

**TRANSITIONAL
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
PLAN**

HIGH COUNTRY LOCAL AREA

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

Program Year 2005

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MASTER PLAN

LOCAL AREA DESCRIPTION

1. **Local Area (LA) Official Name:** Region D Workforce Development Consortium

LOCAL AREA CONTACT DATA AND ORGANIZATION

2. a. **LA Chief Elected Official:** Larry Rhodes
250 C Oakwood Road
West Jefferson, NC 28694
Chairman,
Ashe County Commissioners
336/246-9047
- b. **Alternate address for CEO:** Dan McMillan
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Jefferson, NC 28640
Ashe County Manager
(336) 219-2501
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manager@ashecountygov.com
- c. **Workforce Development Board Chair:** Lynn Graham
Director, Human Resources
Gates Rubber
101 Gates Lane
Jefferson, NC 28640
336/246-1438
lgraham@gates.com
- d. **Administrative/Fiscal Agent:** High Country Council of Governments
- e. **Local Area Director:** Carole Coates
High Country Council of Governments
PO Box 1820
Boone, NC 28607
Workforce Development Director
828/265-5434
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ccoates@regiond.org
3. **Workforce Development Board:** See Attachment A
4. **Youth Council:** See Attachment B
5. **Administrative Entity Organizational Chart:** See Attachment 1

LOCAL AREA BOUNDARIES AND POPULATION

6. **List the county/counties that comprise the Local Area.** The High Country Local Area is comprised of the counties of Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey.
7. **By county, list the July 1, 2005 and July 1, 2010 population estimates of county (ies) in the Local Area.** (Reference: North Carolina State Demographics “county/state projections” www.demog.state.nc.us or, if another source is used, identify source).

COUNTY	2005	2010
Alleghany	11,013	11,522
Ashe	25,500	26,416
Avery	18,395	19,177
Mitchell	16,164	16,665
Watauga	43,497	45,428
Wilkes	68,112	71,156
Yancey	17,774	19,316

ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS
and
SYSTEM ASSESSMENT

1. ***Describe (may be an attachment) the Local Area's oversight and monitoring procedures to be used to 1) determine that expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in the Act and the regulations; 2) determine compliance with other provisions of the Act and regulations and other applicable laws and regulations; and 3) provide technical assistance/corrective action as necessary and appropriate.***

WIA service providers submit invoices to the Local Area on a monthly basis for reimbursement. Invoices are categorized by cost category/limitations and reported expenditures are checked against these limits upon receipt by the Local Area Performance/Finance Systems Manager. Upon the receipt of the final invoice of the program year, the Manager compares end of year expenses reported with year to date expenses maintained at the Local Area to determine any discrepancies. If discrepancies are found, the Manager reconciles the difference to ensure that the Local Area's end of year expenses match those of the service provider.

The Local Area will offer technical assistance in several forms. On an as needed basis, the Local Area will host regional meetings with service providers to provide needed information and to serve as a forum where subrecipients can request clarification on issues of concern. In addition, informal technical assistance visits will be made to JobLink Centers throughout the year. During these visits, the Local Area administrative staff will review documents and systems to determine that the subrecipient is in compliance with applicable laws and regulations and will provide specific technical assistance where problems are identified. In addition, Local Area staff will conduct desk reviews of documents it receives to identify and address any potential problem areas.

The Local Area conducts formal on-site monitoring visits annually. Service providers receive advance copies of the monitoring review document to use as self-monitoring and continuous improvement tools. Formal monitoring will occur sooner and more frequently where potential serious or recurring problems are identified.

Following the review, the service provider receives a written report outlining the results, including any findings. If corrective action is indicated, the report provides instructions on how to eliminate the deficiency and gives a time frame to do so.

The Workforce Development Board, through the appropriate Board Committee, establishes corrective action procedures. If required corrective action is not taken as requested, policies are executed to include termination of contracts, if appropriate.

2. ***Describe procedures to meet the U.S. Department of Labor's goal of 70% expenditure of WIA funds for each program year on June 30th of that year.***

High Country Local Area has consistently maintained a reasonably high level of current program year expenditures. The chart below provides a historical overview of our WIA expenditure performance (excluding prior year's carryover amounts and subsequent program year youth funding received in

April). PY 2003 was the exception, with an expenditure level of 66.06% through June 30 of that program year.

Program Year	PY Total Allocations	PY Actual Expenditures	Percent Expended for PY Funds
PY 2000	1,227,913	923,921	75.24%
PY 2001	\$1,464,456	1,342,858	91.70%
PY 2002	\$2,361,190	\$1,966,261	83.27%
PY 2003	\$3,351,989	\$2,214,206	66.06%
PY 2004 (To Date through Feb. 28, 2005)	\$3,485,579	\$1,551,376	44.51%

The Local Area expects its WIA service providers to expend at least 85% of their available funds each year and it is not uncommon for them to achieve expenditure levels of 90% or greater. Workforce Development staff monitors each service provider's total WIA expenditures on a monthly basis with quarterly thresholds to prevent corrective action.

Local Area staff reviews the overall WIA expenditure reports by means of the "Blue Report" that is generated and distributed by the Division of Employment and Training. This information is analyzed each month when it is distributed by the Division. This information gives staff a fund by fund report of expenditures to determine if the Local Area is on track to meet the minimum 70% expenditure level.

Based upon our expenditure level at February 28, 2005, and obligations and plans for the remainder of the Program Year, the Local Area is confident that it will easily achieve the minimum 70% expenditure level for PY 2004 funds by June 30, 2005.

LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS

3. ***Describe the current and projected economic environment of the Local Area. Include growth occupations/businesses and those that may be in decline. Discuss in context for both adult and youth services.***

The twenty-three county region of Advantage West includes all seven of the counties in the High Country Local Area. Advantage West recently completed a five-year vision planning process, which identified ten "innovation clusters." By preparing our emerging workforce and retraining workers who have recently lost their jobs for these high demand employment clusters, the region anticipates better aligning its resources with the highest probabilities for success with better opportunities for economic and job growth throughout the region. These innovation clusters include fields related to

advanced manufacturing; communications and IT; foods; life sciences and agribusiness; retirement; arts, crafts, and design; healthcare; environment; recreation and tourism; and security.

Advantage West's 2004 Annual Report notes that the western region of the state, manufacturing-related employment makes up more than 30% of the workforce, even through traditional manufacturing continues to decline. As it declines, however, the economy is diversifying. Most significantly, the businesses in the Western North Carolina are small and micro businesses. In the twenty-three county region, more than 15,000 businesses have fewer than five employees and more than 4,500 businesses employ 5-9 workers. As the area's largest employers (those with 100+) employees saw a decrease in workers averaging 8.4%, the smallest employers had an increase of 8.3%.

The Northwest North Carolina Comprehensive Economic Development Study, which encompassed Alleghany and Ashe Counties, identified several key industry areas and strategies that the Workforce Development Board is addressing.

For both counties, the report identifies the following as targeted growth industries: health care; design; materials; transportation equipment; value-added agriculture; and hospitality. Alternative health care drew special notice. In addition, the report encourages developing workforce training programs that target the Hispanic population and workers in transition, as well as providing leadership development to the emerging workforce. The report also recommends providing training programs in the composite materials cluster and for entrepreneurs.

The Future Forward Economic Development Study targeted the counties of Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, and Wilkes, as well as counties beyond our workforce development area. The study recommended that in the area of workforce development, we focus on developing a diverse economy, including advanced business services, expanded retail and tourism, health care, education and retirement services, and globally competitive manufacturing.

The High Country Workforce Development Board itself has contracted with Corporation for a Skilled Workforce to report on the state of the region's workforce. Through focus groups, individual and small group interviews, community forums, and secondary research, the consultant team concluded that there are five industry sector drivers in the region which will continue to be healthy in the coming years: retail trade, tourism and hospitality, manufacturing, health care, and professional and business services.

Common threads run through all of these studies. Our economy is and has been changing. Historically, for most of the region, the economy has depended on manufacturing for survival. Now, service is replacing a goods producing industry. Small business and entrepreneurship define the base of the changing economy and most jobs can be expected to be created through expansion and retention strategies. What manufacturing continues to thrive has been transformed: technological advances have replaced the once familiar assembly line concept

To be specific, the High Country region benefits from a strong services industry base, but the area is not economically diverse. The retail trade, tourism, and services

industry make up approximately 55% of all jobs in the region, according to the NC Employment Security Commission. Increases in the construction and the professional and business services sectors have occurred, while manufacturing has lost a share of employment. This increase provides some diversity to the local economy and will help the region better weather a recession. The many retail, tourism, and service-oriented businesses provide low-wage and low-skilled jobs. The occupations employing the largest number of workers are those in office and administrative support, production, and food preparation. These occupational categories also have some of the lowest average annual wages for the region.

The region has low industrial diversity, which can be extremely damaging when there is a sharp downturn in a given industry. The High Country has learned this painful message with the loss of most of its textile and furniture jobs over the last five years.

However, the region is gaining jobs in other sectors, which is adding to the area's economic diversity. Growth in the finance, insurance, real estate, health care, and education sectors support high-skill and high-wage jobs. In addition, they are capable of developing spin-off businesses in areas such as information technology and research and development. Income from self-employment in the region is at a higher level than the state and nation, indicating that small business ventures and entrepreneurialism are thriving locally.

The 1998-2008 occupational projections indicate agriculture (except for agribusiness) and forestry occupations (other than the Christmas tree industry) experiencing the largest decline in occupation demand.

The implications for adults are multiple. While there are several occupational themes that turn up in most or all of these reports, they tend to be broad areas. These are areas to which we need to pay attention; however, the overarching message is that the entire nature of the economy is changing and the skill sets with which we must arm people must be much more broad than in the past. A higher level of education, more technical knowledge, "soft" skills, transferable skills, and knowledge of/training in areas such as ISO 9000, Kaizen, Six Sigma, lean manufacturing may be as important as any skill-specific knowledge a person may have.

Systemically, our regional workforce system must begin developing a strategic focus on how to increase the critical skills needed by workers in high skilled work settings. Approaches toward skill upgrades can take a variety of forms, including industry skill alliances spanning multiple firms and building career ladders both within and across industries.

To achieve these goals, it is incumbent upon our workforce professionals to stay in regular contact with leading employers and their peers to ensure that the region's workforce policy initiatives are appropriately grounded--that the issues we focus on are those of value to high growth industries in the region. By implementing Business Services Representatives and contracting with a Business Consultant on behalf of the Workforce Development Board to identify and focus on business needs and strategies, the High Country Workforce

Development Board and the workforce development professionals in our system are doing just that.

High Country employers have made it clear that they expect a higher level of education and skill development from their future employees. Occupational projections agree. The region's youth have an eye-opening experience ahead.

The region's educational attainment statistics and literacy levels, as well as feedback from employers, suggest that the basic skills required to enter and advance in the changing economy are lacking. Therefore, It is incumbent on the community at large to create awareness of opportunities to gain the required skills demanded by employers both now and in the future.

High school completion and awareness of options for further education and training are critical for today's youth. Toward this end, the Workforce Development Board's Youth Council has recently taken two dramatic steps. The first is to take control of its youth services in four counties to ensure a higher level of accountability. As part of that strategy, we have developed a youth-friendly center in the Ashe JobLink Center. Both at that location and in other counties where we provide services directly, leadership development and holistic educational workshops are held regularly (as recommended in the NWNK CEDS study). The second action of the Youth Council was to assist the Mitchell County Chamber of Commerce and Board of Education in the purchase of Futures for Kids, highly interactive career exploration software. Both the Chamber and education community believe this software will not only show young people their many career options, but will also strongly encourage them to complete their high school educations. The county's businesses have identified the drop out rate as a major issue for their future success and a strong coalition has developed to carry out an aggressive campaign around this issue. The Youth Council was convinced it could make a meaningful contribution to the development of the emerging workforce by participating in this effort.

With even more long-term goals in mind, the Workforce Development Board plans to convene community leaders throughout the region because signs point to the need for implementing a strong career/technical system that equals the currently available academic track both in quality and perception. If businesses make their needs known, education is much more likely to respond. Such a system must be grounded in mastery of skills that can be credentialed, another place where the Workforce Development system can come into play. These challenges create broad opportunities for our system to reflect market needs and to link education and workforce policies to the community's economic needs.

4. *Describe/identify the workforce investment needs of businesses, job seekers, and workers in the local area. 661.350(a)(1); 118(b)(1)(A)*

According to the Analysis of Workplace Skills Needed by Employers in High Country, businesses, regardless of type, have made it clear that their greatest workforce investment needs include workers with a high school diploma; workers with personal attributes such as being self-starters, valuing themselves and their work, and honesty; and workers with good basic skills, particularly writing, speaking, and listening. These needs are consistent throughout the region regardless of type or size of employer. While this report was conducted a number of years ago, the results of the report

continue to hold true, as we have discovered through JobLink employer focus groups and the Incumbent Worker Program grant applications that have been submitted to the High Country Workforce Development Board

New industries that enter the region tend to be technologically advanced, requiring workers to maintain the technology rather than carry out more traditional manufacturing tasks. This calls for a workforce that's ready and able to master new technological skills. Workers in general need skills upgrades to qualify them for career positions with better pay. This, too, calls for increased economic development efforts, which in turn will require the availability of even more relevant technical training opportunities. More and more, businesses express an interest in a workforce trained in lean manufacturing, Kaizen, and ISO 9000 techniques.

The workforce investment needs are mirrored in those of workers and job seekers. The incumbent workforce, is primarily in need of training in advanced technologies and process improvement/waste reduction, which is a key concern of today's employers who are in a global productivity race. The wise incumbent worker will heed the advice to continue learning for the future, since the workforce is undergoing constant and dramatic change. Workshops and courses in computer literacy are a good start. Spanish for the Workplace is another good option for our region. Incumbent workers without a high school education need to seek their diplomas in classes after-hours, some of which are offered by the employer.

Jobseekers who can lay claim to knowledge and experience in process improvement and waste reduction techniques will have an edge with any cutting-edge manufacturing firm. Serious jobseekers will want to hone their soft skills and will take advantage of any training that will help them improve job seeking and retention abilities. Beyond that, today's jobseekers must have a solid basic educational background with a good grounding in math and science. In a recent interview with the Associated Press, Microsoft's Richard Rashid expressed a concern to federal lawmakers about the lack of computer scientists. He stated that Microsoft already has jobs it can't fill and that he expects a 30% decline in computer science graduates from US schools in the next two years. This places a burden on educators, Workforce Development professionals, and business leaders to communicate more effectively with today's youth about career options and the skills they require.

Locally, Workforce Development professionals have the responsibility to foster knowledge and interest in the career clusters that have been identified through the multiple studies which have been conducted and to learn ourselves the skills and training avenues available to achieve those skills. Toward that end, the Local Area provides professional literature, technical assistance, information on professional development opportunities, sponsors training sessions, and encourages and sponsors on-site visits and field trips.

5. Describe/identify the current and projected employment opportunities in the local area [note well-paying, high volume local jobs] and job skills necessary to obtain such opportunities. 661.350(a)(2); 118(b)(1)(B); 118(b)(1)(C)

Without question, one of the employment opportunities that offers the best wages is in the nursing/allied health field. The demand for truck drivers also continues to be high

and wages are excellent, although working conditions can create retention problems. Construction and related trades are also growing exponentially.

Fields related to business administration, finance, insurance, and real estate are thriving in this area noted for its hospitality and tourism industries, second and retirement home building, and the wealth that can come with those industries. Manufacturing companies that move into the region tend to be in the advanced manufacturing arena. Retail trade is one of the highest growth industries in the region, but generally is not a high paying field. However, it can serve as an entry point for inexperienced workers and can provide opportunities for advancement into management for those with the appropriate training, experience, and motivation.

To obtain jobs in the fields of nursing, truck driving, business administration related fields, job seekers can expect to be required to obtain specific skills training of two years or less. The training required is offered at many locations in the state, including educational institutions in the region. Other health care occupations in demand include technicians and therapists in various specialty areas. These also call for post-secondary skills training, varying in length depending on the specialty or the degree of training required. The prevalent training for technicians is two years. While most therapy programs require at least a bachelor's degree, two years of training is sufficient in some fields. Because of the ever increasing demand in the allied health fields, Appalachian State University has embarked on a plan to establish an Institute for Health and Human Services which is expected to begin operations in the fall of 2006 or 2007. The Institute will incorporate three divisions: Research and Contracts; Community Outreach and Training; and Clinical Services. Initial courses anticipated to be offered include Nursing, Health Informatics; Respiratory Therapy; and Radiological Science. Having these additional health care educational opportunities offered locally will be a tremendous boon to area residents who have, in most cases, had to travel out of the region to get training for anything other than CNA, LPN, or medical assistant.

In addition, job applicants can anticipate that employers will expect the transferable skills indicated in the *Analysis of Workplace Skills Needed by Employers in High Country*. More recently, we have seen an increase in the number of employers who are requesting that applicants have experience with more advanced transferable skills, such as Kaizen, lean manufacturing, and other quality control processes.

6. ***Describe the manner in which the Local Area connects Workforce Investment Act/JobLink Career Center services to businesses. Reference specific staff involved, by title, and approximate percentage of time devoted to business liaison duties.***

WIA Business Service Representatives

Effective July 1, 2004, the High Country Local Area's policy is that each traditional provider of WIA adult/dislocated services employs at least one individual who is designated as a Business Services Representative and whose employment role is dedicated to this responsibility. These employees are expected to be highly qualified, possessing the specific skill sets called for by the positions, in order to fully engage the business community and to compel the business community to see the

public workforce development system as an equal business partner. The Business Services Representatives serve each of the seven counties in the Local Area and are housed in the region's JobLink Career Centers. At present there are five Business Service Representatives employed by WIA service providers, all of which work exclusively in this capacity. Two of these positions are full-time; the remaining ones are part-time positions.

In developing these positions, the High Country Local Area is following the recommendations of *The Mercedes and the Magnolia*, which states that businesses must be integral parts of the design and management of our workforce systems if we are to enhance our ability to train for current and future jobs. We also recognize the advice of the publication *By Design* to fully engage employers in the public workforce development system by becoming more business focused.

To ensure that this connection between the JobLink Centers and local businesses was made quickly and completely, the Business Services Representatives (BSRs) established local advisory committees of employers to identify needs, including needs for business "resource library" materials to be housed at the JobLink Centers. In addition, because of the strong emphasis on entrepreneurship in several of our counties, we are beginning to establish a small resource area in several of our centers dedicated to entrepreneurial materials.

BSRs make regular visits to individual businesses specifically to ask them what they need from the workforce system, after which they report back to their peers at the JobLink Centers. BSRs do NOT serve in the role of Job Developer, although if an employer identifies employment needs, the BSR gathers as much information as possible to pass on to appropriate JobLink staff, who can begin making appropriate referrals. Likewise, the BSR can provide valuable information to the employer about services the JobLink is able to provide; however, BSRs make the distinction that their role is not to "sell" JobLink services, but to be available to meet business needs.

To further enhance our services to the business community, Business Service Representatives sought out local business leaders to serve as mentors as we implemented this new service in our Local Area. WIA staff also began a small-scale job shadowing program with local employers this year .

Workforce Development Board Business Consultant

In addition to the JobLink Business Services Representatives, the Workforce Development Board recently contracted with a *Business Consultant* to represent the Board to local businesses and the region's economic development community. We were steadfast in our belief that this kind of position needed to be filled by someone with a strong business background rather than by someone with a history in workforce development. This position is reinforced by an article in the December 8, 2003, issue of the *Employment and Training Reporter*, which stated that "For workforce officials...to attempt to market their programs to employers without professional and objective help is like 'taking a knife to a gunfight.'" The article points out that a business-to-business approach is needed to appeal to employers to be able to counter their preconceptions about working with government programs and that we, the workforce development community, are so close to our products and services that we don't know what will work with the private sector.

As a result, we contracted with a professional with over thirty-five years of experience in management in the private sector. The specific intent of the contract is to build a connection between area business and the Workforce Development Board and its Workforce Investment Act services. The expected result is enhanced outreach to the region's business community and an improved working relationship between the Workforce Development Board and the private sector. Among other responsibilities, the Business Consultant will serve as a liaison with the Business Service Representatives; will work with private sector Human Resource Directors; will conduct employer needs surveys to assist the Workforce Development Board in identifying demand and high growth occupations.

This position became effective April 1, 2005 and is effective through June 30, 2006 with the option of renewal contingent upon fund availability and satisfactory performance. As a contracted position, we do not specify number of hours dedicated to the position; rather we designate specific expectations within given timeframes.

7. *Provide a description of how the local Workforce Development Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants. (from Workforce Investment Act – Section 118)*

Continuous improvement and customer satisfaction are complementary goals of the High Country Workforce Development Board and are integral to the successful provision of WIA services. Likewise, the success of WIA is key to a flourishing JobLink Career Center. Each center's management team provides the benefit of collaborative resources for WIA service providers. The management team also sponsors customer focus groups and surveys for both job and training seekers and business customers. The results of these tools help WIA service providers as well as other JobLink partners to improve their services to both groups of customers.

In addition, the Workforce Development Board's Program Accountability Committee has oversight of WIA service providers' performance. As part of its responsibility, the committee sets standards and reviews progress of service providers on at least a quarterly basis. These reviews include USDOL's performance measures reports, which incorporate customer satisfaction surveys. The committee is responsible for putting in place procedures to assist providers if they have difficulty meeting their goals. These procedures include corrective action as needed, including contract termination for continued non-performance.

The Workforce Development Board's Continuous Improvement Committee oversees the performance of the JobLink Career Center system as a whole, including continuous improvement and customer satisfaction. For the past three years, the committee has had a professional services contract for continuous improvement/customer satisfaction mystery shopping at all of the region's centers. As part of this contract, the contractor provides an in-depth written report to the Board and to the centers. The contractor also meets with partner representatives from all of the centers to review the findings and assists them in developing an action plan, which then becomes incorporated into their business plans for the coming year. The

action plans are designed to respond to the issues the centers themselves identify as most pressing and serve as a measurement guide for the Continuous Improvement Committee. As core partners of the JobLink Centers, eligible providers of WIA services are a fundamental part of this process, both as staff who are “shopped,” and as those who prepare and implement the action plans.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE ANALYSIS

8. *Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area. 118(b)(4); 661.350(a)(5)*

Except for training provided on-site by the employer, the bulk of adult and dislocated worker actual skills training opportunities rests with the region’s three community colleges. A branch of Caldwell Community College serves Watauga County; however, most skills training must be obtained at the main campus or at one of the neighboring community colleges. Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties are served by Mayland Community College, while Alleghany, Ashe, and Wilkes Counties are served by Wilkes Community College.

Appalachian State University also serves the region with many community college students transferring to ASU to complete degree requirements. Business and industrial technology are just two of the curricular areas designed to fill skill needs. Although not often used by WIA participants, Lees-McRae College, a private liberal arts college located in Avery County, provides another opportunity for higher education in our region.

Popular training options among dislocated workers have been nursing and truck driving, both of which have provided excellent career opportunities at high wages.

Skills training opportunities at Mayland Community College include accounting, electrical/electronics technology, welding, electronics engineering technology, nursing, auto body repair, horticulture, basic law enforcement, industrial maintenance, business administration, information systems, cosmetology, manicuring instructor, cosmetology instructor, nursing assistant, criminal justice technology, office systems technology (with or without medical concentration, early childhood associate, esthetics technology and esthetics technology instructor, marketing and retailing, forest management technology, computer engineering technology, cosmetology instructor training, medical assisting, physical therapy and physical therapy assistant, medical assisting, carpentry, plumbing, truck driver training.

Wilkes Community College offers academic programs in the following disciplines: Arts & Sciences, Business & Public Service Technologies, Health Sciences, and Industrial & Engineering. A sampling of course offerings within these divisions includes accounting, architectural technology, business administration, computer science/information systems/programming, auto body repair, nursing, basic law enforcement, culinary technology, criminal justice, corrections, early childhood associate/operator, hotel and restaurant management, information systems, dental assisting, human service technology, medical assisting, speech-language pathology, automotive systems, broadcasting and production, building construction, horticulture, industrial

maintenance/controls, electronics engineering, heavy equipment and transportation technology, heating/ventilation/air conditioning, machining technology.

9. Describe the manner in which the local area accesses current labor market data/trends for use by staff and participants.

High Country Local Area takes advantage of a variety of labor market information tools for ourselves, our WIA service providers, JobLink partners, and JobLink customers, whether job/training seekers or employers. We utilize labor market information made available to the public and workforce development professionals by the Labor Market Division of the Employment Security Commission. The Local Area has sponsored training sessions by LMI staff for our local area workforce development staff on how to access and use available labor market information and how to assist customers in using that information to make career planning choices. The Local Area also subscribes to USA Today, Employment and Training Reporter, and National Association of Workforce Development Professional publications, all of which provide excellent labor market analyses and trends. We purchase and discuss transcripts from relevant news National Public Radio programming. Throughout the year, when we come across applicable information that will be helpful either to staff or to participants, we make it available to JobLink staff and/or the public, as appropriate. Again, this may be in the form of literature, videotapes, workshops, websites, tv or radio programming. The Local Area Plans to utilize Career Compass as a labor market tool with customers upon completion of training in the summer of 2005.

10. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of Workforce Development related youth activities in the Local Area, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. 661.350(a)(7); 118(b)(6)

The Youth Council of the High Country Workforce Development Board has conducted a survey of organizations that provide services to youth across the region each year since 2001 and has annually produced a regional Youth Service Directory from the results. The directory provides information regarding the type of activities offered by the organizations that provide services to youth and is provided to all agencies who respond to the survey as well as to other community organizations that request the directory or who may benefit from having it as a resource.

To encourage quality services to youth, the Youth Council implemented a self-evaluation process with a star-rating system. Those organizations that earned the highest ratings were recognized by the Youth Council at a Workforce Development Board meeting and were featured in the local newspaper as well in the next year's Evaluation application. This program provided an excellent evaluation and self-improvement tool for those organizations who sought to be recognized. Unfortunately, the process proved too cumbersome to be self-sustaining. During its tenure, however, the participating organizations did identify strengths as well as challenges and gaps in services that they began to fill.

The types of services available in the region include the following: residential facilities for troubled youth; alternative education programs for pregnant and parenting teens; outdoor challenge/leadership programs; after-school and weekend programs for in-school, at-risk youth; vocational training programs in the local school systems; various

work experience and job shadowing programs; youth service clubs; recreational and athletic programs; tutoring and mentoring services; programs for pregnant teens; and employment and training services for economically disadvantaged youth.

The availability of the above programs varies by county and by ease of accessibility. In a rural region such as ours, youth who live in the far reaches of the counties and who do not have ready access to transportation are often at a disadvantage, particularly when it comes to extracurricular school activities and community recreational opportunities. The Northwest NC Comprehensive Economic Development Study pointed to the need for increased availability of youth activities in both Alleghany and Ashe Counties. The presence of the Get REAL Youth Services through WIA in those counties, with the availability of the centralized Youth Center in Ashe County and the multiple opportunities for recreational and leadership activities which are offered as incentives is, therefore, a benefit to the entire community, providing an enhancement to the economic development efforts of that portion of the region.

There are still gaps in services, particularly recreational opportunities, especially safe and healthy options for youth in the evenings and on weekends. While these may be beyond the scope of WIA or the Youth Council, they are areas where advocacy can play a role.

With the aggressive effort of the High Country Youth Council to improve the quality of WIA youth services through staff development and marketing, both the Mayland Community College Workforce Development Department and the youth staff of the High Country COG have become credible and successful providers of youth services in the area, broadening the scope and range of their services and increasing their numbers of active participants. Other community organizations now recognize these providers as viable partners in their efforts to make a real difference in the lives of young people. As a result, we are seeing an increase in referrals, volunteers, donations, and general enthusiasm. This kind of community collaboration has in turn infused renewed excitement and new life into the program.

11. *Provide a description of how faith-based and community-based organizations currently or may play an enhanced role in workforce development for the Local Area to include any amount of funds contracted with faith-based organizations (update as applicable).*

The High Country Workforce Development Board currently contracts with a community-based organization to provide Workforce Investment Act services in two of our seven counties. In every JobLink Center, a wide variety of community-based organizations play leadership roles and belong to the Center Management Teams. Examples are community action agencies, Blue Ridge Development Center, Chambers of Commerce, domestic violence centers, and Partnerships for Children. Even more participate as workforce development partners and referral sources, including residential facilities for troubled youth, homeless shelters, hunger coalitions, Big Brother/Sister organizations, juvenile crime prevention organizations, literacy councils, etc.

Faith-based organizations are excellent referral sources and Workforce Development professionals sometimes make presentations to them or submit written materials to their publications. Pregnancy prevention organizations have been a particularly strong referral source in our region recently. Interdenominational ministry programs with food

banks and clothing closets have long had a two-way referral process and have sometimes served as program worksites.

At this point, we do not contract any funds to faith-based organizations; however, we are currently working to establish a non-financial working relationship with Program for the Rural Carolinas, a workforce development program sponsored by the North Wilkesboro District United Methodist Church.

**ADULT AND DISLOCATED
WORKER ACTIVITIES**

ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

1. **Describe the Local Area's JobLink Career Center system by identifying JobLink Center(s) location, chartering status and type; on-site partners (identify funding source as listed in 662.200); one-stop operator and method of selection; provider of WIA intensive services and method of selection; whether youth services provider is on-site and; whether training is available other than by voucher. Complete and attach Attachment C. Duplicate the form as necessary.**

INTENSIVE SERVICES/SELF-SUFFICIENCY

2. **Provide a description of:**
 - a) **the criteria to be used by the Local Board to determine if funds allocated to the Local Area for adult employment and training activities under WIA sections 133(b)(2)(A) or (3) are limited, and:**
 1. Funds allocated to the Local Area adult employment and training activities are determined to be limited when 80% of service provider funds which are budgeted for customer services have been spent or committed to meet customer needs. Contractors will contact the Local Area in writing in order for the Local Area to begin pursuing additional funds. Local Area funds have not been deemed limited during the past two funding years, PY' 03 and PY'04.
 2. If multiple adults need WIA services when funding has been determined to be limited, WIA service providers will have a short waiting period to ensure that those most in need get priority for services. At the end of the waiting period, all applications deemed appropriate will be reviewed, prioritized, and immediately enrolled and served based on priority and available funds. All others will be provided core services and will remain on the waiting list for intensive and training services, which will be reviewed as funds become available.
 3. As long as there is a waiting list, any additional applicants must go through the most in needs process. The waiting list/priority of service process remains in effect as long as 80% or more of your funds are obligated (per definition above) **OR** as long as the number of people requesting service outweighs available resources, whichever comes first. When the available funding reduces the obligation percentage to below 80% **and** exceed the demand on the waiting list, everyone on the waiting list can be served and the waiting list is dissolved.
 - A. Service providers may set the waiting period to be anytime between 7 and 14 calendar days.
 - B. In the event that a shorter waiting period is needed (class registration Deadline) permission must be granted by the Local Area (contact Don Sherrill or Ruby Greene).

1. Most In needs Form will be used to determine priority for service. It is to be used only after funds have been determined to be limited according to one of the criteria above.
2. Twenty points will be given for each of the following categories: low income, public assistance recipient, and veteran.
3. The Most In Needs Form will include a range of points which qualifies individuals as Most in Need, In Need, Less in Need, which will be served in that order.

b) if the Local Area funds are deemed limited, provide justification based on most recent two years of actual expenditures.

Local Area funds have not been deemed limited during the last two years of expenditures.

3. Describe the Workforce Development Board's criteria for determining if employment leads to self-sufficiency. At a minimum, such criteria must provide that self-sufficiency means employment that pays at least the lower living standard income level, as defined in WIA at Section 101(24). Self-sufficiency for a dislocated worker may be defined in relation to a percentage of the layoff wage. Separate definitions are required for adults and dislocated workers.

The determination that employment leads to self-sufficiency will be based on the following characteristics

- Adult Self-Sufficiency: 200% of low-income guidelines provided by DET and availability of family health insurance benefits, and not receiving public assistance, to include housing, transportation, childcare, food stamps.
- Dislocated Worker Self-Sufficiency: 80% of previous compensation level and availability of family health insurance or Adult Self-Sufficiency definition, whichever is higher.

4. WIA legislation requires the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to pay the cost of training provided with Adult and Dislocated Worker funds. Provide the Local Area's ITA policy and include:

- (a) **dollar limits**
- (b) **time limits**
- (c) **degrees or certificates allowed (Associate degree, Bachelor's degree, other.)**
- (d) **procedures for determining case by case exceptions for training that may be allowed**
- (e) **period of time for which ITAs are issued – examples, semester, school year, short term (less than 2 years) course of study, long term (2 or more years) course of study.**

- (a) The maximum amount to be spent with WIA Title I funds on training through Individual Training Accounts is \$4300 per customer per year. The maximum lifetime amount to be spent on an ITA is \$8600 per customer with WIA Title I funds. The actual ITA expenditure will not exceed the cost of the training program (tuition, books and fees) not paid by other grants.
- (b) The Workforce Development Board's primary intent was to pay for training up to two years through the ITA process, acknowledging that some two year degree programs may take longer than the normal two years to complete and should be allowed. Training to become a Registered Nurse is an example.
- (c) The Board expects that completers of ITA training services will leave the Program with a community college associate degree, diploma or certificate or a bachelors degree if approved for longer training or any state, national, or industry recognized certification, diploma or licensure.
- (d) The Board acknowledges that longer-term training (four year degree programs) should be allowed. The Board has directed staff to review requests for approval of four year degree programs on a case by case basis to insure the programs meet the criteria established in the Occupational Demand Areas for our Local Area. WIA Service Providers may request approval for other occupations on a case by case basis.
- (e) ITA's are issued for training on a semester by semester basis. Customers are made aware that funding changes from year to year may affect WIA's ability to fund training for the entire training time.

5. *Provide Local Workforce Development Board policies on supportive services for adults and dislocated workers, including needs-related payments (i.e., amount, duration, qualifying criteria) as Attachment D. Detail changes to services in the past two program years to include expansion or decrease in services.*

In Program Year 2004, the Local Area placed annual and lifetime limits on supportive services other than childcare and transportation. Adults and dislocated workers are limited to \$250 per year with a lifetime limit of \$500. The Local Area does allow for a one-time exception to these limits upon approval by Local Area staff. Supportive services policy is included as Attachment D.

High Country Local Area is in the process of developing a needs-related policy and will be submitted upon approval by the Workforce Development Board.

6. **Describe use of on-the-job training (OJT) in the Local Area. Include a copy of the Local Area's OJT policies as Attachment E. If OJT is not used in the Local Area, detail the reasons or describe when such plans will be incorporated into the Local Area's services to include a timeline.**

High Country Local Area encourages local contractors to include on-the-job training as a vital part of their service mix to both job seeker and business customers. The Workforce Development Board Business Consultant along with the local provider's Business Services Representatives work closely with Economic Development Commissions and Chambers of Commerce to include On-The-Job Training as an additional resource when recruiting new business or assisting existing businesses. High Country Local Area staff is currently working with the NC Workforce Development Training Center to schedule on-the-job training for all service provider staff in our area.

The Local Area OJT Policy is included as Attachment E.

7. **Describe methods the Local Area has used to increase enrollments of Adult and Dislocated Worker participants. Provide explanation if the Local Area has not shown an increase in enrollments over the past two years.**

The Strategic Plan Modification for PY'04 included an expectation to increase enrollments. The Workforce Development Board had expressed its desire to add an alternative service provider to both increase the number of enrollments in program activities and to have a comparison of program performance across the board. This goal has been accomplished with the addition of Connectinc. through a demonstration project in which they are providing both case management and follow-up services in our Local Area. At the same time, the Local Area increased the enrollment expectations of existing service providers. In addition, the Local Area has hired additional staff to enable it to take a more proactive role, providing technical assistance to service providers to ensure that they fully understand the breadth of services they can offer. We are again increasing performance goals for Program Year 2005.

Program Year	Total Adults and DWs Served	Percent Increase from Prior Year	Cumulative Increase from PY 2000
PY 2000	409	N/A	N/A
PY 2001	588	43.76%	43.76%
PY 2002	755	28.40%	84.60%
PY 2003	890	17.88%	117.60%
PY 2004	1007 (to date) 1250 (goal)	14%	146.21%
PY 2005 Goal	1875	50%	267%

The chart above shows High Country LA's WIA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker service totals for every program year since PY 2000 including our current program year service levels to date and our projected goals for PY 2005.

The High Country Local Area has placed annual Adult and Dislocated Worker enrollment expectations on Adult and Dislocated Worker service providers. The Local Area expects that providers attain at least 85% of their enrollment goal to be eligible for continued funding as Adult and Dislocated Worker service providers. Our target goal for PY 2004 is to have approximately 1,250 Adult and Dislocated Workers receiving Title I WIA services during the year. To date we have served 1,007 customers, reaching 80% of our annual goal. We expect to achieve at least 90% of this goal by year's end.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES – ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS

8. Please answer sections a) and b).

a) Using the charts below, indicate the Local Area's PY 2003 performance goal, actual performance and variance for each of the Adult and Dislocated Worker performance measures.

Adult Performance Measure	PY 2003 Goal	PY 2003 Actual	Variance (Actual/Goal)
Entered Unsubsidized Employment	77.92%	80.60%	103.44%
Employment Retention Rate at Six Months	85.76%	96.55%	112.58%
Average Earning Change in Six Months	\$3,809.57	\$2,862.62	75.14%
Employment & Credential Rate	28.86%	61.11%	211.75%

Dislocated Worker Performance Measure	PY 2003 Goal	PY 2003 Actual	Variance (Actual/Goal)
Entered Unsubsidized Employment	78.22%	93.15%	119.09%
Employment Retention Rate at Six Months	90.57%	96.55%	109.57%
Earnings Replacement Rate in Six Months	97.50%	113.04%	115.94%
Employment & Credential Rate	51.55%	75.44%	146.34%

b) Briefly discuss steps being taken to promote continuous improvement of the Local Area's Adult and Dislocated Worker programs by addressing each measure where the Local Area's goal was not met. Responses should be specific in nature to each unmet goal.

Review current PY 2004 goals and discuss improvements noted to date over PY 2003 actual performance.

The only Adult and Dislocated Worker measure that was not met or exceeded in the PY 2003 Performance Year was the Average Adult Earnings Change in Six Months. The Local Area continues to stress with our service providers the

need to help customers achieve their potential earnings. Case managers have been given extensive training and reading materials regarding labor market needs and potential earnings. The Local Area has scheduled performance training for WIA youth staff and WIA adult and dislocated worker staff in May of 2005. The Local Area has a number of new staff and we believe this training will greatly benefit experienced as well as newer staff as we enter a new realm of performance with common performance measures and as we continue to contend with existing performance measures during the current year.

DATA VALIDATION

9. ***Describe the Local Area's formal file structure policy to include a file checklist with Division of Employment & Training field codes for all participant files. The policy must be in accordance with DET LA Issuance 2004-17.***

All WIA customer files for all WIA customers served since July 1, 2004 are arranged based on the file structure checklists developed by Local Area staff. The High Country File Structure Checklist for each cohort is attached along with an abbreviated list with elements, sources and codes.

The High Country Local Area has committed considerable time and resources to help our service providers effectively prepare files for data validation. In October 2004, the Local Area required that case managers check exited customers in the PY 2003 Data Validation Pool for consistency in meeting the data validation expectations at that time. Unfortunately, we were not in the sample selected for the PY 2003 Data Validation review.

In January, 2005, the Local Area held a day long training session on data validation and the new customer file structure during which labels containing the data element codes for all of the WIA cohorts (adult, dislocated worker, younger youth, and older youth) were printed. Statewide data element charts and Local Area Issuances 2004-15, 2004-16, and 2004-17, all of which are related to data validation efforts were also distributed at that session. In addition, the local area purchased divided files for case managers who needed them.

At the training, service providers were instructed to bring files for all WIA customers served since July 1, 2004, into compliance with the new Local Area file structure and to label needed verification for each of the appropriate elements by March 15, 2005.

The Local Area also hired an Accountability Specialist to help establish and maintain the system. As part of her on-going responsibility, she reviews service providers' compliance with the Division and Local Area policies.

Data Validation Checklists are on the following pages.

HIGH COUNTRY LA - ADULT PARTICIPANT FILE CHECKLIST

Participant Name: _____

Social Security #: _____

SECTION 1	SECTION 2
<p>_____ Case Notes/Activity Notes _____ Counseling/Post Employment Follow-up Notes</p> <p><u>Workforce Plus Forms:</u> _____ Case Profile at Exit _____ Signed & Dated WF+ Intake Form _____ 1st Intensive (Case Man.) Activity Screen _____ First Training Activity Screen _____ Job Referral Activity Screen _____ Leave Program Form _____ Exit WIA Screen _____ Employment Plan at Exit _____ 1st Quarter Supplemental Data Screen _____ 3rd Quarter Supplemental Data Screen _____ LA approved Sources of Supplemental Data for 1st and 3rd Qtrs after exit</p>	<p><u>Eligibility Verification Items:</u> _____ Social Security Number (signed card) _____ Date of Birth _____ Citizenship/Eligibility to Work _____ Proof of Residence _____ Selective Service Compliance _____ Core Services Received /WIA Eligibility Sheet _____ UI Records _____ Lay-off Notice/Letter/Announcement</p> <p><u>Most in Needs/Other Verification</u> _____ Most in Needs Form(when funding is limited) _____ Veteran Status _____ Public Assistance (TANF, GA, RCA SSI) _____ Food Stamps _____ Low Income (for six-month period prior to application and does not exceed federal Poverty Level Income Guidelines) _____ Family Size Verification _____ Other Needs/Qualifications _____ Disability Verification</p>
SECTION 3	SECTION 4
<p><u>WIA Orientation/Employment Plans</u> _____ Employment Plan Updates _____ Individual Employment Plan _____ WIA Orientation/Customer Rights Form _____ Applicant Responsibilities Form _____ Consent for Release of Information Form</p>	<p><u>Assessment/Core Services Documents:</u> _____ Interest Inventory _____ Basic Skills Test _____ CLW/Careerscope _____ TABE _____ Interview _____ _____ Other Assessments _____ _____ Assessment & Recommendations Summary</p>
SECTION 5	SECTION 6
<p><u>Participant Expenditures:</u> _____ Mileage/Travel Reimbursement Forms _____ Day Care Attendance/Reimbursement Forms _____ Unusual Expense Pre-Approval Form _____ Other Supportive Service _____ Cost Authorizations _____ Purchase Orders</p>	<p><u>Participant Training/ITA Services:</u> _____ Attendance Sheets _____ Grades/Transcripts _____ Training Schedules _____ ITAs/FAAs/Budgets/Purchase Orders (Staple each semester together with PO on top) _____ Voucher Control Log _____ Financial Award Analysis _____ Signed/Dated Scholarship Award Policy _____ Copy of Credential</p>
SECTION 7	SECTION 8
<p><u>Work Experience:</u> _____ Signed and Completed Time Sheets _____ Worker Evaluations _____ Job Description _____ Tax Forms (W-4 and I-9) _____ Work Experience Contract _____ Signed and Completed Worksite agreement</p>	<p><u>On-the Job Training</u> _____ Timesheets _____ Worker Evaluations _____ OJT Invoices _____ Training Plan _____ Job Description</p> <p>_____ Contract _____ Pre-Awards Check List _____ Completed and Signed OJT Certificate</p>

HIGH COUNTRY LA - YOUNGER YOUTH PARTICIPANT FILE CHECKLIST

Participant Name: _____ Social Security Number: _____

SECTION 1	SECTION 2
<p><u>Workforce Plus Forms:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Client Profile after Exit _____ Signed and Dated Intake Form _____ 1ST Activity Screen (Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling) _____ Employment Plan after Exit _____ Job Referral Form _____ Leave Program Form _____ Other Reason for Exit Documents _____ Outcomes Form _____ Exit WIA Form _____ Supplemental Data 1st Quarter after exit _____ Supplemental Data 3rd Quarter after exit 	<p><u>Eligibility Verification Items:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Birth Certificate (date of birth and citizenship) _____ Social Security Number (signed card) _____ Proof of Residence _____ Selective Service Compliance _____ High School Diploma/GED <u>Low Income:</u> _____ Public Assistance (TANF, GA, RCA, or SSI) _____ Individual/Family Income (for 6-month period prior to application and does not exceed federal Poverty Level Income Guidelines) _____ Number in Family _____ Food Stamps _____ Foster Child (not a family member = family of one for income eligibility) _____ Disability (not a family member = family of one for income eligibility) <u>Barrier Category Documentation:</u> (must be in one or more of the following categories) _____ Deficient in Basic Literacy Skills (below 8.9 grade level) _____ School Drop Out Score/Results Used _____ Homeless, Runaway, or Foster Child _____ Pregnant or Parenting Youth _____ Offender _____ Requires Additional Assistance _____ Applicant Statement
SECTION 3	SECTION 4
<p><u>Orientation/Assessment Documents:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Get Real Application _____ Orientation/Participant Rights Form _____ Consent For Release of Information Form _____ Liability Waiver _____ Youth Responsibilities Form _____ Referral Form (if applicable) _____ Interest Inventory _____ Basic Skills Assessment (if below 8.9 grade level) _____ WR Assessments (Transition/Job Getting & Keeping) _____ Other Assessments 	<p><u>Training and Career Goals:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ My Personal Strengths & Skills Inventor/ ISS _____ Work Readiness Skills _____ My Personal Goals and Service Plan _____ Youth Program Goal Setting and Outcomes _____ Youth Goal LA Approved Documentation _____ Other Toolkit forms
SECTION 5	SECTION 6
<p><u>Participant Records:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Case Notes/Activity Notes/ Exit Follow-up Notes 	<p><u>Participant Expenditures:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Mileage Reimbursement Forms _____ Day Care Attendance/Reimbursement Forms _____ Training Expenses _____ Incentives _____ Unusual Expenses Approval Form _____ Other Expenses
SECTION 7	SECTION 8
<p><u>Work Experience:</u> (To be filed in order by each Work Experience)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Timesheets/Check Recipient Verification _____ Worker Evaluations _____ Job Description _____ Work Experience Contract _____ Worksite Agreement _____ Tax Forms (I9, W4, NC4) 	<p><u>Participant Correspondence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Attendance Records _____ Financial Aid Documentation _____ Training Schedules _____ Transcripts _____ Credentials Received _____ Verification of Employment at Exit _____ Post WIA Placement/Retention Verification _____ Miscellaneous Information

HIGH COUNTRY LA - OLDER YOUTH PARTICIPANT FILE CHECKLIST

Participant Name: _____ *Social Security Number:* _____

SECTION 1	SECTION 2
<p><u>Workforce Plus Forms:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Case Profile at Exit _____ Signed & Dated Intake Form _____ 1st Activity (Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling) _____ Employment Plan after Exit _____ Activity Forms _____ Job Referral Form _____ Leave Program Form _____ Other Reason for Exit Documents _____ Outcomes Form _____ Exit WIA Form _____ Supplemental Data at exit _____ Supplemental Data 1st Quarter after exit _____ Supplemental Data 3rd Quarter after exit 	<p><u>Eligibility Verification Items:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Birth Certificate (date of birth and citizenship) _____ Social Security Number (signed card) _____ Proof of Residence _____ Selective Service Compliance/Veteran Status _____ High School Diploma/GED <u>Low Income:</u> _____ Public Assistance (TANF, GA, RCA, or SSI) _____ Individual/Family Income (for 6-month period prior to application and does not exceed federal Poverty Level Income Guidelines) _____ Number in Family _____ Food Stamps _____ Foster Child (not a family member = family of one for income eligibility) _____ Disability (not a family member = family of one for income eligibility) <u>Barrier Category Documentation:</u> (must be in one or more of the following categories) _____ Deficient in Basic Literacy Skills (below 8.9 grade level) _____ School Drop Out _____ Homeless, Runaway, or Foster Child _____ Pregnant or Parenting Youth _____ Offender _____ Requires Additional Assistance
SECTION 3	SECTION 4
<p><u>Orientation/Assessment Documents:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Get Real Application _____ Orientation/Participant Rights Form _____ Consent For Release of Information Form _____ Youth Responsibilities Form _____ Referral Form (if applicable) _____ Interest Inventory _____ Basic Skills Assessment _____ WR Assessments (Transition/Job Getting & Keeping) _____ Other Assessments 	<p><u>Training and Career Goals:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ My Personal Strengths & Skills Inventor/ ISS _____ Work Readiness Skills _____ My Personal Goals and Service Plan _____ Youth Program Goal Setting and Outcomes _____ Other Toolkit forms
SECTION 5	SECTION 6
<p><u>Participant Records:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Case Notes/Activity Notes/ Exit Follow-up Notes 	<p><u>Participant Expenditures:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Mileage Reimbursement Forms _____ Day Care Attendance/Reimbursement Forms _____ Training Expenses _____ Incentives _____ Unusual Expenses Approval Form _____ Other
SECTION 7	SECTION 8
<p><u>Work Experience:</u> (To be filed in order by each Work Experience)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Timesheets/Check Recipient Verification _____ Worker Evaluations _____ Job Description _____ Work Experience Contract _____ Worksite Agreement _____ Tax Forms (I9, W4, NC4) 	<p><u>Participant Correspondence:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _____ Attendance Records _____ Financial Aid Documentation _____ Training Schedules _____ Transcripts _____ Credentials Received _____ Verification of Employment at Exit _____ Post WIA Placement/Retention Verification _____ Miscellaneous Information

**YOUTH
ACTIVITIES**

COMPREHENSIVE YEAR ROUND SERVICES TO YOUTH

1. ***Describe the Local Area's process, and resulting product, to identify, describe and assess the type of youth activities and services available in the Local Area. How is this information kept up to date?***

Over the past few years the Local Area has surveyed the region to collect information on services provided to all youth, ages birth to 18. Information is then summarized and included in the High Country Local Area Youth Services Resource Directory. Information displayed in the Directory includes the Organization/Agency Name, Phone, Address, Ages of Youth Served, Services Offered, and Fees. The Directory is then made available to all agencies with a listing in the Directory as well as to any others who request copies. The Local Area Directory has typically been updated on an annual basis. In the past, we have relied on Youth Council members and WIA service providers to request information from service providers. This has resulted in a somewhat uneven collection method. In future years, the Local Area anticipates contracting this service out to ensure complete data collection and more timely dissemination without disruption of other Local Area duties.

2. ***Describe how each of the ten required elements will be made available to youth. If services are to be provided by referral, indicate the specific local agencies and organization with which the Local Area has developed referral agreements.***

A description of WIA Youth Program Elements is provided as Attachment F. Local Areas may detail how the ten program elements will be made available by providing a narrative or by completing Attachment G – "Local Area Youth Program Elements Form".

See Attachment G.

INTEGRATING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

3. ***Describe strategies being used to make youth development a central part of the Local Area's youth program design and service delivery.***

Youth development refers to the ongoing process in which young people are engaged and invested. In the High Country Local Area, a central part of our services is providing supportive environments while promoting positive development for our youth. Staff use many routes to enhance the ability of our young people to successfully make the transition into economic self sufficiency, responsible adulthood, and engaged citizenry.

Strategies being used recognize the ten WIA youth program elements to include monthly workshops, volunteer opportunities, caring adults, rewards for accomplishments, and ongoing youth engagement. Youth development is an inevitable process; with exposure to our services, we hope to improve the odds that the development of our WIA youth participants is a positive experience.

Because of the concern that the staff providing youth services did not have a background in adolescent development, the Local Area provided long-term professional development and technical assistance with highly qualified professional consultants and training materials over the past several years. Even with that training, the Workforce Development Board's Youth Council wanted more assurance that that developmental needs were being met. Ultimately, the Youth Council made a change in service providers with the explicit expectation that staff have a training and/or experience compatible with youth developmental strategies. This is an area that the Local Area is monitoring closely. Having a real program design--one that incorporates youth developmental strategies--is the core of our region's RFP process. A proposal that does not have a strong response to this part of the RFP is considered non-responsive and is not considered for funding.

The Local Area will continue to provide training for WIA youth staff to ensure that youth developmental needs are being met with our current participants and other targeted populations. The Local Area also expects WIA youth staff to participate in a minimum of sixty hours of WIA-specific professional training each year, with a direct focus on youth services to enhance their professional development.

NEW YOUTH VISION

4. *Describe steps the Local Area is taking to increase service levels to out-of-school youth, with specific attention given to services to school dropouts.*

The Local Area has been awarded a special grant to work strictly with youth who are school dropouts which will automatically increase our service levels for this population. Our goal is to assist youth with work based learning while working towards a GED or diploma. Youth staff have also collected dropout lists from each of the high schools and are making efforts to contact as many dropouts as possible and provide assistance to those who are eligible and suitable for both WIA and the Special Demonstration Grant. Staff have also formed relationships with the

community colleges and are receiving referrals get information about obtaining their GED or diploma. Youth staff also work with the local high school counselors and receive referrals regarding youth who are at risk of dropping out and of those who have already dropped out of school.

The Local Area has also placed more emphasis on the out-of-school youth population by establishing the requirement for the 2004 Program Year that at least 50% of youth funds be spent on this population.

5. a) *Describe the Local Area's steps to focus service on the neediest youth to include youth in foster care, those aging out of foster care, youth offenders and children of incarcerated parents and migrant youth.*

Each of our youth case managers has met with their local NC LINKS coordinator in an effort to collaborate and meet the needs of our youth who are in and who have aged out of foster care. Currently, we are working with several youth who are involved in the foster care system and

will continue to partner with the NC LINKS program in order to serve additional suitable youth. Youth staff have also contacted local juvenile officers to provide information regarding our youth services and encourage probation officers to refer youth offenders to us as a part of their probation.

Currently our Local Area does not have a specific outreach for children of incarcerated parents, or migrant youth. Neither of these areas has been identified as a targeted need in our region. However, our services are fully available and accessible to these youth as well as to others.

- b) *Describe the Local Area's strategies to promote collaboration between the local workforce development system, education, human services, juvenile justice, and others to better serve youth that are most in need and have significant barriers to employment, and to successfully connect them to education and training opportunities that lead to successful employment.***

As mentioned earlier, youth staff have formed ongoing relationships with various human service agencies (such as NC LINKS) to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our youth customers to the greatest extent possible. Staff have also formed strong relationships in the education community both at the local high schools and community colleges. They receive referrals from educators and make referrals for training and education as well, which is critical when serving the out-of-school youth population. WIA often provides scholarship assistance to youth who do not receive the PELL grant, in addition to providing assistance with travel and childcare in an effort to help participants successfully complete their training. Youth also participate in workshops and team building activities to help them become employable find suitable jobs. As our area begins on-the-job training for youth, additional opportunities for successful employment should become available.

Participation by representatives from these organizations on the Board's Youth Council has also been an important ingredient in promoting collaboration and ensuring that other organizations are aware of the opportunities available through the workforce development system. In addition, our youth services staff have, in some cases, developed local advisory groups composed of such groups to help in outreach and recruitment at the grassroots level. In other cases, youth services staff have made presentations to such groups to provide awareness of services and open doors of communication.

YOUTH COUNCILS

6. *List the Youth Council's top three priorities for the twelve month period July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006.*

1. Follow through and monitor the Futures for Kids project while being available for assistance to that project as needed.

2. Assist each school system with the development of Graduation Posters that provide information regarding the NC graduation requirements and Focused Courses of Study.
3. Continuation of the Youth Services Resource Directory.

7. Describe how the Local Area ensures both active and on-going youth participation in the work of the Youth Council.

As the Division is aware, this is an area where the Local Area has historically had and continues to have difficulty. However, we are initiating a plan which we hope will reverse that trend. The Youth Council and Youth service providers will encourage WIA participants to attend and participate in selected meetings throughout the year by providing incentives to youth who participate. At those meetings that include youth, we will ensure a youth-friendly atmosphere to promote continued participation.

In addition to the above effort, youth service providers share all relevant information from youth focus groups that assist with the Youth Council's direction.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES – YOUTH

8. Please answer sections a) and b).

a) Using the charts below, indicate the Local Area's PY 2003 performance goal, actual performance, and variance for each of the Youth performance measures.

Older Youth Performance Measure	PY 2003 Goal	PY 2003 Actual	Variance (Actual/Goal)
Entered Unsubsidized Employment	67.7	68.75	101.55
Employment Retention Rate at Six Months	81.99	85.71	104.54
Average Earning Change in Six Months	2578.01	1981.02	76.84
Credential Rate	34.05	23.53	69.10

Younger Youth Performance Measure	PY 2003 Goal	PY 2003 Actual	Variance (Actual/Goal)
High School Diploma/Equivalent	36.80	38.89	105.68
Skill Attainment Rate	68.77	56.99	82.87
Retention	58.75	59.26	100.87

b) Briefly discuss steps being taken to promote continuous improvement of the Local Area's Older Youth program, and Younger Youth program by addressing each measure where the Local Area's goal was not met. Responses should be specific in nature to each unmet goal. Review current PY 2004 goals and discuss improvement noted to date over PY 2003 actual performance.

Older Youth Credential Rate: In an effort to address this measure, youth staff continually develop their relationships with the GED labs and

community colleges in order to continue to meet the needs of this population. Also, with a stronger focus on out-of-school youth, we hope to increase our older youth enrollments, which we think will positively affect this performance measure. The Local Area also provides supportive service assistance with transportation and child care, which are areas that often prevent youth from participating or successfully completing a credential. Our Incentive Policy also rewards active youth for earning a credential. As the Local Area begins on-the-job training for youth, which in turn earns a credential, we expect this performance measure to improve.

Older Youth Six Month Earnings Change: In an effort to address this measure, the Local Area continues to address the importance of extensive follow-up/aftercare services which aims to improve individual services to participants and employers and will assist in tracking employment of our participants. In the coming year our Local Area will begin providing on-the-job training for youth, which we expect to help youth gain higher wages.

Currently, this is a performance measure that we are not meeting because of low numbers in this calculation and possible lack of available wage information. We hope that as additional wage information becomes available and our enrollments increase, performance for this measure will improve.

Younger Youth Skill Attainment Rate: In an effort to address this measure, youth staff are now being encouraged to reassess all youth beginning six months after a goal is set. Testing prior to the end of the one-year time frame will allow staff to assess the progress that has been made. If youth are not progressing, this gives staff time to provide additional intervention that may be needed to meet the skill attainment goal within the one-year time frame. The Local Area Incentive Policy also offers an incentive to active youth for obtaining a skill goal which we feel will encourage youth to work towards their goals and to be reassessed.

Currently, this performance measure is an area that we are not meeting. Due to a change in youth service providers, many youth who were no longer active but who had been inappropriately maintained in the program were exited from WIA. This was a strategic decision on the part of the Local Area. We were aware that we would see initial negative results from this change; however, we have the expectation of greatly improved, performance, staff morale, and youth participation in the long run. We are already seeing the results in a groundswell of interest on the part of youth. The outcome to date has been increased enrollments and active participation in on-going youth activities and special events. We anticipate improving this performance measure by June 30 by reassessing all youth that we believe will attain a skill goal.

During the initial interview process, the expectations of WIA and the importance of being an active participant are clearly explained to all youth. We think this process make it more likely that only youth who are clearly interested in the services we provide will follow through will enrollment, which, in turn should positively affect our performance outcomes.

ATTACHMENT A

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
MEMBERSHIP LISTING**

Workforce Development Board Membership Listing

High Country Local Area

*Indicate the maximum number of WDB members authorized by current bylaws: **[23]**

Member's Name and Title	Employer/Agency (if applicable) Mailing Address & Telephone	Category Represented	Ter(begin and end dates)	County
Board Chair: Lynn Graham, Human Resource Manager	Gates Rubber 101 Gates Lane Jefferson, NC 28640 (336) 246-1438	Private Sector	7/1/2004 – 6/30/2006	Ashe
Jim Halsey, Human Resource Manager and Administration Manager	Louisiana Pacific PO Box 98 Roaring River, NC 28669 (336) 696-3470	Private Sector	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Alleghany
Jayne Phipps-Boger, Director	WCC Alleghany Campus PO Box 220 Sparta, NC 28675 (336) 372-5061 x 231	Education	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Alleghany
Vacant				Alleghany
Carol Coulter, Director	Ashe Partnership for Children 626 Ashe Central Sch. Rd. Unit 1 Jefferson, NC 28640 (336) 982-4588	Community Based Organization	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Ashe
Brantley Price, Controller	Catawissa Lumber 301 Locust Street West Jefferson, NC 28694 (336) 246-7121	Private Sector	1/22/2004- 6/30/2005	Ashe
Sam Ray, Owner	Shady Lawn Motel PO Box 626 Newland, NC 28694 (828) 733-9248	Private Sector	7/1/2004- 6/30/2006	Avery
Marie Gwyn, Director	Avery County D.S.S. PO Box 309 Newland, NC 28657 (828) 733-8248	Department of Social Services	7/1/03 – 6/30/05	Avery
Susan Pittman, Vice President	Pittman Trucking 3091 Squirrel Creek Road Newland, NC 28657 (828) 733-2737	Private Sector	7/1/2005- 6/30/2007	Avery
Laura Way, Director of Operations and Finances	Penland School of Crafts PO Box 37 Penland, NC 28765 (828) 765-2359	Private Sector	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Mitchell

Ned Donnelly, Human Resources Director	BRP 1211 Greenwood Road Spruce Pine, NC 28777 (828) 766-1180	Private Sector	7/1/2004- 6/30/2006	Mitchell
Connie Barnette, Director	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation 245 Winkler's Creek Rd. Suite A Boone, NC 28607 (828) 265-5396	Vocational Rehabilitation	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Mitchell
Dick Jones, Volunteer	Boone Area Chamber of Commerce 478 Whipporwill Lane Boone, NC 28607 (828) 265-5396	Community Based Organization	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Watauga
Doug Pratt, Owner	Boone Paint & Interiors 1852 Hwy 105, Ste 1. Boone, NC 28607 (828) 264-9220	Private Sector	7/1/2004- 6/30/2006	Watauga
Sandra Reese, Human Resource Director	TT Electronics, IRC, Inc. PO Box 1860 Boone, NC 28607 (828) 264-8861	Private Sector	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Watauga
Vickie Key, Account Manager	Unique Solutions 1150 Foster Street Wilkesboro, NC 28697 (336) 667-2447	Private Sector	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Wilkes
Sharon Hodgson, Local Office Manager	Employment Security Commission 320 Wilkesboro Avenue N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659 (336) 838-5164	Employment Security Commission	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Wilkes
Vanya Baker, Human Resources Director	Wilkes Regional Medical Center 1370 West D Street N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659 (336) 651-8167	Private Sector	7/1/2004- 6/30/2006	Wilkes
Kevin McCraw, Human Resources Manager	Hickory Springs Mfg. Co. RR8 Box 756 Burnsville, NC 28714 (828) 675-4101	Private Sector	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Yancey
Gwen Harris, Director	Yancey EDC PO Box 246 Burnsville, NC 28714 (828) 682-7722	Private Sector	7/1/2003- 6/30/2005	Yancey
Wendell Wilson, Manufacturing Manager	Glen Raven Mills PO Box 100 Burnsville, NC 28714 (828) 678-3044	Private Sector	7/1/2004- 6/30/2006	Yancey

Vacant			Community Based Organization	At-Large
Vacant			Organized Labor	At-Large

Duplicate form as necessary.

SHOW ALL REQUIRED REPRESENTATION AND NOTE IF VACANT

ATTACHMENT B

**YOUTH COUNCIL
MEMBERSHIP**

Youth Council Membership Listing

High Country Local Area

(Local Area Name)

Indicate the authorized maximum number of Youth Council members: **[19]**

Member's Name and Title	Employer/Agency (if applicable) Address, Telephone Number (e-mail address as appropriate)	Employer, Agency or Sector Represented Examples: Service Agencies, Public Housing Authority, Parent of Eligible Youth, Job Corps	WDB Member	Term (begin and end dates)	County
Youth Council Chair Marie Gwyn, Director	Avery Co. DSS P.O. Box 309 Newland, NC 28657 828-733-8248 Marie.Gwyn@ncmail.net	Department of Social Services / Experience with Youth	Yes	7/1/03 – 6/30/05	Avery
Bill Post, Chief of Police	1500 Blowing Rock Rd. Boone, NC 28607 828-262-4510 bill.post@townofboone.ne	Law Enforcement	No	7/1/03-6/30/05	Watauga
Brantley Price, Controller	Catawissa Lumber 301 Locust Street West Jefferson, NC 28694 bprice@CATLMBR.com	Private Sector	Yes	1/04-6/05	Ashe
Chuck Bowling, Director	Upward Bound ASU Box 32087 Boone, NC 28608 828-262-2291 bowlingcd@appstate.edu	Youth Services / Education	No	7/1/03-6/30/05	Ashe, Avery, Watauga, Wilkes
Connie Barnette, Director	Vocational Rehab. 245 Winklers Crk. Rd., Ste A Boone, NC 28607 828-265-5396 Connie.Barnette@ncmail.n	Vocational Rehabilitation	Yes	7/1/2003-6/30/2005	Mitchell
Dick Jones, Retired	478 Whippoorwill Lane Boone, NC 28607 828-262-3647 r_jjones@bellsouth.net	Experience with Youth	Yes	3/05-6/05	Watauga
Jayne Phipps-Boger, Director	WCC Alleghany Campus PO Box 220 Sparta, NC 28675 (336) 372-5061 x231 Jayne.Boger@wilkescc.ed	Education	Yes	9/04-6/30/05	Alleghany
Jennie Harpold, Consultant	100 A Hemlock Hill Banner Elk, NC 28604 (828) 898-9831 jennijh@sbcglobal.net	Experience with Youth	No	2/05-6/30/05	Avery
Kathy Castelloes, Apprenticeship Representative	NC Department of Labor P.O. Box 206 Newland, NC 28657 828-733-0452 KCastelloes@direcway.co	Experience with Youth	No	7/1/04-6/30/06	Avery

Kim Barnes, Coordinator	NC Assoc. of Educators P.O. Box 450 West Jefferson, NC 28694 336-246-2400 KBarnes@ashe.k12.nc.us	Education	No	7/1/04- 6/30/06	Ashe
Lauren Ray, Intern	NW Reg. Housing Auth. PO Box 2510 Boone, NC 28607 (828) 264-6683 lrapstate@hotmail.com	Housing	No	7/1/04- 6/30/06	High Country Region
Matt Ruble, Counselor	Upward Bound ASU Box 32087 Boone, NC 28608 828-262-2291 RubleMW@appstate.edu	Youth Services / Education	No	7/1/04- 6/30/06	Watauga
Peggy Wallace, Director of Human Resources	PO Box 2600 Boone, NC 28607 828-262-4222 pwallace@wataugamc.org	Health Services	No	5/05- 06/30/07	Watauga
Tommy Williams, President	Mayland Community College 200 Mayland Drive Spruce Pine, NC 28777 828-765-7351	Education	No	11/04- 6/30/06	Avery, Mitchell, Yancey
Wendell Wilson, Manufacturing Manager	Glen Raven Mills PO Box 100 Burnsville, NC 28714 (828) 678-3044 WWilson@glenraven.com	Private Sector	Yes	10/04-6/06	Yancey
Candinda McCurdy, Youth	1309 3 rd Street, Apartment A N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659 (336) 667-8088	Youth	No	05/05- 06/07	Wilkes
Violet Bare, Parent	PO Box 1331 Jefferson, NC 28640 (336) 982-4170	Parent	No	05/05- 06/07	Ashe

Duplicate form as necessary.

SHOW ALL REQUIRED REPRESENTATION AND NOTE IF VACANT

Attachment C

JobLink Centers

JobLink Career Center System

(Reflects Local Area Structure as of July 1, 2005)

High Country
Local Area

A JobLink Center Name & Address, Chartering Status, and Type*	B Date Charter Expires	C Counties Served	D On-Site JobLink Partners	E One-Stop Operator & Method of Selection**	F WIA Intensive Services Provider(s) & Method of Selection**	G Youth Service Provider On-Site (Yes/No)	H Training Available Other Than By ITA***
Alleghany County JobLink 115 Atwood Street, Suite C Sparta, NC 28675 Chartered (C)	12/01/2007	Alleghany	<p>Community College: WIA Title I; adult education and literacy activities authorized under Title II; postsecondary vocational education activities authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);</p> <p>HC Council of Governments: youth services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>Connectinc.: adult/dislocated worker services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>ESC: programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code; programs authorized under state unemployment compensation laws;</p> <p>VR: programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.);</p> <p>DSS: WorkFirst programs authorized under section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(5)) (as added by section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997);</p> <p>Blue Ridge Business Development Center; New River Community Partners; Experience Works</p>	Wilkes Community College, ESC, and Vocational Rehabilitation (CM)	Wilkes Community College; High Country Council of Governments; Connectinc. (CP)	Yes	OJT; CT; continuing education; GED

A JobLink Center Name & Address, Chartering Status, and Type*	B Date Charter Expires	C Counties Served	D On-Site JobLink Partners	E One-Stop Operator & Method of Selection**	F WIA Intensive Services Provider(s) & Method of Selection**	G Youth Service Provider On-Site (Yes/No)	H Training Available Other Than By ITA***
Ashe County JobLink 626 Ashe Central School Road Suite 3 Jefferson, NC 28640 Chartered (C)	12/01/2007	Ashe	<p>Community College: WIA Title I; adult education and literacy activities authorized under Title II; postsecondary vocational education activities authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);</p> <p>HC Council of Governments: youth services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>Connectinc.: adult/dislocated worker services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>ESC: programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code; programs authorized under state unemployment compensation laws;</p> <p>VR: programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.);</p> <p>DSS: WorkFirst programs authorized under section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(5)) (as added by section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997);</p> <p>Blue Ridge Opportunity Commission; Ashe Partnership for Children; Ashe County Child Care Resource and Referral; Family Resource Center; Ashe County Parks and Recreation; Developmental Evaluation Center; Transition to Kindergarten Program; Family Literacy Program; A Safe Home for Everyone; More at Four Pre-K Program; New River Behavioral Healthcare/PACT Program; Governor Morehead Preschool Program; Ashe Really Cares; Latino Center; Experience Works</p>	Wilkes Community College, ESC, and Vocational Rehabilitation (CM)	Wilkes Community College; High Country Council of Governments; Connectinc. (CP)	Yes	OJT; CT; continuing education; HRD; GED

A JobLink Center Name & Address, Chartering Status, and Type*	B Date Charter Expires	C Counties Served	D On-Site JobLink Partners	E One-Stop Operator & Method of Selection**	F WIA Intensive Services Provider(s) & Method of Selection**	G Youth Service Provider On-Site (Yes/No)	H Training Available Other Than By ITA***
Avery County JobLink 175 Linville Street Newland, NC 28657 Charter pending (C)	Charter pending	Avery	<p>Community College: WIA Title I; adult education and literacy activities authorized under Title II; postsecondary vocational education activities authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);</p> <p>Connectinc.: adult/dislocated worker services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>ESC: programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code; programs authorized under state unemployment compensation laws;</p> <p>VR: programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.);</p> <p>DSS: programs authorized under section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(5)) (as added by section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997);</p> <p>WAMY Community Action, Inc.: employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.);</p>	Mayland Community College, WAMY Community Action, Inc., ESC, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Avery County Dept. of Social Services (CM)	Mayland Community College; Connectinc. (CP)	Yes	OJT; CT; continuing education; HRD

A JobLink Center Name & Address, Chartering Status, and Type*	B Date Charter Expires	C Counties Served	D On-Site JobLink Partners	E One-Stop Operator & Method of Selection**	F WIA Intensive Services Provider(s) & Method of Selection**	G Youth Service Provider On-Site (Yes/No)	H Training Available Other Than By ITA***
Mitchell County JobLink 100 Kim Thickets Road Spruce Pine, NC 28777 Charter pending (C)	Charter pending	Mitchell	<p>Community College: WIA Title I; adult education and literacy activities authorized under Title II; postsecondary vocational education activities authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);</p> <p>Connectinc.: adult/dislocated worker services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>ESC: programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code; programs authorized under state unemployment compensation laws;</p> <p>VR: programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.);</p> <p>DSS: WorkFirst programs authorized under section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(5)) (as added by section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997);</p> <p>WAMY Community Action, Inc.: employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)</p>	Mayland Community College, WAMY Community Action, Inc., ESC, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Mitchell County Dept. of Social Services (CM)	Mayland Community College; Connectinc. (CP)	Yes	OJT; CT; continuing education; HRD
Watauga County JobLink 207 Winkler's Creek Road Boone, NC 28607 Chartered (C)	12/01/2007	Watauga	<p>WAMY Community Action, Inc.: WIA Title I; employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.);</p> <p>HC Council of Governments: youth services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>Connectinc.: adult/dislocated worker services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>ESC: programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code; programs authorized under state unemployment compensation laws;</p> <p>VR: programs authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (housed next door);</p> <p>DSS: WorkFirst programs authorized under section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(5)) (as added by section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997)</p> <p>Experience Works; Small Business Administration</p>	WAMY Community Action, Inc., ESC, and Vocational Rehabilitation (CM)	WAMY Community Action, Inc.; High Country Council of Governments; Connectinc. (CP)	Yes	OJT; CT; continuing education

A JobLink Center Name & Address, Chartering Status, and Type*	B Date Charter Expires	C Counties Served	D On-Site JobLink Partners	E One-Stop Operator & Method of Selection**	F WIA Intensive Services Provider(s) & Method of Selection**	G Youth Service Provider On-Site (Yes/No)	H Training Available Other Than By ITA***
Wilkes County JobLink 312 Wilkesboro Ave. -- Midtown Plaza N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659 Charter pending (C)	Charter pending	Wilkes	<p>Community College: WIA Title I; adult education and literacy activities authorized under Title II; postsecondary vocational education activities authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);</p> <p>HC Council of Governments: youth services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>Connectinc.: adult/dislocated worker services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>ESC: programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code, programs authorized under state unemployment compensation laws;</p> <p>VR: programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.);</p> <p>DSS: WorkFirst programs authorized under section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 603(a)(5)) (as added by section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997);</p> <p>Sheltered Aid to Families in Emergencies, Inc.; Experience Works</p>	Wilkes Community College, ESC, and Vocational Rehabilitation (CM)	Wilkes Community College; High Country Council of Governments; Connectinc. (CP)	Yes	OJT; CT; continuing education; HRD
Yancey County JobLink 24 Highway 19 East Bypass Burnsville, NC 28714 Not Chartered (C)	N/A -- JobLink Information Site	Yancey	<p>WAMY Community Action: WIA Title I; employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.);</p> <p>Connectinc.: adult/dislocated worker services authorized under WIA Title I;</p> <p>Community College: adult education and literacy activities authorized under Title II; postsecondary vocational education activities authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);</p> <p>ESC: programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.); activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code, programs authorized under state unemployment compensation laws;</p> <p>VR: programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.)</p>	WAMY Community Action, Inc., ESC, Mayland Community College, Vocational Rehabilitation (CM)	WAMY Community Action, Inc., Mayland Community College, Connectinc. (CP)	No <i>(due to space constraints, housed at Mayland Community College)</i>	OJT; CT; continuing education; HRD

* Give street address for each JobLink Career Center and Chartering Status – Chartered or Not Chartered

ATTACHMENT D
Supportive Services

High County Local Area WIA Supportive Services Policy

Supportive services for adults and dislocated workers are defined at WIA sections 101(46) and 134(e)(2) and (3). They include services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIA Title I. The key here is that the WIA case manager substantiates and documents the need for the supportive services to participate in WIA Title I services.

Supportive service payments must be paid directly to the vendor with WIA case managers having all the necessary documentation to support the costs. Payment directly to the vendor avoids a host of potential problems that may occur if payment is made directly to customers for expenses. An exception to this is the reimbursement of mileage for transportation costs. These costs are typically paid to the customer or to someone that has transported the customer to school, work activities, etc., to participate in WIA Title I activities. Payment is made based upon the High Country Local Area Transportation Policy. For this type of supportive service, it is totally appropriate to pay the person based upon documentation supporting that they drove a certain distance for the purpose of attending school or going to a worksite. An invoice/attendance form is to be used to support these costs that are signed by the participant and school instructor or worksite supervisor that verifies the person was in attendance on the days reported for reimbursement of travel costs.

Supportive Services allowed by High Country Local Area:

- Transportation – See Transportation Policy below
- Childcare and dependent care
- Housing
- Car Repairs
- Emergency Aid (one time or very **rare** expenses paid to allow a person to continue participating in Title I activities). Examples include payment of utility bills (electric, water, heating, etc.), a car insurance payment that cannot be paid by the participant without WIA assistance and is needed to continue going to school or participating in an activity such as a work experience, OJT, etc. If someone is having extreme financial difficulty, case managers should be assisting participant with needed financial management information (development a budget credit counseling, debt management, etc.).

Supportive services **not** allowed by High County Local Area:

- Supportive service payments that are not documented appropriately through supportive service invoices.

Who may receive supportive services? According to the regulations:

- (a) "Supportive services may only be provided to individuals who are:
 1. Participating in core, intensive or training services; and
 2. Unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services.
- (b) Supportive services may only be provided when they are necessary to enable individuals to participate in Title I activities."

Supportive services payments may be made available on behalf of Adults and Dislocated Workers who are in follow-up services (follow up begins on the 1st day of employment). **After exit, no supportive services may be paid from WIA funds.**

Effective July 1, 2004, participants who indicate a need for supportive services assistance are notified that there is a **lifetime supportive services benefit**. It is up to the participant to weigh needs against resources and consider current versus potential future circumstances prior to determining whether to request assistance now or later. It is the responsibility of the Career Development Counselor to ensure that customers understand the concept of the lifetime limit and to help customers think through the consequences of their choices.

Lifetime Supportive Services Benefit: Participants may receive transportation and childcare assistance when they are participating in an approved WIA activity and have demonstrated the need for such assistance and meet other Local Area transportation and childcare assistance policies.

In addition, if they indicate a need, participants are eligible for additional supportive services in an amount up to **\$250 a year with a lifetime limit of \$500** during the course their enrollment in WIA. These funds may be used for needs previously designated by the Local Area as allowable supportive service costs.

In extreme circumstances, where the participant has used the lifetime limit or has an emergency need that exceeds that limit, the service provider

organization can apply in writing to the Local Area Administrative/ Programmatic Systems Manager for approval for one-time emergency assistance, using the “Unusual Expense Pre-Approval Form”. (**See “WIA Forms” Section of Manual for Unusual Expense Pre-Approval Form and example of completed form**). Approval must be requested and received in writing prior to making the expenditure, and it is incumbent upon the service provider to ensure that the customer understands that, if approved, this is a one-time expenditure.

Supportive services are not to be the primary activity for any WIA customers. It is a means to assist customers find or provide the financial assistance needed to allow them to successfully complete their intensive and training services in their goal of obtaining self-sufficient employment. WIA is a workforce development program centered on training, education and work-based learning.

Documentation: Service providers are to maintain a stringent attitude towards documentation of all supportive services provided. Transportation and childcare are to be documented in the WorkforcePlus System once each semester; other supportive services are documented in WF+ each time a supportive service is provided. Each supportive service is documented in case notes when it occurs with an explanation of the need, effort to locate other resources and description of service provided. Transportation and childcare are updated in case notes on a monthly basis to determine whether the need continues and at what level.

High County Local Area WIA Transportation Policy

Transportation, as with other supportive services, may be provided to WIA customers. The primary question that needs to be answered prior to provision of transportation assistance is as follows: “Is the transportation service/assistance necessary to continue WIA services? The answer must be “yes” for WIA to pay for these services.

Transportation assistance paid with WIA funds will be provided in the following ways:

- (1) as available, tokens will be provided for public transportation;
- (2) arrangements will be made with transportation providers for payment upon receipt of signed documentation of participation and/or receipt of services;
- (3) reimbursement will be made to participants who provide their own transportation for WIA activities, using the following method for daily travel:

0-10 miles/day	\$ 2.50
11-25 miles/day	\$ 5.00
26-40 miles/day	\$ 7.50
41-75 miles/day	\$10.00
76+miles/day	\$12.50

Exception: Assistance may be for a smaller amount if the contractor lacks funds to pay the full amount.

- (4) reimbursement may be made to private individuals who provide transportation to WIA participants for allowable activities at the same rate as in No. 3 above, following receipt of signed and documented Participant Transportation Documentation Log. **Individual does not receive duplicated reimbursement if transportation is provided to multiple participants.**

Service providers must ensure verification/documentation of participant attendance in activity for which transportation is being reimbursed. Documentation of mileage and participant signature alone is not sufficient for Local Area reimbursement to service provider.

ATTACHMENT E

On-The-Job Training Policy

High Country Local Area ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

What is OJT Training?

On-the-Job Training (OJT) is a work based training opportunity for adults, dislocated workers, and youth customers.. OJT is only offered if a client is eligible for *training services* provided through the Workforce Investment Act. OJT contracts encourage employers to provide occupational training that result in hiring unemployed, underemployed or dislocated persons. OJT contracts:

- Provide for the WIA participant in exchange for the reimbursement of up to 50 percent of the wage rate to compensate for the employer's extraordinary costs.
- Are contracted for a limited period of time for a participant to become proficient in the occupation for which the training is being provided.
- Are developed with employers in the public, private or non-profit sector
- Require that clients must uphold the standards of the Hatch Act. Participant cannot do anything that is considered a political activity during working hours. This includes the following: soliciting, transporting voters, distributing campaign materials, working on or developing campaign materials, etc.

What type of client is suitable for OJT?

An OJT contract can be an extraordinary tool for employed and underemployed adults and dislocated workers, who need additional training to be successful in developing the necessary skills to work toward employment, maintain employment or advancement in employment. To receive training services and participate in an OJT contract employed and underemployed adults and dislocated workers must:

- a) Have met the eligibility requirements for intensive services, have received at least one intensive service and have been determined to be unable to obtain or retain employment through these services.
- b) After an interview, evaluation or assessment, and case management by the Employment Representative or One-Stop partner, have been determined to be in need of training services and have the skills/qualifications to successfully complete the training program.
- c) Select a training program that is directly linked to employment in the local area to where the individual is willing to relocate.
- d) Be unable to receive/obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay training cost.
- e) Be an individual served through WIA adult or dislocated worker funding after having been determined eligible for WIA services with priority given to low income individuals, recipients of public assistance, veterans, and dislocated workers. 663.310

If a client is employed, OJT contracts maybe written for eligible employed workers when:

- a) 1) An adult employee is not earning a self-sufficient wage at 200% of lower living standard income level (based on family size) and availability of family health insurance benefits.
2) A dislocated worker self-sufficiency – 90% of previous compensation level and availability of family health insurance or Adult Self-Sufficiency definition, whichever is higher.
- b) Requirements in 663.700 (Requirements for OJT) are met
- c) OJT relates to the introduction of new technologies, new production or service procedures, upgrading to new jobs that require additional skills, workplace literacy, or other appropriate purposes identified by the Local Board.

Choosing the right employer

Just as with a work experience, finding the right match of employer to client for OJT contracts can be challenging *and* rewarding. However, an OJT contract has certain criteria that an employer must meet before they are eligible to receive WIA funds. If an employer has “exhibited a pattern of failing to provide OJT participants with continued long-term employment, wages, benefits, and working conditions, a contract cannot be developed.” 663.700 The High Country Local Area has established the following policy for complying with this provision. The policy states:

- 1) A pre-award checklist will be used which requires the review of retention patterns of employers who have had two or more previous OJT contracts either under WIA or JTPA. Where a pattern of failure to hire without just cause is apparent, an OJT contract cannot be developed.
- 2) OJT contracts will specify that successful OJT participants will be offered long-term employment with wages, benefits and working conditions equal to those provided to regular employees with similar experience and responsibility. Pre-award checklist also require review of past compliance with the requirement.
- 3) It is the Local Area’s policy that no OJT contract will be developed with an employer who has previously exhibited a pattern of failing to meet this requirement.

The Local Area also provides guidance regarding OJT pre-award review of relocating new and expanding industries:

- Employment Representatives will not solicit a company or use funds to entice a company to relocate to or expand in the service area.
- Prior to an employer participating in the OJT program, the employer will complete a DET Issuance that was adjusted for local use survey to obtain information stipulated in Section 627.215 (d) of WIA Regulations.
- A company must have been in the area at least 120 days before contracting occurs.
- Companies that have participated previously, but not within twelve months, will be asked to verify that current employees will not be adversely affected by the OJT contract.

OJT Employers performance expectations

Performance expectations for each OJT contract should be 75% completion and 75% retention. If a employer is providing second or on-going OJT contracts, the Local Area staff should access the employer's past performance in training employees under previous OJT programs and should not undertake development of a OJT contract with an employer who has repeatedly failed to meet performance standards. The employer must exhibit a history of long-term employment of trainees as regular employees with wages and similar working conditioned at the same level.

An employer's retention rate for OJT Training is determined by the number of WIA enrollees who are retained in training related employment for at least 3 months following the completion of the OJT training project. Contract proposals from an employer who has had previous (or has current) OJT contracts are to include a past performance assessment of the employer's completion and retention under previous contracts. The company should have written policies on layoffs and grievances, which articulate its philosophy and approach to separation. The OJT trainees should be aware of, and subject to these procedures.

Conditions governing OJT payments to employers

Conditions governing the OJT payments to employers:

- a) OJT payment is deemed to be compensation for the extraordinary costs associated with training participants and the costs associated with the lower productivity of the participant.
 - b) Employers may be reimbursed up to 50% of the wage rate of an OJT participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to OJT.
 - c) Employers are not required to document such extraordinary costs.
- 663.710

Determining the length of the contract

Negotiated training time for OJT should include a reasonable amount of time for orientation, coaching and counseling activities. These activities are frequently critical to the success achieved by many clients. Coaching may also be used to recognize praise-worthy work and to otherwise provide encouragement. Counseling includes assisting trainees with job-related problems, personal adjustment and other problems, both on and off the job, that will enhance their retention in unsubsidized employment. The OJT experience should provide sufficient time for the Employment Representative to meet the counseling needs of their client and for the employer to meet the training needs of the client.

Use of a book called the *Specific Vocational Preparation Manual* or *SVP Manual* is needed in determining training length for OJTsl. The manual, published by the U.S. Department of Labor, provides guidance in calculating training time based on the type of occupation. Listed with each occupation there is an SVP code. The SVP code describes the classification of difficult for each occupation. The higher the SVP code, the higher skilled or more complex the occupation, thus the more time the training will take. Under

WIA legislation, OJT contract can be developed for occupations between SVP levels of two and eight. Other occupations are excluded because the training is either too simple or too complex. Although, the amount of time needed for training in a is stated in the SVP Manual, Employment staff may use their *professional judgment* to decrease the training time if a participant has prior experience in the particular job training area.

The following chart reflects the OJT time allowed for each Specific Vocational Preparation (SVP) level:

<u>SVP Level</u>	<u>Hours of Training Permitted</u>
2	Anything beyond short demonstration up to and including 1 month. (One month equals 240 hours or 30 days)
3	Over 1 month up to and including 3 months. (Three months equal 520 hours or 65 days)
4	Over 3 months up to and including 6 months. (Six months equals 1,040 hours or 130 days)
5	Over 6 months up to and including 1 year. (One year equals 2,080 hours or 260 days)

The SVP codes correspond with the maximum number of hours allowed under the “Hours of Training Permitted” column. Subcontracts may not be written for fewer than 160 hours.

The following example illustrates the computation of OJT costs:

Credit Clerk, DOT Code 205.367.022, SVP level - 4 has negotiated time for 800 hours. OJT costs for this occupation for one trainee, may be derived as follows:

Starting wage rate - \$5.50
One-half starting wage rate per training. $\$5.50 \times 800 \text{ hours} = \4400.00
Divided by 2 = \$2200.00

The SVP Chart shows that an SVP level of four has a maximum training time of 1040 hours. In this example, the employment representative accrued a savings of \$660.00 by writing the subcontract for fewer than the maximum hours permitted. The employer got a reasonable training time by negotiation, and the accrued savings will go a long way toward funding a slot for another needy participant.

$1040 \times \$5.50 = \5720 divided by 2 = \$2860
 $\$2860 - \$2200 = \$660$

Staff developing OJT subcontracts should be reminded that negotiation is an inherent part of the subcontracting process. Therefore, subcontracts negotiated for fewer than the maximum training hours will permit the operator to serve additional clients. However, use your *professional judgment* when setting up your client’s OJT contract. Make your decision based upon your knowledge of the client and their needs and the

employer and their needs. Assessing your client's past work history, interest, aptitude and classroom training or education levels should all be accounted for when making training time decisions.

Within the above framework, training time may range from a minimum of 30 days to a maximum of 260 days, interpreted, in every case, to mean "days to pay status." When claiming reimbursement, time should be recorded in terms of hours.

When determining the period of time needed for a client to acquire the necessary job task and skills, consideration should include recognized reference manuals, including, but not limited to the "Dictionary of Occupational Titles." In addition, a client's IEP, their education, skills, prior work experience and ISS should all be taken into consideration.

Providing upgrading and retraining through OJT

The Workforce Investment Act *does not* permit a Local Area to plan or operate OJT (regular, retraining, or upgrade) services with an enrollee's current or previous employer. Training an enrollee in the same occupation for virtually or nearly the same work, from which the participant had been laid off or separated, is not allowable when the enrollee already has the skills required for the job. In order to conduct skill upgrading, and retraining, conditions for eligibility and participation must be met and there must be a demonstrable difference between the job and skill requirements of the upgraded job for which the enrollee is being trained and those of current or prior employment. The operator will refer to the SVP and assessment results to determine prior skills of the participant.

What occupations are eligible for OJT contracts?

OJT should only be offered in those occupations, which provide opportunities not otherwise available, lead to economic self-sufficiency and provide upward mobility. Occupations that are eligible for WIA funding include:

- a) Occupations which offer a reasonable expectation of employment in the occupation for which training is offered. This means there is a demonstrated need for workers in the occupation and it has been identified by the Workforce Development Board as a "Occupation in Demand" or the case manager has sufficiently researched and determined that there is a local demand for the occupation.
- b) Occupations which are sufficiently skilled to require a training period of at least thirty (30) days or one hundred and sixty (160) hours duration.
- c) Occupations that meet prevailing standards with respect to wage, hours and conditions of employment.
- d) Occupations on a promotional line that do not infringe in any way upon the promotional opportunities of currently employed individuals.

For all customers, training must be in an occupation, which provides new skills distinct from those possessed by the customer. If an occupation is not identified as a 'Occupation in Demand' the High Country Local Area staff will consider other occupations on a case-by-case basis through written request.

Occupations that are not eligible for OJT contracts

Occupations for which training will not be approved include, but are not limited to:

- a) Occupations that have not traditionally required specific occupational training as a requirement for employment.
- b) Occupations with a substantial number of experienced and able workers presently unemployed and available to fill job openings with no extraordinary amount of training.
- c) Occupations dependent on commission as the primary source of income. (This does not exclude those jobs which have a guaranteed base wage of at least the federal minimum wage in addition to commission pay and such guaranteed wage will continue after the training period.)
- d) Intermittent seasonal occupations.
- e) Professional occupations requiring licensing, testing or certification, or training length extends beyond 1,040 hours (Unless training can be given on the job).
- f) Part-time occupations. (For definition purposes, full-time employment is the 40-hour week, except where fewer hours are normal to the occupation, but in NO case less than thirty-two (32) hours per week).
- g) Occupations that are currently, or will be, included under an employee-leasing contract whereby job openings for a particular occupation at a business facility are filled by staff of the leasing contractor.
- h) Occupations where adequate supervision and/or monitoring is not available.

Length of Training

The length of training allowed in an OJT contract is limited to a period not in excess of that required for the participant to acquire the skills needed for the OJT position. The period of reimbursement to the employer under an OJT contract shall not exceed 1,040 hours of training. The 1,040 hours of OJT may be expressed in the number of hours, days, or weeks the enrollee is expected to work full-time.

Participant Wages

Wages above the average hourly wage are desired and preferred. Being able to offer up to a 50% reimbursement of wages provided through the OJT contract is an effective way to persuade an employer that through their additional savings, they should be able to start the participant at a higher wage.

In no event will wages paid job seekers be less than the highest of the following:

- the federal minimum wage
- the State or local minimum wage
- prevailing wage rates from persons similarly employed
- minimum entrance wage rate for inexperienced workers in the same occupation
- the wage rate required by applicable collective bargaining agreements
- prevailing rate established by the Davis-Bacon Act.

When the participants work overtime, reimbursements are made to the employer at the regular rate. The half-time rate cannot be reimbursed. The amount of the reimbursement is the total number of hours worked times the reimbursement rate. For example, if a participant works 40 hours per week at \$5.50 per hour, the reimbursement is \$110.00 (40 x \$5.50 divided by 2).

OJT Contract Modifications

A change or modification can be made to the OJT contract during the training period if necessary. A modification is necessary to increase the subcontract amount, to change the contract closing date, or to increase the number of training slots. The subcontractor and the contractor must mutually agree upon the modification. Authorized signatures of the subcontracting officer and the contracting officer must be on the modification.

Providing a Training Outline

Developing a training outline is an important part of setting expectations for the employee, employer and the WIA staff person. Training outlines are based on the negotiated training time of the OJT contract. Begin by obtaining a copy of the job description from the employer. If the company or business does not have a job description, the WIA staff may need to assist in the development and completion of a job description which outlines the skills necessary to measure job performance.

The job description is used to assign each task an estimated length of time it will take to acquire the skill. The number of hours for the individual skill will total the negotiated length of the contract. Knowing the person who will be training the participant and documenting this information is an important part of the training outline and developing good communication. The training outline is normally completed with the assistance of a representative of the company and is always reviewed by the employer before the contract is signed. A copy of the training outline is shared with the participant. A sample-training outline is included in your forms section of this notebook. The sample includes a detailed job description with a simple training outline. If the job description does not explain the details of a job, a more detailed outline is necessary. WIA staff should stay in close contact with the trainee, the employer and the person assigned to train the participant to ensure the proper skills are being obtained as outlined in the training plan. This monitoring needs to occur at least two times each month.

After the contract terms are negotiated, the contract is completed based on the information obtained during the negotiation process. The subcontractor's name, address, IRS number, and telephone number, the reimbursement amount, and the start date and termination date of the contract are included.

The OJT Cost Table and Hiring Schedule are completed based on negotiated hourly wages and training hours. The job description and training outline for each occupation are attached to the contract.

Before the subcontractor's signature is obtained, the terms of the contract should be explained a second time. The employer should clearly understand their responsibility and the responsibility of the High Country Local Area and its contractors. The employer

needs to understand that the expectation is that the participant to be retained after training. The employer should also, realize that the goal of OJT program is long-term, full-time unsubsidized employment. If there are any problems or concerns that arise during the training, the appropriate WIA staff member and/or their supervisor will be available to provide assistance.

Problems that may arise during training should be solved with the employer, the participant, and the WIA staff member (may include the WIA supervisor). A good working relationship is needed with the participating employers and the enrollees to make the project a success. It is the WIA staff member's responsibility to help cultivate these relationships and ensure that the employer and the participant are following through on their responsibilities and doing their best to carry out the objectives of the plan.

How to complete OJT invoices

Copies of OJT invoices, timesheets and evaluations need to be maintained in the customer file. The OJT employers are asked to complete the timesheet on a monthly or biweekly basis and trainee evaluations are to be completed for every 80 hours of training completed. The participant's immediate supervisor is expected to complete and sign the timesheet and the evaluation. The WIA staff member completes the bottom portion of the timesheet based on the information in the contract.

The calendar on the timesheet is completed based on the dates the enrollee trained during the month. For example, if the enrollee trained 8 hours on Friday, March 5, a 5 is placed in the corner of the block on the first row of the calendar under Friday. A large 8 is also placed in the square. These numbers show that the enrollee trained 8 hours on March 5. This same procedure is followed for the entire month. WIA funds are not to be used to pay employers for benefits such as sick leave, annual leave or holiday pay; no training is taking place at this time.

Each WIA contractor will have a system for insuring the receipt of OJT invoices from employers in a timely manner for processing by the WIA contractor's finance office. A copy of the invoice is to be placed in the customer's file.

The immediate supervisor completes the evaluation based on the enrollee's work performance during the month. Any rating of a 4 or 5 must include a written explanation. The evaluation should be discussed with the participant in an effort to explain concerns and/or have the opportunity to receive positive feedback. This should occur prior to the evaluation being signed. After the timesheet has been reviewed and the evaluation discussed, the evaluation is signed by the supervisor and the participant.

The WIA staff member who is working with the customer should also review the employer evaluation. Low ratings should be discussed in a professional manner with the supervisor and the enrollee separately. High ratings deserve positive feedback and praise from the WIA staff to the customer.

Reasonableness of Cost: The Act provides that each contract "specify the types and duration of on-the-job training and other services to be provided in sufficient detail to allow for a fair analysis of the reasonableness of proposed costs..." The WIA

Regulations prohibit the imposition of a requirement on employers to document extraordinary costs. Payments to employers should not produce a record-keeping burden on employers by requiring the documentation of extraordinary costs that would unnecessarily make OJT a less desirable training option. The WIA Regulations require no more record keeping of an employer that is already required of the employer for other purposes, (e.g., an employer would have to maintain payroll records to demonstrate that a participant worked the number of hours that were billed, but payroll records are already required to be kept for a variety of other federal and state purposes). The U.S. Department of Labor believes that the intent of this requirement is that the contract accurately reflect the basis for the contract costs, including the number of enrollees, occupations, wage rates, training content and the duration of training, provisions for adjustment (such as scheduled wage increases), and the basis for any other payments (such as separately scheduled classroom training as described in paragraph (d) (4) of this section).

Monitoring

The OJT monitoring system will include at a minimum the following: compliance with the training outline, enrollees eligibility check, comparison of time and attendance with invoices, comparison of contracted wage rate vs. wages paid, and start date of employment vs. contract start date. Other areas of monitoring may include, EO issues, safety, participant interview, and/or supervision.

A monitoring review should be conducted whenever there are indications of problem areas, i.e., layoffs or rumors of layoffs, decrease in hours of reported training time, complaints from participant (either formal or verbal complaints), complaints from the employer (either formal or verbal), rumors of an employer filing bankruptcy, etc.

All monitoring reviews should be documented and the written documentation should become a part of the contract file. The report should include: all areas of non-compliance with the contractual agreement, review of the eligibility of participant(s) enrolled under the contract, any corrective actions necessary, and the findings of any ineligibility of WIA enrollees.

ATTACHMENT G

LOCAL AREA YOUTH PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Local Area
Youth Program Elements

Youth Program Elements	<u>WIA</u>	<u>Referral</u> (Indicate specific agency name)
1. Educational Achievement Services		
a. Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies	X	WCC, MCC, ASU, CCC, Foster Grandparent Program, Upward Bound, Watauga Youth Network, 4-H, ASU ACT Office; Local School Counselors & Advocates
b. Alternative secondary school offerings		WCC, MCC, CCC GED Programs; Ashe Academy, Ashe Family Literacy; Boone Literacy Council; Local Schools have evening classes
2. Employment Services		
a. Paid (and unpaid) work experiences, including internships and job shadowing	X	ESC; 4-H; Ashe High; NC LINKS; Community College Work Study Programs
b. Occupational Skills Training	X	WCC, MCC, CCC; Mark of Eden; JY Monk Real Estate; WAMY Community Action
3. Summer Employment Opportunities		
Summer Employment Opportunities linked with academic and occupational training	X	Blue Ridge Conservation Corps; New River State Park
4. Additional Support		
a. Adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve months that may occur both during and after program participation	X	Foster Grandparent Program; Watauga Youth Network; 4-H; Ashe Youth Connection; Alleghany Connections
b. Comprehensive guidance and counseling	X	DSS; Local Schools; VR; New River Behavioral Health; A Safe Home for Everyone; Community College Counselors; Agricultural Extension
5. Leadership Development Opportunities		
Leadership Development Opportunities	X	Upward Bound, 4-H; Watauga Youth Network; ASU ACT Office; Ashe High; Ashe Volunteer Initiative; Blue Ridge Conservation Corps; Ashe Humane Society; Alleghany Volunteer Center; Parks & Recreation; Local High School Clubs & Sports; Habitat for Humanity
6. Supportive Services		
Supportive Services	X	DSS; VR; Hunger Coalition; HUD; NC LINKS; Ashe Transportation; Ashe Really Cares; BROCC; Child Care

		Resource & Referral; Local Pregnancy Centers, Health Departments & Churches; Allegheny in Motion; Allegheny Cares; Wilkes Transportation Authority; WAMY; Salvation Army; Shepherds Staff; Yancey Reconciliation House; Partnership for Children
7. Follow-up Services		
Follow-up Services	X	Pregnancy Centers & Health Departments; Ashe Really Cares; BROCC; Child Care Resource & Referral; ESC; HRD; VR

ATTACHMENT J

BUDGETS

ATTACHMENT ONE

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

FY 2005/2006

COUNTIES AND TOWNS IN REGION D

