

Workforce Investment Act/Wagner Peyser Act
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
Local Plan

Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA):

Name of LWIA Stanislaus County

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INTRODUCTION

The One-Stop system's success in implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) will be gauged in part by the progress it achieves in using annual appropriations along with ARRA funds to help unemployed, underemployed, and dislocated workers find new, good jobs and to access and remain in the middle class; to help low-skill or low income workers acquire 21st century skills, find family-supporting jobs in healthy industries and access the middle class; and to help enhance the education pathways for disadvantaged and disconnected youth to improve their labor market prospects and long term career success. The LWIAs are expected to fully utilize the ARRA funding to substantially increase the number of customers served, and to substantially increase the number and proportion of those customers who receive training.

We recognize that some of these responses may be duplicative of those provided for elements of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Plan modification. However, the intent of ARRA and the goals of saving and creating jobs and increasing service delivery to target populations are distinct. We have identified those questions here. The responses should be included as an attachment to your WIA Plan and be entitled, "American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Local Plan."

ARRA PLAN QUESTIONS

1. Integrated Services

Describe how your LWIA will develop close partnering relationships between Unemployment Insurance (UI) and One-Stop services to ensure UI claimants are quickly linked to a local One-Stop in the area to develop and pursue an employment plan.

Two of our One Stop Career Resource Centers are located within an Employment Development Department (EDD) site. This allows for efficient and effective referral to WIA services. Customers referred by EDD to Re-employment Assessment and Individual Assessment Workshops are provided an overview of the tier one and intensive services available to them via Alliance Worknet (AW). Edd Veteran Representatives also complete direct referral of veterans to AW for intensive services. AW and EDD staff partner with our Rapid Response activities to inform the employees of company closures/downsizing of the services available to assist with their job search and reemployment goals.

2. Green Jobs

How will your LWIA recognize opportunities to prepare workers for “green jobs” related to other sources of federal funding?

Stanislaus County contracted with the Yosemite Community College District to complete a study identifying green job related opportunities. The study will identify sectors within the county that stand to make a more significant impact on job creation and job quality. The report will also include identification of career pathways for the target occupations identified. Several opportunities have already been developed to prepare youth, adult and dislocated workers for “green jobs”. “TEAM GREEN” is a youth focused initiative providing 15 Stanislaus County youth with both soft skills and green job skills. Participants will be participating in the Green Administrative skills or Solar Installation programs. Alliance Worknet is also participating in a regional collaborative with neighboring counties focused on providing adult and dislocated workers with green job related skills. The occupations being focused in this initiative are Home Weatherization, Solar Installation and Alternative Fuel Technician.

3. Collaboration and Alignment

Describe how your LWIA will collaborate with local government agencies and employers who are creating jobs in road and bridge projects, local food production and processing, nursing and allied health, and local conservation projects and energy efficiency programs such as the Weatherization Program run by many local Community Action Agencies.

In collaboration with the County Housing Authority, City of Modesto, and Modesto Junior College, the Alliance Worknet has embarked in a joint effort in providing Solar and Weatherization training for Adult/Dislocated Workers and Youth. Participants receive classroom and hands on (lab approach) application learning followed by a Paid Internship through the Housing Authority and local employers. Please refer to question #10 for further efforts at a regional level.

4. Accountability and Transparency

Describe the oversight and monitoring activities to be used to determine whether or not there is compliance with programmatic, accountability, and transparency provisions of the ARRA, as well as the regular provisions of WIA and the Wagner-Peyser Act.

We conduct an on-site review of Service Provider’s program, fiscal, administrative and procurement procedures for compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies.

5. Adult Services

The intent of the ARRA is that WIA Adult funds be used to provide necessary services to substantially increased numbers of adults to support their entry or reentry into the job market. Describe the programs and processes your LWIA will use to achieve this goal.

6. Training

Because workers may need to learn new skills to compete for limited career opportunities, training will be a particularly vital service during the economic recovery, and overall training enrollments are expected to increase. Describe the programs and processes your LWIA will use to achieve this goal.

Through the ARRA initiative, 362 customers will be provided training services. The identification of an appropriate ITA or Customized Vocational Training will be done through the Core and Intensive case management service system. Through the regional collaborative effort, customers may be referred to a variety of customized training programs like those focused in green jobs or allied health fields. Referral to these programs will be based on the pre-requisites determined by each regional program. ITA funds will be provided to any person eligible and qualified. ITA's will only be developed utilizing eligible training providers, as per identification on EDD Eligible Training Provider List. Please refer to local Plan, section V (F) for further details on process.

7. Supportive Services and Needs Related Payments

The ARRA specifically emphasizes the authority to use these funds for supportive and needs-related payments to ensure participants have the means to pay living expenses while receiving training. Supportive services may include transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and other services that are necessary to enable an individual who is unable to obtain the services from other programs to participate in activities authorized under WIA. Describe any new policies, programs and processes your LWIA will use to achieve this goal.

Staff will adhere to our recently revised Supportive Services Policy. Case Managers submit supportive service requests to their supervisor as the need arises. Generally, requests are processed immediately. The Alliance Worknet has defined four supportive services areas: Employability Assistance; Transportation; Child Care Assistance and Emergency Assistance. A maximum supportive service cap per participant has been set, the program manager must approve any additional cost above the cap.

8. Priority of Service

The WIA Adult formula funds are to be targeted on the services that most efficiently and effectively assist workers impacted by the current economy to obtain employment, with priority given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals as described in WIA section 134(d)(4)(E). The LWIAs must also incorporate priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act. This requires veterans and eligible spouses to receive service priority over recipients of public assistance and low-income individuals. Describe what programs and processes your LWIA will use to achieve these goals.

CalJOBS system programming ensures: Job order information is available to veteran's 24 hours before non-veterans. Veteran job seeker resumes are available to employer's 24 hours before those of non-veterans.

All Customers visiting One-Stop centers are asked to identify certain characteristics, including whether or not they are a veteran or spouse of a veteran. If checked yes, those customers' names are fast tracked to our case management staff for follow up and processing.

9. Apprenticeship Programs

The LWIAs are encouraged to leverage new, and existing national, state and local registered apprenticeship programs and assets as a key resource in their talent development and reemployment strategies. Describe the programs and processes your LWIA will use to achieve this goal.

Alliance worknet does not currently have any apprenticeship programs. However, it is our hope to avail ourselves of such opportunity when such need arises in the future.

10. Regional Collaboration

The LWIAs are encouraged to partner with each other regionally and across political jurisdictions as necessary. Describe how this will be accomplished.

There is a long-standing history of collaboration amongst the LWIAs in the Central Valley. These collaborative efforts have been strengthened in recent years. The Valley directors meet every 6 weeks as the Central California Workforce Collaborative (CCWC). With the help of a Governor's 15% grant, the CCWC has partnered to develop a regional Work Readiness Certificate and a regional workforce development web site, among other initiatives. The CCWC is currently assisting the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley in implementing a wide-ranging education and workforce development program and has a grant application in to the Department of Labor to assist in the continuation of our regional efforts.

11. Dislocated Worker Services

The ARRA makes available additional funding for dislocated workers. It is the intent of the law that substantially increased numbers of dislocated workers will be served with this infusion of formula funds, and that training will be a significant area of focus. Describe how your LWIA will achieve this goal.

A primary focus of the ARRA unit is to provide services to 243 ARRA enrolled dislocated workers. The customers will be entering the unit via marketing done at the One Stop Career Resource Center, through newspaper advertisements, referrals from local training providers and via the EDD Individual Assessment Workshops provided on site, to name a few. All, if not most, of the customers will receive some On the Job Training and/or vocational training services.

12. Wagner-Peyser Act – Coordination of Services

The ARRA makes available additional Wagner-Peyser Act funding. Describe how your LWIA will utilize these funds to provide services such as assessment of skill levels, career guidance, job search workshops and referral to employers, to name a few.

The Alliance is in partnership with the local EDD agency. Collectively, we both agreed on the following service practices:1). All participants will complete the WorkKeys Assessment offered by the Alliance Worknet (AW). 2). AW is a co-presenter at all IAW and REA workshops. EDD staff have been included in the facilitation process for all job Preparation/Job Search Workshops for all customers accessing the One-Stop/EDD facility. Partners have combined the front reception area into the one joint area. Any customer can be served by either agency staff, including workshop registrations, referral to specialized services, case management, and/or Veteran Services. Furthermore, all TAA participants are co-enrolled with AW and Both partner staff work closely together in ensuring that program participants are successful.

13. Summer Youth

The LWIAs are encouraged to use ARRA funds to operate an expanded summer youth employment opportunities program in 2009, and provide as many youth as possible with summer employment opportunities and work experiences throughout the year. Also, the ARRA specifies that 30 percent of Youth funds are to be spent on out-of-school youth. Finally, two waivers have been approved. One deals with procurement of youth employment providers and the other using the work readiness indicator only for youth employment outside the summer months. Describe how your LWIA will achieve the goal of providing summer employment opportunities. Further, describe how your LWIA will ensure 30 percent of Youth funds are spend on out-of-school youth. Finally, describe how your LWIA will use the waivers and publish the list of youth employment service providers.

AW did not utilize either of the two waivers. The Procurement waiver would have been very helpful if it had been granted prior to the start of the Summer program. The start of the Summer program was April 1, 2009 (with youth enrollments allowed starting May1, 2009). The waiver was not granted until June 15, 2009. Waiting this long to begin the selection of Summer Youth Providers would have made it impossible to run a Summer Youth Program. AW utilized the four current year round youth providers that had just recently been competitively procured to provide most of the Summer Youth Program. With the remaining funds, AW issued an RFP and selected two additional Summer Youth Providers. With the funds that were not expended during the Summer Program, the Youth Advisory Council and the LWIA Board decided to obligate there funds to the four year round youth providers. All traditional youth services were to be provider with these additional funds, so our LWIA did not utilize the waiver to use only the work readiness indicator for youth employment outside of the summer months.

14. Economic Analysis

Provide a detailed analysis of the LWIA's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context in relation to the economic downturn.

According to the recent University of the Pacific (UOP) California Forecast and Metro report for Stanislaus County, unemployment is to climb in Stanislaus (which they refer to as Modesto for the Modesto metro statistical area) with an annual average jobless rate of 18.0% in 2010. Also for 2010, they predict California's rate will be 12.4%, so we could be nearly 6% higher than the state this year. Some of the factors they blame for our region's weakness are the spring 2010 NUMMI plant closing in the Bay Area (local supplier Trim Masters to be impacted), home foreclosures, the construction slump, and state budget cuts. Their forecast does see some jobless rate improvement in 2010, forecasting an annual rate of 15.7%. The California Forecast report further goes on to state that Manufacturing, Construction, and Retail have experienced the greatest decline over the past year. Each of these sectors has shed over 100,000 jobs across the state. Manufacturing alone will lose about 11,000 jobs across the state over the next 12 months, with job growth picking up in the fourth quarter of 2010.

The California Department of Finance put out statewide job forecasts in November. At the state level, the only major area of job growth they are detailing for 2010 is the category "Educational & Health Services. Statewide, they see more widespread job creation in 2011.

15. The Governor has identified the following key priorities for the workforce system in California's Strategic Vision for Implementation of Employment and Training Provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

- Invest in high-wage, high-growth jobs
- Advance workers with barriers to employment
- Support industry sectors experiencing statewide shortages of workers

How will your local plan modification implement the Governor's priorities?

The Governor has identified the following as priorities for California's Workforce System:

A. Invest in high-wage, high-growth jobs

The policy of the Stanislaus WIB is to only spend WIA funds on training programs that prepare individuals for high growth occupations that pay a self-sufficiency wage or put individuals on a career ladder that will lead to a self-sufficiency wage. Each of the occupations on the annual "list of high demand occupations approved for WIA funding" meet this criteria.

B. Advance workers with barriers to employment

The Stanislaus LWIA maintains excellent relationships with community - based organizations that specialize in working with individuals with barriers to employment. One example of this is the Memorandum of Agreement between the Alliance Worknet and the Stanislaus Literacy Center that provides for cross – referrals between the two organizations of individuals in need of the services provided by both organizations. This agreement addresses the needs of individuals requiring basic literacy skills, GED preparation, and occupational training. Another example is the close working relationship that is maintained between the LWIA and the County Social Services Department. This relationship was the subject of a study commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor on WIBs that have demonstrated outstanding success in serving TANF recipients who have significant barriers to employment.

C. Support industry sectors experiencing statewide shortages of workers

Although in the current economic climate in California, there are no industry sectors experiencing significant shortages of workers, the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley has identified five sectors that are anticipated to have a worker shortage in the foreseeable future. These sectors are: Agribusiness, including Food Processing, Agricultural Technology, and Biotechnology; Manufacturing; Supply Chain Management and Logistics; Health and Medical Care; and Renewable Energy. In partnership with the other seven WIBs in the region, the Stanislaus WIB has successfully pursued grant opportunities that provide funding to train individuals for careers in these sectors. Support of these sectors will continue to be the focus of competitive grant pursuits and other investments of financial and staff resources.

16. Educational Opportunities

Describe how your LWIA will align itself with local educational institutions and other training providers to maximize opportunities for education and training for adult and dislocated workers.

The Stanislaus LWIB strongly believes in the importance of developing educational and career pathways that are aligned across the K-12 post secondary, and workforce systems. To that end, the LWIB employs a full-time Education Manager who is responsible for coordinating the efforts of all of these systems. In addition, the LWIB has a sub-committee on education that oversees these efforts. Some initial success in this area can be verified by the designation of Stanislaus County as a Ford Next Generation Learning Community.. Also, as stated in Q 3and 10, the Alliance Worknet has collaborated with educational institutions locally as well as on a regional level to better serve customers during these challenging times. An example of this partnership is

reflected in the ARRA Training initiative between Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Merced, Madera and Mother Lode. Collectively, we have partnered with community colleges and CSU's to provide high demand training that is linked to high growth jobs. This partnership allows any LWIB to refer their customers to the local LWIA(co-enrollment) to obtain training. In Stanislaus County, the Alliance worknet contracted with Modesto Junior College (MJC) for the purpose of providing training in the following programs:

- a. Solar Installation Training
- b. Home Weatherization Training
- c. Fluency in Advance Manufacturing technologies
- d. Alternative Fuels

Merced and Columbia Community Colleges are offering Waste Water system operator training, Delta College is offering EKG Technician training, Merced College is offering Diagnostic Radiology Technology training while Madera and most other community colleges are offering LVN training, to name a few.

17. One-Stop Staffing

Describe the additional staffing which will be provided at local One-Stops to ensure the provision of expanded staff assisted services to customers.

In order to provide an expanded level of staff assisted services to our customers, an ARRA unit was created. The unit consists of a supervisor, eight workforce consultants and one administrative assistant. The supervisor is responsible for the day to day oversight of the unit. The workforce consultants will evaluate the type of service to be provided to a customer and our administrative assistant will provide clerical support to the unit.

18. Levels of Service

Describe the adjustments being made in One-Stop Career Centers in order to provide increased levels of service. Do One-Stop Career Centers have a uniform method of organizing their service delivery to business customers? Is there a common individual assessment process utilized in every One-Stop? What approaches will be used to ensure funds are targeted to those most in need, including low-income, public assistance recipients, persons with disabilities, etc.? How will One-Stops streamline the sequence of service to facilitate individual access to needed services and training?

Continuous improvement is integrated within the infrastructure of the Alliance Worknet. Staff routinely meets to discuss improvement to current process. We have refined our orientation process to maximize the number of attendees, while reducing the amount time per session, we have expanded our Tier I Group Workshops to address the increased participant demand. Furthermore, we have implemented a new program called "RESET". Targeted for professionals (white collar), gives these high level job seekers a place where they can network with other career professionals to share job leads, provide support and update their job search skills.

Based on the high volume of job seekers, the Alliance Worknet still maintains its priority focus in serving veterans, low-income and/or others with multiple barriers. Based on the job seeker's circumstances, services may be provided by an outside partner. In addition, all participants regardless of circumstances are required to complete our WorkKeys Assessment. The assessment is used in helping determine best career services/path for participant.

19. Public Comment

Describe the process used to ensure transparency and to obtain public comment on the ARRA local plan modification. What were the outcomes of the public comments? Advertisement is placed in the local newspaper (The Modesto Bee) in both English and Spanish languages announcing the proposed modification to the Local five-year Plan and inviting interested parties to attend one of two hearings planned for their questions and comments. Public comments on the proposed amendments to the local plan could be sent via a Web E-mail address designed for that purpose. To facilitate the hearing process, copies of the modified local plan are provided for viewing at several locations within the County to ensure ease of access. Additionally, the document is posted on the Alliance website. At least a 30-day public comment period is provided to allow individuals ample opportunity to comment on the local plan. Comments received (both positive and negative) are reviewed and added to the comments area of the local plan.

20. Performance Measures

Describe the measures which will be used to gauge performance for use of ARRA and WIA funds

Performance Goal for Summer Youth Contracts

The work readiness portion of the WIA youth skill attainment rate measure will be the only performance indicator used for youth that participate in summer youth employment programs,

| Performance Goal | 2009 Minimum Level |
|---|--------------------|
| Attainment of Work Readiness Skills Certificate | *75% |

- CONTRACTOR must meet or exceed the 2009 ARRA Summer Youth performance goal levels as issued by EDD for COUNTY. (EDD issuance of goal level amounts were pending at time of contract finalization).
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Performance for Year Round ARRA Youth Contracts

Program Performance Outcome Standards. The goals by the end of 1st quarter after exit are:

- Entered employment
- Post-secondary education or Advanced Training

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In addition,

- Out of School Youth who are Basic Skills Deficient must increase one or more educational functioning levels.
- Youth enrolled in Education must attain a Diploma, GED or certificate by the end of the 3rd quarter after exit.

Performance Goals for the ARRA youth contractors.

| Youth Common Measures | Minimum Level |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Placement in Employment or Education | *65% |
| Attainment of Degree or Certificate | *45% |
| Literacy and Numeracy Gains | *15% |

- CONTRACTOR must meet or exceed the 2009-2010 Youth Common Measure performance goal levels as issued by the EDD for COUNTY. (EDD issuance of goal level amounts were pending at time of contract finalization.)

21. Expenditures Monitoring

Describe the processes, which will be adopted to track and monitor expenditure of ARRA funds.

The programs funded by ARRA are tracked in separate accounts in our financial system and we conduct an on-site compliance review of the Service Provider's program, fiscal, administrative and procurement procedures.