

# Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties Workforce Development Board

## Local Plan Program Years 2025 – 2028



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<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>
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		PAGE
<b>I.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW</b>	4
<b>II.</b>	<b>WIOA CORE AND REQUIRED PARTNER COORDINATION</b>	
	A. Coordination with AJCC Partners and WIOA Memorandum of Understanding	13
	B. Partners' Efforts to Collaborate on Co-Enrollment and Case Management	14
	C. One-Stop System's Use of Technology and Other Remote Strategies	15
	D. Coordination of Workforce Activities and Support Services	16
	E. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility for Individuals with Disabilities	18
<b>III.</b>	<b>STATE STRATEGIC PARTNER COORINDATION</b>	
	A. Coordination with County Human Services Agency and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals Accessing CalFresh Employment and Training Services	19
	B. Coordination with Local Child Support Agency and Other Local Partners Serving Individuals That Are Non-Custodial Parents	26
	C. Coordination with Local Partnership Agreement Partners Established in Alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities	31
	D. Coordination with Community-Based Organizations and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals Who Are English Language Learners, Foreign Born, and/or Refugees	33
	E. Coordination with Local Veteran Affairs, Community-Based Organizations, and other local partners who serve Veterans	34
	F. Collaborate with the Strategic Planning Partners to address Environmental Sustainability	35
<b>IV.</b>	<b>WIOA TITLE I COORDINATION</b>	
	A. Staff Training and Professional Development to Increase Digital Technology Skills	39
	B. Frontline Staff Training and Professional Development to Increase Cultural Competency and Effectiveness in Working with Individuals and Groups that Have Been Exposed to Trauma	40
	C. Coordination of Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities	41
	D. Services and Activities Available under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs	42
	E. Services and Activities Available under WIOA Title I Youth Program	43

	F.	Entity Responsible for Disbursal of Grant Funds and the Competitive Process Used to Award Contracts for WIOA Title I Activities	44
	G.	How the Local Board Fulfills the Duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider or Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers	45
<hr/>			
<b>V.</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>		
	A.	Joint Powers Agreement between Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties (Attachment 1)	47
	B.	Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary (Attachment 2)	53
	C.	Public Comments Received That Disagree with The Local Plan (Attachment 3)	58
	D.	Signature Page (Attachment 4)	59

**I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act includes requirements for Local Boards to establish a framework for collaboration among state and local programs that are financially supported by nineteen distinct federal fund sources. Six of these programs constitute the four “core partners:” the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs; the WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program; the WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act Program; and the WIOA Title IV State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program. The core partners, together with thirteen other federally supported programs, make-up the WIOA-mandated one-stop partners. The Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties Workforce Development Board (KIM WDB) has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the organizations managing each federal program at the local level. The narrative that follows describes coordination with the WIOA core and other required program partners as prescribed by the Act.

**Overview of Local One-Stop System Partners**

KIM WDB has built strong and effective relationships with state and local agencies that represent the one-stop partner programs. Over the next four years, the WDB looks forward to further enhancing coordination with each of the workforce system partners.

Following is a summary of the local/regional organizations representing the federal one-stop partner programs with which the KIM WDB has developed an MOU.

Partner Programs	MOU Partner
WIOA Title I Adult WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker WIOA Title I Youth	Kern County Employers’ Training Resource
WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy	Delano Joint High School District Farmworker Institute for Education @ Leadership Development Kern High School District McFarland Unified School District Wasco Union High School District Tehachapi Unified School District
WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser	Employment Development Department (EDD)
WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation	California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
Carl Perkins Career Technical Education	Bakersfield College Cerro Coso Community College Taft College Kern Community College District Taft Community College District
Older Americans Act Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	SER – Jobs for Progress, Inc.
Job Corps	Inland Empire Job Corps Center
Native American Programs (WIOA Section 166)	California Indian Manpower Consortium
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSF) (WIOA Section 167)	<i>Not applicable. There is no MSF program in the county.</i>
Jobs for Veterans State Grants	Employment Development Department

Youth Build	<i>Not applicable. There is no Youth Build program in the county.</i>
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	Employment Development Department
Community Services Block Grant	Community Action Partnership of Kern
Housing and Urban Development E&T	Housing Authority of Kern County
Unemployment Insurance (UI)	Employment Development Department
Second Chance Act	Latino Coalition for Community Leadership
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/CalWORKs	Kern County Department of Human Services

**MOU with WIOA Colocated and Non-Colocated Partners**

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Kern County Employers’ Training Resource (ETR), the fiscal and administrative agent of the KIM WDB and the WIOA-mandated partners contains the following key provisions.

Responsibility of AJCC Partners: AJCC/One-Stop Partners agree that the following reflect foundational tenets. The AJCC partners agree to:

- Participate in joint planning, plan development, and modification of activities offered by the partner to facilitate continuous partnership building; continuous planning in response to state and federal requirements; responsiveness to local and regional economic conditions, including employer needs; and participation in and adherence to common data collection and reporting needs, as required by law.
- Make agreed upon services available to customers through the one-stop delivery system.
- Participate in the design and operation of the one-stop system, consistent with the terms of the MOU and requirements of applicable law.
- Participate in capacity building and staff development activities to ensure all partners and staff are adequately cross trained on system services.

Funding of Services and Operating Costs: The partners agree to participate in the development of a cost-sharing agreement through Infrastructure Funding Agreements that identifies shared AJCC system costs. Such shared costs can be provided either in cash or through in-kind services. Actual costs of the system will be driven by the system designed by the partners. These costs could range from items such as rent and utilities for agencies with a physical presence at the AJCC, to a proportionate cost of developing and maintaining common informational portals for job seekers and employers.

***AJCC Partner Programs***

The following information summarizes the ways in which KIM WDB and the local workforce system collaborate with organizations managing the federally mandated one-stop partner programs.

WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs: The three formula-funded programs are administered by Kern County Employers’ Training Resource, the fiscal and

administrative agent of the KIM WDB. Services are delivered at one comprehensive AJCC, located in Bakersfield, and at several affiliate and specialized sites.

WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Literacy: Kern Community College District, on behalf of Bakersfield College and Cerro Coso Community College, and Taft Community College District, on behalf of Taft College, are WIOA Title II adult education and literacy grant recipients. Referrals are regularly made between the Title I and Title II programs, and many participants are co-enrolled. When the California Department of Education requests applications for Adult Education Title II Education and Literacy Activities, ETR staff reviews applications to determine how they complement the Local Workforce Development Plan.

WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser: Wagner-Peyser staff are co-located in the AJCC. Staff at ETR works with EDD to coordinate marketing and outreach to UI claimants, ensuring full access to all available WIOA services, and ETR participates in EDD's RESEA workshops. EDD collaborates with ETR through its representatives, participation in Job Fairs and by referring businesses to EDD to post their job orders. EDD and ETR staff also collaborate on Rapid Response orientations for laid off workers.

WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation: WIOA and DOR staff are cross-trained in the eligibility requirements for services that each offers in order to ensure appropriate referrals. Regular meetings are held to discuss and enhance the referral process and co-enrollments. DOR staff is available to provide technical assistance and training to AJCC and partner staff in disability awareness and use of competitive integrated employment. DOR and ETR have collaborated on the expansion of competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. DOR staff are co-located at the comprehensive AJCC in Bakersfield.

Carl Perkins Career Technical Education: The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) is a principal source of federal funding to states and discretionary grantees for the improvement of secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs across the nation. The purpose of the Act is to develop more fully the academic, career, and technical skills of secondary and postsecondary students who elect to enroll in career and technical education programs. The community colleges through the Kern Community College District and Taft Community College District are recipients of Perkins funding in Kern County.

Title V Older Americans Act: SER – Jobs for Progress, Inc. operates the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) that serves Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties residents. The program offers short-term pre-vocational services to eligible seniors who are 55+, low income, and have barriers to employment; and provides part-time, temporary on-the-job training through community service assignments at local nonprofits and government agencies. SER – Jobs for Progress, Inc. representatives participate in the AJCC partner meetings led by the One-Stop Operator and have provided training on its program to ETR and partner staff. SER – Jobs for Progress, Inc. has an office located in the comprehensive AJCC in Bakersfield.

Job Corps: Programs representatives conduct eligibility determination for Job Corps services. Their principal activity at the comprehensive AJCC in Bakersfield is to promote the Job Corps program to potential applicants, who are young adults ages 16 to 24.

Native American Programs (WIOA Section 166): KIM WDB collaborates with California Indian Manpower Consortium (CIMC) to provide referrals and co-enrollment opportunities for Indian and Native American job seekers, along with access to all WIOA and partner services available through the AJCC.

Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program (WIOA Section 167): There is no entity that administers and operates the Migrant Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) program in KIM Workforce Development Area. ETR refers clients to other partner programs for services.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants: EDD administers this program and designated Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) Specialists support the AJCC by providing assistance to veterans seeking employment.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Act: TAA, which is operated by EDD, is a federal program that provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. The TAA program offers a variety of benefits and reemployment services to help unemployed workers prepare for and obtain suitable employment. Workers may be eligible for training, job search, and other reemployment services. Coordination with TAA generally includes co-enrollment into WIOA, which provides multiple benefits, including TAA funds being used to cover all training costs.

Community Services Block Grant: Community Action Partnership of Kern is a key partner in providing a wide range of support services to workforce system customers. The organization provides early childhood education programs, food and nutrition services, utilities assistance, housing support and more. ETR and the community action agency regularly refer customers to each other.

Housing and Urban Development Employment and Training Program: Housing Authority of Kern County is a critical partner in providing both work experience and leveraged opportunities.

Unemployment Compensation: The Unemployment Insurance program is accessible to ETR customers by phone or via EDD's website. AJCC staff works with EDD to coordinate marketing and outreach to UI claimants, ensuring full access to all available WIOA services.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/CalWORKs: Kern County Department of Human Services assists individuals and families with welfare services. These services

include but are not limited to Cash Assistance, Diversion Assistance, Medi-Cal Coverage, CalFresh, and Employment Services.

### **Partners' Collaboration on Co-Enrollment and Case Management**

WIOA's emphasis on system partnerships, leveraging of resources, and customer-centered design have all contributed to an environment in which workforce development stakeholders are focused on identifying a broad range of resources to assist job seekers in meeting their education, training, employment, and career goals.

For many years, ETR and other local system partners has been co-enrolling participants. Most frequently, the event driving co-enrollment across two or more programs is the identification of a participant having multiple barriers to employment and, therefore, demonstrating needs for multiple interventions. Some of the most common partners for co-enrollment across systems include local providers of TANF, Wagner-Peyser, Probation, and Child Support Services. DOR and local education agencies programs are also strong candidates for having participants co-enrolled in WIOA or other programs. Due to the lack of a shared case management system among all workforce partners, communication between organizations serving common customers relies, after client approval, on verbal and written communication between staff from two or more organizations. Co-case management is most often seen among the workforce system partner programs that utilize the state CalJOBS system. These include the WIOA Title I programs, Wagner-Peyser, veterans' employment services, and the TAA program. The AJCC Partner Referral Form will continue to be used for all customer referrals, until an alternative referral process is agreed to by the partners. All completed forms are sent to the designated email address that each partner provides. Partners are responsible for tracking the referrals they send and receive through the AJCC Partner Referral process.

### **Use of Technology to Support for Co-Enrollment**

WIOA and various other fund sources strongly encourage co-enrollment of customers to provide as many partner services as possible without duplication. As customers are co-enrolled, frequent communication and case management occur between partners. The local system partners have strong relationships, and referrals and co-enrollments between the partners is documented in each agency's case management system. For WIOA, this occurs in CalJOBS and updates regarding cases are commonly shared, with an Authorization of Exchange of Information consent completed by the participant. As situations arise regarding a common customer, partners ensure all details are communicated and questions are addressed on a timely basis. When participants are co-enrolled in programs for which the partners use CalJOBS (e.g., TAA), co-case management is much easier, and information sharing is facilitated by the system.

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### **Co-Enrollment Improvement Strategies**

Co-enrollment and co-case management strategies are facilitated when staff from various programs are informed about the content and requirements of other workforce system programs. ETR has sponsored various cross-training sessions for AJCC partner staff to increase their understanding about all partner programs and to share expertise about the needs of various populations. ETR is committed to coordination of additional cross-training among the AJCC partners, to promote learning for new AJCC staff and to reinforce information among all organizations within the local workforce development delivery system. The more frontline staff know about partner programs, the greater the likelihood that they can make appropriate referrals that will lead to co-enrollment. For frontline staff that are unable to attend the trainings on partner programs, the trainings are available on YouTube.

### **AJCC One-Stop System's Use of Technology and Other Remote Strategies**

With its 21,522 square miles and population of just under 940,000 residents, Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties are the largest of the local workforce areas and the second largest in population in the Central Valley. While more than 410,000 residents reside in Bakersfield, a large portion reside in rural areas. Ensuring access for all of the residents in Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties, there are a total of ten (10) AJCCs, consisting of one (1) comprehensive, seven (7) affiliated and two (2) specialized AJCCs. Both brick and mortar, and virtual operations are key to meeting this objective.

### **Comprehensive, Affiliated and Specialized AJCCs and Other Physical Locations**

The public transit system in Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties are effective in moving people in and out of the locations where comprehensive, affiliated and specialized one-stop AJCCs are located. The AJCCs are well equipped, offering a fully outfitted resource room with computers, internet access, and a wide range of resources that job seekers need to support their career planning and employment goals. For job seekers in remote communities, other options for in-person services are available. On a scheduled basis, ETR staff travel to designated locations to conduct orientations or meet with prospective customers. In addition, other partner locations throughout the tri-county area can serve as onramps to workforce programs. Applicants may be able to use computers, internet, phones, and other equipment at these sites to make contact with ETR and begin their process of learning about and receiving workforce services. In addition, ETR is partnering with the Kern County Public Library (KCPL) system to help expand AJCC services for customers that are unable to visit the centers during regular hours of operation. The KCPL system has 22 branches some of which are located in remote areas of the county.

### **Delivering Services through Virtual Platforms and Web-Based Information**

As stated above, KIM WDB has made significant developments in recent years in launching its virtual intake system and utilizing CareerHubUS.com, which enables remote communications, exchange of information, and participation in services. Effects of the

pandemic on the ability to provide in-person services accelerated further development of this system and the migration of many services (e.g., job readiness workshops and skills training) to web-based platforms. A byproduct of services being available on the web is that they are, at least in theory, more readily accessible to individuals living in remote corners of the counties of Kern, Inyo and Mono or blocks away from the one comprehensive, six affiliated and two specialized AJCCs. The KIM WDB recognizes, however, that there is a profound digital divide in Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties with many individuals lacking internet access, hardware, and technology skills to gain access to and effectively utilize virtual services.

Practices and procedures have been put in place so that customers can be provided all WIOA services remotely. These include career and training services, orientation, eligibility, assessment, enrollment, and case management. Services are provided through email, phone and text through CareerHubUS.com, and video communications with no in-person appointments. However, in-person appointments are available upon request. In addition to these services, necessary forms can be provided, discussed, and signed by customers and staff remotely by utilizing CareerHubUS.com or DocuSign on a customer's personal cell phone. Staff utilize CalJOBS for customers to upload their eligibility documents and have customers sign documents by PDF.

### **Improving Service Delivery to Remote Communities**

Addressing technology gaps experienced by many residents of Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties will be a top priority for KIM WDB over the four-year period of this Local Plan. Improving access to web-based services is critical to every organization that is part of the local workforce system and many more agencies and programs that provide a host of services to county residents. The KIM WDB will engage with state officials and work with county government to identify strategies to increase access.

### **Coordination of Workforce Activities and Support Services**

The KIM WDB provides supportive services to customers enrolled in WIOA training to enable their participation in services, training activities, and employment. Supportive services are coordinated for individuals with demonstrated financial need. The provision of supportive services is based on an individual's assessment results, budget, and the availability of funds. Supportive services are identified to address barriers to employment such as limited English proficiency, limited exposure to work, insufficient skills development, lack of credentialing, and other employer-valued skills, experience and educational attainment. During the intake process, customers complete a career profile assessment, inquiring as to the need for training and supportive services required to successfully achieve employment goals. This assessment is discussed in detail with case management staff to ensure need and, subsequently, referrals to appropriate agencies. Prior to accessing WIOA funds for supportive services, staff ensures that there is no duplication of services with other programs or benefits that an individual may be receiving. As indicated, WIOA supportive services are only provided if need and is determined if

funds are available. In all cases, WIOA funds are expended only after it is determined other services and sources of support are not available.

### **Types of WIOA Supportive Services**

Support services provided to WIOA-enrolled customers include items to meet a variety of needs, including transportation allowance while in training, bus passes, tools and equipment required for training, tools and clothing required for work, and other services, as appropriate and allowed through local policies. Such additional services may include funds for licensing fees; drug screening and background clearance applications; health and vision needs; and moving expenses for dislocated workers with a bona fide job offer. Long-term and costly forms of support, including childcare, are typically identified through referrals to local partner agencies.

### **Support Services Partners and Resources**

ETR staff has established working relationships with the Housing Authority of Kern County, Community Action Partnership of Kern, the Kern County Department of Human Services, Garden Pathways, Bakersfield Homeless Shelter, Independent Living Center of Kern County, Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired, California Department of Rehabilitation, and many other organizations that support persons in need of services to overcome barriers to employment and training. There is an electronic community resource listing by phone at 211 and 211Inteliful, online. These resources are updated by the Community Action Partnership of Kern. Workforce system partners are cross-trained on various forms and sources of supportive services that are available throughout the community, including services from government and non-profit, faith-based, and other community providers. ETR developed an English and Spanish Community resource directory that is regularly updated with local resources to assist job seekers with employment related barriers.

### **Physical and Programmatic Accessibility for Individuals with Disabilities**

KIM WDB has implemented various strategies to ensure compliance with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, KIM WDB makes available technology, programs, and services that support job seekers with disabilities' effective use in all of the nine comprehensive, affiliate and specialized one-stop AJCCs throughout Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties.

### **Compliance with WIOA Section 188 and ADA**

All partners within the workforce development delivery system, including the One-Stop Operator (OSO) and partners co-located at the comprehensive AJCC, fully comply with WIOA Section 188 (non-discrimination and equal opportunity) and applicable provisions of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. References to this requirement are included in all contracts and the MOU with all local workforce system partners. All enrolled participants sign a Grievance and Complaint Procedures form that informs them of steps

they can take in the event they wish to file a complaint. Notices regarding non-discrimination and equal opportunity are also prominently displayed in all of the AJCC lobbies for non-enrolled customers. Training on WIOA Section 188 is provided to all AJCC staff, include prohibiting discrimination against people who apply to, participate in, work for, or come into contact with programs and activities of the workforce development system. Training on the Americans with Disabilities Act includes the definition of an individual with a disability, reasonable accommodations, undue hardship, retaliation against an individual, and medical inquiries.

ETR is aware of the difficulties individuals with disabilities may encounter when accessing one-stop services and staff is committed to ensuring individuals with disabilities have physical and programmatic access to all one-stop systems and services. DOR, which administers California’s Vocational Rehabilitation program, is represented on the KIM WDB and is a significant resource for all of the AJCCs and the local workforce system in developing strategies to effectively serve individuals with disabilities. DOR staff also maintains scheduled office hours at the comprehensive one-stop AJCC located in Bakersfield and Delano and assists in training AJCC staff regarding accessibility and accommodations needed for job seekers with disabilities. AJCC facilities are certified compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and offer Sorenson and other adaptive equipment. The one-stop AJCCs are located near major bus transportation routes, which allow for easy access. Staff are bilingual in English and Spanish and can translate as needed, while services in other languages are available when requested.

**Resources for Job Seekers with Disabilities**

As indicated, the one-stop AJCC complies with all mandates and notifications with regard to providing services and materials to individuals with disabilities. Technology which has been obtained and is available to individuals with disabilities includes, Sorenson, ZOOM screen enhancement software (assists individuals who are visually impaired); Ubi Duo (deaf/hearing impaired communication device); and Dragon Natural Speaking Software (speech recognition technology). In addition, one-on-one assistance is provided to customers to support the use of the one-stop AJCCs located throughout Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties. Reasonable accommodations are available upon request.

**Training to Increase System Effectiveness in Serving Individuals with Disabilities**

As indicated, training on WIOA Section 188 is provided to all AJCC staff. Training occurs annually, documentation is provided, and signatures/verification are obtained to ensure validation of training provided for county employees. This information is housed with ETR’s Equal Opportunity Officer. ETR also plans to continue to arrange for more training on topics such as best practices for serving individuals with disabilities. ETR will collaborate with DOR to identify and secure such training.

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**WIOA – Local Plan for Program Years 2025 – 2028**

In accordance with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and guidance published by California Workforce Development Board and Employment Development Department, the KIM WDB has developed a four-year Local Plan covering Program Years (PY) 2025-28. Upon its approval by state officials representing the Governor, this Local Plan will become the official, active and effective version of the plan beginning on July 1, 2025 and remaining in effect through June 30, 2029.

**II. WIOA CORE AND REQUIRED PARTNERSHIP COORDINATION****A. *How the Local Board and AJCC partners will coordinate the services and resources identified in its MOU, as outlined in WIOA Memorandums of Understanding (WSD18-12).***

The WIOA MOU addresses service coordination and collaboration amongst the eighteen WIOA partners (AJCC Partners). The purpose of the WIOA MOU is to establish a cooperative working relationship between the KIM WDB and the required AJCC Partners as well as defining their respective roles and responsibilities in achieving a seamless one-stop delivery system that is quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of the local economy. This WIOA MOU also serves to establish the framework for providing a unified one-stop delivery system to employers, employees, job seekers, and others needing workforce services. The WIOA MOU serves as a functional tool as well as a visionary plan for how KIM WDB and the AJCC Partners work together to serve the needs of their shared customers. The AJCC one-stop delivery system is driven by local needs and will evolve over time as employers and individual's customers' needs change. The AJCC Partners manage referrals through cross-training of appropriate staff. The AJCC Partners also provide access to each required AJCC Partner's program through cross-referrals, such as: physically co-locating at the AJCC center, being available for appointments to job seekers, and having appropriate technologies at the AJCC.

The WIOA MOU addressed how the WIOA Partners functionally and fiscally will sustain the AJCC One-Stop delivery system in KIM Counties through the use of resource sharing and joint operating and infrastructure costs. Each of the AJCC Partners that carries out a program or activities within the comprehensive AJCC must use a portion of the funds available for their program and activities to help maintain the One-Stop delivery system, including proportional payment of the infrastructure costs of the locally operated comprehensive AJCC. Staff have received training from the California WDB which has assisted the KIM WDB and AJCC Partners with the continued development of cost sharing agreements for both infrastructure budgets and other shared cost budgets. The WIOA MOU

allows for the co-located AJCC Partners to meet on a regular basis to develop a mutually agreeable budget for the comprehensive AJCC. In addition, the co-located AJCC Partners have negotiated the cost sharing methodology based upon their proportionate use and relative benefit to each co-located AJCC partner while complying with federal cost principles.

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

The Better Bakersfield & Boundless Kern Regional Action for Economic Prosperity (B3K Report) provided the KIM WDB with the foundation to continue work on career pathways working in partnership with WIOA partners. The B3K Report highlighted those occupations within the industry clusters that show growth and present an individual with a sustainable wage. The B3K Report focuses on achieving dual economic objectives of (i) enduring growth and competitiveness for the Kern region, and (ii) jobs that enable self-sufficiency and upward mobility of its residents. These outcomes require workforce and economic development strategies that focus not just on job counts, but the quality of jobs created and providing access to them. In particular, “middle skill, middle income” jobs for workers with less than a bachelor's degree are central to determining workforce and economic development priorities, responding to the impact of macroeconomic trends that hollowed out job creation in that category and reduced pathways to employment opportunities. The “Opportunity Industries” analysis used in the B3K Report identifies the sectoral concentrations of “good” and “promising” jobs that enable workers to achieve self-sufficiency for themselves and their families. Furthermore, Opportunity Industries affords a granular understanding of progressions in job quality by sector, by occupation and worker demographics. With this information, KIM WDB will prioritize workforce development interventions by focusing on sectors that concentrate on good jobs, enhance job quality in other prominent clusters, align workforce outreach, and training activities to ensure residents are better connected to those jobs. The term “Good jobs” must meet four criteria, including (i) pays a sufficient annual wage that enables workers to meet their family’s market basket of expenses and savings, and be ineligible for California benefit transfers; (ii) provides employer sponsored health insurance which is a proxy for other employment benefits; and (iii) affords career pathways that lead to the same or another good job in the future; (iv) upward mobility toward better quality jobs. This analysis also accounts for differences in the quality of a job and the likelihood of upward mobility depending on the attributes of the person who holds the job.

In order to help residents in the local workforce development area obtain jobs that ensure both long-term economic self-sufficiency and economic security, KIM WDB continues to work with industry, education, labor, and economic development leaders. KIM WDB collaborates with its WIOA partners to identify and solve employment challenges, support system alignment, partnership building, employer

engagement, sector strategies, and development of service strategies focusing on serving individuals with barriers to employment. KIM WDB relies upon its nine (9) America's Job Centers of California (AJCC) spanning three counties as the cornerstone of its workforce system. The AJCC serves as an all-inclusive access point to education and employment programs that provide demand-driven skills attainment, especially for those with barriers to employment, including English Language Learners, Homeless and Housing Insecure, Immigrants, Justice-Involved Individuals, People with Disabilities, Veterans, Youth, Low-income households and Dislocated Workers. To ensure maximum participant access to WIOA programs and services, including training, KIM WDB leverages resources through strategic co-enrollment. Through the Memorandum of Understanding, WIOA partners within the AJCC system collaborate to streamline administrative processes in order to co-enroll participants and direct resources to meet the needs of participants within the local workforce development area. KIM WDB collaborates with WIOA partners to increase service integration, as appropriate. KIM WDB continually improves service delivery to meet participant needs through co-enrollment into partner programs. KIM WDB assists participants' access to resources across partner programs by having AJCC staff work in cross-functional teams and provide ongoing training and professional development. This training and professional development allows AJCC staff to be knowledgeable in the eligibility requirements of partner programs to allow for an integrated service delivery and co-enrollment which streamlines intensive services, such as case management, job search assistance, and follow-up services.

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

KIM WDA spans more than 21,400 square miles of fertile farmland on the Central San Joaquin Valley floor, the arid Mojave Desert, and the mountains of the Eastern Sierra Region. The KIM WDA is larger in area than the State's largest county, San Bernardino. Sparsely populated, the residents of Inyo and Mono Counties comprise 3.5% of the Workforce Development Area's population of 938,593 (July 1, 2023) residents. Due to the seasonal nature of employment, sparse population, low number of employers, and other factors, most economic studies do not target individual employers in Inyo or Mono Counties, but rather aggregate data for the Eastern Sierra Region.

Given the breadth of the Workforce Development Area (WDA), KIM plans to utilize technology, such as Skype, Zoom, Teams, Webex, Google Conference and Social Media platforms such as: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube to facilitate access to services and enhance the currently maintained websites [www.americasjobcenterofkern.com](http://www.americasjobcenterofkern.com) and [www.employerstrainingresource.com](http://www.employerstrainingresource.com). These websites provide information regarding current training and employment opportunities, employer recruitments, job fairs, weekly Facebook Live Job Squad employment opportunity announcement forum, industry forums, orientation

information, special grant opportunities, connections to all AJCC partner services and programs, Workforce Development Board agendas and notices, community resources, policy bulletins, request for procurement/refunding, and program performance data. Using websites and YouTube, KIM WDB will offer on-line video links that allow both employers and job seeker customers to review work readiness workshops, partner services presentations, and more information about specific programs and services at their convenience; virtual orientations to offer an additional on-ramp to services to assist job seekers, incumbent workers, customers with accessibility or transportation barriers, and anyone unable to visit centers during regular hours of operation; and the use of remote access points. Kern County established remote access points for county services using San Joaquin Air Pollution Control Grant aimed at reducing vehicle miles. These remote access points are provided using video equipment that could be used to provide career services in outlying areas. KIM WDB will continue to explore technological advances that can help us to provide customers with other options for service delivery in remote areas.

At the present time, KIM WDB is partnering with the Kern County Public Library (KCPL) system to help expand AJCC services for customers that are unable to visit the centers during regular hours of operation. The KCPL system has 22 branches some of which are located in remote areas of the county.

In addition, KIM WDB staff uses CareerHubUS.com's Virtual Service Model ("VSM") to communicate with clients and employers. The VSM permits staff to communicate more effectively and efficiently with clients by texting information to their mobile devices. This allows staff to provide job seekers in the targeted populations with assistance through the use of innovative service delivery methods and lets employers know about services they have requested. Staff is able to provide technical assistance, coaching, virtual training, reminders, referrals to on-line and shared community resources, notices to job/resource fairs, employer recruitments and other employment opportunities, and matching clients with job opportunities via text, email and voicemail to the customers' smartphone regardless of their geographic location. The VSM has increased efficiency and program outcomes through engagement of the targeted population.

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

ETR met with staff from California State University, Bakersfield, Kern High School District's Bakersfield Adult School, Bakersfield and Taft Colleges, and Kern County Superintendent of Schools regarding improved access to credentials. One of the colleges suggested encouraging local employers to increase use of WorkKeys as an assessment tool for their specific occupations. Another suggestion was to provide additional cross training to staff in order to better understand how more students, not just those enrolled in target industry clusters, might be assisted by the one-stop AJCC system including access to supportive services. Suggestions



also included for staff to assist individuals that need out-of-state, out-of-country credentials evaluated to meet the credential requirements of California.

KIM WDB has also partnered with the Kern County Public Library (KCPL). The KCPL provides the public free Wi-Fi and public access computers, with low-cost printing, copying, and scanning available. Residents with personal, professional, or educational needs may visit any KCPL branch for in-person services such as technology assistance, English and citizenship classes, one-on-one computer help, job recruitments and fairs, as well as to access free online databases for test prep and business learning. KCPL visitors may also utilize library computers to search for jobs, submit job applications, and seek assistance with library personnel during workforce appointments. Beale Memorial Library, the main branch, which is located in Bakersfield, also provides tutors in math and reading through scheduled appointments and in conjunction with their Snacks in the Stacks program which provides free meals to children 18 and under. Utilizing partners, such as the library supports student and adult learners by strengthening Kern County networks that ensure better retention and completion of beneficial credentials to provide a literacy/digital lab at Beale Memorial Library. Students needing to improve their keyboarding and computer skills may make appointments for one-on-one tutoring to learn how to navigate the World Wide Web as well as the Windows Software programs. Beale Memorial Library also provides tutors in math and reading through scheduled appointments; have access to practice tests on a variety of subjects; and non-traditional hours of operations to afford more public use and support the adult learner. Utilizing partners to strengthen the support networks for students and adult learners will help with retention to ensure forward progression of credentials.

Presently, the referral system allows WIOA and community Partners to email a referral form to the other partner(s) which includes the information about the customer and services needed. However, this referral system is antiquated and needs a more robust universal referral tracking system in place to ensure customers are receiving the services they deserve from the AJCC. The One-Stop Operator has been working with the WIOA and community Partners to formalize a universal referral tracking that is acceptable to all partners. Unfortunately, EDD and DOR are unable to utilize third party referral software. The WIOA and community Partners, in cooperation with the One-Stop Operator are working on implementing a referral system that is user friendly and provides direct access to all of the AJCC partners (except EDD and DOR) through real-time technology. EDD and DOR will continue to use the present referral system. The third-party software will allow WIOA and community Partners to track outcomes together, identify service gaps and at-risk populations, and most importantly, refer customers to partner services to benefit the community.

Supportive Services are provided to eligible customers that present a financial need which affects their ability to obtain or maintain employment. Current services include, but are not limited to transportation, hygiene kits, tools, uniforms,

certifications/license fees and other expenses such as books and background checks. KIM WDB coordinates with One Stop partners and other community-based organizations to provide services not afforded by KIM WDB. In the interest of improving customer service, the coordinator will serve as a point of contact for the customer and be responsible to report the outcome of services. This prevents duplication of services, enhances braiding of resources, and prevents the customer from being lost in red tape. KIM WDB also maintains a community resource directory of services available through other agencies and community-based organizations. The directory provides contact information for organizations providing transportation, utility assistance, legal services, childcare services, food, clothing, shelter, tax assistance, substance abuse counseling, and assistance for battered women, and youth in crises.

Two examples of coordination with partners are:

Supportive services are used for eligible customers to take the bilingual exam at Bakersfield College. Attainment of this recognized certificate qualifies them for many job opportunities with private employers and public organizations.

Community Connection for Child Care provides subsidized childcare services to families meeting eligibility criteria. Families in need can either place their child(ren) in licensed day care programs or may have a family member compensated while caring for their child(ren). This is a much-needed service to individuals entering the workforce. KIM WDB leverages funds by making direct referrals for services without utilizing WIOA supportive services dollars.

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

KIM WDB has universal workstations located all of its comprehensive, affiliate and specialized one-stop AJCCs. These universally accessible workstations are available to any person with a disability including those with mobility, hearing and visual barriers. The workstations are typically placed in the Resource Room where a staff member is located. This allows for easy access to the workstation and staff is readily available for assistance. The universally accessible computer has Windows-based software with assistive technology including:

- *Screen Magnifier:* Magnifies the computer screen up to a maximum of 1500%
- *Narrator:* Requires the use of headphones and has the ability to read a selection of words or paragraphs

- *Speech Recognition*: Uses an external microphone for speech-to-text. The built-in MS Windows software works in all applications including the MS Office Suite, Google Chrome and Internet Explorer
- *Flatbed Scanner*: Compatible peripheral device connected to the workstation with the capability to scan both text and image documents to various file types including PDF, JPEG, TIFF via push button on the scanner and/or an on-screen guide

KIM WDB is aware of the difficulties individuals with disabilities encounter when accessing AJCC One-Stop services and is committed to ensuring individuals with disabilities have physical and programmatic access to the One-Stop system and services. The DOR administers California's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program and is represented throughout Kern Inyo and Mono Counties. The AJCC One-Stops promote universal access in order to achieve full compliance with state and federal laws and to increase employment of individuals with disabilities. KIM WDB's staff are provided annual training to improve and coordinate agency services to customers with disabilities. KIM WDB's AJCC One-Stop facilities are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and offer TTY, Braille materials and other adaptive equipment as requested. One-Stops are located near major bus transportation routes which allow for easy access. Most AJCC One-Stop Resource Rooms contain Universal Access Workstations (UAW) which are available to any person with a disability including those with mobility, hearing and visual barriers. KIM WDB complies with all State issued policy guidance with regard to access for individuals with disabilities. Kern County also contracts with an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter service, and Independent Living Center of Kern County. Spanish bi-lingual staff can translate documents as needed, while other languages are available when requested.

### III. STATE STRATEGIC PARTNER COORDINATION

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

The Kern, Inyo and Mono Workforce Development Board (KIM WDB), by and through its administrative and fiscal agent, Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR) have partnered with Kern County Department of Human Services (DHS) to identify ways to increase communication and reduce barriers with shared customers. In addition, ETR will continue to work with community-based organizations (CBOs), service providers, community colleges, and representatives of DHS to increase employment rates and wage gains for all individuals who receive CalFresh with the common goal to help low skilled, low income or low wage individuals find sustainable employment. DHS has also entered a partnership with

the Foundation for Community Colleges Fresh Success and third-party provider, Bakersfield College, to provide educational career development opportunities and supportive services.

Partnerships between these agencies emphasize sharing information through access to their respective programs, braiding resources, and blending services at each of their locations. This includes physical co-location of staff, cross training of staff, virtual access through phones or websites, distribution of printed materials and establishing a process for reciprocal referrals to appropriate services offered through the partnering agency.

CalFresh E&T focuses on serving a population that traditionally have not had their workforce needs met by other federal workforce programs: low-income individuals with significant barriers to success.

CalFresh participants need more education and training to succeed in advancing to middle-skill jobs compared to other job seekers. For example, a majority of Kern County CalFresh households include an adult caretaker without a high school diploma. Although participation in CalFresh E&T is not limited to these groups, the CalFresh recipients targeted for E&T participation are able-bodied adults and college students, and General Assistance Employable (non-aged/disabled) recipients. Participation in E&T is strictly voluntary for the CalFresh program.

<i>Kern County Department of Human Services (DHS)</i>	
<i>CalFresh Participant Demographics: November 2024</i>	
<b>Cases</b>	104,799
<b>Individuals Participating</b>	226,834
<b>Ages 18-59</b>	104,555
<b>English Second Language (ESL)</b>	57,391
<b>Receiving Employable General Assistance</b>	196
<b>Higher Education Students</b>	4,343
<b>Estimated CF Employment and Training Participants</b>	95

The barriers these individuals face may include a lack of knowledge about training program options, lack of childcare or transportation, low basic skills (literacy/numeracy), basic English language proficiency, homelessness or housing instability, psychological issues and/or criminal backgrounds.

Workforce services must be developed to improve employment rates and wage gains for all individuals who receive public benefits and create a seamless service

delivery flow between DHS and its CalFresh E&T partners. Workforce services targeted for unemployed or underemployed individuals should:

- 1 Increase job placements, retention and able to increase wages to “a living wage”;
- 2 Increase CalFresh E&T participation across a dynamic mix of people, communities and cultures;
- 3 Increase employability by removing barriers to employment;
- 4 Increase skills to attainment and credentialing; and
- 5 Braid funding streams to maximize budgets.

Examples of these services include, but are not limited to:

- On-the-job training;
- Work experience (including paid apprenticeships);
- Educational programs (including ESL Classes);
- Job Search skills;
- Job Club;
- Vocational training;
- Career/technical programs;
- Job retention for up to 90-days post-employment; and
- Providing supportive services that directly help participants succeed in E&T components.

Making these E&T services accessible to these targeted individuals will assist them in eventually getting a “good job”, which will provide them “a wage sufficient to support a family adequately, and, over time to save for emergency expenses”.

DHS offers the following employment services to local community members:

- Job Fest (Fairs) – DHS organizes and hosts several job fairs throughout Kern County (Bakersfield, Lake Isabella, Taft, Ridgecrest, Shafter, Mojave, Lamont and Delano, and Wasco). Over a hundred potential employers from the private and public sector participate and at times, may interview and hire on-site.

DHS partners with Employer’s Training Resource to provide the following E&T service components to eligible CalFresh E&T participants on a voluntary basis:

- Job Search – Orientation and Job Readiness Assessments provide a participant-centered evaluation of basic skills, education, work history, occupational skills, general employability, interests, and aptitudes. Supervised job search activities are provided both on-site and virtually. Access to CalJOBS, assistance with resume building, and training on how to search for

jobs, job interview skills, guidance on completing job applications, instructor lead training on job retention skills and techniques and how to dress for interviews.

- Non-Paid Work Experience – Evaluation of each participant for potential placement in appropriate non-paid work experience programs. Job site monitoring ensures participants are performing within the scope of the job as outlined in the site agreement and that participants attain positive work habits. The non-paid work experience placement may be completed concurrently with the Supervised Job Search activity.

DHS offers the following supportive services to CalFresh E&T participants:

- Transportation Funds – participants of the Employment and Training program may receive bus passes to be able to travel to the designated areas required to complete training workshops or seek employment, and attend interviews.

In the upcoming year, DHS will roll out a new partnership with the Foundation for Community Colleges to operate E&T utilizing the Fresh Success program model. The Foundation will offer the following E&T service components through a third party provider, Bakersfield College, to eligible CalFresh E&T participants, on a voluntary basis:

- Education – Bakersfield College will offer Fresh Success enrollment to students enrolled in for-credit Career Education courses and programs, as well as students enrolled in noncredit programs such as basic skills, high school equivalency, English for Multilingual Students, and vocational training. Participating students meet with the Basic Needs or Students of Concern team and their academic counselor to discuss academic progress, potential barriers, and course of action to address barriers through direct referrals to on or off-campus service providers.

The Foundation receives federal funding for the administration of the Fresh Success E&T program through contract with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), with no exchange of funds through DHS.

The Foundation's Fresh Success program offers the following supportive services as needed to CalFresh E&T participants:

- Transportation funds;
- Textbooks;
- Training materials and supplies;

- Tests and fees;
- Emergency housing and utilities;
- Minor automobile repairs;
- Interview/work clothing and tools;
- Internet/mobile device service payments; and
- Medical, vision and dental expenses; personal hygiene products and services.

The Foundation receives funding for supportive services through philanthropic sources, as well as federal 50/50 reimbursement, with no funds passing through DHS.

DHS also collaborates and provides referrals to several community agency partners to assist with CalFresh participant's barriers. Some partners include:

- America's Job Centers – Employment and training services.
- Child Support Department – Custodial and non-custodial parent referrals to obtain assistance with information on their child support payments received, or required to pay.
- Community Connection for Childcare – Subsidized and unsubsidized childcare referrals for individuals in need of childcare.
- Housing Authority – Housing assistance for low-income individuals.
- Veteran's Department – Assistance in seeking VA benefits that individuals or their dependents might be entitled to receive.
- Community Action Partnership of Kern – Housing cost assistance and income tax preparations (Federal and State EIC).
- Kern Behavioral Health – Substance abuse treatment and mental health services.

Several Partnership opportunities can be developed to assist these targeted individuals with the outlined barriers above by leveraging the CalFresh Employment and Training 50/50 federal funding and partnering with third parties to deliver and provide the resources and services needed to achieve the goal of obtaining a "good job".

Partner information sharing is accomplished by providing access to their respective programs, service locations; which includes physical co-location of staff, cross training of staff, virtual access through phones or websites, distribution of printed materials and establishing a process for reciprocal referrals to appropriate services offered through the partnering agency.

With the common goal to help low skilled, low income or low wage individuals find sustainable employment, DHS could seek third-party partners (AJCCs, Community and Technical Colleges, and/or CBOs) to deliver Employment and

Training (E&T) services, including partners who can assist with removing employment barriers.

The goal is to coordinate services in which braiding of funds can be utilized to pay for E&T services and achieve a blending of services (combine and eliminate duplicate services to the same population) to provide these individuals with a customized plan that meets their needs. The braiding of resources to achieve the coordination of service delivery could be achieved by leveraging the CalFresh E&T's 100% Federal and 50/50 matching funds, WIOA (Adult Low Income and Dislocated Worker) funds and Non-federal matching funds such as, AB 109 and County general funds. The operating costs to provide these services would be shared upon the partners under a Memorandum of Understanding agreement.

The E&T partners would enter into a referral agreement, which could be a reciprocal referral procedure that would do the following:

- Individuals seeking employment or training resources at AJCCs, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Community Colleges, or Educational Institutions could be referred to DHS to apply for CalFresh and be approved; DHS would refer these individuals to E&T partners which would then enroll the individuals in the necessary services; or
- Individuals receiving CalFresh could be referred by DHS to partners, which could then enroll the individual in the necessary services.

When seeking partners to braid resources and blend services or collaborating with CBOs, the following objectives would need to be met:

- 1 Work jointly to identify models of workforce services based on one-stop partnerships that meet the baseline federal expectations and evaluate service delivery to improve outcomes;
- 2 Work together to implement WIOA program strategies through a value-added partnership in which partners contribute to the basis of their programmatic expertise. The WIOA strategies would be as follows: subsidized employment, sector strategies, career pathways, and providing supportive services, “earn and learn” training models, including apprenticeships, integrating service delivery and braiding resources, and creating cross-system data capacity;
- 3 Provide access to their respective programs, service locations by means to be determined, which may include physical co-location of staff, cross training of staff, virtual access through phones or websites, distribution of printed materials and establish a process for reciprocal referrals to appropriate services offered through the partnering agency; and



- 4 Work to identify & implement best practices & model partnerships that encourage program coordination & alignment meeting federal standards for workforce service delivery models.

The following policy objectives of the state plan would need to be met by potential local partners to help provide services to CalFresh participants:

- 5 Fostering demand-driven skills attainment. Workforce and education programs need to align program content with the state's industry sector needs so as to provide county business and employers with the skilled workforce it needs to compete in the state's economy;
- 6 Enabling upward mobility for all Kern County residents, including populations with barriers to employment. Workforce and education programs need to be accessible for all county residents and ensure that everyone has access to a marketable set of skills and able to access the level of education necessary to ensure economic self-sufficiency and security;
- 7 Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services to economize limited resources while providing the right services to clients, based on each client's particular needs, including individuals with disabilities; and
- 8 Serving Individuals with Barriers to Employment. This may include remedial education and English language literacy services.

Ultimately, the goal of the E&T partners would be to work together to identify and implement best practices and model partnerships that encourage program coordination and alignment to meet federal required standards pertaining to workforce service delivery models.

E&T partners would ensure that target populations have access to employment services, supportive services, training, and education programming that will help these individuals eventually get a "good job". This includes developing principles of common programs information, participant information sharing and common reporting through electronic mechanisms, including shared technology.

Partners could have success in retaining these individuals in E&T programs by participating in joint program planning, plan development and modification of activities to accomplish the following:

- Continuous partnership building;
- Continuous planning in response to state and federal requirements;
- Responsiveness to local and economic conditions, including employer needs, and (v) Constantly reviewing the individuals E&T plan to ensure that any barrier is identified and services are available and provided to overcome the barrier.

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

Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR) will partner with Kern County Department of Child Support Services (KCDCSS) to identify ways to increase communication and reduce barriers with shared customers. Providing immediate and direct communication with customers at the time of service ensures customers have the necessary information to make educated decisions. Specifically, KCDCSS will provide video-conferencing equipment to be placed in strategic AJCC one-stop centers to ensure face-to-face interviews to discuss their specific child support case, educate the non-custodial parent on what to expect once they are employed, and review their case to ensure the order accurately reflects their current earning situation. In addition, a referral system has been created between the departments to inform one another of parents who would be qualified candidates for services.

As of September 2024, KCDCSS managed 47,638 open cases. Most families receiving services are living in poverty or are income instable. Of the total caseload, 25.9% families are currently receiving and 58.1% have previously received TANF benefits through the Department of Human Services. For these families, child support is a critical safety-net as consistent reliable child support payments help provide for the basic needs of the children in their care. Parents in these cases can have multiple cases and, depending on the situation, the person may be a custodial parent in one case and a noncustodial parent in another. Noncustodial parents in these cases can live throughout the state of California and nation, and in some cases internationally. There are 21,665 non-custodial parents with at least one open child support case. Of the total number of open cases, 7,003 noncustodial parents have some form of incarceration history. 86.0% of noncustodial parents are male. 45.5% of noncustodial parents are identified as Hispanic, 21.9% are White, and 13.8% are Black. Of the cities within the County of Kern, Bakersfield has the largest number noncustodial parents with a total of 16,141 people. The four other top Kern County cities include: Delano, Ridgecrest, Shafter, and Wasco.

KCDCSS currently works with all parents by proactively communicating throughout the establishment and enforcement of their child support order. During these interactions, parents are educated about the child support process and the specific impacts to their case. Throughout the life of the case and as personal situations change, court ordered child support amounts are reviewed and modified to reflect current circumstances. Staff are also educated about other available community resources and actively share this information with customers when appropriate.

Parents face a wide variety of challenges in meeting their parental responsibilities. Some of these challenges can be attributed to two different reasons. The first of which is reliable, consistent employment. Many parents struggle in finding full-time employment at a sustainable living wage. Formerly incarcerated and low skilled workers face greater challenges in securing full-time work as they are competing with higher skilled and more educated people entering the job market. Often, they rely on seasonal or part-time work

without benefits to just sustain themselves, with nothing left for their children. To be successful, parents need help with increasing their marketable skill sets making them more attractive to potential employers. Additionally, parents need available reliable jobs where they could earn livable incomes. Even if the person has the skills needed by employers and there are available job opportunities, access to available employment becomes the second area of difficulty. If the parent has additional challenges such as being an English language learner or not having reliable transportation, these challenges are exponentially more difficult to overcome.

As Kern County geographically spans over large distances, parents may live a considerable distance away from available employers making reliable transportation a necessity. The second challenge is private transportation costs, including purchasing of a vehicle, gas, and vehicle maintenance. All of these expenses can be detrimental for those living in both the larger cities as well as in neighboring towns. Public transportation is limited, can be difficult to use or access, and may not fit the family needs relating to childcare. For these parents to succeed in the labor market, they need assistance with overcoming these barriers.

Job preparation and training are critical for non-custodial parents to obtain meaningful and sustainable employment. Custodial Parents need to be able to depend on consistent monthly child support payments to successfully manage their budget. Non-Custodial Parents need to be prepared for the workforce which will provide them with enough wages to support themselves as well as their children. Recognizing unemployed or underemployed parents often have multifaceted challenges to securing full-time employment and may need additional resources and support, KDCSS has created a Family Resource Team dedicated to creating an additional level of support to parents while they are seeking employment or experiencing other hardships. For those parents referred through the partnership with ETR, KDCSS provides continued education and personalized child support case management to support parents actively participating in the workforce development services. This specialized support ensures parents understand the importance of supporting their child while reducing barriers for parents as they continue with the program.

To serve customers efficiently, KDCSS' Customer Service Representatives are able to handle most customer needs by phone, including making payments. For those seeking in-person services, KDCSS has worked to create a welcoming environment to reduce customer fear and apprehension of accessing services. There are three offices strategically located throughout Kern County for customers to access a case manager directly. The Bakersfield office serves as the main office location and is conveniently located with a bus stop steps from the property. For those traveling by motor vehicle, the building is easily accessible from the freeway and there is plenty of convenient customer parking. The Ridgecrest branch office provides services in the East Kern area. In 2023, the Delano branch office was opened to better serve Northwestern Kern County.

For even greater convenience, a mobile unit was secured this past year providing the department with a greater opportunity to serve customers in person throughout the county. This mobile unit is fully equipped for parents seeking child support services

allowing the case manager to take a variety of actions from opening cases, conducting genetic tests, printing documents, updating cases, and taking actions to establish, enforce, or modify orders. Lastly, customers have 24/7 access to review their accounts, make and receive payments, review child support resources, and submit questions to their case manager through Customer Connect Website on their personal computer or phone.

KCDCSS is committed to providing services for non-English speaking customers. The department actively hires Spanish speaking staff at all public points of contact so that customers can talk directly with a child support professional in their own language. There is also a dedicated caseload for customers whose primary language or language of preference is Spanish. Staff assigned to this team are proficient in both English and Spanish to ensure customers are provided with the highest quality of service directly and without an interpreter. For additional languages, KCDCSS utilizes language interpretation services, and most forms are available in a variety of languages.

KCDCSS also attempts to minimize any challenges customers with disabilities may face in accessing or utilizing services. Most, if not all, services provided by the KCDCSS can be handled telephonically or through the mail minimizing the need for customers to come into the office. The department actively uses email and TextPro as communication tools which are very popular with customers. Over the past few years, Kern County Superior Court has allowed for select legal documents to be electronically signed which has significantly reduced the need for in person services. For those who prefer face to face services, each branch office has been designed to fit a variety of customer needs and the new mobile unit was also customized to ensure customers can access staff easily. If additional assistance is needed, customers can authorize someone they trust to receive information and act on their behalf.

While the department has worked to increase accessibility and ease of communication for everyone, the department acknowledges that customers may still have apprehension, fear and distrust of government which creates a barrier that prevents people from seeking services, disclosing information, and overall cooperation. In addition, with the increase in scams, some customers are leery, and distrust electronic communications initiated by the department are trustworthy. As such, the department will continue to work to build trust throughout the community. One such effort includes KCDCSS is piloting is virtual customer interviews. This option may provide the best of both worlds for the customer, where they can experience a face-to-face interview at a place most convenient for them. This option will continue to be explored to provide another avenue to communicate with customers.

Program partners have a pivotal role in reducing some challenges faced by parents and extending trust to the department. While agencies specialize in their own particular area, parents often face multiple challenges and require assistance from multiple partners to address each circumstance. When a parent seeks services from one partner they trust, those partners create a bridge to other services needed by the family. By gaining greater understanding of services each partner provides and increasing accessibility to each other's services, staff can provide important information and guidance to help with the

family with their dynamic and multi-faceted needs. Staff at all levels should be knowledgeable of the available resources in their community, understand what barriers the customer is facing, and refer him/her to the appropriate agency with the subject matter expertise to assist in eliminating each barrier the customer is facing. Program partners must work together to streamline and simplify processes for customers needing services who already have so many other challenges to overcome.

One obstacle to meaningfully engaging local partnerships is the strict confidentiality rules within the Department of Child Support Services. These rules are mandated by the state and federal government and strictly prohibit sharing of customer information with anyone outside of the program. While these challenges add a level of complexity to referral processes and do not allow for sharing of information between community partners, KDCDCSS continues to build partnerships throughout the community, especially in areas with shared customers, including:

- Kern County Employer's Training Resource: In addition to the referral system and video conferencing kiosks, this partnership has evolved to experiment with different tactics, such as presenting an educational workshop at KDCDCSS for unemployed parents with child support orders.
- Kern County Sheriff-Lerdo Detention Facility: Through this partnership, KDCDCSS staff provide education and support to incarcerated parents regarding the child support process while they are incarcerated and what they can expect once released. Case Managers ensure child support amounts are accurate based on their current circumstances and build relationships with the parents that will continue post-incarceration. Specifically, this partnership includes an on-site video-conferencing kiosk which allows the inmate to have a direct face-to-face discussion with a Child Support Case Manager during regular business hours Monday through Friday and answer any questions they have about their case directly. To provide additional education and support, weekly in-person presentations are also provided to inmates to learn more about child support. Case Managers are available at that time to talk with inmates about their specific circumstances and immediately handle any actions needed in their case.
- Department of Human Services: Understanding that some parents have different circumstances, there are times were parents who are custodial parents of one child, may also have other children they are responsible for paying child support for. KDCDCSS has partnered with DHS Welfare-2-Work program creating a referral for these parents to review these cases and provide any additional support. This partnership reduces barriers and provides additional support for parents who are cash aided and seeking employment services.
- Family Justice Center: For customers in domestic violence crisis, KDCDCSS has a video-conferencing kiosk stationed at the Family Justice Center both in

Bakersfield and Lamont to provide face-to-face services to parents interested in learning more about the child support program and the service provided.

- Kern County Family Law Facilitator: KDCDCSS has also partnered with and provides referrals to the Kern County Family Law Facilitator to assist customers with other legal matters outside of child support. In addition to the referral system, throughout the year, the Kern County Family Law Facilitator will also co-locate staff in the KDCDCSS lobby to help customers directly with any legal matters they need assistance with relating to child support.
- In addition, KDCDCSS seeks opportunities to be out in the community to provide services at events or activities parents may be. Often these include partners who have already build positive relationships with customers we service. For these events, staff bring computers and printers to event, so they are able to access the person's information, update case information, print documents, and take any necessary action immediately. Examples include: Kern County Public Library, Kern County Veterans Stand Down, and Kern County Homeless Collaborative.

To provide additional assistance and support to parents, KDCDCSS has an area in the lobby available to customers for job searching and community resources. The "Kids Count Resource Room" provides a variety of resources, including public computer access and employer hiring information free of charge. Community members can access hiring websites, gain knowledge of those who are hiring, and submit applications. Staff are knowledgeable about community resources and able to assist customers with additional needs. KDCDCSS also uses its social media presence to share valuable community partner information with the public. In order to increase KDCDCSS staff awareness of community resources, each month community partners are invited to present and share information about their programs and services to staff. This information is then actively shared with customers as needs arise.

Overwhelming challenges in the job market have led to apathy by some noncustodial parents. Unable to fully support themselves, parents are frequently not able to provide additional support to their children. They often want to support their children but are frustrated with the lack of employment opportunities and disappointed with the on-again, off-again nature of the work they are able to find. Along with noncustodial parents, custodial parents also struggle with consistent employment. In addition to the previously identified barriers they share with noncustodial parents, such as inconsistent work and transportation issues, custodial parents have additional challenges. Unreliable, limited, and expensive childcare often prevents custodial parents from obtaining sustainable employment. Addressing these concerns for the custodial parent would also help to secure financial independence from government assistance for the family. As such, custodial parents could benefit from the workforce services collaborative approach.

KDCDCSS will continue to collaborate with ETR and implement a referral process for noncustodial parents who are unemployed and/or under-employed during both the

establishment and enforcement of their order. In addition, to increase the level of customer-centered service, KDCSS will work towards expanding video-conferencing kiosks to additional AJCCs around Kern County. Specifically, these kiosks will be located at the affiliate AJCC One-Stop Center in Delano (once a new location is opened) and the affiliate AJCC One-Stop in Oildale (1129 Olive Drive, Suite H, Bakersfield). Through this video-conferencing kiosk, customers will have direct access with a child support case manager to discuss case specifics and remove any potential barriers that will prevent the customer from successfully obtaining sustainable employment.

KDCSS understands the value of educating staff across the departments as they are the ones who will be providing services to our shared customers and will be important in the success of the referral process. As such, KDCSS has provided informational sessions to staff located in the AJCC to educate them on the importance of child support services for the family, the services the department provides, and how the referral process works. KDCSS is open to continuing to provide these types of informational sessions to AJCC staff as kiosks are deployed to new locations, as refreshers, and for newly hired staff.

KDCSS is open to attending and/or hosting collaborative AJCC education events in which multiple partners provide education to child support program participants. These events could educate customers and/or employers on a variety of work-related topics and include information on the child support program and what can be expected. KDCSS will partner with ETR and DHS to expand the services provided in the KDCSS Kids Count Resource Room and receive consistent job information which can be shared directly with customers.

KDCSS supports the KIM WDB by working with CBOs to provide training and offering services. KDCSS partners with the DHS, Kern County High School District, and California State University Bakersfield to support interns who need practical experience to develop marketable skills and bridge them successfully into the workforce. While at the department, interns assist with various functions throughout the office. Depending on the employment field they are hoping to enter, interns practice and develop various skills such as clerical, marketing, customer service, paralegal, and graphic design. Through this partnership, interns have successfully moved on to permanent positions within the department and with other public and private employers.

***C. How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Partnership Agreement partners, establish in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint, and other local partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.***

Kern High School District, Kern Regional Center, Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR) and Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) continue to collaborate and update collective plans to assist individuals with Intellectual Disability and Developmental Disabilities in achieving CIE. The Local Plan Agreement (LPA) was

established to identify the ways in which Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties will work together in achieving this goal.

Educational agencies, DOR Branches, Kern Regional Center and AJCCs located in Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties are collaborating by developing Local Partnership Agreements (LPAs). LPA's create frameworks that transcend changes to personnel, funding, and political climates. They are critical in efforts to change the ways mutual consumers of the core partners (LEAs, DOR, AJCC and Kern Regional Center) are served, to better utilize resources, and to produce improved employment outcomes. By taking the time to develop a plan for working together, partners create a shared vision of what's possible. During the past few years, the partners have been collaborating to have LPAs developed between DOR districts, regional centers, and 270 LEAs. Kern High School District has been convening quarterly LPA meetings.

As part of this process, AJCC Staff have been trained in the following areas: (1) Windmills Training (Disability Awareness and Etiquette Training); (2) Working with Individuals with Hidden Disabilities, Including Mental Health Disabilities; and (3) Consumer Self-Disclosure and Related Barriers, How to Address. In addition, DOR assisted ETR by identifying the assistive technology needed for each comprehensive, affiliated and specialized AJCC site located in Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties.

AJCC staff have been working closely with DOR staff and community partners to expand the pathways to employment in supporting individuals with ID/DD in achieving CIE.

DOR has been working with AJCC and other Partners to streamline service delivery, engage the community and increase CIE opportunities for individuals with ID/DD.

DOR developed a plan with its community partners for recruitment, referral, and employer engagement strategies. DOR continues to work with community partners to provide student services as well as Vocational Rehabilitation services to the local population identified as individuals with disabilities. In addition, DOR continues to pursue new local community partners that are linked to serving this population. DOR has been sharing resources with community partners while working with them to streamline processes needed to service the population. DOR also works to provide information to individuals with disabilities to help them participate based on their needs, interests, and the choices available. DOR is part of an active Local Partnership Agreement which offers five types of DOR Student Services available to PE students: Job Exploration, Work-Based Learning Experiences, Postsecondary Enrollment Counseling, Workplace Readiness Training, and Instruction in Self Advocacy. The DOR Student Services team will engage the student in identifying needed services and exercising informed choice. The student services and activities in which the student expect to participate in will be documented in the DR 205 – Student Services Plan. The Plan also includes chosen providers and estimated start dates. DOR staff coordinates with the student and the LEA to provide Student Services directly or through a collaborative contract. The student is responsible for providing information



requested by DOR, notifying DOR if they change schools or no longer enrolled in school and fully participate in Student Services meeting and activities. In addition, DOR staff work on an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in collaboration with the consumer, the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) Counselor, and other stakeholders to assist in development of the employment goal when the client has: applied for services, completed the assessment process, found eligible for services, and are placed in a disability priority category being served.

***D. How the Local Board will coordinate with community-based organizations and other local partners who serve individuals who are English language learners, foreign-born, and/or refugees.***

The Kern County Adult Ed Programs Consortium (Kern AEP) is a partner of the Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR). As such, the Kern AEP is working to coordinate resources and service delivery with ETR. The Kern AEP is serving individuals who are English language learners, foreign born, and refugees in need of adult education services. These services include the following:

- High School Equivalency (General Education Diploma [GED]) classes;
- English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction;
- Programs designed to support older adults;
- Pathways and programs for re-entry to work;
- Opportunities for adults to assist elementary and secondary school children;
- Programs for adults with disabilities;
- Short-term Career and Technical Education; and
- Pre-Apprenticeships.

The Kern AEP is working together on building a referral system between adult education, community college, and ETR to track student progress.

The Kern AEP provides adult education and services that help individuals reach their goals of attaining livable wage jobs and careers in high-demand regional sector pathways. This includes high school equivalency courses, citizenship classes, and multiple career pathways. The Kern AEP employs retention strategies throughout the consortium and at Kern AEP member locations including childcare, transportation, tutors, career and college counselors, post-secondary transition specialists, and other individualized supports.

The consortium members continue to work with ETR stakeholders by providing services and employment plans to the extent that this information is provided by the client/student at the time of enrollment in adult education program services. The client/student provide ETR or stakeholders with Kern AEP enrollment information.

The Kern AEP continues to provide Burlington English for students to use. In addition, Kern AEP continues to support distance education options in addition to in-person instruction. Kern AEP which is part of Kern Community College District, was awarded the full Perkins Reserve Innovation Grant fund, without conditions in the sum of \$300,000 which was used to purchase Career Choices and Changes Curriculum. This grant allowed Kern AEP to create career pathways for students who are English language learners, foreign-born, and add virtual reality components its courses.

The Kern AEP is focused on building pathways for English language learners and supporting those students as they develop necessary skills to thrive in the regional workforce. The Kern AEP offers a number of programs to assist individuals who are English language learners, including. These efforts include expanding career pathways to college and offering a range of instructional options such as Smart classes at remote sites where students can interact with an instructor at a different site, interactive technology that enables two classrooms to interact with one another; self-paced options, and dual enrollment opportunities for students to get high school credits and college credits at the same time. The Kern AEP also offers assistance to international students who need to have their international degrees evaluated with World Education Services (WES). The WES evaluation identifies prior course equivalents that the student has completed, thereby helping advisors identify any remaining courses the student needs to complete in order to earn their degree in the United States. With the successful completion of a degree at an American institution of higher education, these international students are better prepared to find meaningful employment in the field of their studies.

Additionally, ETR, Kern AEP, and other community-based organizations support the continued development of pre-apprenticeship programs for the KIM farmworker population. The focus has been on pre-apprenticeships that include Language Learning, Child Care, and Job Training skills at one site with the overarching goal of helping this population join the ranks of Governor Newsome's goal of having 500,000 apprentices in California by 2029. Pre-apprenticeships are designed to prepare participants to participate in a registered apprenticeship program that will further develop their job-related knowledge and skills.

***E. How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Veteran Affairs, community-based organizations, and other local partners who serve veterans.***

KIM WDB provides essential information to Veterans and their eligible spouses that offers priority of service including employment, training, and supportive services. Through Operation V.I.P., veterans can transition from military to civilian life by attending the Veterans Job Club Workshop which is held weekly facilitated by staff from the Employment Development Department (EDD) and Employers' Training Resource. Veterans can receive assistance with filling out applications, learn how to build resumes, and get tips on how to dress for success. In addition, Veterans can discover valuable

interviewing techniques. Veterans are able to network with fellow veterans and stay updated with the latest job openings. Kern County Human Resources also shows veterans how to navigate the County website as veteran applicants are given veterans' preference.

Veterans are invited to attend employer informational sessions, recruitments, and other hiring events organized by ETR. Referrals are coordinated and are given priority of service through a partnership with the Employment Development Department's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Representatives specialists (DVOP) and the Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER). EDD services include a veteran 24-hour priority hold on all job listings. Veterans are encouraged to schedule an appointment with an EDD Veterans representative for personalized services and assistance to achieve professional goals.

ETR staff also refer veterans to Kern County Veterans Service Department with regards to their eligibility for United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits based upon their discharge from active military service under honorable conditions. Veteran dependents and survivors may also be eligible for certain benefits, these services include benefit counseling, claim preparation, submission, and follow up, education, pension, health care, requests for military records, burial benefits, vocational rehabilitation, VA home loan, and surviving spouse benefits.

Another partner is California Veterans Assistance Foundation (CVAF) to assist housing impaired or at risk of becoming homeless veterans, to restore and improve their lives by alleviating homelessness through information, advocacy, and service. California State University Bakersfield's Small Business Development Center is able to assist Kern County's veteran entrepreneurs and small business owners by providing one-on-one consulting, business training, and research. They provide guidance on how-to-do so and offers low-income loans.

ETR's staff also attend quarterly Kern County Veterans Collaborative meetings whose goals are to meet the needs of veterans and their families. The collaborative hosts the Resource Fairs and Veterans Stand Down events in Bakersfield, California City, and Ridgecrest. Besides, ETR, other community partners that provide assistance to Veterans are California Veterans Assistance Foundation, Kern County Veterans Service Department, Kern County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services, Bakersfield College Veterans Resource Center, California State University of Bakersfield Veterans Resource Center, Employment Development Department, Veteran Affairs of Bakersfield Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC), and Wounded Heroes Fund.

***F. How the Local Board will collaborate with the Strategic Planning Partners to address environmental sustainability.***

Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties Workforce Development Board (KIM WDB) seeks to collaborate with its Strategic Planning partners, including labor, business, government, and other community stakeholders such as economic development, and education by

supporting the creation of new, high-quality jobs that are closely aligned with the objectives of California Jobs First. It is essential that individuals seeking employment opportunities gain the necessary skills, knowledge and competencies to succeed in the labor market and contribute to a dynamic and resilient economy through higher wages. Career advancement opportunities are also a crucial component of this strategy. By investing in workforce training and upskilling programs, it aims to provide workers with the skills needed to eventually compete for higher-level positions within the priority sectors, including Energy and Natural Resources/Renewables; Healthcare Services; Aerospace & Defense; Transportation, Logistics and Advanced Manufacturing; Value-Add Agriculture; and Tourism Recreation. These programs will offer clear pathways for career progression, allowing workers to move into more specialized and better-paying roles. In addition, these programs will be designed through partnerships among employers and local educational institutions, including community colleges and technical schools, to offer training and certification courses tailored to the specific occupational needs of advanced manufacturing employers. By focusing on skills such as precision machining, robotics, and quality control, these programs will prepare workers for high-demand roles in sectors like aerospace, clean energy, and agriculture. For example, the Kern Economic Development Center's Manufacturers' Alliance of Kern (MAK), which brings together 400+ manufacturers, could partner and support workforce development programs, providing staff to help provide direct training or keep close collaboration with educational institutions to ensure they stay up to date on the latest job market needs.

KIM WDB will need to increase its recruitment efforts through outreach, engagement, and education initiatives designed to speak to specific subregions and communities of the Kern County region, conducted in partnership with community-based organizations. These would include job fairs, apprenticeship programs, and partnerships with industry associations to highlight the opportunities available in the region's advanced manufacturing sector. Special attention will be given to recruiting individuals from disinvested communities, helping to ensure equitable access to high-quality jobs.

The partnership will emphasize the development of innovation hubs and incubators, which will serve as centers for research, development, and entrepreneurship. By connecting manufacturers with local innovation resources, these hubs will help accelerate the adoption of new technologies and processes, driving competitiveness and growth within the sector. For example, the Kern Economic Development Corporation and its partners could provide the space and equipment for ideas incubation and prototyping. This could also be hosted by educational institutions like the Kern Community College District, Taft Community College District and vocational training centers such as Bakersfield Adult School and Delano Adult School, among others.

Community-based organizations, labor unions, and worker organizations need to play a crucial role in this strategy. These organizations may include the Kern Chambers of Commerce, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), and the Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties Building and Construction Trades Council. Collaborative efforts will ensure that training programs not only meet industry

standards but also address the needs and rights of workers, promoting safe working conditions and opportunities for career advancement.

The KIM WDB will be expanding workforce development programs tailored to skills needed for emerging clean energy sectors, with a focus on absorbing former oil and gas workers. This will include partnerships with community colleges and industry stakeholders and targeted outreach to former oil and gas workers to build upon their existing skillset through the Displaced Oil and Gas Worker Fund which is a five-year grant. The program provides former oil and gas workers with the necessary training to obtain clean energy jobs should be a priority. Clean energy jobs are generally high quality, offering relatively high pay, healthcare and retirement benefits, stability, and opportunities for collective worker input (Urban Institute 2024). Analysis by the Urban Institute shows that a larger share of jobs in energy efficiency and renewable energy generation are high quality than in the overall labor market. Further, clean energy jobs, especially those in renewable energy generation and green construction are highly accessible to individuals with less than a four-year degree; only 39% of high-quality renewable energy generation jobs and 37% of green construction jobs require a bachelor's degree or higher. Fifty-seven percent of high-quality renewable energy generation jobs have high union coverage while also requiring less than a bachelor's degree. Notably, women and BIPOC tend to be under-represented in the highest-quality clean energy jobs, indicating that successful strategies for growth will need to include incentive and opportunities to boost employment for these groups. Proposed strategies aim to retain existing high-quality jobs while also working to create new jobs in both existing clean energy areas and frontier technologies. Newly created jobs are expected to maintain the high level of quality offered by existing clean energy opportunities. The clean energy strategy in the Kern County region is designed to provide substantial indirect and direct community benefits, particularly to disinvested communities. Given the region's economic history and significant environmental challenges, the clean energy sector presents an opportunity for transformative change, addressing both economic disparities and environmental justice. Job creation and training are central to its success.

The clean energy sector offers a pathway to high-quality, sustainable jobs. By developing tailored training programs and providing clear pathways for necessary education or skills, it ensures that members of disinvested communities can access these opportunities. These efforts will include partnerships with local educational institutions and targeted outreach to former oil and gas workers, leveraging their existing skills for clean energy roles. The plan includes culturally sensitive training programs at accessible times and locations, covering relevant skills such as solar panel installation, energy efficiency audits, and clean technology maintenance. This concept places a strong emphasis on workforce retraining and upskilling, ensuring that the local labor force is well equipped to meet the demands of emerging clean energy jobs. This approach will address talent recruitment and development while fostering strategic collaboration among businesses, educational institutions, labor organizations, and other stakeholders. The opportunity focuses on matching skills to available jobs by supporting comprehensive workforce development

programs tailored specifically to the needs of the clean energy industry. By mapping the current skillsets of the local workforce, particularly those transitioning from the oil and gas sector, our strategy can design targeted training modules that build on existing competencies while addressing any gaps. These training programs combine classroom instruction with hands-on experience in critical areas such as solar and wind energy installation, maintenance, energy storage systems, and advanced manufacturing for clean energy technologies. This alignment ensures that graduates are job ready and possess the skills that employers are seeking. For example, the partnership between the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and the Kern College Community District (KCCD) has created numerous opportunities for students to collaborate with industry employers via internships, classwork, events, and more, and learn skills that meet the needs of the industry. In addition, Bakersfield College created a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Energy Center whose learning topics include technical skills desired by employers.

Addressing talent and recruitment challenges involves targeted outreach efforts to attract individuals from the oil and gas sector, as well as other industries, into employment opportunities in clean energy. In the Kern County region, the oil and gas industry has historically provided high-paying, moderate-to-high skill level jobs that are accessible to workers with low levels of education. Facilitating the transition to clean energy will require a balance to maintain the accessibility of jobs for people with a range of education levels while also further diversifying the workforce and retraining current energy sector workers to fill gaps in skills needed for clean energy. Recognizing the valuable skills and experience of former oil and gas workers, KIM WDB's strategy aims to create pathways that facilitate their transition into renewable energy roles through tailored training. Additionally, inclusive recruitment practice will ensure diverse participation from underrepresented communities, leveraging local CBO networks to reach potential candidates. Strategic collaboration with local education institutions, industry stakeholders, and labor organizations is essential to the success of any initiative. These partnerships will help develop and deliver training programs that align with industry needs, provide support services such as job placement and apprenticeships, and ensure that training programs are responsive to current and future labor market demands. This cohesive approach to workforce development helps ensure equitable access to high-quality jobs for all members of the community.

The growth of the clean energy sector in the Kern County region strongly aligns with several key statewide strategies. The region's focus on expanding renewable energy projects directly supports California's overarching climate goals, including those outlined in the California Climate Scoping Plan and the California Climate Adaptation Strategy. By increasing the production of clean energy from solar, wind, and other renewable sources, the Kern County region will contribute significantly to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. This not only helps meet the state's ambitious targets for emissions reductions, but also mitigates the impacts of climate change, aligning with broader

adaptation and resilience objectives Moreover, the development of the clean energy sector in the Kern County region enhances air quality and public health, which are critical components of the state's environmental strategies. By replacing fossil fuel-based power generation with renewable sources, the county reduces pollutants that contribute to poor air quality. This supports state efforts to improve air quality and public health outcomes, particularly in regions like Kern County that face significant air pollution challenges.

#### **IV. WIOA TITLE I COORDINATION**

##### ***A. Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to gain and expand proficiency in digital and distance learning.***

Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR) explores opportunities in providing frontline staff ways to expand their proficiency in digital and distance learning. KIM WDB purchased licenses in 2023 for Metrix Learning, an online training platform that provides digital and distance learning topics on a variety of soft skills and hard skills. All staff have access to the Metrix Learning and can access a diverse catalog of training courses that covers the full spectrum of skills needed in the workplace including, but not limited to, Microsoft software training, customer service training, DEI training, safety training, and more. The training platform comes with career pathway training modules. With a catalogue of over 3,000 individual courses that include skill check tests with certificates, staff have a diverse offering of courses to expand their proficiency and skills. Staff working in specific units can be assigned career pathway trainings that are relevant to their job and assist in filling any skills gaps employees are experiencing. The training platform also has professional development courses for those interested in advancement into supervision and management.

The Workforce Services Branch Statewide Training Unit provides staff with ongoing CalJOBS training webinars. Staff receives both the CalJOBS Individual Management Series and the CalJOBS Employer Services Series on such topics WIOA Program Enrollment, Case Management Tools, Helpful Case Management Reports, Performance for Case Management, CalJOBS Reporting Process, Six Indicators of Performance, Creating and Managing Job Orders, and Recruiting Candidates.

Staff attended and participated in virtual conferences for designated WIOA formula and NFJP grants, such as the Youth Symposium for EPIC Staff in 2021 and 2022 and the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP) National Virtual Conference 2022.

Workforce 180 Online Trainings and Certifications is an effective multimedia platform tool for ETR's case managers and job developers as the courses are online, self-directed, self-paced, and exam-driven for certifications. Courses completed and certifications received by staff are Business Services, Case Management, and Re-entry Services.

EconoVue and Jobs EQ are utilized by Administrative Analysts, Management, Lead Staff, and the Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion team as they are provided current real-time workforce labor market data and economic analytics at a glance such as demographics, occupations, wages, certifications, etc. Assigned staff can access virtual training sessions, individual training, and videos to assist them in properly utilizing the tools.

CareerHubUS.com's Virtual Service model permits staff to communicate effectively and efficiently as staff are able to text information to their clients' mobile devices. This allows staff to provide job seekers in targeted populations with assistance through the use of innovative service delivery methods. Staff has been able to provide technical assistance, coaching, virtual trainings, send reminders, and make referrals to on-line and shared community resources, job fairs, and other employment opportunities via text, email, and voicemail to the clients' smartphones regardless of their geographic location.

Ninjio Dojo are security and awareness trainings sent out to all staff by Kern County's Information Technology Services to keep ETR staff knowledgeable about how to avoid potential cyber-attacks on their County-issued computers and mobile devices and make sure they remain safe from cyber-attacks. With a partnership with CSUB and Small Business Development Center (SBDDC), webinars are provided for Job Developers for their knowledge and for them to invite the employers they work with on funding resources available to assist their employers from small business loans to grant funds for businesses, disaster relief loans, business leasing and purchasing options, creating value added services and products.

DocuSign is a new solution frontline staff are using for electronic signatures from clients, employers, supervisors, and management. Staff are using DouSign for On-the-Job Training contracts and supportive services. Staff have learned how to send, approve, and track documents in DocuSign.

Other digital and distance learning are provided through CWA's virtual seminars to train staff on a variety of topics including how to utilize technology to connect with customers remotely.

***B. Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma-exposed populations.***

To ensure continuous cultural competencies, staff use Target Solutions, a web-based learning management system that captures all of staff's completed trainings. On this online platform, staff were required to successfully complete the Preventing Discrimination in the Workplace training. All staff are also required to attend sexual harassment training, with nonsupervisory staff required to attend an hour of training every two years and supervisors every year. A variety of training platforms are utilized for this training, including virtual and in-person training. Staff have access to Metrix



Learning modules that cover cultural competency and working with a diverse population.

Staff just completed a year-long series of trauma informed training offered through the Regional Planning Unit (RPU), which is the San Joaquin Valley and Associated Counties. The trainings included Traumatic Stress, Trauma Informed Coping Toolkit, and Trauma Informed Systems Change for Management. KIM WDB will continue to participate in these regional trainings throughout the next four years.

***C. How the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as outlined in Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities (WSD16-04).***

KIM WDB, through its fiscal and administrative agent, Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR) will take a coordinated approach with One Stop partners and relevant stakeholders to conduct Rapid Response activities in the local area for the purpose of effective delivery of services in matters of business closures, downsizing or for layoff aversion. Under WIOA, the State has interpreted "layoff aversion as an integral component of Rapid Response policy" (EDD Directive WSD 16-04, July 22, 2016). Therefore, it anticipates that ETR will incorporate the two.

The purpose of Rapid Response is to assist workers to "quickly re-enter the workforce" (Title 20 CFR 682.220, 4. Subpart C-Rapid Response Activities) or to "prevent layoffs all together" (EDD Directive WSD 16-04, p.3). The intent of Layoff Aversion is to "prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment" (Title 20 CFR 682.320). ETR will address these areas proactively by working closely in business-to-business relationships; and getting to know industry trends and concerns. ETR will also identify businesses deemed at-risk by gaining knowledge through one-on-one business engagement and shared knowledge with partners such as Kern Economic Development Corporation and Small Business Development Center. In addition, ETR will use EDD's Labor Market information, and EconoVue, a Dunn & Bradstreet and commercial database that provides predictive indicators of potential for downturn in economic activity. Rapid Response services will also continue to utilize JOBS EQ, a Chmura Labor Market Software that is utilized to review RTI (Real Time Intelligence). JOBS EQ will be used to generate a 5-year report to forecast downward trends in occupations, these reports will help anticipate industries who may face closure or layoffs for more efficient services. The knowledge will be used to strategize with businesses to mitigate or eliminate the loss of jobs. Strategies will include industry-related and incumbent worker training, targeting of Career Pathways, coordination with Apprenticeship Standards, and Work Sharing.

The Local Board will use WARN notices, media, and word of mouth for notification of layoffs. Upon notification, the Rapid Response Team, comprised of EDD and Board staff, will conduct outreach to the businesses and offer to provide onsite or offsite Rapid Response workshops to affected individuals. Outreach to the community will be implemented by focusing on a higher community presence to educate the public about Rapid Response Services. Outreach will be conducted through the attendance of business associated events in Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties. In the spirit of the law, "Rapid Response will be available regardless of the number of affected workers" (CFR 682.300). The workshops will address Unemployment Insurance Benefits, Trade Readjustment Assistance, WIOA training/ job services, CalWORKs, CalFresh, Medi-Cal, Covered California, Child Support Services, Kern County HR staff, Department of Human Services employment team (Job Fest). In cases where Layoff Aversion and Rapid Response will have a regional impact, the KIM WDB will coordinate with regional Boards to serve those impacted. The board will continue to be actively involved with Central Valley Industry Engagement Roundtable (CVIER), a collaboration of neighboring WIBs and WDBs to determine best practices and efficient services for regional layoffs impacting ETR and surrounding Kern County areas.

ETR will continue to stay Informed of affected areas, industries, and primary sectors that are or will be experiencing layoffs and closures now or in the future. By using early detection tools and rapid deployment of Rapid Response/layoff aversion teams, services, and funding resources to mitigate the impact of the layoffs and closures. Sectors and industries that have been identified as "priorities of concerns" within Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties for 2024-2025 reporting cycle are: Gas and Oil sector and all of its supporting businesses, Manufacturing Sector (specifically related to Oil and Gas and local foods manufacturing), Retail sector (small local and large regional/national businesses), Hospitality sector (Restaurant Industry), HealthCare sector (Hospitals, and medical service providers).

All oil and gas businesses in Kern County are at a high risk and need to be actively monitored due to the political climate in this State. ETR is closely working with the following businesses: California Resource Corporation, Schlumberger Technology, Key Energy Services, Golden State Drilling, Inc., and many more. ETR will be devoting significant resources to serve this industry in the foreseeable future. ETR recently received a three-year grant to serve the oil and gas industry as layoffs increase due to state policy decisions on energy extraction. cRapid Response funding will be braided with the Dislocated Oil and Gas Workers Fund (DOGWF) grant to serve this industry and assist with rapid reemployment and training of affected workers.

- D. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area. This is how the Local Board will ensure that priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients receiving public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as outlined in WIOA Adult Program Priority Service (WSD15-14).**

Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR), the administrative and fiscal agent of the KIM WDB provides direct Basic Career Services to its customers, including Outreach, Orientation, Intake, Initial Assessment and Eligibility. Additionally, ETR provides direct Individualized Career Services, including Assessments, Staff Assisted Job Search Assistance, Direct Placement and Case Management. Paid Work Experience is provided by ETR's subrecipient providers Kern High School District and Proteus. ETR also funds 75+ occupational training programs that are approved on the State's Eligible Training Provider List.

ETR establishes Priority of Service status during the intake/eligibility appointment. Staff documents the participant's status as low income, basic skills deficient or a recipient of public assistance. ETR's policy describes in detail the type of documentation to be collected and documented in the participant file. Priority of Service is used for adult and dislocated worker participants receiving Individualized Career and Training services. The establishment of Priority of Service during the intake/eligibility process ensures that we identify and provide Veterans and priority groups Priority of Services pursuant to WSD 15-14. ETR's policy explains in detail the order in which participants are to be served, dependent upon their Priority of Service status.

ETR, guided by Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGL) from Department of Labor and Workforce Service Directives (WSD) from the State of California, will continue to stay abreast of changes in policies that affect how Priority of Services are to be carried out. Further, ETR will update, create and implement policies that are in alignment with federal and state guidelines and will proactively seek innovative ways to address and meet the needs of individuals with the most barriers to employment, as a top priority.

***E. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the Local Area, as outlined in WIOA Youth Program Requirements (WSD17-07). This includes any strategies regarding how to increase the digital literacy and fluency of youth participants, including youth with disabilities.***

Kern County Employers' Training Resource, the fiscal and administrative agent for the Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties Workforce Development Board provides a comprehensive year-round young adult workforce development services via a network of five subcontracted young adult service providers. These adult service providers operate a total of two In-School youth programs and four Out-of-School young adult programs. Services are provided in Greater Bakersfield, Delano/North Kern, Tehachapi, Mojave, Southeast Kern, and Taft/West Kern. Young adult service providers provide most of the 14 Elements of Service directly, the rest via referral, and are required to provide ETR with partner agency information for any services not offered directly. All are

required to offer paid work experience. Issuance of a competitive Request for Proposals for comprehensive In-School youth and Out-of-School young adult service providers generally takes place in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the program year prior to the next fiscal start on July 1<sup>st</sup> and or as new funding opportunities become available throughout the program year. During the procurement process, priority may be given to programs serving participants with additional barriers, such as young adults who have aged out of the foster care system, justice involved young adults, parenting young adults, and young adults with disabilities.

In addition to the subcontracted young adult service providers, ETR operates the Envision-Plan-Innovate-Connect (EPIC) Program for opportunity young adult between the ages of 18-24. This program operates in a stand-alone location in downtown Bakersfield and features workforce services that prepare young adults for employment, advanced education, and life sustaining careers.

A variety of experiences are available for participants to gain proficiency with 21st Century skills, including digital technology skills. Examples include Kern High School District Career Resource Department courses in the use of electronic communications, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Microsoft Access; and Bakersfield College non-credit, free-of-cost courses in basic office skills that cover digital literacy topics. Laptops/Computers, hotspots, printers, and other technology assistance are also available as supportive services.

***F. The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or Governor and the competitive process that will be used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.***

The County of Kern is the fiscal recipient of local WIOA funds on behalf of the Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties Workforce Development Board (KIM WDB). Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR) is the administrative and fiscal agent of KIM WDB. A joint powers agreement between Kern, Inyo and Mono counties define their roles. The County has integrated the staff to the WDB into the County's Division of Economic and Workforce Development. ETR may utilize Request for Proposals (RFP), Request for Refunding (RFR), or sole source procurement processes to award sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities. Sole source procurement is allowable when one of the following conditions occurs: the item or service is available only from a single source; a public emergency precludes delay; the awarding agency authorizes the specific non-competitive procurement; or, after a solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate. Use of non-competitive procurement for public emergency reasons should be for goods, suppliers, or services that will provide for the agency's immediate need to enable correction or resolve the emergency. For long-term or ongoing needs, one of the competitive procurement methods must be used. The issuance of RFPs are announced through public notice in the local newspaper, the AJCC's website, ETR's website and the County of Kern's

website. Separate RFPs may be sent for specific programs or services (for example, Youth Programs) in which case both the format of the RFP itself and the review forms used for that procurement may be specific to that program or service. In addition to publishing the notice in the newspaper, RFP packets are sent to agencies on the KIM WDB's Bidders/Mailing List. A bidder's conference may be held. ETR conducts competitive procurement for WIOA programs and services at least once every three years.

***G. A description of how the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider roles are fulfilled within the Local Area outlined in Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers (WSD19-13). This includes the name(s) and role(s) of all entities.***

The responsibilities of the AJCC Operator includes: Reporting to the KIM WDB on operations, performance, and continuous improvement recommendations; Implementing policies established by the KIM WDB; Coordinating the service delivery of required AJCC partners and service providers; Ensuring the implementation of mandated partner responsibilities and contributions under the Infrastructure Funding Agreements agreed upon in Memorandums of Understanding; Convening and facilitation of monthly WIOA partner meetings that focus on systems alignment, process improvement and building value added collaboration amongst system partners; Acting as a liaison between the KIM WDB and the WIOA partners and as such shall be required to submit a written report to the Chief Workforce Development Officer (Director) for the Kern County Employers' Training Resource identifying the services being provided by the AJCC Operator and any progress and/or developments thereof a minimum of ten (10) business days prior to the Local Board's quarterly Executive Committee meetings and quarterly the KIM WDB's meetings, and to attend said meetings in order to orally present the content contained in each written report; Performing customer satisfaction surveys for all co-located WIOA Partners at the comprehensive, specialized and affiliate AJCC one-stop centers, and on a quarterly basis, submit a written report detailing the results of said surveys to the Director of Kern County Employers' Training Resource, a minimum of ten (10) days prior to the KIM WDB's Executive Committee meetings and KIM WDB's meetings, and attend said meetings in order to orally present the content contained in said written report; Any other assigned duties consistent with the WIOA and related regulations, directives, policies procedures and amendments; and Adhering to all applicable federal and state guidance. The role of the Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services Provider includes the following: Providing basic career services, including, but not limited to, participant intake, orientations, initial assessments, employment services, and referrals to other partners and services; Providing individualized career services, including, but not limited to, comprehensive and specialized assessments, case management, individual employment plans, career planning, and vocational counseling; Managing the daily operations in coordination with local fiscal agents for the lease, utilities, and other property activities in support of AJCC premises; and Managing the hours of operation for all of the comprehensive, affiliate and specialized AJCCs.

**V. APPENDICES**

The following Items are Included as part of this Local Plan.

Attachment 1: Joint Powers Agreement between Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties

Attachment 2: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Attachment 3: Public Comments Received that Disagree with the Local Plan

Attachment 4: Signature Page

Kern County  
Agt. # 511-2020

**JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT  
(Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act)**

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this 18<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2020, by and among the COUNTY OF KERN, COUNTY OF INYO, and COUNTY OF MONO, each a political subdivision of the State of California;

**WITNESSETH:**

WHEREAS:

- (a) In 2014, the Congress of the United States enacted the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (P.L. 105-220; hereinafter "WIOA") for the purpose of consolidating, coordinating and improving employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation programs, and for other purposes; and
- (b) The WIOA provides for the delivery of WIOA-funded services through Local Workforce Development Areas; and
- (c) The Governor of the State of California has designated the Counties of Kern, Inyo, and Mono as a single Workforce Development Area; and
- (d) Government Code §26227 authorizes counties to establish programs necessary to meet the social needs of their population; Government Code §53703 authorizes counties to do all acts necessary to participate in programs whereby federal funds are granted to counties for purposes of education and welfare, including the authority to contract and cooperate with other local public agencies; and Government Code §6500 et seq. authorizes counties to jointly exercise any power common to them all; and
- (e) The parties hereto desire to enter into an agreement to specify their responsibilities under the WIOA to be operated in the Workforce Development Area comprising Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED by the COUNTY OF KERN, COUNTY OF INYO, and COUNTY OF MONO as follows:

1. Definitions. Except as otherwise set forth herein, all terms shall have the same meaning as set forth in the WIOA or its implementing regulations.
2. Purpose. This Agreement will provide the administrative framework for the Counties of Kern, Inyo, and Mono to cooperate in undertaking the WIOA-funded programs and other WIOA responsibilities to be operated within their jurisdictions. It is the parties' intent to both maximize local control and decision-making over their individual programs and to work together regionally, when appropriate.
3. Establishment of the Kern, Inyo, and Mono Workforce Development Board.
  - a. Pursuant to §107a of the WIOA, there is a Workforce Development Board for the Kern, Inyo, and Mono Counties Workforce Development Area.

- b. The Board of Supervisors of each County (or their respective authorized representatives), subject to the State Workforce Development Board's and Governor's certification, shall appoint members to the Local Workforce Development Board (hereinafter "Local Board") in the manner provided in the WIOA.
  - c. Inyo and Mono Counties may each appoint one member and Kern County will appoint the balance. Should Inyo and/or Mono Counties not appoint a member, Kern County will appoint members, as necessary.
  - d. The Local Board shall initially be composed of 33 members. Thereafter, the number of members of the Local Board shall be determined by the Local Board.
  - e. The Local Board shall function pursuant to the requirements of the WIOA (§107d) and shall have the authority to, among other things, enter into agreements with the Counties of Kern, Inyo, and Mono; and select a grant recipient and entity to administer the workforce development plan.
  - f. The Local Board shall review, monitor, and evaluate the programs conducted under the workforce development plan.
  - g. The Local Board shall develop its own operating procedures.
  - h. The Counties of Kern, Inyo, and Mono may establish individual advisory councils for the purpose of advising the Local Board on the training needs within their individual jurisdictions.
4. Duties and Responsibilities of the Counties.
- a. Acting within the parameters of the WIOA, it's implementing regulations, all applicable laws, and as authorized by the Local Board, each County will be responsible for operating WIOA-funded programs within its own jurisdiction. Program operations shall include, but not be limited to, recruitment, determination of participant eligibility, assessment, counseling, placement, training, follow-up, grievance procedures, providing required insurance, and other workforce development plan activities, including Basic Career Services, Individual Career Services and Training Services.
  - b. Each County shall develop mechanisms for coordinating its programs with public and private service deliverers within its own jurisdiction.
  - c. Each County may enter into vendor agreements, Individual Training Accounts and/or subcontracts with public and private agencies as necessary, to fulfill its responsibilities under the WIOA and the workforce development plan, subject to the terms of any agreement between the Counties and the Local Board.
  - d. Each County shall implement any and all accounting and reporting procedures necessary to assure compliance with the requirements of the WIOA. The Counties of Inyo and Mono shall submit any and all necessary information, documentation, and reports to Kern County in a timely manner.
5. Additional Duties and Responsibilities of Kern County. Due to its large population (in comparison to Inyo and Mono Counties) and its experience as an Administrative Entity and Grant Recipient under the Job Training Partnership Act and the Workforce Investment Act, Kern County will undertake the following duties:



- a. Receive WIOA funding from the State and develop necessary accounting and disbursement systems for providing such funding to the Counties of Kern, Inyo, and Mono.
  - b. With the assistance and cooperation of Inyo and Mono Counties, compile and submit WIOA reports as required by the State.
  - c. Provide support staff to the Local Board.
  - d. Provide monitoring and auditing services to Inyo and Mono Counties, which services shall be available on a cost reimbursement basis.
  - e. Provide additional services to Inyo and Mono Counties as needed on a cost reimbursement basis.
6. Allocation and Disbursement of Funds.
- a. WIOA funds received by Kern County shall be disbursed to each County in the same proportion as determined by the formulas in the WIOA and using the same data sources used for the Workforce Development Area allocation; except that individual allocations for each County will be used, if provided by the State.
  - b. Funding to individual Counties may be withheld if there is a determination that a County is not in compliance with this Agreement, an agreement with the Local Board, the WIOA or its implementing regulations, or existing laws.
  - c. There shall be strict accountability for all WIOA funds and each County shall provide all necessary reports of all receipts and disbursements.
7. Term. This Agreement shall become effective upon its execution by all parties hereto and shall continue in effect until terminated in the manner hereafter provided.
8. Termination. This Agreement may be terminated by:
- a. Appropriate action of the State of California or the U.S. Department of Labor;
  - b. The State of California designating an alternate Workforce Development Area involving a party to this Agreement; or
  - c. A party hereto withdrawing, following 90 days written notice to the Local Board and each of the other Counties.
  - d. In the event this Agreement is terminated, all real and personal property and WIOA funds in the possession of the administering entity shall be disbursed pursuant to WIOA requirements or State or U.S. Department of Labor orders. Absent such requirements or orders, said property and funds shall be distributed to the parties in accordance with the "population basis" formula initially employed in disbursing the funds, after payment of any outstanding debts or reimbursable costs.

- 9. Amendments/Modifications. This Agreement may only be amended or modified by the written consent of all parties hereto.
- 10. Liability of the Parties.
  - a. Each of the parties hereto shall be liable for the activities conducted within its own jurisdiction pursuant to this Agreement.
  - b. No debt, liability, or obligation of any one party to this Agreement shall constitute the debt, liability, or obligation of any of the other parties to this Agreement.
  - c. Each of the parties to this Agreement shall indemnify and hold harmless the other parties to this Agreement for any damages, costs, or liabilities arising out of the acts or omissions of its own officers, agents, and employees.
  - d. All of the privileges and immunities from liability, exemptions from laws, ordinances and rules, all pension, relief, disability, worker's compensation, and other benefits which apply to the activity of officers, agents, or employees of any party to this Agreement when performing their respective functions within the territorial limits of their county of employment or agency, shall apply to them to the same degree and extent while engaged in the performance of any of their functions and duties extraterritorially under the provisions of this Agreement.
- 11. Successors. This Agreement shall be binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of any successors to or assigns of the parties.
- 12. Pledge of Cooperation. Each of the parties hereto pledges its cooperation to the other parties hereto in attempting to accomplish the purposes of this Agreement and the WIOA.
- 13. Compliance with Laws. Each of the parties hereto shall comply with the provisions of the WIOA and its implementing regulations, and any and all applicable federal and state laws.
- 14. Severability. Should any part, term, portion, or provision of this Agreement be finally decided to be in conflict with any law of the United States or of the State of California, or otherwise be unenforceable or ineffectual, the validity of the remaining parts, terms, portions, or provisions shall be deemed severable and shall not be affected thereby, provided such remaining portions or provisions can be construed in substance to constitute the Agreement which the parties intended to enter into in the first instance.

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed by their respective officers and agents on the day and year first written above.

COUNTY OF KERN

ATTEST *Beth Ann Krauss*  
Clerk, Board of Supervisors

*[Signature]*  
Chairman  
Board of Supervisors

COUNTY OF INYO

ATTEST *[Signature]*  
Clerk, Board of Supervisors

*[Signature]*  
Chairman  
Board of Supervisors

COUNTY OF MONO

ATTEST *[Signature]*  
Scheereen Dedman (Jul 21, 2020 11:33 PDT)  
Clerk, Board of Supervisors

*[Signature]*  
Chairman  
Board of Supervisors

RECOMMENDED AND APPROVED  
AS TO CONTENT - KERN COUNTY

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
OFFICE OF COUNTY COUNSEL  
KERN COUNTY

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RECOMMENDED AND APPROVED  
AS TO CONTENT - INYO COUNTY

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
OFFICE OF COUNTY COUNSEL  
INYO COUNTY

*[Signature]*

*[Signature]*

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RECOMMENDED AND APPROVED  
AS TO CONTENT - MONO COUNTY

Jacob Sloane  
Jacob Sloane (Jul 21, 2020 12:07 PDT)

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
OFFICE OF COUNTY COUNSEL  
MONO COUNTY

Stacey Simon  
Stacey Simon (Jul 22, 2020 10:13 PDT)

TH/eb

Attachment 2

**COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY**

To facilitate the engagement of the community and stakeholders in planning for the local workforce development delivery system and in the development of the Local Plan for PY 2025-28, the Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties Workforce Development Board (KIM WDB) hosted one community and stakeholder forum which focused on the following topics:

- How Kern County Department of Human Services and other local partners will coordinate services to individuals who access CalFresh Employment and Training Services.
- How Kern County Child Support Services and other local partners will coordinate services to individuals who are non-custodial parents.
- How local partners will braid resources and coordinate service delivery to English language learners, foreign-born, and/or refugees.
- How KIM WDB will collaborate with the Strategic Planning partners to address environmental sustainability.

This forum was held virtually via Teams on November 13, 2024.

The following attendees participated in 1-to-1 discussions with the KIM WDB and related County Departments, and engaged in the local planning process:

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Employer</u>
1. Marsha Manos	Employers' Training Resource
2. Michael Saltz	Employers' Training Resource
3. Stephanie Ahlf	Driltek Inc,
4. Kyla Griffin	Mono County HHS, Social Services
5. Brandon Evans	Employers' Training Resource
6. Esther Solis	Employers' Training Resource
7. Dyann Barrientos	Garden Pathways DOO
8. Jana Webb	Employers' Training Resource
9. Danette Williams	Employers' Training Resource
10. Deborah McDade	SER Senior Community Service Employment Program
11. Brenda Mendivel	Bakersfield Family Medical Center
12. Stacy Pfluger	Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Student Success, Kern Community College District
13. Ashley Coyle	Assistant Program Director, Department of Human Services
14. Rosario Miranda	Housing Services Program Manager Adult Re-Entry, Community Action Partnership of Kern

15. Nora Dominguez	Farmworker Institute of Education and Leadership Development, Chief Operating Officer
16. John Morales	Teamsters Local Union 87
17. Stacey Wuertz	Assistant Director, Kern County Child Support Services
18. Kristyann Thorp	EDD WSB Regional Advisor for KIM (Kern/Inyo/Mono) and San Joaquin Valley WDB's and Ventura
19. Imelda Ceja	Community Affairs Rep, Teamsters Union Local 87
20. David Teasdale	Kern Community College District Workforce and Economic Development
21. Gabriela Silva	Staff Services Manager I California Department of Rehabilitation
22. Devin Daugherty	Interim VP of Economic and Workforce Development, Taft College
23. Luanne Santos	Employers' Training Resource
24. Brian Holt	Business Manager, IBEW Local 428
25. Valerie Rangel	Program Director, Department of Human Services
26. Priscilla Varela	Staff Services Manager, Department of Rehabilitation
27. Scott Couture	Employers' Training Resource
28. Brooke Beaman	Employers' Training Resource
29. Steven Dominguez	Program Manager, Bakersfield College
30. Christina Arzate	Field Operations Coordinator - California Indian Manpower Consortium, Inc.
31. Norma Rojas-Mora	Associate Vice Chancellor Public Affairs and Development, Kern Community College District
32. Morningstar Wagoner	Deputy Director Public Assistance and Aging, Inyo County Health and Human Services
33. McKenna Liebgott	Adult Education Program Manager, Tehachapi Unified School District
34. Leonor Vasquez	Director of Grants Management - The Wonderful Company
35. Christina Garza	Central Valley Deputy Division Chief, Employment Development Department
36. Jeremy Shumaker	Assistant Director, Employers' Training Resource
37. Devin Forester II	
38. Miriam Ocampo-Arreola	Assistant Director, Kern County DHS
39. Jose Rocha,	HR Manager - Wonderful Orchards
40. Juan Rocha	Program Director Employment Services
41. Jacqueline Huang	Assistant Program Director, Department of Human Services

42. Matthew Wanta	Chair of Allied Health Dept., Director of Vocational Nursing and Health Careers, Cerro Coso Community College
43. Ruben Jauregui	Employment Development Specialist, EDD Workforce Service Branch,
44. Cody Brooks	Executive Director, Kern County Chapter NECA
45. Shawna Rodriguez	Director of Operations Proteus, Inc.
46. Erica Maldonado	Director of Community & Workforce Development  Proteus, Inc.
47. Bonita Steele	Director Programs & Program Development, Kern Community College District
48. Miriam Richards	Program Manager, Kern County Child Support
49. Kenia Jimenez	
50. Heidy Forsythe	Garden Pathways
51. Marleni Maston	Wasco High School District
52. Brenda R. Duenas	Employers' Training Resource
53. Jacqueline Stoner	Program Director, Nursing & Allied Health Bakersfield College
54. Shawna Rodriguez	Director of Operations Proteus, Inc.
55. Karine Kanikkeberg	Kern High School District
56. Endee Grijalva	Program Director- Customized & Corporate Training, KCCD
57. Daniel Rodela	Community Organizer, Faith in the Valley
58. Shawna Rodriguez	
59. Jaime Lopez	Interim Dean of Instruction, Taft College
60. Alissa Reed	KIM Building Trades Council (Unverified)
61. Ian Journey	Journey Engineering, Inc.
62. Christine Couture	Director of Operations, Tailored Brands
63. Kenny Spratt	Director of Talent Partnerships, The Wonderful Company
64. Nicole Griffin	Dean, Career Technical Education, Cerro Coso Community College
65. Peggy Langels	Employers' Training Resource
66. Danielle Beckett	Cluster Manager: State of CA EDD Workforce Services Branch
67. Carolina Aldaco	Assistant to the Deputy Division Chief, EDD
68. Lee Lopez	Principal McFarland Adult Ed Program
69. Maria Olvera	Program Specialist, Employers' Training Resource
70. Tamar Asatryan	Asst. Director, Farmworkers Institute of Education & Leadership (FIELD Institute), FIELD

Total Number of Participants: 70

### **Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary (Continued)**

Kern County Employers' Training Resource (ETR), the fiscal and administrative agent for the Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties Workforce Development Board held a virtual Stakeholder and Community Engagement – Local Planning Forum (Forum). The overall focus of the Forum was that employment has evolved through the rise of remote work, the growth of the gig economy, the importance of skills over degrees and the increasing impact of artificial intelligence & automation. ETR has learned that in-person forums do not attract many attendees due to the distance they must travel to attend. ETR held its Forum on Wednesday, November 13, 2024 from 8:30 am – 11:30 am. The forum topic included:

- Braiding resources & coordinating services for English Language Learners, foreign-born & refugees
- Coordinating services with Department of Human Services' CalFresh Employment & Training customers
- Aligning services for non-custodial parents through Child Support Services
- Addressing environmental sustainability through collaboration

The Forum had 70 attendees and consisted of four presenters that had subject matter expertise discussing a variety of relevant topics that were instrumental in the preparation of the Local Plan. Each presenter delivered their presentation while engaging the virtual attendees. At the end of each presentation, questions were asked by attendees which caused other attendees to either ask additional questions or provide further feedback which helped the presenter. One presenter asked several engaging questions of the attendees during her presentation and sought feedback using the chat box feature. The attendees were very engaged and learned a great deal about the programs and collaboration being offered by ETR's partners. The final presenter discussed California Jobs First, formally known as California Economic Resilience Fund. This statewide initiative brought about the most discussion amongst attendees. The presenter indicated that the Kern Coalition is set to help communities diversify and strengthen local economies while transitioning to a carbon-neutral economy to create equitable access to high-quality jobs. There was a lot of discussion about the definition of a quality job, as well as priority tradeable industries versus locally-serving industries. The Forum was deemed successful by attendees and the presenters.

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Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
Emails and reminder emails	Employers, Labor Organizations, WIOA partners, Community-Based Organizations, KIM WDB members, Governmental Agencies, and Educational Partners.	All of the targeted outreach attended	KIM WDB had 70 people attend the Stakeholder and Community Forum
Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter	General Public	Outreach attempted and had a few attendees	Please see above.

Attachment 3

Public Comments Received that Disagree with the Local Plan

1.	<i>From:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Comment:</i>		

2.	<i>From:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Comment:</i>		

**Signature Page**

The Local Board chairperson and local CEO must sign and date this form. Include the original signatures with the request.

By signing below, the local CEO and Local Board chair agree to abide by the Local Workforce Development Area assurances included in this document.

**Kern, Inyo and Mono Counties  
Workforce Development Board**

**Kern County Board of Supervisors**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ian Journey  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Leticia Perez  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairwoman of the Board  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date