

Berkshire County Workforce Development Business Plan  
Fiscal Year 2022 Executive Summary

The MassHire Berkshire Workforce Board (BWB), in partnership with our Chief Elected Official, Mayor Linda Tyler of Pittsfield, is required to prepare a Fiscal Year 2022 Workforce Development Business Plan for Berkshire County for submission to the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. This planning document articulates the region’s priorities and workforce development strategies and revisits the broad scope of how the Workforce Investment Act system will be coordinated with other systems providing employment and training services to improve services for both job seekers and employers.

For FY22, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development has not released the requirements as of 6/4/21, therefore, we are starting with the basic elements for the Local Plan to implement critical elements of WIOA. Planning for WIOA will be coordinated with other systems providing employment and training services to improve services for both job seekers and employers.

Our region’s workforce development priorities continue to have an emphasis on alignment with BWB goals and initiatives; alignment of program design with local labor market trends to create a demand-driven system; developing career pathways and industry sector strategies; continuous improvement of the One-Stop Career Center system as the primary vehicle for delivering services; integration of WIOA and non-WIOA systems and programs to enhance services for job seekers and employers; minimizing duplication; and improving performance and accountability. The local plan will include performance and participant planning forms and the budget for how funds will be allocated. The comprehensive plan can be found after June 20, 2021 on the BWB website [www.MassHireBerkshire.com](http://www.MassHireBerkshire.com).

The Chief Elected Official and the BWB are seeking public comment on the proposed plan. Interested parties may submit written comments regarding this document to the BWB by July 20, 2021 in order to be included with the plan. All questions or comments should be directed to Heather Boulger at [Heather@MassHireBerkshire.com](mailto:Heather@MassHireBerkshire.com).

**WIOA FY22 Anticipated Allocations**

| Grant Source                       | Berkshire County FY21 | Berkshire County FY22 | Difference from 2021 | % change from 2021 |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Adult</b>                       | \$ 269,820            | \$288,199             | \$18,379             | 6.8%               |
| <b>Dislocated Worker</b>           | \$ 308,267            | \$369,652             | \$59,712             | 19.3%              |
| <b>Youth</b>                       | \$ 317,052            | \$339,551             | \$22,499             | 7.1%               |
| <b>Wagner Peyser 10% &amp; 90%</b> | \$ 198,110            | \$200,016             | \$1,906              | 1.0%               |
| <b>Total LWIB</b>                  | <b>\$ 1,093,249</b>   | <b>\$1,197,418</b>    | <b>\$104,169</b>     | <b>9%</b>          |
| <b>*WIB Portion</b>                | \$65K                 | \$65K                 | \$0                  | 0%                 |

The MassHire Berkshire Career Center staff are available Monday-Thursday from 8AM-4PM and on Fridays from 9AM to 4PM (Staff meeting from 8-9AM) for services. Due to the pandemic, the Career Center has been closed to the public since March 2020, and there are reopening plans scheduled for September 2021. As the center reopens, services in North Adams and Great Barrington will be explored. **Effective March 19, 2020: Due to pandemic and state regulations, the Career Center will be providing services VIRTUALLY from 8AM-4PM as the building is closed to the public.**

Training continues to be a priority of the Berkshire Workforce system with 25% of WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program funds to be used for training/education. The Berkshire County Individual Training Accounts will be capped at \$5,000. Training opportunities include a customer-choice driven form of individual training accounts that will help pay for the costs of approved training programs. **We have requested a training waiver due to the pandemic and limited number of customers entering training.**

***Below are the negotiated performance goals.***

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| <b><u>Title I Adults:</u></b>               | Approximately 34 adults will be served in FY22. |
| Negotiated Performance Goals:               |   |
| • Entered employment rate Q2:               | 75%   |
| • Entered employment rate Q4:               | 75%   |
| • Training Activities Obtaining Credential: | 65%   |
| • Average Earnings:                         | \$5,000   |
| • Measurable Skill Gain:                    | 35%   |

Adult job seekers will have access to a broad array of services from a comprehensive assortment of employment programs. WIOA provides for basic core services, which are available to all job seekers, and additional intensive and training services may be available to persons who meet certain eligibility criteria. On-the-Job Training (OJT) opportunities are also available which is occupation specific training provided by an employer for a limited duration.

Additional collaborations included the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education funded adult education and post-secondary vocational education; Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission and Commission for the Blind vocational rehabilitation for persons with disabilities; Department of Transitional Assistance funded education and training services to public assistance and food stamp recipients; and Title V services to older workers.

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| <b><u>Title I Dislocated Workers:</u></b>  | Approximately 50 dislocated workers will be served in FY22. Goal of 31 participants entering training. |
| Proposed Performance Goals:                |  |
| • Entered employment rate Q2:              | 86%  |
| • Entered employment rate Q4:              | 85%  |
| • Training Activities Obtaining Credential | 62%  |
| • Average Earnings                         | \$7,800  |
| • Measurable Skill Gain:                   | 35%  |

Dislocated workers are those who have been permanently laid off or have received a notice of termination or layoff from employment and are eligible for the same WIOA core, intensive and training services provided to Title I Adults. Other training resources include National Emergency Grants for targeted company lay-offs, On-the-Job Training, Workforce Competiveness Trust Fund grant, and other industry-specific training grants in the region.

**Title I Youth Programs:** Approximately 42 youth will be served in FY22

Proposed Performance Goals will be negotiated:

- Entered employment rate Q2: 65%
- Entered employment rate Q4: 65%
- Average earnings Q2: \$2,000
- Degree or certificate attainment 65%
- Measurable skill gain: 45%

Youth programs are selected through a competitive bidding process and target low income, at-risk youth ages 14-21 who are in-school or out-of-school. Key services to *in-school youth* are dropout prevention; academic support; career and leadership development; work experience; and case management services that link youth to other community resources and youth partnering agencies. Primary outcomes for in-school youth are successful completion of high school with a transition to employment and/or post secondary education and attainment of a degree or certificate/credential.

Key services to *out-of-school youth* include programs that raise educational attainment levels and provide academic support; occupational skills development; career and leadership development; work experience; and case management services that link youth to other community resources and youth partnering agencies. The primary outcomes for out-of school youth are transition to employment and/or post-secondary education, attainment of a degree or certificate/credential and literacy/numeracy gains.

The Berkshire Region works closely with the Department of Social Services and Department of Youth Services to better coordinate dropout prevention and reintegration activities. Additional collaborations for youth include School-to-Career Connecting Activities programming which encompasses 12 school districts in providing internships to high-school students; Youth Works which places low-income, at-risk youth from Pittsfield into summer jobs; and the Berkshire Reconnect Center which works with youth to reconnect them to school, develop alternatives and/or identifies employment opportunities.

**Wagner-Peyser:**

Approximately 3,700 individuals will receive labor exchange services in FY22

Approximately 400 employers will be served.

|                                  |       |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Persons with Disabilities served | 175   |
| Unemployment Insurance           | 2,200 |
| Veterans served                  | 185   |

Wagner-Peyser provides universal access to core services as delivered through the One-Stop Career Center and an integrated array of labor exchange service activities between the job seeker and employer.

The Berkshire Region will continue to be closely aligned with our economic development partners and implement strong business outreach and employer services programming to help connect our companies with training opportunities including the Workforce Training Fund, Hiring Incentive Training Grants, WTFP Express, Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, and other industry-sector training programs.

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