

**WIOA**

# Strategic Workforce Development Plan *Update*

for the Sacramento Area

PYs 2021-2024



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- **Attachment 1:** Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary
- **Attachment 2:** Public Comments Received that Disagree with the Local Plan Updates
- **Attachment 3:** Signature Page

## **SACRAMENTO STRATEGIC WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This document represents the Sacramento Strategic Workforce Development Plan Update for program years (PYs) 2021-24. This plan update builds on previous work and is jointly submitted by the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) and Sacramento's Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB), the Sacramento Works, Inc. (SWI). The SWI is a 27-member board, comprised of representatives from business, including small business, workforce/labor, education and training, and governmental, economic and community development agencies, are charged with providing policy, planning and oversight for local workforce development initiatives.

The plan outlines strategies that assist youth and individuals with barriers gain access to employment opportunities, including career pathways in critical industry sectors identified within the Sacramento region, with special emphasis on targeting vulnerable populations to ensure equitable access to programs and services. The ultimate goal of these strategies is to support economic prosperity and income mobility. This will be accomplished through aligning the local plan objectives with sector strategies that enhance WIOA outcomes and support and align with the California Workforce Development Board's (CWDB) Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan Goals, and take into consideration temporary or permanent effects of COVID-19. Strategic areas of focus include:

- Expansion of the partner network
- Continuation of Sector Partnerships and LMI/Workforce Analysis
- Expansion of Career Pathway Programs (Youth and Adult)
- Continued Service Alignment/Resource Braiding
- Increase of Employer Work-based Training
- Continuous System Performance Review

The SWI has developed its local plan with a clear understanding of the State Policy Framework and its objectives. The State Policy Framework includes three policy objectives:

1. Fostering demand-driven skills attainment
2. Enabling upward mobility for all Californians, and
3. Aligning, coordinating and integrating programs and services

### **WIOA CORE AND REQUIRED PARTNER COORDINATION**

#### **Coordination of Services and Resources Identified in the AJCC and Partner MOUs**

To achieve the vision of the local plan, the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency/Sacramento Works (SETA/SWI) will ensure that Sacramento Works America's Job Centers of California (SWJC) continue to be access points, or gateways, to employment, education and training services through the development of MOUs, strong partnerships, coordination, service

alignment, and integration with the State Employment Development Department (EDD), State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), Los Rios Community College District (LRCC) Strategic Plan, Capital Adult Education Regional Consortium (CAERC) AB 86 Comprehensive Regional Plan, the County Department of Human Assistance (DHA), community based organizations and other partner agencies within the Sacramento Works Job Center (SWJC) system. Services, many integrated, are showcased via a comprehensive, system menu to customers. The focus is geared towards employment, education and training opportunities for marketable sets of skills that align with regional in-demand industry sectors/clusters. This is accomplished by:

- A combination of referral and customer service options, which include on-site SWJC and partner staff, as well as digital/virtual training options.
- Facilitating leveraged funding between core program entities and partners to prepare and train customers in industry recognized certificate/degree programs and apprenticeships with career pathways, as well as provide supportive services to ensure successful completion of programs.
- Sharing success and outcome data with core program entities and other partners on certificates/degrees attained, and job placement and retention outcomes.
- Identifying, where necessary, metrics and benchmarks to measure services for core programs and other required partners in the absence of data system integration/alignment.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) have been executed with all core program and other required partners to ensure system coordination for the provision of employment, education, and training services. The MOU document reflects the cooperative working relationships with core program partners and other required partners within the system, including those targeting services to underserved populations. SETA/SWI ensures that services are targeted, coordinated and provided to individuals on public assistance, limited English proficient, immigrants, migrant and seasonal farm workers, individuals with disabilities, older individuals, veterans, as well as Native Americans. Many of these organizations have co-located staff throughout the SWJC system to assist with outreach efforts and to further ensure that all populations have access to employment, education and training opportunities available through the system. Clearly delineated common goals and strategies, commitment to leveraged resources and services, frequent partner communications, and coordinated professional development activities will further ensure that the SETA/SWI, core program and other required partners are actively engaged in the delivery of system services.

### **Local Board and AJCC Partner Co-enrollment Strategies**

The local workforce system has a breadth of experience with braiding/leveraging resources and services with other grant and core program and partner organizations when delivering career pathway opportunities to its customer base, while identifying opportunities for co-enrollment. By working together and integrating resources and services, the needs of underserved populations are best met. Services within the system are provided by SWJC staff, co-located partners, cross-trained staff providing access to partner services, or through real-time access to

partner services. SWJC staff apply policies and procedures outlined in the local Customer Flow Directive. WIOA core program partners and others work together with the customer to develop the most appropriate plan, establish common service strategies and goals, and identify the role of each partner. WIOA partners track the progress of the individual and continue communication on the status of the individual along the way to self-sufficiency. Additionally, the need for supportive services is assessed, and if deemed necessary, administered and provided by one or more partners.

Key to co-enrollment is the multidisciplinary approach to job coaching/case management utilizing the Integrated Resource Team (IRT) model, which applies to joint planning, case coordination, alignment of intake, assessment and data collection practices to access and leverage services and resources of partners to optimize the provision of wraparound services. By implementing an IRT for co-enrolled clients, the team is better able to align staff expertise, skills, and resources to meet client needs. By applying the IRT model, teams also determine preferred methods and tools for communication and information sharing, as well as mutually agreed upon “alert” measures to ensure timely intervention will occur between partners. Also, in an IRT, partner roles and responsibilities are identified, and the discussion and identification of success principles and success indicators for the clients being served. In some instances, MOUs may be required to ensure information sharing, and will be developed and executed, as needed where they don’t already exist.

### **One-stop Delivery System – Remote Access**

The SWJC system provides electronic access to services by offering web-based tools and career coaching workshops through Sacramento Works. Tools are intended to assist customers in identifying their skills, knowledge and abilities, to utilize the self-sufficiency calculator to determine earning needs, to research the labor market for high growth/demand/wage jobs, and research training providers that provide training in the region.

Also, given the extensive disruption to employment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, it was critical to ensure that the full range of employment and training opportunities were made available to all populations, especially the most vulnerable. Virtual and remote access to SWJCs included conference calls, webinars, Zoom, WhatsApp, along with other digital access points that continue to be available as needed. The provision of technology devices continues and helps ensure equitable access to programs and services. Specific web-based tools include:

- Assessments: QuickGuide, WorkKeys, CalJOBS Work Interest Profiler
- Labor Market and Training Provider Information: CareerGPS2.com, [CAERC.org](http://CAERC.org)
- Self-Sufficiency Calculator: <http://www.insightcced.org/family-needs-calculator/>
- Job Search and Placement Assistance: Resume Wizard, CalJOBS – Virtual Recruiter

Other virtual services include, but are not limited to:

- Job Center Virtual Orientation, Intake, Assessment and Enrollment
- Earn & Learn Workshops
- Resume Building
- Resource/Job Fairs

In addition, the SWJC offers Metrix Learning, a self-paced, online learning platform designed to provide customers with self- or staff-directed workforce skills development, such as job readiness, career planning, vocational training, and interview preparation. Through virtual registration, customers have instant remote access to over 6,000 training courses for a six-month period. Course offerings include over 100 in-demand certificate courses, such as Microsoft Office, QuickBooks, and CompTIA. Also included are several industry-recognized, credential earning programs. As trainings are completed, customers receive course certificates and digital badges. Metrix also contains a number of assessments that can be utilized to pre-screen customers' skill levels to ensure that there is appropriate entry into training programs and employment.

For customers enrolled in WIOA with mobility/accessibility barriers, such as Individuals with Disabilities (IWDs), and determined in need of vocational training to increase their employability, SETA subcontracts with some providers of training under its Local Training Provider List (LTPL) that offer distance learning opportunities.

#### Mobile Workforce Services Teams

To further expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services, the SWJC system offers remote services through the utilization of mobile workforce services teams. The mobile workforce service teams are self-contained with all the technology needed to provide services at no cost to the community. Customers accessing mobile service receive initial coaching and assessment to determine next steps for employment referral, education resources and training program referrals. Services provided include:

- Intake, Eligibility and Registration
- Job announcements
- Employment referrals
- Career Assessment
- Coaching and Career Planning
- Assistance with Resume, Application and Interviewing Skills
- Referrals to On-the-Job Training, Apprenticeship and other "earn and learn" training opportunities.

Customers are connected to the nearest SWJC for continued services not available at remote locations. Remote service locations provided by mobile services team currently include community college campuses, community-based organizations, libraries, and community centers in high poverty, low income neighborhoods.

#### **Strong Workforce Job Placement Services**

Additional remote access for customers includes The Strong Workforce Job Placement Services initiative, which is a partnership between the Los Rios Community College District and SETA. SETA has been awarded Strong Workforce Initiative funding by Los Rios to increase the number of CTE graduates that find employment in their field of study. SETA co-locates job developers at the Los Rios Community College District campuses. Job developers provide virtual and on-campus

services to recruit employers to hire graduating CTE students in jobs that align with their education and career goals.

Project activities include:

- Coordinating on-campus and off-campus interviews between employers and graduating students
- Recruiting employers to interview graduating students
- Developing partnerships with industry associations, chambers of commerce, staffing agencies aligned with CTE students' education and career goals, and other industry groups
- Conducting follow-up calls to referrals provided by chambers of commerce and industry associations
- Providing presentations at employer events
- Conducting outreach calls to employers listed in the Sacramento Business Journal and other employer publications
- Establishing lists of employers representing specific business or industry sectors
- Coordinating with CTE faculty to identify graduating students and the types of positions that align to their career and educational goals
- Working with Los Rios to identify the best platform for employers to recruit graduating students
- Identifying and coordinating innovative marketing materials, such as developing a graduate profile by CTE program and promote to industry groups/advisory committees
- Conducting follow-up on students placed in jobs
- Employer and participant tracking and reporting

By securing the use of the Northstar Digital Literacy platform, the SWJC system now has access to a digital literacy assessment tool that allows coaches to evaluate and connect customers to appropriate digital skills building activities/programs. In addition to assessing the basic digital literacy skills of job seekers, the platform also offers learning resources that support adult learners through classroom curriculum that can be accessed remotely, providing self-directed instruction and practice for individuals.

SETA is in discussion with representatives of Cell-Ed to pilot the use of the electronic mobile learning platform that offers language and digital literacy, numeracy, job and life skills training through micro-lessons, which are delivered through a combination of audio, video, still imagery, written content. Accessible from any mobile device, Cell-Ed is designed to serve low literate populations through microlearning that results in accelerated skills gains. Additionally, each Cell-Ed learner is paired with a certified coach based on language ability and their needs, and stay connected to their coach until skills competencies are reached.

### **Coordination of Workforce and Education Activities**

SETA/SWI has continued to ensure that the full range of employment and training opportunities are available to all populations, especially those who face multiple barriers to employment. At the SWJCs and through building, strengthening, and maintaining strong partnerships with organizations that have traditionally served special populations with a “no wrong door”

approach, SETA/SWI is able to ensure universal access to services and staff at all locations. By working together and integrating resources and services, the needs of all customers are met. Key to this is cross-system training with all SJWC partners to gain first-hand knowledge of one another's missions, goals, and mandates, which builds and strengthens relationships resulting in informed coordination and integration practices.

As previously indicated, services within the system are provided by SWJC staff, co-located partners, cross-trained staff providing access to partner services, or through real-time access to partner services. Through established MOUs, SETA/SWI maintains cooperative working relationships with core program partners and other required partners within the system, including those targeting services to special populations. These organizations include, the State of California's Employment Development Department (EDD), Sacramento County DHA, the California Human Development (CHD), the State of California-Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), Crossroads Diversified Services, Inc., AARP, Vietnam Veterans of California, California Indian Manpower Consortium, Alta Regional, the Los Rios Community College District—Sacramento City College, to name a few. SETA ensures services are targeted, coordinated and provided to individuals on public assistance, limited English proficient, immigrant, migrant and seasonal farm workers, individuals with disabilities, older individuals, veterans, as well as Native Americans. Many of these organizations have co-located staff throughout the SWJC system to assist with outreach efforts and to further ensure that all populations have access to employment, education and training opportunities available through the system.

#### **Compliance with WIOA Section 188 and Applicable Provisions of the ADA of 1990**

SETA's policy guidance on Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures, and on Referral and Request for Services and Accommodations for IWDs, as well as periodic training offered to system staff and partners on Disability Etiquette and Reasonable Accommodations, ensures compliance with federal and state regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability, including Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which ensures that each qualified person shall receive the reasonable accommodations needed to ensure equal access to employment, educational opportunities, programs, and activities in the most integrated setting. To ensure compliance with Section 188 of the WIOA, on an annual basis, all WIOA, Title I funded providers within the SWJC system are formally monitored. The Rehabilitation Act and the ADA require that no qualified person shall, solely by reason of disability, be denied access to, participation in, or the benefits of, any program or activity operated by SETA. The law extends accessibility provisions to the private sector in order to help guarantee persons with disabilities employment and the right to enter the economic, social and cultural mainstreams.

As a result of work incentive programs such as Ticket-to-Work (TTW), as well as discretionary and local grants, more customers with disabilities are being directed to SWJCs for services. These efforts are coordinated with the assistance of SETA's Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC). The role of the DRC is to guide Job Center staff in helping people with disabilities access and navigate

the provisions of various work incentive programs, develop linkages, and to collaborate with employers and service providers to achieve and expand the capacity to serve customers with disabilities. The DRC also serves as an information resource on programs that impact the ability of persons with disabilities to gain and retain employment.

SETA provides ongoing training to SWJC system staff to continue to build and increase their capacity to ensure effective service delivery and awareness of disability etiquette and accommodation needs via SETA's Disability Services team, CART, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, as well as partners within Sacramento's disability services network. These efforts have cultivated improved and increased access to SWJCs among people with disabilities, has improved physical and program accessibility, strengthened relationships with employers, and increased job placement opportunities for IWDs. To further ensure the continuous improvement of physical accessibility to the system for IWDs, ongoing evaluation of resources and adaptive stations and assistive technologies available system-wide is conducted on an ongoing basis. Upon the introduction of new technologies or adaptive equipment to the SWJCs, the DRC coordinates training to ensure proper use of the equipment or technologies.

## **STRATEGIC PARTNER COORDINATION**

### **Coordination with County Health and Human Services Agencies and Other Partners Serving CalFresh Employment and Training Customers**

SETA braids resources and coordinates workforce service delivery for CalFresh recipients in Sacramento County through integrating and aligning services and resources available through the SWJC system, including Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I-IV programs, the County of Sacramento CalFresh E&T program and other Department of Human Assistance (DHA) programs, through community and state college partners, and through regional Community Based Organizations (CBOs). Several of SETA's WIOA-funded subgrantees also provide CalFresh E&T services, are co-located at SWJCs, and coordinate services with SWJC partners. In addition, SETA and DHA have established CalFresh E&T partnership plans. Plans include targeted outreach and recruitment to CalFresh recipients, the use of the established referral process, and continued cross-training with the County CalFresh partners to develop staff capacity and ensure the continuum of high-quality, coordinated service delivery.

Barriers to obtaining employment for this population include lack of high school diploma or its equivalent, limited work history, limited English proficiency, lack of transportation, as well as physical and/or mental disabilities.

CalFresh customers have access to a comprehensive range of workforce development activities, strategic partnerships, and services. Depending on a client's individual eligibility and established Individual Employment Plan (IEP), services available include assessments, career exploration, labor market information, job search assistance, adult education and literacy, vocational training, or subsidized employment opportunities, such as OJTs. On average, CalFresh recipients make up approximately 30 percent of the customers served in the SWJC system under both self-assisted

and staff-directed services. As a result of the increased partnership with the County's CalFresh team, SETA continues to see an increase in the number of CalFresh recipients accessing services within the SWJC system.

### **Coordination with Local Child Support Agencies and Other Partners Serving Non-custodial Parents**

In 2018, SETA and DCSS formalized a referral process by which the Sacramento County Superior Court Bureau of Family Support Judges (Commissioners) will refer child support-involved parents to SETA staff to conduct an initial assessment and connect the client to an SWJC for ongoing services. The clients' participation is considered mandatory and they can be held in contempt of court if they do not comply with the judge's order. Clients' participation is reported in CalJOBS and retrieved periodically by DCSS.

SETA staff currently attends the mandatory Court Session every third Wednesday, and starting in January 2023 a new session will be added every third Thursday.

Child Support Program participants seeking employment are referred to SETA/SWI by the Sacramento County Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) staff, and/or links to employment resources, including SETA and CalJOBS. Links to SETA's website (SacramentoWorks.org) are posted on the DCSS Resources and Links webpage.

Family courts currently require enrollment with Sacramento Works on a case-by-case basis. DCSS provides Sacramento Works brochures in their lobby, along with a list of system involved-friendly employers to participants. There are community resources available through local community-based organizations, education partners, and the workforce system. By strengthening the partnerships between all partners serving non-custodial parents, a more integrated service delivery will continue to be achieved, including coordinated information sharing, follow-up, and monitoring of client progression.

Upon referral to an SWJC, financial needs assessments are conducted by job coaches for non-custodial parents to determine the appropriate level of support needed to ensure their success and to identify partner services or resources that may be needed to support that success, and coach check-ins monthly/regularly to monitor progress.

Barriers experienced by Local Child Support Agency (LCSA) program participants include professional and drivers' license revocations, inability to pay current or back child support, lack of visitation with their children, unemployment or underemployment, wage garnishment, program understanding, mental health or substance abuse issues, or disabilities. These barriers can be prohibitive for non-custodial parents to participate in education, training, and/or employment. In some circumstances, DCSS staff are able to decrease child support for participants who are attending/participating in workforce or education programs. Providing support to address these barriers can be an incentive to non-custodial parents to better facilitate a successful referral, and participation in the Job Center System.

LCSA program participants with disabilities may be receiving needs-based SSI or SSP benefits, in which case DCSS is unable to collect child support. If the noncustodial parent is receiving SDI, the children may be eligible for derivative benefits, and the family may need assistance navigating this process. Existing resources that may be used to alleviate these barriers include education and outreach, GED and vocational training programs, Job Center services including workshops and job readiness training, and referral (warm handoff) to other community resources and information. The partnership between SETA and DCSS expands access to workforce services in a coordinated manner, thereby, effectively assisting LCSA program participants in overcoming barriers to gainful employment.

SETA also focuses on the following support elements in order to effectively serve the LCSA population:

- Motivate and nurture the commitment to change
- Offer support and access to resources when needed as early as possible
- Identify opportunities to provide stipends so that participants have income while in training to ensure persistence, or identify “earn and learn” opportunities when immediate income is needed
- Provide non-punitive, problem solving assistance
- Provide access to concrete supports such as interview and work clothes, housing and food
- Create a well-developed network of potential employers
- Coordinate employment and DCSS commitments to provide as little disruption to training and job responsibilities, as possible Job retention

Steps to ensure the comprehensive provision of services to non-custodial parents include referral/outreach, thorough needs assessment, case management, client tracking, and referral to resources or ancillary support services that may be needed to alleviate barriers to employment, and follow up. Through the IRT approach, Job Coaches and partners, including DCSS, assist non-custodial parents in identifying short-mid-long-term goals, and creating an IEP. Services provided may include: job search, resume preparation, application/interview workshops, skills/interest assessment testing, career research, vocational training, misdemeanor conviction expungement, reduction of felony conviction to misdemeanor, driver’s license reinstatement, education, literacy programs, etc. Career pathway exploration provides the opportunity for the client to identify on-ramps and off-ramps for a particular career and where the labor market payoffs exist within a pathway.

#### **Coordination with CIE Blueprint Partners, and Other Partners Serving Individuals with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities**

Partners engaged with SETA in providing services to IWDs, specifically those with an intellectual disability (ID) or a developmental disability (DD) include, but are not limited to:

- California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
- Alta Regional Center
- California Department of Development Services (DDS)

- Crossroads Diversified Inc.
- Adult Education (members and partners of Capital Adult Education and Regional Consortium-CAERC)
- Independent Living Centers
- Supported Employment service providers, including In-Alliance
- Goodwill
- PRIDE Industries
- Los Rios Community College District (Sacramento City College Disability Students Program Services center and College2Career, and DOR's Workability Programs)
- Meristem

In all instances of partnership and collaboration, SETA seeks new and ongoing opportunities for cross-training to facilitate cross-system professional development in serving IWDs, specifically those with IDs and DDs.

SETA is a recognized partner in the Greater Sacramento Valley Local Partnership Agreement (GSV LPA) providing services to individuals with IDs/DDs that align with the Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) and related programing strategies outlined in the GSV LPA, specifically those enhancing client-centered, coordinated partner service strategies.

The SETA Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) and Disability Employment Accelerator (DEA) grant initiatives have allowed SETA to build the capacity of SWJC staff to serve IWDs through specialized training opportunities for staff and reviews of physical and programmatic access. The program and system staff formed a Disability Services team led by SETA's Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC). The team meets at least quarterly to discuss challenges, strategies, and best practices, and to receive specialized training. Key strategies utilized by Disability Services staff and the workgroup include developing partnerships with local and regional service providers as well as creating IRTs to coordinate service delivery with partners. SETA works closely with partners such as the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), the Alta Regional Center, Crossroads Diversified Inc., Adult Education, Independent Living Centers, Supported Employment service providers including In-Alliance, Goodwill, PRIDE Industries, the Los Rios Community College District, Sacramento City College Disability Students Program Services center (DOR, Workability, College2Career), and Meristem. SETA works with all partners to provide cross trainings to staff, specifically focusing on eligibility, enrollment, available resources, concurrent services, and IRTs.

SETA periodically coordinates training with the Alta Regional Center on regional center eligibility and enrollment, and disability etiquette specific to working with individuals with ID/DDs. The Disability Services team and SETA's DRC continue to expand knowledge of working with individuals with ID/DDs through co-enrollment and collaboration with Alta Regional, In-Alliance, PRIDE, DOR, College2Career, and Meristem.

SETA collaborates with the DOR at all levels. SWJC staff reach out to DOR counselors that are working with their clients concurrently to coordinate services. SETA Management and the

Disability Resource Coordinator work with the DOR Regional Administrator and DOR Site Managers to align policies and procedures. Through coordinated service delivery, SETA and DOR staff have received cross-training in eligibility, enrollment, and service delivery. SETA and DOR have coordinated services for many individuals with ID/DDs, including those that have accessed job coaching and supported employment. SETA works with the DOR to facilitate formal cross training for AJCC staff and DOR counselors to expand the capacity of both departments.

Additionally, through IRTs, SETA seeks opportunities for work-based learning, training, and wraparound services through resources leveraged through its WIOA Title I, II, CalWORKs and other partners. The Disability Services team coaches incorporate resource and service leveraging into all participant plans not only to leverage funding, but also to ensure targeted expertise is accessible to participants. Partner services and resources are accessed as the participant engages in the IRT process. Also, as an Employment Network contracted with the Social Security Administration under its Ticket to Work (TTW) program since 2006, revenue generated by SETA's program continues to increase annually and is utilized to leverage earn-and-learn and vocational training opportunities, supportive services, and professional development for coaches serving IWDs. Currently, SETA has 129 Tickets assignment from Supplemental Security and Social Security Disability Income (SSI/SSDI) beneficiaries with a total of 81 placed in employment. Last year, this resulted in total annual revenue of just under \$350,000.

The DOR District Administrator has worked with SETA to facilitate collaboration in the following ways:

- Included SETA management and the Disability Resource Coordinator to DOR management meetings in order to facilitate the relationships between SETA Disability Services and DOR local branches
- Ongoing facilitation of communication with branch managers
- Attended partner meetings with SETA and the team at the Sacramento City College Disability Students Program Services center
- Discussed co-location at DOR offices and SWJCs to facilitate further integration and coordination of services, as well as to support comprehensive cross-training between SETA and DOR staff
- Provided access for SETA staff to DOR's Talent Acquisition Portal
- Provided training on the Talent Acquisition Portal

SETA has also attended trainings and had discussions with DORs Employer Outreach team to identify strategies for the outreach and recruitment of employers that are directly contracting with the federal government and are required to employ IWDs as a condition of their federal contract under Section 503 placement requirements.

Recognizing the importance of meaningful employer engagement, specifically for the ID/DD population, SETA, through its disability initiatives, has dedicated a significant amount of resources in this area to promote the successful transition of IWDs into employment. Through these initiatives, employer engagement has included training to destigmatize the inclusion of IWDs in the workforce. Employers often are hesitant to hire IWDs because of perceived costs of

accommodations, or of risks related to Workers Compensation, over-use of sick time, lawsuits, or decreased performance. Training has focused on dispelling these myths. Also, because many IWDs, especially those with IDs or DDs, experience long-term work interruption, the SETA Job coaches within the Disability Services team can work closely with employers to negotiate reasonable accommodations and task reassignments, as well as to coordinate onsite job coaching to ensure the successful integration of clients into the workplace while reinforcing employer trainings.

SETA has established relationships with employers in high demand sectors/clusters through the SWI Employer Outreach Committee, SETA's Employer Services Unit, and through collaboration with local chambers of commerce and economic development partners. SETA continues to expand and seek opportunities to work with new employers, often engaging new businesses through partner agencies.

Occupations of interest identified by SETA customers with disabilities reveal that roughly half have skills and/or interests in administrative and/or office occupations, which cross all industry sectors. Other positions identified include manufacturing and production, nursing, customer service, entry-level healthcare positions, human services, and public sector employment, including Limited Examination and Appointment Program (LEAP) and Schedule A positions designated by the State of California. As a result, increased focus has been placed on job development and employer outreach to public sector employers, including the City of Sacramento and County of Sacramento, where job placement often begins with entry-level, administrative support occupations.

SETA also participates on the Northern California Business Advisory Council (BAC). The BAC was developed in 2015 to promote partnership between local employers and employment/training programs in order to promote employment of PWDs. The BAC provides business partners with guidance and support and holds collaborative events to enable businesses to learn about resources, discuss workforce needs, and share expertise about the industry sectors they represent. SETA continues to work to strengthen the BAC to enhance its ability to engage and educate employers.

Additionally, as important as employer engagement for job placement opportunities are job retention strategies. SETA continues to build and enhance job retention service strategies, and to seek innovative strategies for ensuring the retention of employment. SETA has found that often "getting" the job is the "easy part" for individuals with IDs or DDs. Through recent and current initiatives, SETA continues to explore alternative, creative, and innovative job retention strategies, many of which are extremely unique in the general workforce world. As is as important as the retention strategy, is the buy-in at all levels of business, including the training of direct supervisors. Retention services provided to IWDs and employers, at a minimum, includes ongoing case management, conflict resolution, identification and coordination of accommodations, as well as additional supportive services.

Finally, the former grant administrator of the State Workforce Board's Breaking Barriers in Employment for Adults with Autism Pilot Program, SETA continues to work with Meristem, the California Workforce Association, and other partners within the network of organizations serving individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), to increase long-term employment opportunities for individuals with autism. One way this is accomplished is by connecting employers to Meristem's TAP (Transformative Autism Program), the online training program and "best practices" employer manual that provide specific techniques and strategies that can be instituted by employers to build workplace capacity, and to assist in taking affirmative action to hire, retain and promote individuals with IDs/DDs. Both are work products of the Breaking Barriers initiative.

In addition to SWJC and SETA Disability Services staff coordinating services under SETA's WIOA Title I funding, SETA continues to apply for targeted funding, such as WIOA discretionary, to provide additional services to IWDs, such as OJTs. Case management for individuals with ID/DDs is often more intensive, and requires flexibility in the determination of suitability and service provision. While SETA relies heavily on resources and services available through partners and leveraged resources, SWJC staff often serve as the primary case manager and lead IRTs in order to better coordinate all resources and services, including those that are leveraged.

### **Coordination with CBOs and Other Partners Serving English Language Learners**

Through recent initiatives, such as the English Language Learner (ELL) Workforce Navigator pilot, SETA has expanded access points for ELLs within the workforce system. This was accomplished through the building and strengthening of partnerships between WIOA Title I, II, and CAEP providers, refugee resettlement and employment providers, and CBOs. Access points were further expanded through bridges with partners such as DHA, as well as other programs such as Head Start, which offers childcare and pre-school services to low-income families, and the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), which offers safety net and other family self-sufficiency services.

In addition to aligning program services, the ELL Navigator pilot partnerships assisted in identifying best practices in aligning policies, program reporting, and identifying common performance outcomes. Metrics were used to measure systems and services changes and the requisite funding alignment. System changes achieved included improved alignment of intake, assessment and referral processes among partners, as well as increased integration of job training, counseling, and support services thereby creating seamless pathways to postsecondary credentials and employment for ELLs. The career pathway model implemented allows ELLs progressive skills development through education and training programs, allows the use of multiple entry and exit points, and ensures that at each level of skills development there is a corresponding labor market payoff. Pathways offered to ELLs weave together SWJCs, adult education, community college programs, CBOs, and employers. Pathways may begin with ABE programs, such as English language instruction, as well as address basic skills deficiencies. ABE education effectively serves as a bridge program that prepares low-skilled adults to enter and succeed in postsecondary education, often integrating adult education with occupational skills training in the same class, thereby providing an occupational context for education. ELLs are

provided English language instruction to increase proficiency levels sufficient to succeed in courses and programs requiring a certain level of proficiency for participation.

In serving ELLs that are assessed in need of adult literacy, SETA continues to identify and seek Integrated Education and Trainings (IETs) opportunities within our adult educational system to ELLs to fast-track learning. IETs are different from traditional, sequential participation in adult literacy and vocational trainings. IETs integrate and embed Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) with vocational skills training to accelerate client success. SETA continues to seek new IET adult education partners and the development and expansion of IET offerings in our region.

ELL Navigators assist ELLs in navigating the road to success through advanced coordination in the delivery of workforce services. ELL Navigators utilize the IRT model to expand career pathway opportunities through aligning partner services and resources to meet the needs of ELLs. IRTs include ELL Workforce Navigators, other WIOA Title I and Title II staff, refugee resettlement and Refugee Support Service (RSS) funded refugee employment service provider staff, DHA caseworkers, VESL instructors, and CBO staff ensuring competent, coordinated wraparound services to support ELLs through program participation to success. ELL Navigators are able to assume the lead case manager role, ensuring that ELLs achieve success at each step.

SETA has increased multilingual outreach, including disseminating information to the community about the language capacities of WIOA Title I, Title II, and CAEP partners, and further partnering with refugee resettlement and employment providers to reach traditionally underserved populations such as Afghan refugee and SIV women who have frequently arrived in the U.S. and are basic skills deficient in their native language. English-language and basic skills proficiencies can lead to empowering Afghan SIV and refugee women to seek education, employment, and improve their social adjustment and acculturation. Current SWJC language capacity includes Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, Pashto, Cantonese, French, Hmong, Lao, Mandarin, Mien, Portuguese, Punjabi, Spanish, Thai, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Russian, and American Sign Language (by appointment).

A very small percentile of migrant seasonal farmworkers access SWJC services on an annual basis, however, SETA continues to collaborate with the California Human Development (CHD), a recipient of WIOA National Farmworker Jobs Program funds, to ensure access to unduplicated WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training program services offered to migrant seasonal farmworkers, when needed. SETA has a WIOA MOU with CHD as a required partner within the local Workforce Development Area (WDA), and CHD recently became the host for the SWJC located in Galt, thereby expanding opportunities to coordinate services within the system for the migrant and seasonal farmworker population.

SETA also partners with Asian Resources, Inc. (ARI), La Familia Counseling Center, Inc., and Lao Family Community Development who each host SWJCs. All three serve large populations of ELLs. ARI provides social services to low income and ELL, immigrant, and refugee communities in Sacramento. ARI also offers ESL and citizenship classes, tax preparation, translation/interpretation, and other community programs. La Familia and Lao Family both

provide multi-cultural counseling, outreach, VESL, subsidized employment, and support services to low income adults in Sacramento County.

In addition, since the mid-1980s, SETA has administered the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF)--Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Refugee Support Services (RSS) grant intended to assist newly arriving refugees, asylees, individuals holding Special Immigrant Visas (SIVs), Cuban/Haitian entrants, and federally-certified victims of trafficking resettling in Sacramento County to achieve economic self-sufficiency through employment, education and training programs. Services are delivered consistent with SETA's State-certified 3-year Refugee Employment Services Plan. The service delivery structure of SETA's refugee program ensures effective integration of the SWJC system and refugee resettlement systems resulting in expanded opportunities, resources, and services critical to assisting refugees increase their employability and competitiveness in the U.S. workforce.

Eligibility for the refugee program extends to refugee adults, asylees, Cuban and Haitian Entrants, federally-certified victims of human trafficking, SIVs, and recently Afghan and Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees (HPs). Services are provided through adult education partners and local CBOs, including ARI, Bach Viet Association, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Lao Family Community Development (LFCD), Twin Rivers Unified School District (TRUSD), Slavic Assistance Center (SAC), Folsom Cordova Community Partnership (FCCP), Sacramento City Unified School District, Elk Grove Unified School District, and Folsom Cordova Unified School District. Services are intended to assist refugees in achieving economic self-sufficiency and reduced dependency on public assistance through employment and acculturation services. RSS providers currently coordinate with SWJCs to access additional services and training. Several RSS providers also operate work-based learning programs, co-enrolling participants in training subsidized employment opportunities.

SETA also coordinates with five local refugee resettlement agencies, including the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Sacramento Food Bank, World Relief, Opening Doors, Inc. (ODI), and LFCD, providing information and referrals to RSS funded providers to support the employment and educational needs of newly arriving refugees. Also, SETA actively participates in the Sacramento Refugee Forum meetings facilitated by the local resettlement agencies, where challenges facing the newly arriving populations are discussed and addressed.

The integration of refugee employment and support services in the SWJC system has provided a comprehensive roadmap and approach for refugees being resettled in Sacramento County. The immediate needs of refugees are purposefully integrated from start to finish beginning with assistance from the local resettlement agencies in finding housing, navigating public assistance supports and healthcare offered by the Sacramento County's DHA, and finishing with finding employment through services offered by SETA's RSS funded employment service providers. Services include intensive case management intended to assist program participants navigate through education, training, job development soft skills, and English language skills development to find not only employment, but pathways toward careers and self-sufficiency.

SETA also recognizes that CBOs are key in helping to assist in locating immigrants. Often ELLs don't directly access traditional workforce providers. SETA will continue to build upon current partnerships, such as those within the refugee resettlement network, as well as expand outreach to organizations working with or serving the ELL community, such as faith-based organizations to promote and increase service coordination. SETA will continue to explore ways to streamline referrals, such as through the use of ELL Navigators, in connecting to partner services and resources. CBOs serving ELL populations, such as refugees, have co-located at Job Centers within the SWJC, further expanding the reach and integration of services to this population. Additionally, California Human Development (CHD) has recently become host to one of the SWJC system Job Centers, expanding services within the system to the Migrant Farm Worker ELLs.

SETA continues to strive for improvement in service delivery resulting from the cross-training of partner and SETA staff in order to increase the level and quality of service received by ELLs, to increase access to education and workforce system services, and to increase the outcomes of this population. Strategies and best practices learned through SETA's ELL Workforce Navigator pilot, as well as the ORR-funded refugee program, such as the provision of coordinated, multi-disciplinary case management through an IRT model at the most basic educational levels of an ELL's career pathway, have been scaled through the application of those strategies and best practices in other programs within the SWJC system.

## **WIOA TITLE I COORDINATION**

### **Professional Development – Digital Fluency, Distance Learning, and Cultural Competency**

Since 1997, SETA has led the Capital Area Regional Training (CART) Team, a regional team of workforce board and partner staff that coordinates capacity building and training for the region. The team includes highly knowledgeable staff who are subject matter experts and considered masters in areas like CalJOBS, business services, working with specific hard-to-serve populations, and other areas of specialized training. This is supplemented by regularly engaging training vendors with additional areas of expertise. The CART Team has developed a web-site that is used to track and coordinate numerous capacity building activities throughout the region. In January 2020, the Team hosted its first regional capacity building conference, bringing together all of the Capital Region's workforce board and partner staff to train on new regional initiatives. The CART Team has continued to provide capacity building activities, and has prioritized its efforts on those activities that can be delivered in a virtual learning environment, including best practices in providing virtual/remote services to customers.

The SWJC cross system collaboration and training amongst partners is critical to ensuring that the services provided to the most vulnerable populations are done so in a well-informed, sensitive manner. Key to this is soliciting and receiving training from CBOs that are connected to the neighborhoods and communities in which the vulnerable populations reside, such as with CBOs within the refugee resettlement network like the International Rescue Committee-Sacramento, CBOs and other organizations within the disability community like Resources for Independent Living and the Alta Regional Center, as well as others attuned to serving re-entry

populations, and veterans. Training is offered as a continuum either through group or one-on-one opportunities, with most development occurring as a result of individual, integrated, client case work.

An Equal Opportunity employer, SETA formed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee in 2019 committed to cultivating a workplace that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion for staff and clients to ensure professional and personal growth. The Committee, made up of staff from diverse backgrounds, secures training opportunities that offer concrete ways to engage in respectful and positive interactions in the workplace while working to reduce discrimination and prejudice based on factors such as gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, or physical and mental ability. In addition to training opportunities, the committee also provides diversity, equity inclusion education and awareness through monthly newsletters that focus on topics, such as people with disabilities and celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

### **Coordination of Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities**

Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion activities are coordinated as follows:

#### **Rapid Response**

SETA and the Employment Development Department have created a Rapid Response Team which delivers services to dislocated workers to assist in the transition to new employment as quickly as possible. Employees are provided a direct link to local re-employment and training networks, and employers are linked to business services that can avert or minimize the impact of an impending layoff.

SETA's Rapid Response assistance is based on the following principles: (1) Timeliness (2) Convenience (3) Customer Choice (4) Consistency and Accurate Information (5) Leveraging Resources (6) Seamless Services Delivery (7) Active Promotion (8) Layoff Aversion (9) Measures of Success (10) Partnerships and (11) Innovation.

To ensure that dislocated workers and their families are able to overcome the devastation caused by job loss and the loss of income, direct access is provided to a UI Representative. To ensure that dislocated workers can effectively use the SETA SWJCs and access local employment and retraining services, extensive information is shared about the SWJC system, including services available through EDD's Workforce Services Branch.

While these elements are the foundation for any effective Rapid Response Orientation, each orientation is unique and geared to the needs of the employer and dislocated workers. Over the years, SETA/SWI has incorporated services to meet the changing economic conditions such as Pacific Gas and Electric Company's California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) and Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) and SMUD's Energy Assistance Program Rate (EAPR) to assist with utility bills; the California Low Cost Auto Insurance (CLCA) Program to assistance with automobile insurance, the Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) and the Covered California to address medical coverage. Recently incorporated are workshops provided

by the California State Personnel Board on “How to Get a State Job” and a workshop provided by EDD “Preparing for Your Next Job” along with other key services to assist dislocated workers with specific job search, including resume writing and interview skills geared to laid-off workers and assessment tools assisting them in identifying their talents, interests, and values.

SETA’s Rapid Response Team is comprised of SETA/SWI Workforce Professionals along with representatives from the Employment Development Department’s Workforce Services and Unemployment Insurance Branches. The Team provides virtual and on-site orientation(s) coupled with information describing the services and benefits available to employees affected by layoffs. Additional services and staff support are available based on employer/employee need.

SETA/SWI is a member of the Northern California Rapid Response Roundtable (NCRR). The Roundtable, established in 2008, is comprised of the Regional WDBs in Northern California, EDD Workforce Services, County Economic Development Departments and regional Small Business Development Centers (SBDC). The Roundtable consists of Rapid Response Coordinators, planners, and practitioners who work locally on behalf of the many Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), to deliver timely rapid response services to employers and dislocated workers. The purpose of the Roundtable is to maintain the quality of services at a time of limited funding opportunities.

#### **Rapid Response Services Available to Dislocated Workers**

- Information about regional services to assist them in finding new jobs
- Information about training opportunities and providers
- Professional help with their job search
- Distributing information to dislocated workers on job prospects and occupational demand
- Access to one stop career centers and career coaches
- Access to various online job search, job matching, and training systems
- Job Clubs and Job Search Assistance
- Counseling
- Information on unemployment insurance, housing programs, medical insurance
- Other services to address employee and family needs

#### **Benefits to the Employer**

- Access to layoff aversion services
- Better employee morale and productivity during transition
- Confidentiality concerning business decisions
- Coordination with outplacement services that may be provided
- No red tape to handle
- On-site assistance
- Services provided at no cost

#### **Layoff Aversion and Rapid Response**

SETA helps to avert layoffs through early intervention by referring troubled companies to local city and county economic development departments, and business associations for assistance and by providing skills upgrade training to employees through classroom, online or on-the-job

training to prepare them for other jobs within the employer's business. One unique strategy is "Talent Connect": a closed, virtual or on-site, industry specific recruitment event. "Talent Connect" is designed to get workers rapidly re-employed, ensure they are not under-employed, and will not face a future layoff.

SETA's network of employers participates in our "Talent Connect" events with the understanding they will be interacting with a highly skilled, "soon to be" dislocated workforce who are seeking positions or classifications with the same or similar skill sets, offer same or similar salaries, and are full-time/permanent positions.

SETA's goal for layoff aversion is to help companies make changes so that layoffs are reduced or completely averted. SETA is notified of impending layoffs through WARN notices from the CALJOBS WARN Notification system and local elected officials that are required recipients of the notices, from local media television, radio, business journals and the internet, and from employers who are seeking assistance. To attain this goal, SETA/SWI participates in meeting with a network which includes the Economic Development Offices of the City and County of Sacramento along with other cities economic development entities such as Rancho Cordova, Folsom and Elk Grove who share information about the business climate including closure, layoffs or potential layoffs.

**Additional methods used in being proactive in providing layoff aversion services are:**

- Conducting Business Services Workshops – The Sacramento Works Job Center system includes California Capital Women's Business Information Center (BIC) which engages both start-up and established small businesses with business services provided by the SWJC system, strengthens the business services offered by SETA/SWI, and adds services that assist small businesses with layoff aversion.
- Reaching out to businesses – SETA works with the County Economic Development Department, and city economic development departments like Sacramento, Elk Grove, Folsom and Rancho Cordova, along with the Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce as members to inform employers of the services available to them, and link workforce development activities to business retention.
- Collaborating with EDD/LMID, EMSI's Lightcast, and Dun & Bradstreet's Econovue databases to research business activity to determine if the local employment market can absorb recent dislocated workers or to determine if skill upgrades are needed.
- Supporting the Business Retention and Layoff Assistance plans and initiatives of the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Greater Sacramento Economic Council.

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) - IWT is an effective layoff aversion component of SETA's local rapid response effort. Sacramento's local core industries are in constant transition driven by changing national and state policy (i.e., healthcare reform and climate change legislation), global competitiveness, and innovation. This is especially true for small and medium sized businesses, which require frequent workforce skills upgrading in order to keep competitive. Without IWT, the workforce in these industries is at risk of displacement. A layoff is averted when: 1) A worker's job is saved with an existing employer that is at risk of downsizing or closing; or, 2) A

worker at risk of dislocation transitions to a different job with the same employer or a new job with a different employer and experiences no, or a minimal spell of, unemployment.

**Local Area Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities and Priority of Service**

The SWJC system provides for a single point of access for persons seeking employment in Sacramento County. Services within the system are customer-driven, easily accessible, and customized to meet the workforce needs in the region. Services are comprehensive, customer-focused and performance-based.

The SWJC system unites business, education, community and public agencies to meet the needs of employers and job seekers through a comprehensive range of workforce development activities and strategic partnerships. Job Center job seekers have universal access to a variety of tools and services including assessments, career coaching, labor market information, job search assistance, education and skills training, including customized and on-the-job training, entrepreneurial training, apprenticeship opportunities, as well as vocational training via Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Job Center staff provide services and outreach to job seekers, including special populations, such as dislocated workers, veterans, parolees, immigrants, refugees, high-risk youth, low-income, homeless and the disabled. Over 90 percent of all customers served have one or more significant barriers to employment.

To respond to the needs of today's employers and unemployed/under- skilled workers, SETA/SWI has built a system that places a priority on academic and vocational skills development, attainment of industry-recognized credentials and degrees, promoting career pathways in high demand, middle-skill occupations. The SWJC system aligns with the CWDB's Unified State Strategic Workforce Development Plan, which promotes regional alignment through sector strategies, career pathways, and organized regional partnerships, as well as promotes local access to regional pipelines providing supportive services, integrating services and braiding resources.

Through the SWJCs, customers have universal access to a variety of tools and services including assessments, career coaching, labor market information, job search assistance, adult education and literacy, and vocational skills training accessed through the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) or OJT opportunities. Co-located partners assist staff in providing services and outreach to customers, including special populations such as dislocated workers, veterans, parolees, immigrants, refugees, high-risk youth, low-income, homeless and the disabled. The Job Centers located throughout Sacramento County meet ADA requirements, and provide reasonable accommodations to those with special needs.

SWJC system staff and partners recruit and identify low-skilled job seekers and at-risk vulnerable populations, and provide them with training activities necessary for entry into career pathways in high demand or high growth industry sectors/clusters in the region. Training provided to system customers will result in:

- Attainment of the basic skills/competencies needed to successfully enter into and complete postsecondary education, apprenticeship, or career technical education program in an approved industry sector/cluster.
- An industry recognized credential or degree, and employment in an approved, high-demand industry sector/cluster.

The local board has an approved priority of service policy, which aligns with the “priority of service” policy guidance issued by the State. In addition to giving priority to veterans and eligible spouses of veterans, under the policy, the SWJC gives priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority of service status is established at the time of eligibility determination for WIOA, Title I, Adult registrants. Eligibility documentation is collected to verify priority. If priority eligibility is determined, the customer will receive priority placement into education and training opportunities, if assessed suitable, and ensured priority for the provision of supportive services. The implemented policies assist and guide SWJC staff in providing equitable access to education, training, and employment opportunities to the most vulnerable, underserved communities.

### **Description of Youth Workforce Activities**

The intent of the SWI WIOA Youth Program is to “Provide high quality services that prepare youth and young adults, with one or more barriers to employment, for postsecondary education and employment with career/promotional opportunities.”

The Sacramento Works for Youth WIOA program focuses on the following:

Significantly increased services to out-of-school youth 16-24

- High school dropout recovery
- Achievement of recognized postsecondary credentials
- Career pathways and work-based learning tied to a systematic approach that offers youth a comprehensive set of service strategies
- Closer linkages to local labor markets
- Required connection between WIOA-funded youth programs and the America’s Job Center of California (AJCC) system providing information on the full array of appropriate services that are available to youth.

The Sacramento Works Youth Committee (Youth Committee) is responsible for the planning and oversight of WIOA Youth Services. The mission of the Youth Committee is to prepare youth for continued education in post-secondary, apprenticeship, or occupational skills training leading to recognized credentials in high-demand industry occupations.

The goals of the Youth Committee include:

- Coordinate strategic planning process for youth employment program
- Develop the process to select youth providers and make funding recommendations to the full board
- Conduct oversight and evaluation of youth providers
- Coordinate with youth education and workforce development initiatives in the region

- Ensure job centers are youth friendly
- Ensure that youth program providers are providing 21<sup>st</sup> century skill development to attain and retain employment
- Develop a continuum of activities to engage more youth in the workforce system
- Identify Digital Literacy and Skills partners that can provide expanded services to youth enrolled in programs.

The principles that guide the work of the Youth Committee and the Youth program include:

- Focus on the identified critical occupational clusters for training and employment;
- Focus on 21<sup>st</sup> Century work readiness skills to attain and retain employment and academic achievement;
- Promote academic achievement and lifelong learning;
- Promote career pathway opportunities;
- Promote demand industry sector partnerships; and
- Promote services to high-risk youth.

The Sacramento Works Youth Service Providers serve youth residing in challenged neighborhoods. These service providers are responsible to provide access to services to youth in their target geographic areas and through the SWJCs located in their target areas. Youth WIOA service providers are required to be located on-site at an SWJC on a frequent basis to provide access to the WIOA youth program for youth seeking services through the SWJC system.

### **Special Youth Initiatives:**

#### **STEPS – Summer Training and Employment Program for Students -**

Funded through the Department of Rehabilitation, SETA has operated the STEPS program since 2018, beginning with serving 50 students with disabilities (SWDs). The STEPS program provides 40 hours of 21<sup>st</sup> Century World of Work job readiness training followed by placement in a 167-hour paid work experience. In addition to job readiness training, and paid work experience, youth are provided support services and resources to address transportation and other needs to ensure successful participation in the program.

SETA partners with the Sacramento County Office of Education and the High School Districts' Special Education Departments and Workability Coordinators at local high schools within Sacramento County. Additionally, SETA works with the four local community colleges' Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) offices to connect SWDs to the STEPS program.

#### **Gap Inc. – This Way ONward -**

Launched in 2007, the Gap Inc., This Way ONward program is a paid life skills and internship program that helps low-income youth land a first job at Old Navy stores.

In January 2019, SETA was selected as the Community Partner for the Gap Inc.'s, This Way ONward program in Sacramento. SETA received grant funding to operate the program for three years to recruit, train and support 36 interns to be placed in a 10-week paid internship program

with Old Navy stores. After completion of the internship, over 65% of the interns are hired in permanent jobs.

### **Innovative Pathways to Public Service -**

Innovative Pathways to Public Service (IPPS) began as a “public sector workforce pilot project” in partnership with the Institute of Local Government and SETA through the California Workforce Development Board’s Workforce Accelerator Fund. This pilot project provided the impetus for a cross-sector collaborative of organizations focused on youth and workforce development, leaders from education (K-12 and community college), workforce development, municipal and state government agencies, and regional community and business partners that want to align efforts for more intentional, effective pathways into public service.

IPPS is focused on building bridges and working in new and strengthened relations. Together, the partners desire and are building a new paradigm of effective, data-driven strategies for attracting, developing and retaining talent. Through creative branding /marketing, partners can inspire a sustainable culture of innovation, increase diversity and ensure government employees resemble our communities. Through a collaborative, informal network, this dedicated cohort of stakeholders are champions of change in the development of, and engagement with, a new generation of the public sector workforce.

### **Equity and Special Populations -**

Through WIOA Governor’s Discretionary funds. The ESP program goals include:

- Reduce mental health stigma
- Train system-involved youth to be Community Mental Health Navigators to navigate the mental health system
- Provide exposure to mental health careers

The ESP program will serve 30 culturally diverse youth with lived experience with the recovery from mental illness, substance abuse or both, ages 18-24 and provide an 80-hour Cal Voices Wise U Peer Training Academy Peer training to mirror the mental health challenges faced by youth in our community. Once the youth participants complete the training they are placed in a mental health related 40-hour, paid work experience opportunity.

### **SMUD High School Internship Program -**

Starting in 2015, SETA has been awarded yearly contracts to coordinate SMUD’s High School Internship Program. Each year 25 students are selected from area high schools to participate in a six- week internship at SMUD. Interns work in a wide variety of departments including Human Resources, Security Operations, Substation Maintenance, Communications, Marketing and Community Relations and IT Operations.

In 2020, with the onset of COVID-19, the SMUD High School Internship Program pivoted from a live in-person service delivery model to a live virtual service model. Due to the need to transition to a virtual model per health and safety restrictions the program only served 5 students in the summer of 2020. In the summer of 2021, the program served 10 students virtually. In 2022 the program served 18 students in a hybrid model that consisted of remote work and also in-person

networking opportunities and culminating field trip. SETA will be preparing 25 students to be placed in internships in June 2023.

**Responsible Entity for the Disbursal of Grant Funds and the Competitive Process Used to Award Contracts**

SETA serves as the designated local grant recipient and fiscal agent and is responsible for the disbursement of funds.

SETA follows Procurement Policies and Procedures adopted by the SETA Governing Board to award contracts for services and activities carried out under this plan. The goal of the policies to ensure that all SETA procurements are conducted in a manner which provides for full and open competition consistent with standards set forth in applicable local, state and federal regulations.

The process begins with the publishing of Public Notices informing the public of the release of Requests for Proposals (RFPs). Offeror's Conferences are held to provide potential respondents an opportunity to ask questions or obtain clarification. SETA assembles evaluation teams to review and score proposals consistent with criteria outlined in the RFPs. Recommendations for approval are prepared by the evaluation teams and presented to respective boards for review and approval. SETA makes awards and enters into contracts with contractors possessing the ability to perform successfully. Consideration when entering into a contract is given to such matters as ability to serve customers with significant barriers to employment, contractor integrity, compliance with public policy, record of past performance, financial stability and technical resources. Procurement records detailing each procurement are maintained for a period of three years from the date of final payment. These records include, but are not limited to, the following: 1) rationale for the method of procurement; 2) solicitation documents; 3) the basis for awards; 4) selection of contract type; 5) contractor selections or rejections; and 6) the basis for contract price.

**Description of How the Local Board Fulfills Duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider**

As described above, SETA/SWI conducts a competitive procurement to select SWJC and Career Services providers and a comprehensive listing of providers is available at: <https://sacramentoworks.org/job-centers/>. In addition, the local board conducts a competitive procurement for the limited role of One-Stop Operator and has selected SETA to perform this role. Requests for approval are submitted to the State Workforce Development Board.

## Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

The development of comprehensive plans entails building broad and inclusive partnerships with regional and local entities in a variety of sectors. This includes engaging with employers, labor organizations, and community-based organizations as well as WIOA core, required, and strategic program partners. These partnerships will ensure the inclusion of person-centered approaches to addressing multifaceted barriers to employment by utilizing input from the communities themselves.

Stakeholders participating in the planning processes should include but are not limited to, employers, labor organizations, education partners, human services and housing partners as well as community-based organizations that provide services to target populations such as: justice-involved, English language learners, refugees, immigrants, youth, older adults, veterans, people with disabilities, and any other entities supporting historically unserved or underserved communities.

Using the template below, Regional Planning Units and Local Workforce Development Boards should provide a detailed description of how meaningful stakeholder involvement and community engagement was achieved when developing the Regional and Local Plan Updates. This summary should be included as an attachment to both the Regional and Local Plan Updates.

| Mode of Outreach                                                                                                              | Target of Outreach                                                  | Summary of Attendance | Comments |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Email blasts, announcements at relevant local and regional stakeholder and community meetings, and posting on SETA's website. | <b>See attached Summary of Stakeholder and Community Engagement</b> |                       |          |
|                                                                                                                               |                                                                     |                       |          |
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## Summary of Stakeholder and Community Engagement -

### Outreach Efforts

The Capital Region Workforce Boards facilitated two Public Input Meetings to solicit input from local workforce development stakeholders (education, labor, business, economic development and community-based organizations) on the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local and Regional Plans. Attendees were informed that the plan modification to be developed would be intended to respond to current and foreseen challenges faced by the local workforce system, that it would provide a framework for continued regional cooperation and investment, that it would encourage continuous improvement of integrated services to clients, and finally that it would respond to policy direction in workforce legislation.

The Public Input Meetings were facilitated via zoom and were held on the dates and times as follows:

- Wednesday, November 16, 2022 (6:00 p.m., PST)
- Wednesday, December 7, 2022 (9:00 a.m., PST)

Public Notices were posted in local and regional publications, including published on SETA's website. In addition, an email notification was widely disseminated to local area stakeholders, including the required list as mandated by the state's policy guidance, and other representatives from the business and organized labor communities, the K-12 system, the community college system, adult education, private postsecondary institutions, and community-based organizations. Special care was taken to ensure that organizations representing historically disadvantaged populations, such as the Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance, the California Human Development, Department of Rehabilitation, PRIDE Industries, the local American Association of Retired Persons, Vietnam Veterans of California, the California Indian Manpower Consortium, Alta Regional, NorCal Center on Deafness, to name a few, received a notification of the postings. Partners were also invited to submit written comments via email to our regional convener.

### Public Input Meetings

The meetings included a presentation on economic landscapes, an overview of the workforce development system, current state and regional goals and priorities, and offered questions designed to solicit input from the attendees on how to improve services to job seekers and business communities. Attendees included stakeholders and partners from education, labor, business, economic development and community-based organizations, including those serving specialized populations.

The overarching input and discussion concerned additional and innovative ways to reach customers who could benefit from WIOA programs and create more awareness about workforce board services and offerings. One such model championed was ambassador programs that

include residents from the communities that these programs are trying to reach. Other suggestions included connecting and developing relationships with additional community-based organizations, CTE programs, and other public programs, and utilizing social media platforms to promote programs and services and share success stories.

Additional input from the meetings highlighted the need for:

- Support for residents going through training that cannot afford to lose a source of income such as stipends, paid internships, and other subsidized programs
- Earn and learn opportunities that are similar to an apprenticeship model
- The development of additional employment opportunities for people with disabilities
- Additional collaboration and career pathway development with higher education to provide individuals with advancement opportunities
- Support to assist additional community-based organizations in getting involved in WIOA program service delivery
- Expand partnerships with employers and community-based organizations by communicating the benefits of partnering with workforce boards and service providers
- Additional employer engagement in informing training programs
- Mental health supports
- Mentorship to help vulnerable individuals
- Case management that allows for more personalized support for residents
- Transportation services
- Utilizing social media platforms to promote programs and services and share success stories

## Sacramento Local Board Record of Comments

Section 108 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires the Local Boards to publish their local plans and updates for public comment. This document includes all comments that have been received by the Sacramento Local Board that disagree with this local plan update, and reflects how the Sacramento Local Board considered that input and its impact on the narrative in its plan update.

**Please provide these comments in the following format:**

| Local Plan Section | Comment/Response      |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Section:           | Comment:              |
|                    | Local Board Response: |
| Section:           | Comment:              |
|                    | Local Board Response: |
| Section:           | Comment:              |
|                    | Local Board Response: |
| Section:           | Comment:              |
|                    | Local Board Response: |

**PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION DESIGNEE AND PLAN UPDATE SIGNATURES**

This local plan update represents the Sacramento Works, Inc. Workforce Development Board's efforts to maximize and coordinate resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

This local plan update is submitted for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025 in accordance with the provisions of the WIOA.

**Local Workforce Development Board Chair**



Signature

**Anette Smith**

Name

**Chair, Sacramento Works, Inc.**

Title



Date

**Chief Local Elected Official**



Signature

**Patrick Kennedy**

Name

**Chair, SETA Governing Board**

Title



Date