected occupation / field. **Documentation of applicable employment opportunities must be included with the appeal. ~~Applicants must supply a pre-hire letter with their appeal.~~**

Truck Driving Specific Requirements

1. The applicant must supply a valid Medical Examiner's Certificate of a DOT Physical (currently valid for a maximum of two years) and proof of drug screen, performed no more than thirty (30) days prior to date of WIOA eligibility.
2. The applicant must supply a copy of a Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) that is no more than ten (10) days prior to the date of WIOA eligibility.
3. Driver's license must not have been suspended or revoked in the last three (3) years.
4. No reckless or careless driving violation within the last three (3) years.
5. No more than three (3) moving violations in the last three (3) years.
6. No more than one (1) "at fault" accidents in the last three (3) years.

Appeal Process

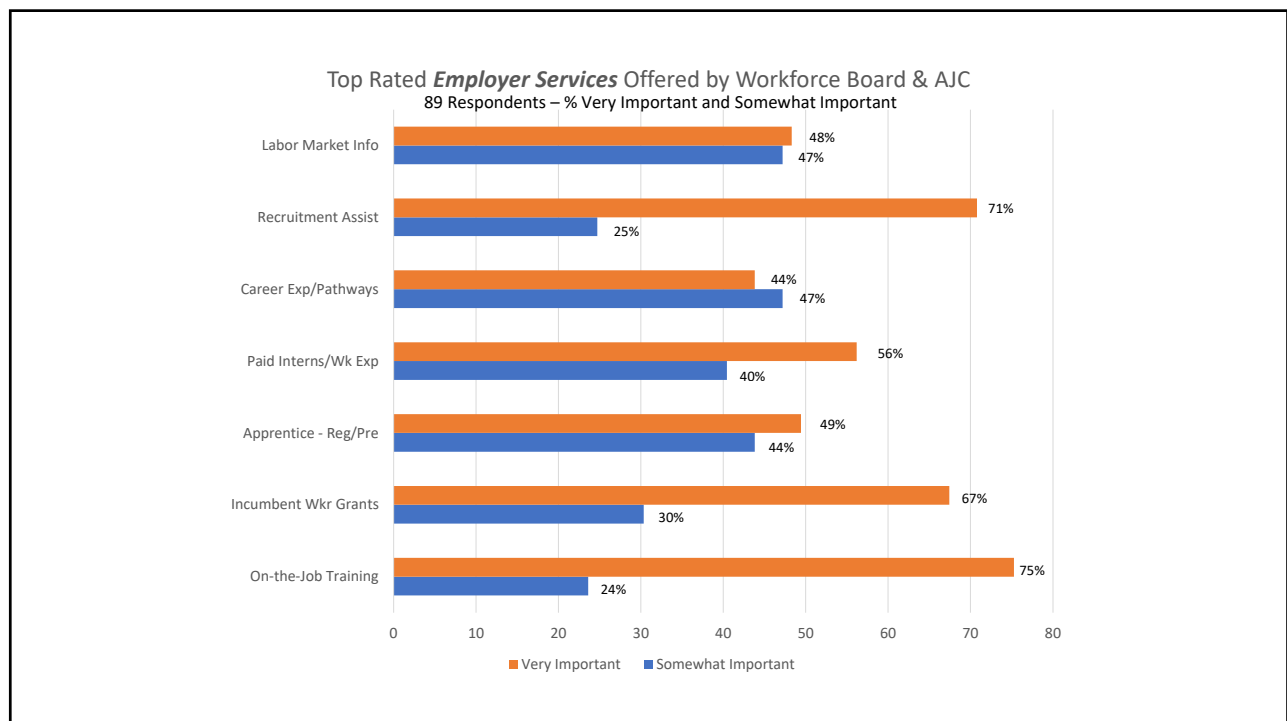
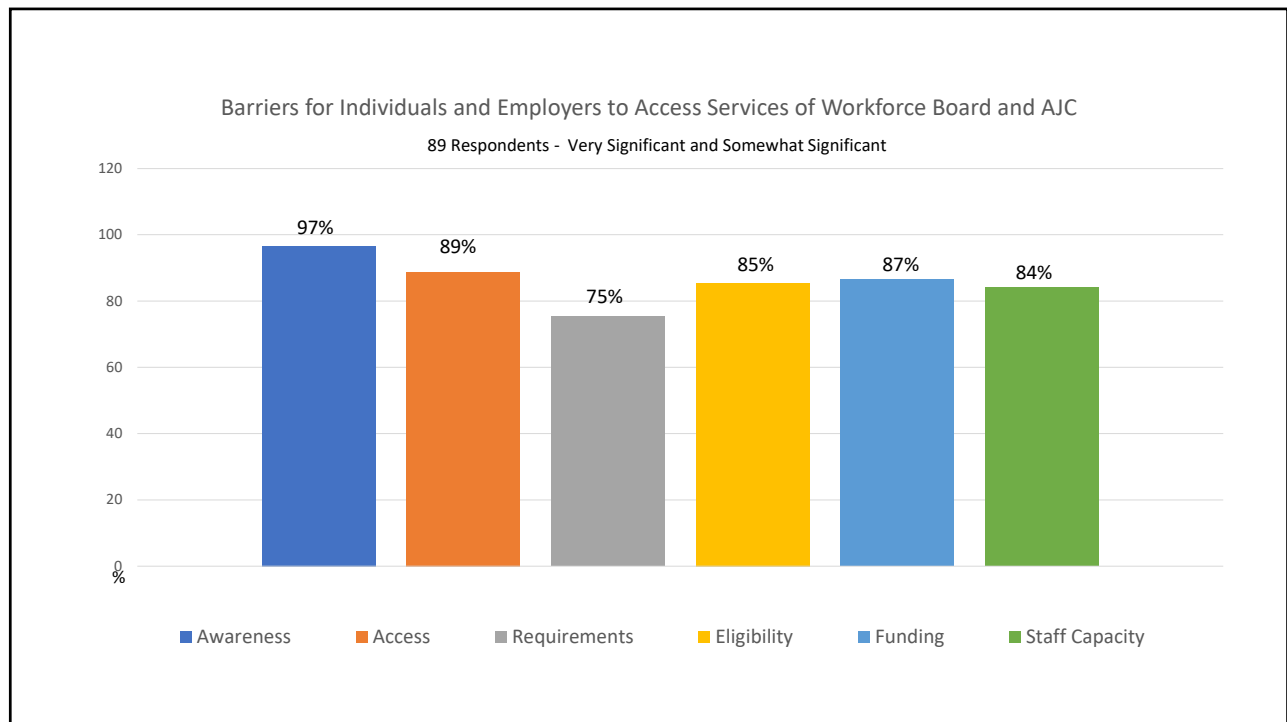
When to File an Appeal

1. If an individual is denied funding for training because a staff person determines that an individual is not in need of training due to the individual being marketable, able to work in the field, and the expected wages per EMSI are enough for the person and his / her family to be self-sufficient, then the individual may choose to file an appeal.
2. If the customer is ineligible to attend a training program for an occupation which requires a license, such as a truck driver, nurse, or teacher, due to restrictions in the Funding Criteria for Licensed Occupations and/or Truck Driver Specific Restrictions, the customer may choose to file an appeal.

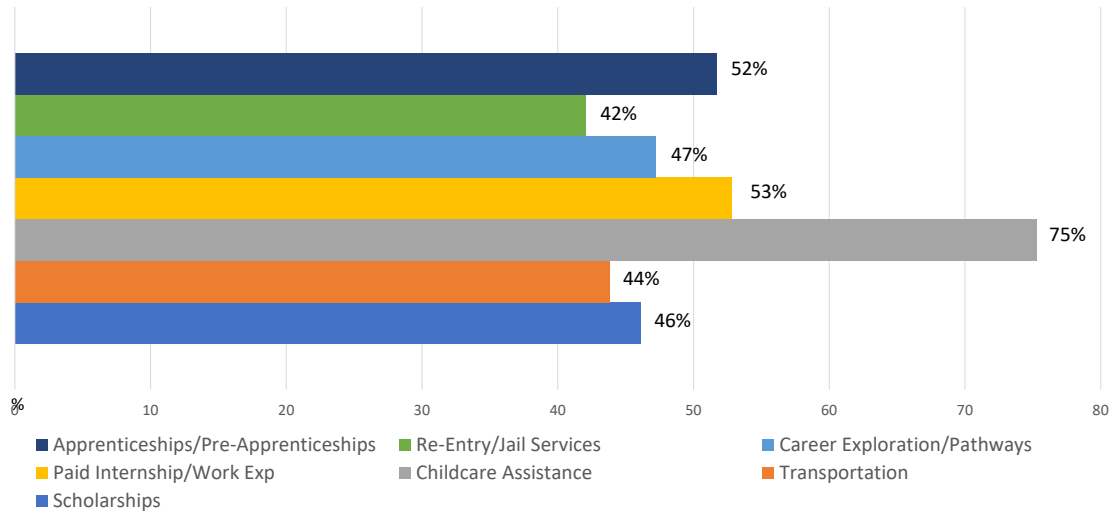
Process to File an Appeal

If the applicant chooses to appeal a condition of eligibility, an appeal must be completed by the applicant and submitted to the Executive Director of the Career Service Provider. Appeals denied by the Career Service Provider, may be appealed to the One-Stop Operator. In the case where an applicant can provide a pre-hire letter, this is to be included with the Appeal. Any appeal recommended for approval by the Career Service Provider or One-Stop Operator must be submitted to the Executive Director of the Local Workforce

May 2023 Strategy Session Survey Results

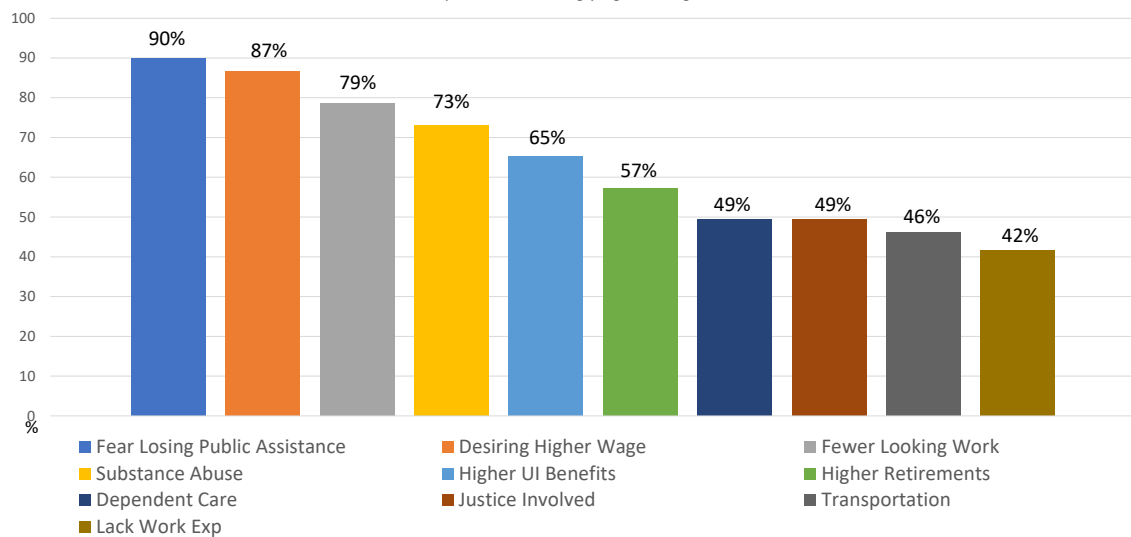


Top Rated *Individual Services* Offered by Workforce Board and AJC
(89 Respondents - Very Important)



Top Ten Rated Factors Contributing to Low Labor Force Participation

89 Respondents - Strongly Agree or Agree



Suggested Action Items

Group 1 – Fear of losing public assistance benefits; Lack of work experience

- Show examples / successes of moving off public assistance and into work - display success stories.
- Provide funding for career advancement.
- Promote the importance of having a driver's license or other I-9 acceptable identification.
- Increase employment among high school students.
- Accommodate desire of early retirees to continue working part-time.

Group 2 – Desiring Higher Wages reducing interest in low-paying jobs; Transportation

- One-year transportation stipends for those in 'low wage' jobs.
- Define low wage.
- Evaluate impact of the benefits cliff.
- Virtually Speaking webinar on benefit plans.

Group 3 – Fewer people of working age looking for employment; Justice-Involved Individuals (JIIs)

- Training and assistance for Human Resources professionals.
- Alternative work schedules.
- Diverse job offerings.
- More short-term credentials.
- Training for childcare professionals and pathway development.
- Incentives for childcare.
- More intensive support for JIIs and youth at work (e.g. on-site coaches).
- Assistance for individuals with disabilities.

Group 4 – Substance Abuse; Increased dependent care needs

- Expand partnerships with organizations serving these individuals.
- Streamline services between agencies.
- Family education and resources.
- Working with the Small Business Development Centers and DHS for existing and potential childcare owners.
- Seek additional funding – needs to be less restrictive.

Group 5 – Higher UI Benefits; Higher pace of retirements due to an aging population

- Survey to ask individuals about why they aren't working.
- Better succession planning.
- Partnerships with other boards and organizations.
- Additional grants and funding.

Other Comments / Suggestions

- Policy Changes?
- Service-Strategy Changes?
- Taskforce Members?