

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA
(NE 055)**

TITLE I LOCAL PLAN

October 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007

Revised Submission: September 7, 2006

PY 2006 Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area Local Plan

I PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The process for the development of the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area PY 2006 Title I Plan:

- A copy of the initial draft document was forwarded to both the Local Elected Officials (LEOs) and the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Board, full-board membership, for preliminary review and comments. The document was then formally presented and discussed at the full-board Quarterly meeting on June 22, 2006, at which time, a thorough review of the draft was made with comments incorporated into the final submission. This meeting was documented on tape with subsequent minutes developed to reflect any/all suggestions/comments made.
- The membership of the Lackawanna County WIB is such that virtually all sectors of the community including economic development leaders, educational facilities/institutions (including public school districts, private training facilities, two and four-year universities, a Career Technology Center, etc.), labor organizations, Community-Based Organizations, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Public Welfare, the Lackawanna County Library System, the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging, and a wide-range of business executives sit and, as described above, were instrumental in the development of this document. On June 23, 2006, a 30-day comment period commenced to allow for community input and questions from any/all interested parties.
- On June 26, 2006, an advertisement was placed in the Scranton Times/Tribune which described the process for public access and review of the Lackawanna County Title I Local Plan. Said plan was available for the period of 30-days from June 27, 2006, through July 27, 2006, Monday through Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the WIB offices, located at 200 Adams Avenue, Suite 201, in downtown Scranton, PA. The Scranton Times/Tribune is distributed throughout the County of Lackawanna. A copy of the advertisement is included as Appendix A. Note – Appendix B reflects that no public comments were received.

II VISION AND PRIORITIES

A. Vision

- The Lackawanna County WIB has, since its inception, routinely reviewed and channeled the usage of all available Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Transitional Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds into areas of strategic need within the local community. This is accomplished through local planning outreach efforts and the development of industry coalition groups in five targeted areas with outcome data then matched to actual distribution of the aforementioned dollars. All

WIA information is presented at full-Board quarterly meetings, from both a fiscal as well as programmatic view. Dissemination of actual WIA training provider data (numbers of enrollments, completions, employment placements by funded course/curriculum, and wage rates) reflecting year-to-date activity allows for a hands-on approach and charting of successes and/or problem areas to ensure alignment/realignment of WIA dollars as appropriate. During PY 05, the receipt of regional Industry Partnership and Incumbent Worker Training grants spurred the development of regional planning efforts that further fed substantial dollars directly to employers within the northeast region of the Commonwealth. These grants are discussed more at length in the following sections.

- As described in the bullet below, the Lackawanna County WIB has joined forces with local business and industry partners (i.e, Tobyhanna Army Depot, Cinram Manufacturing, Lockheed Martin), educational entities (i.e., Johnson College, Lackawanna College, Career Technology Center), and economic development arms (local Chambers of Commerce) across the Northeast region of the Commonwealth to leverage any/all resources that support a high-demand, skilled workforce such as scholarships, internships, work-study assignments, job shadowing, teacher-mentoring, school awareness campaigns, etc. As economic conditions fluctuate, the addition of new partners in collaborative efforts across targeted industries will, hopefully, maximize additional funding and in-kind contributions. Leveraged dollars will support WIA funding in providing the best possible mix of comprehensive services.
- During the Fall of 2005, the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, as the premier economic development entity within the community, took the lead in forming a “electronics committee” comprised of Chamber staff, WIB Board members and staff, Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA) staff, NEIU #19, a corporate consultant, a private advertising company, and, most importantly, area employers (primarily Tobyhanna Army Depot, Cinram Manufacturing, Gentex, and TR Associates) and two Colleges (Johnson and Lackawanna) who took the initiative to design an Associate Degree program to specifically meet the needs of these employers. As previously stated, this group came together to address the need for trained electronic technicians throughout the Northeast region with implementation of this concept to be expanded to include other Northeast regional targeted clustered areas during PY 06. Through two press conferences held at Scranton High School and the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, State and local dignitaries unveiled strategies addressing local strategic needs, steps to accomplish goals, and timelines for implementation.

B. Priorities and Goals

Lackawanna County, having weathered a sluggish downturn in the local economy at the turn of the millennium, is now experiencing what can be considered a major resurgence in hiring, both by major companies that are expanding, new operations under development or outside venues relocating to the area as well as by smaller, independent “Mom and Pop” operations. Positions are growing in “self-sustaining” job classifications

such as electronics and machinists along with the ever-present health care positions which are significantly stimulating the economy. Spurred by a reputation as an excellent “quality of life” area, a top-notch workforce, area revitalization, excellent educational opportunities, convenient accessibility to major East-coast metropolitan areas, cultural growth, first rate recreational facilities and, now, good jobs, Lackawanna County is reaping the rewards.

To significantly support this economic growth in Lackawanna County and throughout the Northeast region, the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Board has set its current and on-going goals:

- 1) To identify and encourage economic growth through communication and oversight in the development of local partnerships with business and industry, education, and community leaders;
- 2) To continually improve the established One-Stop PA *CareerLink* system of operation resulting in a streamlined provision of services to encourage employer and job seeker usage;
- 3) To proactively address emerging needs of employers and develop/refine programs/systems to address those needs including the continual development of educational programs designed to meet fluctuating training requirements of business and industry;
- 4) To support all Chamber of Commerce efforts to entice new and relocating businesses to the area;
- 5) To encourage the continuation and development of regional Industry Partnership groups to discuss industry-specific issues and guide reform and change, as needed;
- 6) To participate fully in and collaborate on Incumbent Worker Training initiatives across the Northeast region to stimulate productivity and workforce upgrading;
- 7) To direct WIA and other resources in support of high-demand, high-growth industries and occupations both locally and throughout the region;
- 8) To continue outreach efforts through coalition meetings in five (5) identified major clusters of local business and employers to ensure continuity of service and identification of needs;
- 9) To maintain a strong Youth Council for coordination of youth activities that support youth training and initiatives, outreach to schools, reduction of out-migration trends, and marketing of educational and employment opportunities;
- 10) To support continued training for all PA *CareerLink* staff to ensure competency of service to a universal population; and
- 11) To continue development and growth of the PA *CareerLink* Business Services Team to ensure dissemination of information, to encourage and provide assistance in system usage; to determine current and future employer needs and to provide an avenue for discussion of growth patterns to ensure continued economic stability.

Through identification of these goals, the Lackawanna County WIB ensures alignment with the *Strategic State Workforce Investment Plan* and the *Governor's Job Ready for Pennsylvania* priorities as well as addresses its plans for continual analyses of the local economy. Although considered to be a metropolitan area, Lackawanna County has historically been a tight-knit community, diverse in the size of its industry, from small to very-large. The goals defined above not only address the inward migration and growth of "big business" but the creation and sustainability of small, new and emerging industries, such as the development of plastic manufacturers, dental implants, and food processing. Shortages in the health care, metals, plastics, electronics, and transportation and logistics industries are being addressed with the Industry Partnership initiatives across the Northeast. Linkages will be maintained with the Small Business Development Center at the University of Scranton, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), the Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA), and bordering WIBs to ensure communication and cooperation across the region in support of economic growth.

III GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

A. Organization

1. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area is a single-county entity and, as such, is governed by one (1) Board of Commissioners who serve as LEOs. The LEOs hold the responsibility for reviewing nominations and formalizing WIB appointments and replacements, as necessary. All such actions are taken via proclamations at scheduled Board of Commissioner meetings. The LEOs also provide oversight and guidance to the WIB and set policy for local operations.

2. The Scranton-Lackawanna Human Development Agency (SLHDA), Inc., a large, non-profit, umbrella Community Action Agency, has been designated by the local WIB, in agreement with the Lackawanna County Commissioners as LEOs, to serve as the Title I Contractor. The SLHDA, Inc., has a long history of administration of employment and training programs and is the employing entity for WIA Title I staff. WIA staff, in turn provide operational data reports, both programmatically and fiscally, to the WIB at all quarterly and committee meetings.

3. The Scranton-Lackawanna Human Development Agency (SLHDA), Inc. has been designated by the Lackawanna County LEOs as the Fiscal Agent for the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area and, as such, is responsible for disbursement of all grant funds in accordance with the direction of the WIB. Contact information is as follows:

Mr. Fred F. Lettieri
Executive Director
SLHDA, Inc.
200 Adams Avenue 2nd Floor

Scranton, PA 18503
Phone 570-963-6836 Ext. 2260
Fax 570-496-7713
Email mcanevari@slhda.org

Mr. Chester Buzzinski
WIA Accountant
SLHDA, Inc.
200 Adams Avenue 2nd Floor
Scranton, PA 18503
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4. An Organizational Chart is included with this document as Appendix C.

B. Local Workforce Investment Board

1. During calendar year 2005, the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Board developed and instituted an intensive outreach campaign to local employers to specifically identify current as well as projected hiring needs to substantiate future planning efforts and ensure the sustainability of economic growth within the County of Lackawanna as well as the Northeast sector of the Commonwealth. Utilizing statistics supplied by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) as well as local data obtained by staff outreach and discovery, the WIB identified five occupational clusters currently projecting the highest growth rates. To encourage local involvement and substantiate the statistical data, the WIB conducted a series of “Coalition Meetings” within each clustered sector to further define the needs of specific employers falling within each category. Following the scheduled meetings, an outcome report was prepared and presented in booklet format to all WIB members, PA *CareerLink* staff, and made available for community distribution. The WIB has designed a survey which, to date, has been disseminated to over 200 employers in Lackawanna County and will continue to be used for planning purposes.

In addition, the WIB continues to provide financial support for the Northeast Regional Job Fair, held annually in April, and, also, conducted two local Job Fairs during PY 05 for Lackawanna County employers with immediate openings.

Board staff involvement also occurs in regionalized Industry Partnership and Incumbent Worker/Industry Partnership Training efforts and community initiatives to promote economic development throughout the Northeast Region.

2. As previously described in Section II A of this document, operational

collaboration and coordination for service provision is a priority in the development of methods of operation, outreach, and communication among workforce professionals. A wide variety of workforce development leaders, educational institution heads, community leaders, and employers are all “at the table”, both locally as well as regionally, to promote economic development and eliminate barriers that may inhibit substantial growth. On-going problem solving addresses such revolving issues as continual provision of quality service in a fluctuating economy, staff training and upgrading, community outreach, etc.

3. Any/all WIB Quarterly Board or Committee meetings are conducted at venues that support accessibility to individuals with disabilities. In adherence to the Sunshine Law, all quarterly-scheduled meetings are advertised in the local paper(s) and open to the public. Any information regarding local activities of the Board, including local plan review (before and after submission), membership, designation and certification of one-stop operators, youth activities grants, and Board minutes, is available at the WIB staff offices, Suite 201, 200 Adams Avenue, Scranton, PA 18503.

4. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Board has and will continue to provide timely, open and effective sharing of information, firstly, between state and federal agencies through well-established linkages with operational staff of these entities and through submission of reports and documents as required. The Lackawanna County WIB Executive Director also participates fully in the planning and implementation of regional Industry Partnership and Incumbent Worker/Industry Partnership Training Grants and sits as a member of the PA Partners Board which encourages interaction, collaboration, and an avenue for discussion of individualized issues as they pertain to overall WIA implementation, and access to State officials on governance issues. The WIB Executive Director also sits as a member of the Northeast Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Board, the Northeastern Educational Intermediate Unite (N.E.I.U.). # 19 Transition Council, the Lackawanna County Youth Council, the Local Management Committee for Department of Public Welfare funding, and provides information on WIB activities as appropriate. Members of the Board disseminate information outward to the community through additional Board linkages and public affiliations. The PA *CareerLink* – Lackawanna County Administrator sits as a member of the Board, is privy to all operational information, and is included as a presenter at all WIB Industry Coalition meetings. In addition, the WIB Planner attends all PA *CareerLink* Business Services Team meetings and relays information, as applicable.

5. The Lackawanna County WIB, in cooperation with the LEOs, has appointed a very dedicated group of individuals to serve in the capacity of a *Youth Council*. With membership representing the private sector, the WIB membership, youth service and justice agencies, former participants, Job Corps, public housing

authority, education, etc., the Youth Council provides oversight and guidance to WIA Title I Youth Program Staff as follows:

- Reviews and provides comments in the development of portions of the local plan relating to youth;
- Provides authority to issue a yearly Request for Proposal (RFP) soliciting eligible providers and services of youth activities. In turn, reviews all RFPs received and recommends award of grants to the local Board;
- Conducts oversight and reviews on-going activity of awardees;
- Reviews activity reports and provides guidance and direction to WIA Youth Program Staff in regards to all internally managed youth activities and operations; and
- Performs any other duties as directed by the WIB.

The Youth Council Chair presents a Youth Council report at all WIB Quarterly meetings.

6. The LEOs in Lackawanna County appoint the business members of the local WIB as authorized by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The local Chamber of Commerce, representing local businesses, business organizations and business trade associations, makes nomination, by letter, to the LEOs who then make selections as appropriate. As mandated by the Act, three nominations are made for every seat filled on the Board. Regional and local education agencies, institutions, and organizations nominate individuals to represent local educational entities. Other individuals representing community-based organizations, labor organizations, economic development agencies, etc. are nominated by their governing entity and are approved by the LEOs.

7. WIB members, as previously stated, are appointed by the LEOs, Chief Elected Officials within Lackawanna County. Yearly, a current roster of Board members is forwarded to the Department of Labor and Industry which details each member's name, title, company/entity, telephone/fax numbers, email address, nominating entity, sector represented, and term expiration date. This information remains on file at the WIB staff offices along with yearly signed Financial Interest and Conflict of Interest Statements of all Board members. Restricted activities, as dictated by WIIN 3-03 Change 1, ensure that no LWIB member shall:

- cast a vote, participate in any decision-making capacity, attempt to influence Board action, or be present during any Board discussion on any matter concerning the provision of services by such member, or by an entity that such member represents that would provide direct financial benefit or remuneration to the Board member or his/her immediate family;

- engage directly or indirectly in any business transactions or private arrangement for profit that accrues from or is based upon his/her official position or authority on the Board;
- participate in the negotiation of or decision to award contracts or grants, the settlement of any claims or charges in any contract or grants, the certification of any eligible providers, or the establishment of any PA *CareerLink*, with or for any entity in which he/she has financial or personal interests or from which he/she receives remuneration;
- represent, or act as an agent for any private interest, whether for compensation or not, in any transaction in which the Local Board has a direct and substantial interest and which could be reasonably expected to result in a conflict between the Board member's private interest and his/her official Board responsibility; and
- use any Board equipment, supplies, or properties for his or her own private gain or for other than official designated purposes.

Violations of any/all of the above conditions by any member, as documented through an investigation, will result in a recommendation by the WIB to the Governor and local CEOs for said member's dismissal from the Board. It should be noted here that the Governor and CEOs have the authority to remove a member of the LWIB for a violation of the conflict of interest provision even if the LWIB has not made such a recommendation.

IV ECONOMIC AND LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS

A. The current makeup of the local economic base by industry for Lackawanna County is predominantly in eight cluster groups that make up 90 percent of the average annual payroll of the County. Using the latest available data, provided by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA), and reflecting the estimated 2002 analyses they provided, the eight clusters that are most dominant are, in order, Life Sciences (Bio-medical and Health Care); Advanced Materials and Diversified Manufacturing; Business and Financial Services; Retail, Wholesale and Hospitality Services; Industry; Education; Government; Logistics and Transportation; and Building and Construction.

Of the average annual payroll for 2002, and totaling 2.9 billion dollars, these eight cluster groups encompassed 2.6 billion dollars of Lackawanna County's payroll. Of these eight clusters, two are not on the list of Pennsylvania's Targeted Industry Clusters. They are the Services Industry and Government. As these targeted clusters were not expected to define each workforce investment area in exactly the same way, Lackawanna County can further be defined by the top five of these job clusters from which 75% of the average annual payroll is paid and equals 2.16 billion dollars of the 2.9 billion dollar total.

The top industry cluster in Lackawanna County is Life Sciences. The cluster is comprised of the Bio-Medical and Health Care industries. Of these two critical sub-clusters, the overwhelming majority of the employment positions are held, 98 percent, in the Health Care Industry. With the total estimated employed population of 100,620 persons in the County in 2002, 16,940 of those employed, or 18.2 percent, worked in the Life Sciences, and predominantly Health Care Industry, cluster. The average weekly wage for workers in these fields was 599 dollars.

With 14,050 persons employed in the second highest industry cluster, Advanced Materials and Diversified Manufacturing, this sector of the working population comprised 16.2 percent of the average annual payroll and earned an average 586 dollars per week in 2002. As the cluster has five different critical sub-clusters, industries working with Chemicals, Rubber and Plastics as well as Electronics and Metals and Metal Fabrication employ a great number of employees in the County. In addition, employment in Printing and Vehicle and Vehicle Equipment industries add to this total.

Business and Financial Services is an industry that employs 12,660 people in the County with a diverse amount of jobs in the field and makes up 15.2 percent of the average annual payroll. The wages for these industries were an average of 647 dollars a week.

The Services Industries are not one of the Targeted Industry Clusters for Pennsylvania but, as they include retail, wholesale, hospitality, tourism and recreation sub-clusters, they employ 18,150 people and is the greatest amount of persons employed in one cluster in Lackawanna County. With a lower average weekly wage of 518 dollars, it is understandable that they were ranked fourth with the average annual payroll of 13.6 percent for the County.

The Education Industry in Lackawanna County employed 9,810 persons in 2002. In addition to elementary and secondary schools, there are many fine colleges, universities, and professional schools locally. Earnings in the industry averaged 616 dollars per week and made up 10.8 percent of the average annual payroll.

The last three industries in the County that individually employed a notable number of employees in 2002 were Government, Logistics and Transportation, and Building and Construction.

Government jobs were held by 6,110 people earning an average weekly wage of 638 dollars and made up 7 percent of the average annual payroll.

Logistics and Transportation jobs were held by 3,660 people earning an average weekly wage of 688 dollars and made up 4.5 percent of the average annual payroll.

Building and Construction jobs were held by 3,390 people earning an average weekly wage of 646 and made up 3.9 percent of the average annual payroll.

The remaining 15,850 employed persons in Lackawanna County made up approximately 15 percent of those who worked in 2002. Their average weekly wage was less than the other industry groups, 364 dollars per week, and is evidenced by their collective average annual payroll equaling only 10.2 percent of the total for the County.

B. Since short term projections were not available from the CWIA, it will be assumed that the same industries and occupations that experience long term growth or decline over the next decade will experience a continued, gradual growth or decline in the short term. As the CWIA has projected an average annual change for the growth and decline of industries and occupations, the approximate time frame for short-term growth and decline can be readily determined for whatever amount of years the reader is interested in. Information for growth and decline, presented for each of the top ten industries and occupations, is as follows:

The top ten Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area industries with *Projected Employment Growth Estimated 2002 and Projected through 2012* are:

1. Ambulatory health care services will increase in employment from 5,560 in 2002 to 7,160 in 2012 with a total increase of 1,600 jobs and an average gain of 160 jobs per year.
2. Nursing and residential care facilities will increase in employment from 4,200 in 2002 to 5,200 in 2012 with a total increase of 1000 jobs and an average gain of 100 jobs per year.
3. Membership associations and organizations will increase in employment from 2,540 in 2002 to 2,890 in 2012 with a total increase of 340 jobs and an average gain of 35 jobs per year.
4. Educational services will increase in employment from 9,810 in 2002 to 10,150 in 2012 with a total increase of 340 jobs and an average gain of 34 jobs per year.
5. Social assistance will increase in employment from 1,480 in 2002 to 1,810 in 2012 with a total increase of 330 jobs and an average gain of 33 jobs per year.
6. Professional and technical services will increase in employment from 3,100 in 2002 to 3,370 in 2012 with a total increase of 270 jobs and an average gain of 27 jobs per year.
7. Administrative and support services will increase in employment from 3,570 in 2002 to 3,840 in 2012 with a total increase of 270 jobs and an average gain of 27 jobs per year.
8. Food service and drinking places will increase in employment from 5,550 in 2002 to 5,820 in 2012 with a total increase of 270 jobs and an average gain of 27 jobs per year.
9. Miscellaneous store retailers will increase in employment from 760 in 2002 to 940 in 2012 with a total increase of 188 jobs and an average gain of 18 jobs per year.
10. Warehousing and storage will increase in employment from 640 in 2002 to 820 in 2012 with a total increase of 180 jobs and an average gain of 18 jobs per year.

The top ten Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area industries with *Projected Employment Decline Estimated 2002 and Projected 2012* are:

1. Apparel manufacturing will decrease in employment from 670 jobs in 2002 to 150 jobs in 2012 with a total decrease of 520 jobs and an average loss of 52 jobs per year.
2. General merchandise stores will decrease in employment from 2,830 in 2002 to 2,550 in 2012 with a total decrease of 280 jobs and an average loss of 28 jobs per year.
3. Food manufacturing will decrease in employment from 1,550 in 2002 to 1,280 in 2012 with a total decrease of 270 jobs and an average loss of 27 jobs per year.
4. Electronic markets and agents/brokers will decrease in employment from 810 in 2002 to 560 in 2012 with a total decrease of 250 jobs and an average loss of 25 jobs per year.

5. Paper manufacturing will decrease in employment from 640 in 2002 to 480 in 2012 with a total decrease of 160 jobs and an average loss of 16 jobs per year.
6. Fabricated metal product manufacturing will decrease in employment from 1,740 in 2002 to 1,600 in 2012 with a total decrease of 140 jobs and an average loss of 14 jobs per year.
7. Textile mills will decrease in employment from 250 in 2002 to 130 in 2012 with a total decrease of 120 jobs and an average loss of 12 jobs per year.
8. Hospitals will decrease in employment from 5,700 in 2002 to 5,580 in 2012 with a total decrease of 120 jobs and an average loss of 12 jobs per year.
9. Printing and related support activities will decrease in employment from 1,060 in 2002 to 950 in 2012 with a total decrease of 110 jobs and an average loss of 11 jobs per year.
10. Publishing industries, except internet, will decrease in employment from 870 in 2002 to 790 in 2012 with a total decrease of 80 jobs and an average loss of 8 jobs per year.

The top ten Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area Occupations with *Projected Employment Growth Estimated 2002 and Projected 2012* are:

1. Employment will increase by 380 for Registered Nurses from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 38 jobs.
2. Employment will increase by 210 for Home Health Aides from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 21 jobs.
3. Employment will increase by 190 for Personal & Home Care Aides from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 19 jobs.
4. Employment will increase by 180 for Child Care Workers from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 18 jobs.
5. Employment will increase by 180 for Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 18 jobs.
6. Employment will increase by 170 for Postsecondary Teachers from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 17 jobs.
7. Employment will increase by 170 for Receptionists and Information Clerks from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 17 jobs.
8. Employment will increase by 140 for Cashiers from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 14 jobs.
9. Employment will increase by 140 for General & Operations Managers from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 14 jobs.
10. Employment will increase by 130 for Truck Drivers (Light or Delivery Services) from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly gain of 13 jobs.

The top ten Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area Occupations with *Projected Employment Decline Estimated 2002 and Projected 2012* are:

1. Employment will decrease by 320 for Sewing Machine Operators from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly loss of 32 jobs.
2. Employment will decrease by 260 for Stock Clerks & Order Fillers from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly job loss of 26 jobs.
3. Employment will decrease by 240 for Secretaries from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly loss of 24 jobs.
4. Employment will decrease by 160 for Team Assemblers from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly loss of 16 jobs.
5. Employment will decrease by 140 for Laborers & Freight, Stock, and Material Movers from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly loss of 14 jobs.
6. Employment will decrease by 140 for Word Processors & Typists from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly loss of 14 jobs.
7. Employment will decrease by 100 for Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly loss of 10 jobs.

8. Employment will decrease by 80 Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly loss of 8 jobs.
9. Employment will decrease by 70 for Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers & Weighers from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly loss of 7 jobs.
10. Employment will decrease by 70 General Office Clerks from 2002 to 2012 with an average yearly loss of 7 jobs.

C. The occupations that are in demand the most are for skilled workers, including professional occupations, in the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area will have 25 or more annual openings per year between 2002 and projected through 2012. The estimated 2002 number of positions that exist and projected 2012 estimates for the number of positions that will exist for the occupational title are not the only determining factor for the average annual openings. By adding the estimated number of positions due to growth each year, the difference between the estimated 2002 positions and projected 2012 positions estimated to exist, divided by ten, and adding it to the average annual openings due to replacement, the total annual openings for that particular occupation can be determined. The top professional or skilled occupations, by average annual number of openings are listed below:

1.	Retail Salespersons	110 Openings
2.	Registered Nurses	93 Openings
3.	General and Operations Managers	49 Openings
4.	Post Secondary Teachers	39 Openings
5.	Licensed Practical & Licensed Voc. Nurses	33 Openings
6.	Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	33 Openings
7.	Customer Service Representatives	31 Openings
8.	Supervisors – Retail Sales Workers	29 Openings
9.	Elec. & Electronic Equipment Assemblers	28 Openings
10.	Elementary School Teachers	27 Openings
11.	Sales Representatives	27 Openings

In the following tables are the demand occupations for skilled or professional workers in Lackawanna County. They are listed in order of need. The occupation is in bold letters and to the right of it is listed, in bold, the amount of annual openings that need to be filled for this occupation. In the charted spaces below are listed the specific local industries that are in need of employees in this occupation. The numbers to the right of the industry are the percentage breakdown of the need for each type of industry for Lackawanna County.

Retail Salespersons	110
Department Stores	19.00
Clothing Stores	13.00
Building Materials & Supplies Dealers	7.20
Automobile Dealers	6.40
Health & Personal Care Stores	4.80
Sporting Goods/Musical Instrument Stores	4.60
Other General Merchandise Stores	3.90
Office Supply, Stationary & Gift Stores	3.60

Electronics and Appliance Stores	3.30
Self-Employed	3.00

Registered Nurses 93

General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	56.50
Offices of Physicians	8.30
Nursing Care Facilities	6.90
Home Health Care Services	5.00
Other Hospitals	3.00
Outpatient Care Centers	2.80
Employment Services	1.80
Local Government	1.70
Elementary and Secondary Schools	1.70
Psychiatric & Substance Abuse Hospitals	1.70

General & Operations Managers 49

Grocery Stores	2.80
Local Government	2.80
Full-Service Restaurants	2.20
Management of Companies & Enterprises	2.00
Automobile Dealers	1.90
Depository Credit Information	1.80
Building Equipment Contractors	1.80
Insurance Carriers	1.70
Insurance Agencies, Brokerages & Support	1.50
Electronic Markets & Agents/Brokers	1.50

Postsecondary Teachers, Other 39

Colleges and Universities	87.50
Junior Colleges	6.50
Other Schools and Institutions	1.80
Accounting and Bookkeeping Services	1.30

Licensed Practical & Licensed

Vocational Nurses 33

General Medical & Surgical Hospitals	27.40
Nursing Care Facilities	26.80
Offices of Physicians	9.10
Local Government	5.80
Home Health Care Services	5.80
Community Care Facility for Elderly	5.00
Employment Services	3.60
Residential Mental Health Facilities	3.10
Outpatient Care Centers	1.70
Federal Government	1.60

Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants 33

Nursing Care Facilities	40.60
General Medical & Surgical Hospitals	21.90
Local Government	9.20

Community Care Facility for Elderly	8.50
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Residential Mental Health Facilities	5.20
Employment Services	2.60
Other Hospitals	1.60
Offices of Physicians	1.40
Home Health Care Services	1.20
Private Households	1.20

Customer Service Representatives 31

Depository Credit Information	7.60
Insurance Carriers	7.60
Business Support Services	7.00
Insurance Agencies, Brokerages, & Support	6.00
Employment Services	2.80
Department Stores	2.80
Management of Companies & Enterprises	2.70
Grocery Stores	2.50
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	2.50
Wired Telecommunications	2.20

Supervisors – Retail Sales Workers 29

Self-Employed	27.10
Grocery Stores	8.20
Clothing Stores	7.60
Department Stores	6.00
Health and Personal Care Stores	4.50
Gasoline Stations	4.10
Building Materials & Supplies Dealers	4.00
Automobile Dealers	3.70
Other General Merchandise Stores	2.80
Office Supply, Stationary & Gift Stores	2.20

Electrical & Electronic Equipment

Assemblers 28

Semiconductor & Electronic Components	27.90
Electrical Equipment Manufacturing	9.80
Electronic Instrument Manufacturing	9.40
Communications Equipment Manufacturing	8.60
Audio and Video Equipment Manufacturing	8.10
Magnetic Media Mfg. & Reproducing	6.20
Other Electrical Equipment & Components	5.60
Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing	5.00
Electric Lighting Equipment Manufacturing	2.30
Accounting & Bookkeeping Services	1.90

Elementary School Teachers 27

Elementary & Secondary Schools	96.30
Religious Organizations	2.20

Sales Representatives		27
Electronic Markets & Agents/Brokers		11.20
Machinery & Supply Merchants Wholesalers		5.20
Grocery Product Merchant Wholesalers		4.90
Commercial Goods Merchant Wholesalers		4.70
Misc Nondurable Goods Merchant Wholesalers		3.90
Self-Employed		3.50
Lumber & Supply Merchant Wholesalers		3.40
Hardware & Plumbing Merchant Wholesalers		2.80
Building Material & Supplies Dealers		2.40
Electric Goods Merchant Wholesalers		2.30

D. The occupations that are most critical to the economic base for Lackawanna County are referred to as high priority occupations. These high priority occupations comprise a list that is lengthy and ranges from employment that, as of 2002 and projected through 2012, has 2000-3000 positions currently, per occupation, all the way down to occupations that have 10 current positions filled.

For the purpose of considering which high priority occupations to emphasize, for being the most critical to the economic base of Lackawanna County, the most important factors are the quantity of annual openings and the size of the existing and 2012 projected employment positions that are available in the Workforce Investment Area. The 27 occupations in the list below contain no less than 500 existing jobs in the County as of 2002. By the large volume of these positions, it is evident that the persons employed in those jobs have been contributing a sizeable cash flow into the local economy and support the local market. By the presence of their projected yearly annual openings, ranging from a projected 6 to 93 positions a year, and comprising a majority of professional and skilled occupations, the persons in these occupations will continue to bring a greater amount of money into the economy of the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area. The list of these 27 critical, high priority occupations follows.

HIGH PRIORITY OCCUPATIONS FOR LACKAWANNA COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA

SOC Code	SOC Title	Employment Estimated 2002	Projected 2012	Annual Openings
29-1111	Registered Nurses	2,650	3,030	93
53-7062	Laborers & Material Movers	2,240	2,100	59
39-9011	Child Care Workers	690	870	37
43-9061	Office Clerks	1,990	1,920	37
43-4171	Receptionists & Information Clerks	820	990	37
29-2061	Licensed Practical & Vocational Nurses	1,000	1,110	33
31-1012	Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	1,180	1,360	33
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	2,080	2,080	31
39-9021	Personal & Home Health Aides	620	810	29
31-1011	Home Health Aides	530	740	28
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers	1,340	1,310	27

41-4012	Sales Representatives	940	960	27
25-9041	Teachers Assistants	1,020	1,080	26
53-3032	Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor Trailer	1,200	1,260	26
53-3033	Truck Drivers, Light	1,430	1,560	26
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	860	930	23
43-1011	Supervisors – Office & Admin. Support Workers	1,070	1,060	22
49-9042	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	930	960	21
25-2031	Secondary Teachers – Math, Science, F. Languages	730	730	21
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	1,600	1,500	20
47-2031	Carpenters	800	860	19
43-6014	Secretaries	1,870	1,630	17
41-9041	Telemarketers	920	940	17
51-5023	Printing Machine Operators	660	660	15
43-3032	Financial Managers	510	560	12
51-1011	Supervisors – Production & Operating Workers	560	540	10
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving & Traffic Clerks	560	510	6

SOURCE: Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis.

Note: Not listed above, primarily due to its recent emergence, is the current as well as projected need for up to 500 electronic technicians at various employers throughout the region. Because the above data is taken from census information, it does not reflect current trends in the marketplace. Because of retirements of the baby-boom generation, several local employers have come forward with this urgent need for 2-year Associate degree programs to specifically address these shortages.

E. In Lackawanna County, we are currently targeting specific, high-priority clusters. These critical jobs have been targeted as they show a high projection of need in the Manufacturing, Business and Financial, Health Care and Logistics and transportation fields. By their nature, these high priority jobs can provide employment opportunities for workers in fields that are capable of providing wages that are considered family-sustaining. Equally important is the fact that the jobs in these clusters provide careers and career paths. Opportunities in each of these high-priority clusters that utilize available career ladders is evidenced by the fact that, in this past year, incumbent worker training grants have been made available and utilized by each of these industry clusters in Lackawanna County.

In the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area, the most prevalent occupations in the Advanced Materials and Diversified Manufacturing Industry cluster are Production & Equipment Operators; Skilled Crafts; Management Occupations; Clerical Occupations; Mechanics, Repairers & Equipment Operators and Sales Occupations. These occupations require the ability to have a reasonable amount of oral and written comprehension and expression and information ordering, as well as, physical abilities in manual dexterity, control precision and near vision. Most of the occupations in this cluster demand a mechanical background and a firm grasp of mathematics. Skills in equipment selection, problem identification, information gathering and organization and operation monitoring, problem-solving, team building and control are most necessary for the occupations in this industry cluster. Manufacturing occupations are now, more

than ever, requiring workers to be more versed in the skills previously mentioned. As skilled crafts must keep up with the technological advances that are needed to produce these goods, workers must have a more diverse background in electronics, mathematics and machining skills. High tech production machinery must be operated and repaired by trained professionals with the ability to troubleshoot problems independently. Sales and clerical staff in the companies in the manufacturing field must be equally proficient if our local industries are to compete in a global economy that has become highly competitive. Companies that can produce high quality goods efficiently and deliver them to consumers cost effectively will be the ones who succeed.

In the Business and Finance cluster, the most dominant occupational groups encompass the clerical, management, business and financial, sales and legal occupations and the abilities for number facility, speech clarity and oral and written comprehension and expression are paramount. The jobs in this cluster deal with management and job tasks that require mathematical knowledge. Communication skills that include active listening, speaking, reading comprehension and writing will be used frequently for success within the occupation. Furthermore, critical thinking and information gathering and organization skills are the tools that are necessary to maintain success and further career paths for those who work in these jobs. Business and Finance occupations are historically jobs that had been seen as a smaller percentage of available occupations. As we move along in this new century, white-collar jobs have been, and will keep, increasing. The skills that are described above are the ones that are being emphasized earlier in educational institutions that are paramount in a changing world. With economic that get increasingly more global, it is apparent that workers must be able to interface with, obviously, a more global community. Communication and comprehension skills of workers in this cluster of occupations must be exceptional if they are to compete.

The Health Care cluster is continually growing at an elevated rate. To find success in occupations that include healthcare practitioners, technicians, technologists and therapists, and management and clerical occupations, workers must possess oral and written comprehension, be able to express themselves both orally and in written form and have the ability to order information while maintain problem sensibility. Critical skills in these areas require actively listening and speaking, while gathering information, identifying problems and using good judgment-making skills, utilizing social perceptiveness with a service orientation. The required knowledge background and education usually requires biology, chemistry and/or medicine and dentistry. In a community and world where health care advances are being made at an escalating pace, so too must the workforce adapt to the new advances in this cluster. As we also see a population that is living longer and healthier lives, the professional in this field, at all levels of care, must continually upgrade their skills to adapt to the changing advances in medical technology. The care that is provided in the Health Care cluster of occupations demand more than just compassionate care, but employees capable of utilizing good communication skills while maintaining pertinent records and using good judgment and Independent thinking skills.

The most important occupations in the Logistics and Transportation cluster are in the occupations of transportation equipment operators; production workers and equipment operators; mechanics; repairers and maintenance workers and management, sales and clerical occupations. The physical abilities that are required for these fields are control precision, depth perception, far and near vision, multi-limb coordination, and, frequently, trunk strength. The occupation demands oral and written comprehension and expression. Most of the occupations in the industry cluster will necessitate mechanical and mathematical knowledge. Besides being able to use active listening, speaking and reading comprehension skills, the occupation will demand equipment maintenance, selection and operation and control. Logistics and transportation incorporate more than just a fleet of truck drivers that are delivering goods. To compete in this field, the industry has to incorporate a new mindset and utilize the technology that will get goods to consumers at an increasingly faster pace. At the national and global scale, goods must travel faster and farther than ever before. Those vehicle operators must still possess the abilities to transport goods, but must now also communicate better and utilize organizational skills to maximize efficiency.

F. The most recent local labor pool statistics that are available are from the 2002 annual average. Information is divided into sections that include males and females together and females separately. In both cases, there are statistics for race and minority characteristics. Additionally, there is an area to note the age groups for 16 to 19 year olds and 20 to 21 year olds.

The total labor force population for males and females combined is 107,650. Of those, 101,375 were employed and 6,250 were unemployed with an unemployment rate of 5.8%. Concerning race for the figures of both sexes, the white population had a labor force of 105,175 of which 99,175 were employed and 5,975 or 5.7% of the population was unemployed. The black labor force totaled 800 of which 675 were employed and 150 or 17.2% of the population were unemployed. The labor force for other races was 1,675 of which 1,525 were employed and 150 or 8.4% of the population were unemployed. Hispanics had a labor force of 1,500 with 1,375 employed and in which 125 or 8.9% of the population was unemployed. The total of the minority groups had a combined labor force of 3,975 with 3,575 being employed and 425 or 10.4% being unemployed. Of the total veteran population, 12,800 were in the labor force and 1,025 or 8% were unemployed. Vietnam veterans had 5,850 people in the labor pool with 375 of those unemployed, or 6% being unemployed.

Concerning the female population, the total labor force population for females is 50,900. Of those, 48,375 were employed and 6,250 are unemployed with an unemployment rate of 8.9%. Concerning race for females, the white population had a labor force of 49,725 of which 48,375 were employed and 2,525 or 4.8% of the population was unemployed. The black female labor force totaled 325 of which 275 were employed and 50 or 16.1% of the population were unemployed. The labor force for other races was 850 of which 775 were employed and 50 or 7.1% were unemployed. Hispanic females had a labor force of 625 with 575 employed and 50 or 9.1% unemployed.

The total female minority groups had a combined labor force of 1,800 with 1,625 being employed and 175 or 19.5% being unemployed.

Persons falling between the ages of 16 and 19 years old had a labor force of 6,025 with 5,475 being employed and 525 or 8.9% being unemployed. Those who were between the ages of 16 and 19 years old had a labor force of 4,400 with 4,050 being employed and 350 or 7.9% of the population being unemployed.

The latest data for the total combined local labor pool is from the 2005 annual average. In that year, the total civilian labor force was 106,200 with 100,400 being employed and 5,800 or 5.4% of the population being unemployed. The latest data for an individual month for the local labor force is February 2006. At that time, the total labor force was 106,100 with 100,000 being employed and 6,100 or 5.7% of the population being unemployed. As this data is preliminary, not seasonally adjusted and falls right after the holidays, it can be assumed that the heightened unemployment rate was affected by all three of these factors.

As there are not available projections for the demographic of local or regional labor pools, historical data may be used to infer what changes will take place on local levels. Lackawanna County has gradually been dropping in population for many years. The U. S. Census Bureau reports that Pennsylvania is the second slowest growing state. The demographic of the State, and therefore it can be assumed the County also, is also changing at a pace that is far slower than the majority of states in the nation. The only change that we can say, with any validity, would be made by using cultural differences in the average amount of births of Hispanics, Non-Hispanic Whites, Blacks and Asians. These are the groups that comprise nearly 100% of the area's population. The results are as follows. Non-Hispanic white women are having an average of 1.9 births per woman, compared with 2.0 for Asian Americans, 2.2 among Blacks, and 3.2 for Hispanics. The largest change that we will see is that the number of Hispanic persons who are coming into the labor pool, and who will come into for the next decades, will be increasingly greater of a percentage than it had been previously for that group. The Black demographic will have a slight rise while the Asian and White, Non-Hispanic birth rate will maintain their approximate replacement rate. The replacement rate is typically 2 births per woman per demographic group.

G. The commuting patterns for the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area evidence that there is a greater "in-migration" of workers in our local labor pool than there are residents who live within the WIA and commute outside of it to work. While in both cases there are a number of states and counties that residents commute to for employment, and a number of workers in the WIA commute from, those numbers balance each other out. The two states where our WIA experiences the most workers coming from or going to for employment are New York and New Jersey. In that case, we export approximately 450 more resident workers to those states than those who migrate here to work.

The number of persons who live in the WIA and work outside of it totals 15,025 workers. The number of persons who reside outside of the WIA but work within it totals 19,407. The result is a total of 4,382 persons who migrate to Lackawanna County to work. This can be explained by the number of residents who work in other counties of Pennsylvania as compared to the amount of persons who migrate from other Pennsylvania counties to work here. The greatest amount of commuting to or away from Lackawanna County takes place with five of our surrounding counties. They are Luzerne, Monroe, Wayne, Wyoming and Susquehanna Counties. As a rather centralized Workforce Investment Area, Lackawanna County is not a far drive to any of these surrounding counties.

As we import 5,023 more workers just from other counties than we export to work in those counties, the ones with the highest influx of non-residents coming to work here are more rural and lack the sheer volume of employers and services provided in Lackawanna County. Luzerne County would be excluded from the counties by the fact that it is less rural. We still do import approximately 1,200 more workers from that county as well. Luzerne and Lackawanna Counties do; however, have a combined 14,953 cross commuters and this can be attributed to our close proximity and the fact that we share sports teams, an airport and resorts and recreational facilities that are used frequently.

As previously mentioned that there are no projections for demographics of the labor pool for Lackawanna County, there are also no local or regional statistical projections for the “in-migration” or “out-migration” of workers that impact the local labor pool. After looking for any/all related information, and after discussing the situation at length with the professionals from the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA), I accessed the U. S. Census Bureau for data pertinent to this subject. The information acquired was for the statewide levels of “on-migration” and “out-migration”. Pennsylvania has, very nearly, the lowest rate in both of these areas. The in-migration rate for PA is 18 persons per 1000 population and the out-migration rate is 19 persons per 1000 population. These rates are almost perfectly even and, thus, even themselves out. In determining, then, if a shift in population would affect this outcome, one must consider what the shift in population would be. Pennsylvania’s projected average annual rate of natural increase per 1000 population: 1995-2025, (as stated in the Current Population Projections Reports by the U. S. Census Bureau), is estimated to be in the -2.9 to 1.4 range. It can be inferred, therefore, that there will be no major effect on in-migration or out-migration by any reasonable shift in population.

H. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Board has identified the skills most commonly needed in the high priority occupations where the need for qualified workers is not being met. These “in-demand” occupations share many skill requirements as a few of the top ten are in the same occupational group or groups.

The method used to identify the most prevalent skills gaps incorporated first listing the top 10 high-priority occupations (HPOs) in Lackawanna County where demand exceeds supply. These come directly from Section IV. D. and have, also, the

greatest amount of annual openings. They were then identified as having been determined to be included on the HPO list for all WIAs in Pennsylvania. Utilizing the *Skills Gap Analysis* files, (Occupations for all WIAs), that were provided by the CWIA, the ten most important skills were chosen for each occupation. After compiling these skills, it was necessary to sort this list of 100 skills to determine which ones were the most prevalent across the HPOs that were identified most important to Lackawanna County. The common skills that resulted were able to be classified in three general areas. As they pertain to the HPOs that are most needed, and where supply exceeds demand, they are, definitively, areas where skill gaps are occurring and where we need to place an emphasis for future prospective employees in these fields. These three general skill gaps areas deal with communication skills, information organization and service orientation. Below are listed the top skills needed in these areas.

Prevalent first and foremost is the need for the basic communication skills that deserve more focus, even as we get more technologically advanced as a society. Reading comprehension, writing skills and the need to be able to speak intelligibly become even more important as students today must be able to discuss, record and gain written instruction as a faster moving workforce must do more complicated work in less time with less members in the workforce.

A commonality among these occupations is the need to be more aware of what is going on in their surroundings, while being able to gather more information and remain attentive to those around them. The common skills that presented themselves were information gathering, monitoring and maintaining a social perceptiveness. People skills are becoming more and more a part of most employees' necessary soft skills.

Almost every type of job analyzed is in a type of field where service orientation is integral to successful employment. Coupled with the communication skills that these occupations require, is the absolute need for active listening skills. Education programs need to incorporate more of the social sciences to prepare prospective workers so they will be better able to focus and have a better situational understanding. This leads into the next skills need that all but one of the top ten shared, and that is problem identification. The need for workers in these occupations to actively seek out the things that can, and will, go wrong are survival skills in every workplace that can be the difference between a big sell, a missed opportunity, or a life and death situation. Ultimately, our careers are what allow us to sustain ourselves. We must take every effort to make sure that courses of study, training programs and social awareness instruction in these areas must be emphasized and be made more readily expected and available.

V PLANNING AND EVALUATION

A. The sole PA *CareerLink* site of the County of Lackawanna (single-County Workforce Investment Area – NE 055) was established in the Spring of 2001, and operating in accordance with the mandates of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, ensures a collaborative process of operation built upon locally driven workforce and economic development initiatives. To this end and through the establishment of this PA

CareerLink site, the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) assures the coordination of resources and development of strategic plans to address, both locally as well as regionally, current and projected future economic needs.

The PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County site provides an easily-accessible, comfortable, and comprehensive site that affords accessibility to market-driven services and information that are considerate of the abilities and work-related needs of a diverse population by empowering all customers (job seekers as well as employers) to make individualized, informed choices. The Center serves as a pivot point for the delivery of workforce development strategies both electronically through the provision of core services for both customer bases as well as through individualized attention by well-trained, considerate staff. The WIB, PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County Consortium of Operators, and management staff oversee the collaboration and coordination of employment, education, and economic development activities that ensures a structural blending of all locally available programs and services which, in turn, promotes the provision of quality service in a performance-driven system compatible with locally defined customer needs. The inter-agency/inter-program structure for collaboration, oversight, and operational responsibility hallmarks the PA *CareerLink* as well as the Workforce Investment Act's goals in promoting a unified system of operation.

The PA *CareerLink*'s primary business objective facilitates a county-wide employment and training system of operation that provides a comprehensive full-menu of employment services, assessment practices, and education and job training services to adults, youth, veterans, dislocated workers, as well as incumbent workers as they participate in, enter, or upgrade their current and future labor marketability. The PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County provides the local workforce accessibility to an all-inclusive, one-stop resource site with access to self-directed as well as assisted activities.

To accomplish this objective, the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County's long-range vision is *to strengthen Lackawanna County's economic position by providing job seekers and employers universal access to a variety of customer-focused services, delivered through a well-integrated system where quality and accountability are primary.* A succinct mission statement is: **Superior service breeds successful customers.**

1. One full-service PA *CareerLink* site, chartered in March of 2001 with Grand Opening on April 25, 2001, is operational within Lackawanna County. Located in downtown Scranton at 135 Franklin Avenue, the Center accommodates several operational considerations which include the following: strategically located in Lackawanna County's most populated area with accessibility to the general public via many interconnecting highways and bus routes/public transportation; adequate space considerations to accommodate a wide-variety of programs and services on an ongoing basis; relatively modern and professional work settings conducive to positive public image; open areas to facilitate customer flow and maximize useable space; adequate wiring to accommodate modern electronic communication equipment; some historic identification and public service awareness of available employment and training

services; and cost effectiveness for current and ongoing PA *CareerLink* considerations.

2. As stated above, the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County has been designed to promote the best possible setting for the provision of employment and training services to a diverse customer base. Hours of operation are weekdays from 8:30 A.M. through 4:30 P.M. daily with special events and community needs dictating the extension of hours as necessary (i.e., on-site recruitment for companies, job fairs, etc.). It should be noted here that previous after-hour sessions have not been well received; however, any requests for the addition of expanded hours will be positively addressed. Also, the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County is located in the center of the City of Scranton, the area of greatest population within the County, which, in turn, affords easy accessibility to a large segment of the County's population. In addition, the Center also houses the Northeast Regional Civil Service Testing Center which has extended testing hours on Wednesday evenings and alternate Saturdays. During those times, the Center is open, on a limited basis, specifically to accommodate this service.

- B. The Lackawanna County WIB has utilized the extensive data and statistics provided by the CWIA to identify the following five (5) prevalent local industry clusters which, in most cases, mirrors regional demands: health care, transportation and logistics, finance, manufacturing, and services. During 2005, the WIB began a series of "coalition meetings" designed to unite employers within the targeted clusters to determine current and future needs that will impact local economic conditions and to discuss on-going operational and staffing problems. These localized coalition meetings are now expanding to become regional initiatives through the receipt of Industry Partnership and Incumbent Worker Training grants. CWIA information continues to provide an in-depth overview of the area and serves as a tool for local research and outreach efforts.
- C. The PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County Administrator conducts weekly staff meetings at which time internal activities are discussed and ideas formulated to ensure the provision of comprehensive services aligned with current economic conditions. In addition, the WIB Planner attends all PA *CareerLink* Business Services Team Meetings and has provided the Site Administrator with a descriptive manual of WIB activities and projects. PA *CareerLink* Consortium of Operators Meetings, which are generally held on a bi-monthly basis, serve as the communicative avenue for discussion of priority operational issues and planning purposes. Finally, the PA *CareerLink* Administrator has recently been appointed as a member of the WIB, representing the Department of Labor and Industry, which enables his participation at Quarterly WIB meetings and ensures the flow of directives as they occur.
- D. Forefront in the process for improving service to business customers is the implementation of the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County's Business Services Team (BST). Comprised of partner members representing the Bureau of

Workforce Development Partnership (BWDP), Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) staff, the Team serves as the outreach arm to employers and the community at large and provides personal assistance in utilization of the Center's services. The BST utilizes a packet of internal materials that promotes the site's services through personal visits and mailings, as determined appropriate, and is also developing an employer satisfaction survey to be utilized to assess overall appropriateness of referrals. In addition, a wide-variety of workshops are conducted on-site along with six-week basic computer training classes which prepare job seekers with better "soft skills" and entry level competencies to accommodate business needs. New initiatives, as described in Section E below augment these strategies.

- E. Since the inception of the One-Stop PA *CareerLink* system of operation in early 2000, strong emphasis has been placed on the development of an internal operating system that would effectively and efficiently service a dual-customer base in job seekers and employers on a localized level. Now fully organized, expansion to regionalization is underway in the form of collaboration in Industry Partnership initiatives and training activities. Spurred by Executive Directors of the WIBs and such other entities as the Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA), the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), and local Chambers of Commerce, economic development activities now include wide-spread training in such areas as plastics, metals manufacturing, transportation and logistics, and health care. Currently on-going and the brainchild of the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce is an electronic training initiative which has seen Chamber leaders, WIB members and staff, business representatives, and two educational facilities join to produce a new curriculum designed to specifically address current and future training needs within the electronic industry at such employers as Tobyhanna Army Depot (physically located in the Pocono Counties WIA), Lockheed Martin (Lackawanna County WIA), and others. Begun locally, this group is now expanded throughout the Northeast region of the Commonwealth through an Electronic Industry Partnership Grant award to NEPA who hosted a "kick-off" meeting at a large meeting facility in the Pocono Mountains on May 22, 2006, and provided the impetus for such goals as identifying 21st century skill needs, promoting early educational needs awareness in local intermediate and high schools, developing functional "teacher in the workplace" events; conducting job fairs, developing marketing initiatives, and creating needs assessment tools to be utilized across the industry. Building on a positive Electronic Industry Analysis/study prepared by the Wadley-Donovan Group of Edison, NJ, for Penns Northeast, which assessed the region's ability to attract, nurture, and grow electronics manufacturing, assembly, and repair activities, the Northeast Regional Electronics Partnership envisions ongoing constructive planning efforts and impetus to propel projected regionalized economic growth.

VI SERVICE DELIVERY

A. Delivery System

1. All services are delivered via the One-Stop model through the PA *CareerLink* system of operation. The wide-variety of partner entities involved bring to the table employment specialists, customer service representatives, older worker employment liaisons, youth counselors/case managers, a computer instructor, business team representatives, veterans representatives, veteran's outreach coordinators, workshop/group leaders, educational representatives, and employers, all working under one roof to provide easy and accessible contacts within a pleasant, comfortable environment. The PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County is strategically consistent with the mandates of the Workforce Investment Act in reinforcing and co-locating linkages with services providers, all of whom interact to provide the best possible mix of a myriad of customer services. The availability of this One-Stop Center further enhances the capabilities of these providers to incorporate their areas of expertise into a seamless system of service delivery and improve the effectiveness of service provision to meet the needs of an ever-changing economic structure. Any/all emerging new providers are encouraged to participate in this endeavor. Continuous improvement efforts encompass all constituents to ensure dissemination of the most current material in a constantly fluctuating and unpredictable environment. This, in turn, filters down to the customers through the provision of well-informed, educated managers and staff in all aspects of Center operation.

2. The following overarching service delivery strategies apply:

a. The PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County provides a full-menu of relevant employment and training services that targets both job seekers as well as employers as "customers." Job seekers have access to generic information regarding local company needs, labor market information, civil service opportunities, current job openings, employer information, as well as the opportunity to participate in activities as described below. Employers may electronically access job seekers resumes, place job order on-line, utilize the PA *CareerLink* Center for recruiting and/or testing purposes and information sessions, etc. The following core and intensive services are available:

<u>Core</u>	<u>Intensive</u>
Eligibility determination	In-depth assessment of skills and service needs
Outreach, intake, orientation	Individual Service Strategies (ISS)
Initial Assessment	Group counseling
Job Search	Individual counseling
Employment information	Case management
Performance and cost information on providers	Short-term prevocational services
Civil Service information	Basic, on-site, computer instruction/classes
Support service coordination	

State Coordination Services staff. Assessment revolves around such additional factors as meeting local occupational demands, attaining negotiated performance levels, length of time of training, and reasonableness of costs.

The Lackawanna County WIB utilizes Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and On-The-Job Training (OJT) activities as the primary means of addressing training needs within the community. Virtually every educational institution within Lackawanna County, as well as many from surrounding counties, participate in the provision of services through ITA's. Yearly, numerous businesses, many identified through outreach efforts of the BST, utilize OJT contracts (up to 50% of a wage paid for a specified period) to support the hiring of new workers. Customized Training, Skills Upgrading, and Industry Partnership Grants are available to address specific employer-related needs, thus, ensuring a wide-range of both WIA and non-WIA services and funding opportunities.

c. The Lackawanna County WIB directs the coordination of Pa *CareerLink* services through the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Board and local partners in PA *CareerLink* operations. A copy of this MOU is included with this document as Appendix D. Any/all partners engaged in the operations of the Center must maintain strict accountability and ensure quality of service provision to the PA *Careerlink's* universal population. Any/all partner entities are bound by a PA *CareerLink* Resource Sharing Agreement and One-Stop Service Plan that promotes a system striving for high performance and delivering unparalleled levels of service to customers.

B. Adults and Dislocated Workers

1. The Lackawanna County WIB reserves the right to request a transfer of up to 100% of funds between the Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams. This transfer request will take place only after careful consideration of the circumstances within each funding area based primarily on factors such as higher than expected enrollments in either category based on local economic conditions and fluctuating situations. All transfers will be coordinated and monitored by WIA management staff to ensure that there is no loss of service to the original population and will not impact on local program performance. It is anticipated that any/all requests for transfers will occur during third or fourth quarter of each Program Year, if necessary, based on actual end-of-year fiscal projections and enrollment outcomes.

2. Core Services

a. Through an open door policy for all customers seeking to utilize the

PA *CareerLink* One-Stop system of operation, as described throughout this document, the WIB assures that all adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required core and intensive services. All services may be staff-assisted, on request from the customer, and are available to the general public at large. A description of core services is listed in Section VI A. 2. of this plan and can be accessed by visiting the Center; browsing an informative web page, www.lackawannacountycareerlink.org; attending workshops; and through staff phone contacts at 570-963-4671, 570-344-0564, TTY #570-963-4717, or through the universal # 1-800-NEW JOBS which is used in all PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County marketing initiatives.

b. Since 2001, the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County has been configured to integrate all areas of operation within the Center. Physically, staff of different partner agencies are incorporated into a open, inviting floor plan to ensure that customers receive the best possible mix of services in the most comfortable manner available. Cross-training has been instituted which facilitates smooth presentation of available services and eliminates duplication. Monthly scheduled workshops are presented by a mixture of partner staff on a variety of topics. Internal communication is essential and is handled through weekly partner/staff meetings conducted by the PA *CareerLink* Administrator designed to promote the dissemination and discussion of operational information.

3. Intensive Services

a. All PA *CareerLink* staff, regardless of their funding entity, have been trained in all areas of internal operating procedures including knowledge of the all services available. Following the initial description and/or explanation of these services, PA *CareerLink* staff may make referrals to specific program staff responsible for specialized activities, including eligibility determination for allowable WIA activities as defined in the Act. Once a customer has been identified as an eligible Adult and/or Dislocated Worker under WIA Section 134(d)(3)(A), specific intensive services such as in-depth assessment and testing (as applicable), development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS), and individualized counseling/case management occur to ensure referral to the proper activity based on assessment results, individual circumstances, and customer choice.

b. The Lackawanna County WIB supports the Commonwealth's Workforce Reform policies regarding self-sufficiency and recognizes the wage floor currently set at \$26,040 for a family of one adult and one child. Critical to this effort is the contribution of newly forming Regional Industry Partnerships consisting of business leaders, worker representatives, and education experts who can define immediate as well

as anticipated training and employment needs across specific sectors. The development of specialized training curriculums to support these needs must reflect outcomes contingent on wage rates consistent with the base wage or with local industry standards that could advance to those levels. Placement information, as presented to the WIB at quarterly meetings is now expanded to include wage rates of all WIA training completers to allow for determination of aggregate wage rates within specific occupational clusters to monitor compliance and ensure updating of internal policies, as needed.

4. Training Services – Adult and Dislocated Workers

a. In an attempt to leverage resources to allow for increased access to training opportunities, the WIB utilizes linkages with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), services of the Employment Opportunity Center (EOC), State and Federal financial aid entities, WAGE Grants, and/or any specialized scholarships with educational providers and/or employers. In addition, the Lackawanna County WIB is linked with the Pocono and Luzerne/Schuylkill County WIBs to provide upgrading opportunities to employers across the Northeast region through the receipt of Industry Partnership Grants in the metals, logistic and transportation, health care and plastics industries.

b. Within the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) is the method used to provide funding to local schools and educational institutions and is handled through an individualized voucher system. If it is determined during the assessment process that any customer is in need of training to enhance their skills, they are given the opportunity to research schools (in accordance with those approved and listed on the Statewide Training Provider List) and identify courses of study that will lead to employment upon graduation. Each participant must discuss their choice with their assigned Customer Service Representative to validate their selection for projection of success. Once a school has been identified, said school will submit a letter of acceptance outlining the course of study and applicable costs. The Customer Service Representative then generates an ITA voucher for funding purposes. At this time, the Lackawanna County WIB has set a maximum of \$8,000.00 to be issued for use over a maximum 24-month period. Prospective students are required to investigate any/all avenues of financial aid and grants prior to issuance of ITA dollars. WIA staff assist the prospective student in leveraging dollars, as needed, to support their goals. Please note: the Lackawanna County WIB, in accordance with a waiver granted to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on April 22, 2005, to allow the use of ITAs for older, eligible, out-of-school youth, follows the policy as described herein for provision of

training and receipt of dollars specific to the WIA youth funding stream. At this time, there are no exceptions to this policy.

c. Institution of the Statewide Eligible Training Program/Provider System mandates the provision of education and training opportunities in high-demand, priority occupations based on local economic conditions. Adherence to the State Training Provider List ensures the approval of courses of study to those most appropriate to meet the need of local employers and which will generate higher level employment opportunities upon completion. In turn, wage rates should follow on an upward scale to accommodate new skill sets.

- i. Local training providers must follow a Statewide eligibility determination process for inclusion on the Statewide Training Provider List. Any/all local educational/training providers were afforded the opportunity to attend a regional training session (conducted by Department of Labor and Industry staff) to become acquainted with all new policies and procedures. In addition, local staff contacted all viable training providers via letter and phone contact to further explain the process and answer questions as needed. All providers were informed of the performance standards and demand-occupation requirements to ensure inclusion on the List through state-wide dissemination of information via email.

Once a course of study has been submitted to the local WIA Title I Contractor for approval, WIA staff proceed to review and approve or deny based on criteria presented such as: attainment of eight of ten performance measures; cost universality; accurateness of content; etc.

d. The WIB's approach to the provision of On-The-Job Training (OJT) and Customized Training (CT) is pro-active based on community need. The OJT activity is designed specifically for use with individual employers, either profit or non-profit, who intend to hire the participant at the completion of a pre-determined, agreed upon contracted period which can vary in length from a few weeks to 1040 hours, dependent on the wage rate offered and the gap in skill sets as identified in the position's job description. Any participant enrolled becomes the employee of the actual employer and, barring any unforeseen difficulties, becomes a permanent hire at the completion of the contracted period. Reimbursement to the employer, of up to 50% of the employee's wage, is handled through a monthly invoicing process based on the actual number of hours that the participant works in any given calendar month.

Historically, the Lackawanna County WIB has seen only minimal use of CT activity; however, it is available to meet special requirements of an employer to be conducted only through a commitment by an employer to employ or continue to employ individuals upon successful completion of the training. In such instances, the employer is responsible for 50% of the cost of training and must adhere to the following conditions: employees are not earning self-sufficient wages and training relates to appropriateness of training as defined by the WIB.

A member of the WIA staff, with primary OJT responsibility, sits as an active participant on the Business Services Team to ensure involvement in community outreach efforts, networking with local employers, leveraging employer dollars, and identifying opportunities through employer visits and contact.

e. The Lackawanna County WIB has always promoted the availability of WIA funding to support apprenticeship training, as applicable. Strong linkages are maintained with representatives of labor organizations to support various apprenticeship opportunities and a listing is available at the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County that provides contact information to prospective trainees on local application submission. In addition, the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County is involved through dissemination of information for the yearly Apprenticeship Expo which is held at our local Career Technology Center each Fall.

C. Service to Specific Populations

The Lackawanna County WIB, through its service arm, the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County, ensures the provision of comprehensive services to all individuals seeking assistance. As previously described throughout this document, a wide-variety of services are available, both for WIA eligible and non-eligible customers, that can be accessed at will or with staff assistance. Specific populations of customers may qualify for extended services and are addressed as follows:

- Dislocated Workers, Displaced Homemakers, Low-income Individuals such as migrant workers, seasonal farm workers, women, minorities, and/ or individuals training for non-traditional occupations. Eligible for Intensive Services, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), On-The-Job Training (OJT), and individualized case management.
- Veterans Three (3) Veterans representatives are on-staff at the *CareerLink* to accommodate this sub-group, as appropriate. In addition, an outreach-to-veterans coordinator

hiring initiatives. Veterans receive priority for any/all services for which they are determined eligible.

3. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Board does not limit funding based on specificity of priority group. Any/all WIA eligible customers receive universal treatment based on funding levels. Should funding levels become restrictive, consideration by the WIB will be given to reduce the funding level cap to enable service to a larger customer base as well as instituting policy that priority for service will be given to residents of Lackawanna County.

E. Rapid Response (RR)

The WIB has and will continue to support involvement in any/all Rapid Response activities. At present, the Northeast Regional Rapid Response Coordinator is based at the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County and provides information on all local downsizings and closings as they are predicted or occur. Historically, representative staff from WIA, BWDP, United Way, the Employment Opportunity and Training Center (EOTC), Unemployment Compensation (UC), Unions, and the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) have come together to provide information sessions at the locale determined best such as on-site at the affected facility, at the PA *CareerLink* (with after-hour meetings scheduled to accommodate the customers, as necessary), or at any other location that is determined to be most suitable. The WIB is kept informed of any/all closings through dissemination of an on-going, comprehensive listing of all activity dating back to 2001. Through direct communication with the Regional Rapid Response Coordinator, the WIB ensures coordination with any/all statewide Rapid Response activities.

F. Youth

1. The Lackawanna County WIB, Youth Council, and local economic development officials and constituents promote the development and orchestration of an information network to thoroughly encompass all youth organizations throughout the County. Representatives from many of these bodies sit as active members of the WIB and Youth Council and provide invaluable insight into local youth issues. All are kept abreast of current systems in place or under development and concur that we must target specific pockets of “at risk” youth such as those involved with the courts for various reasons such as truancy, domestic violence situations, juvenile delinquency and children of incarcerated parents; homeless and foster care youth; migrant and seasonal farm worker youth; etc. Also targeted are those economically disadvantaged and underprivileged youth in need of guidance and supervision to learn not only social skills but job skills as well. Strategies addressing the “in-school” student are coordinated with local school districts and outreach centers such as United Neighborhood Centers, the local Boys and Girls Club, the Teenage Mothers Program, etc., and have, traditionally, revolved around remedial and truancy concerns but are currently

broadening to include economic development issues such as local employment awareness campaigns targeting not only high schools, but the intermediate level as well. The WIB participates heavily in the Commonwealth's Health Careers Week each November with presentations and inter-active activities for 6th through 12th graders. Local youth advocates strongly agree that access to a younger youth population affords the opportunity to address such pertinent issues as course scheduling for specific occupations in demand or projected to be in demand in the local area, coordination of services addressing specific needs, involvement of the PA *CareerLink* in career planning efforts, etc.

Recognizing that career ladders and goal-setting can begin during the secondary school years, it must also be accepted that those youth traditionally categorized as out-of-school youth, if they can be successfully engaged and maintained, are adaptable to open options and development of employment plans. To address the first issue, intensive marketing of available services, on-going local employment opportunities including wage scales, post-secondary training opportunities, and funding availability, etc. entices prospective youth-aged job seekers. Once engaged, strong program staff, serving in the capacity of case managers/counselors, offer a wide array of services including one-on-one career planning, skilled training opportunities, work experience activities, and On-The-Job Training (OJT) placements. Long a proponent for youth advancement, the Lackawanna County WIB also provides in-house, computerized GED and remedial functions, a myriad of PA *CareerLink* informational workshops, and specialized group training programs including a very successful "Build-to-Keep" computer instructional activity being used with both in-school and out-of-school age groups that involves the actual assembly of a computer unit, installation of programs, trouble-shooting problems, remedial lessons, and basic computer instruction in Word, Excel, Internet usage, Access, and, in some instances, pursuit of Microsoft Certification..

Lastly, strongly identified as a high-problem area by local employers is the lack of "soft" and/or "life" skills by most youth that are necessary not only for obtaining employment, but, more importantly, are crucial for maintaining that employment once hired. Instruction/guidance in these areas is available, as applicable.

2. The Lackawanna County Youth Council (YC) has and continues to be an effective force in the identification of services to youth within the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area. Guided by a local business owner and youth advocate as Chair, the Council is made up of representatives from such areas as the business community, Job Corps, organized labor, the PA *CareerLink* Administrator, the WIB Executive Director, the Scranton School District Chief Executive Officer, a Community Action Agency Executive Director, a former participant, and an eligible parent. Meeting bi-monthly, the Council provides oversight to a Youth Operations Director and two Case Managers/Counselors for the delivery of services to eligible participants. As stated above, all WIA youth

participants must meet eligibility requirements as defined by the Act, with priority of service given to those experiencing major barriers impacting successful outcomes. Most YC members are long-standing citizens of the community and, as such, have the knowledge of local resources to approach for support of program initiatives. On-going outreach and collaboration with other programs advocating continued opportunities for the youth of our area, such as the United Neighborhood Center, the Boys and Girls Club, Goodwill Industries of NEPA, and local high schools and post-secondary schools, support existing as well as developing venues for growth. The Lackawanna County Youth Council's vision is *to encourage quality education, training, and services for our area's disadvantage youth that promotes growth and development, both educationally and socially.*

3. Due to the strict regulatory requirements of the Workforce Investment Act, all youth who meet the enrollment criteria and express an interest in participation are afforded the opportunity. Linkages are in place with virtually every provider of youth services within Lackawanna County to ensure the best possible avenue for successful placements. Youth program staff serve as advocates for participants as they plan their career steps and provide case management and guidance in each youngster's development. The staff conducts such activities as power point presentations in local high schools; providing in-house instruction in job search techniques; administering testing, as appropriate; maintaining open lines of communication with parents; attending PTA meetings; speaking at School-Age Mothers Programs; providing remedial and GED instruction; etc. The Youth Operations Director maintains contact with the local Juvenile Justice System, as needed, to ensure that youth needs in this area are addressed. In addition, the Lackawanna County YC also supports such activities as Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) that supports skill training in approved, high-demand occupations; On-the-Job Training (OJT) reimbursements; and Work Experience opportunities in non-profit worksites to support career development. As described in the above section, collaboration is occurring at all levels of the workforce system ensuring an effective network of service.

4. A representative from Job Corps sits as a member of the Youth Council and actively participates in program development. Dissemination of Job Corps material is available through the PA *CareerLink* and program staff with referrals made, as appropriate. Linkages are solid and productive.

5. Both the WIB Executive Director and the Youth Operations Director have many years of experience (30 and 10 respectively) in the provision of employment and training activities for youth participants in Lackawanna County. Both are cognizant of applicable safety and child labor laws and have provided instruction to supporting staff. Any/all worksites involved in younger youth (ages 14 – 18) activities, are presented with a "child labor law poster" which must be available for inspection upon request with program staff monitoring sites to ensure compliance. Youth clients are made aware of all applicable child labor

law information during program orientation and enrollment and can also access such as described above at their assigned worksites.

6. All youth program staff are physically located at the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County, from where all activities emanate. The initial intake process, objective assessment, case management, the development of Individual Service Strategies (ISSs), and eligibility assessments/determinations are handled on a one-on-one basis by youth program case managers/counselors. The youth program staff are so located in the PA *CareerLink* floor plan to ensure that confidentiality and privacy is maintained. Applicants are first provided with an overview of program opportunities and the services available, and, if interested, begin the eligibility determination process. Once economic eligibility is confirmed, the staff schedules testing which is conducted on-site at the PA *CareerLink* and is computerized in nature. Utilizing the TABE format, results may be used to determine a necessary barrier for participation. Scoring is automatic and results are available for discussion with the client immediately. If a barrier (as defined within Section 129(c)(4) and (5) of the Workforce Investment Act) is identified, the development of an ISS to chart the youngster's goals and avenues for progression is initiated. Taking into consideration such factors as the youth's age, educational level, barriers, abilities, and school attendance for enrollment purposes (in-school or out-of-school youth), the staff works closely with each participant to ensure the appropriateness of their plan and confirm the responsibilities involved.

7. As previously stated within this document, Youth activities are structured to incorporate the community as a whole, dependent on the specifics involved. All eligible youth are counseled as to the importance of education for attainment of career goals; however, it must be recognized that a "traditional," post-secondary plan is not always practical nor feasible for some youngsters, especially those falling into the WIA-targeted, at-risk population. Alternative, shorter-time framed, specifically designed training courses can significantly address local employers' current and projected needs and interweave with fluctuating economic development conditions. Specific issues are addressed as follows:

- Ideally, preparation for post-secondary education should begin at the intermediate school level as students apply their likes and dislikes to development of possible steps enroute to what they may consider a "career" following graduation. Provision of information regarding the classes needed to enter certain occupations is critical and is just now becoming an economic development issue. Infiltration into the schools with power point presentations, local employer visits, and dissemination of material explaining local opportunities, as they fluctuate, will help guide the process. Engagement of local school officials, teachers and guidance counselors is critical to substantiate the importance of education in career-planning throughout the intermediate and secondary school years.

- The above bullet addresses in-school planning efforts. For an out-of-school population, the concept of classes under development designed to specifically address current employment trends is now a reality. Coupled with academic instruction is a summer, paid internship program with the specified company and actual placement at the company during the final semester of training. Economic development communication has allowed for systematic development of workable programs to meet local and regional needs.
- The on-going availability of Youth program staff to provide information, one-on-one services, counseling, etc., as previously described herein, will continue to augment eligible youths' preparation to enter unsubsidized employment.
- Through on-going coordination and collaboration, youth program staff have engaged the educational arm of the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce, training providers, local intermediate and high schools, and other youth supporters, including WIB and Youth Council members, in developing and maintaining important linkages with the local business community to encourage internships and employment for area youngsters.

8. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Board yearly supports a diverse assortment of activities to enhance both educational and employment opportunities including the following:

Activity	Service
Tutoring, study skills training, instruction leading to secondary school completion, dropout prevention;	On-site GED and remedial lab, after-school remedial programs including drop-out prevention/ intervention activities, linkages with family court and juvenile probation;
Alternate secondary school services;	Coordinated through local school districts;
Summer employment opportunities linked to academic and occupational learning;	Remedial activities provided to all summer work program enrollees testing below grade level and placement of year-round high school participants into work opportunities specific to their course of study/training;
Paid and un-paid work experience;	Utilization of non-profit worksites for development of actual workplace skills, peer interaction, team-building, workplace "soft skills" and "life skills", development of good work habits, etc.;
Occupational skill training;	Provided through issuance of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs);
Leadership development opportunities;	Provided through the Skills in

	Scranton arm of the Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce;
Comprehensive guidance and counseling;	Provided by trained youth program staff, coordinated with subcontracted training providers, and linked with school teachers and guidance counselors, as allowed;
Adult mentoring;	Interaction with program managers and staff for support and guidance;
Supportive services;	Provision of transportation allowances and bus tickets, coordination with “Dress for Success” for the provision of proper business attire, as needed, and additional linkages with the County Assistance Office, as appropriate, to address day care and housing needs.
Follow-up services;	Performed through customer contact and maintenance of case records at 30, 60, and 180-day intervals by program staff.

9. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area does not utilize the 5% exception rule in its program operations.

G. Business Services

1. In early 2006, the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County initiated a Business Services Team (BST), comprised of BWDP, WIA, and Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) staff, designed specifically for the dedicated purpose of providing professional, one-stop services for employers in a positive, pro-active manner. Recognizing the need to infiltrate this specific customer base, BST members meet regularly to develop and implement on-going strategies designed not only to strengthen community ties and make introduction but to market PA *CareerLink* services as a viable and effective way to promote job openings, engage in development of system processes, utilize the Center for interviewing purposes, etc. Guided by the PA CareerLink Administrator with input from the WIB Planner, the BST targets locally defined high-priority occupational cluster employers to determine their current and projected staffing needs to ensure proper planning efforts. To improve the quality and efficiency of the delivery of available services, the BST is refining and expanding an employer survey to allow for more accurate efficient collection of data pertinent to the individual businesses needs. By streamlining the process or referral to different companies, maximum effort will be given to refer only candidates that are suitable and qualified for the positions that are available. Equally, the type of services that are given for employers who place job orders will be redolent upon the skill levels of individuals sought, the frequency with which employers use job

orders to place seasonal or more temporary unskilled positions with higher turnover and the circumstances surrounding those businesses who are extremely sporadic with the use of services. Identification of Human Resource Directors or those in charge of hiring within specific industries/occupations, provides direct access to hiring trends (both currently as well as projected) and allows for the charting of employment and staff development needs across the County and will, invariably, provide the basis for the development of a Northeast Regional Strategic Plan.

The BST will continually explore and make changes to systematic operating procedures that are or may be in need of restructuring. Those practices that are no longer viable will be omitted and/or replaced with more effective ones. To facilitate this role, the BST will use their experience and knowledge of the local labor force, employers and partner agencies as a springboard for brainstorming ways to create more effective provider services. With the approval of the PA *CareerLink* Administrator and the WIB Executive Director, and within the rules governing the Facility, the improvements will be implemented.

With the ability to begin the recruitment process for new industries prior to their arrival to the area, the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County is one of the most important resources for business that are locating, or relocating, in our northeast region. The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce “has committed to incorporating the functions of the BST into their economic development efforts” to recruit and retain businesses.

As the BST makes recommendations and decisions regarding the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County and how it will conduct some of its business practices, so will the minutes and reports, generated through meetings, be shared with all local PA *CareerLink* staff. This will take place through weekly meetings and regular updates that will be distributed, also, to partners and other agencies.

2. The local strategic plans and goals of the PA *CareerLink* system for business services are communicated to the BST through frequent contact with the local workforce entities that govern, or positively affect, economic development in the area. Ultimately, it is through regular and frequent contact within the local WIA, local WIB, the Chamber of Commerce, participating educational institutions and economic development agencies that enables the BST to operate effectively while making improvements, as needed, to services provided. The PA *CareerLink* Administrator is in regular contact with the Chamber of Commerce, sharing decision-making and collaboration with business decisions made that affect the area. The BST staff can regularly access the Executive Director of the Workforce Investment Board. With the WIB Planner as a BST member, the WIB and its intentions are never left to question. This dialogue between all of the entities not only gives the BST, but all of those involved, a chance to carry out business services in the manner which is in line with the Local Plan.

3. The PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County BST members currently infiltrate the local business community through phone contact and on-site visits to determine current hiring needs and encourage participation in the PA *CareerLink* on-line job matching service. Team members participate in all WIB Coalition meetings and are involved in regionalized Industry Partnership events, as appropriate. Issues such as career-ladder building, industry-recognized credentialing, and customized service delivery are just now beginning to emerge through these coalition and industry-partnership groups. Incumbent Worker Training Grants in metals industries, transportation and logistics, plastics, and health care now provide the means to encourage business and industry upgrading. Long-range plans include wide-spread marketing of the availability of these resources and process mapping to promote business viability in a global marketplace.

4. At this time, the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area does not plan to waive the 50% requirement for Customized Job Training activities; however, the LWIB reserves the right to exercise this option should situations arise with the awarding of any/all Industry Partnership Grants.

5. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area reserves the right to utilize 10% of Formula Funds for Statewide Activities, if needed.

H. Faith-Based and Community Organizations

At this time, Faith-Based and any other specific community organizations are provided services as overall policy through the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County. Linkages are maintained with all organizations throughout the community for dissemination of information purposes, usage of PA *CareerLink* space for interviewing, staff presentations, as applicable, etc. Key figures representing Catholic Social Services; the Scranton-Lackawanna Human Development Agency (SLHDA), Inc., as the largest Community Action Agency within the County; and the United Way are represented on the WIB. Other linkages with the Salvation Army, United Neighborhood Centers of NE PA, the Boys and Girls Club, Goodwill Industries, and Friends of the Poor provide a large umbrella under which such services as emergency rent assistance, a food bank, crisis fuel allotments, home weatherization, clothing, etc. are provided as needed.

VII ADMINISTRATION

A. Program Administration

The Lackawanna County WIB has not implemented any additional policies or guidelines that support WIA Title I program operations that are not addressed herein.

B. Fiscal Administration

1. All WIA funds within the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area are governed by the Workforce Investment Board and administered by the designated Title I Contractor and Fiscal Agent, the Scranton-Lackawanna Human Development Agency (SLHDA), Inc. As such, the SLHDA holds the responsibility for fiscal integrity for disbursement of any/all WIA funds, PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County operational funds in accordance with a pre-approved Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA) and any Department of Public Welfare employment grants. SLHDA staff ensuring fiscal accountability include the Executive Director, Controller, staff accountant, and bookkeeper(s). All WIA funding is audited on a yearly basis in accordance with OMB Circular A-133 which governs the SLHDA, Inc, as Fiscal Agent, and a non-profit corporation.

2. Due to the fact that the SLHDA, Inc., as described above, is the sole entity responsible for WIA dollars within the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area, adherence to administrative cost levels is assured and verified through yearly audits.

3. Property management within the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area is the responsibility of the SLHDA, Inc., as overseen by its Executive Director, Mr. Fred F. Lettieri. Ms. Sharon Benson is the Purchasing Agent and can be contacted as follows:

Ms. Sharon Benson
Purchasing Agent
SLHDA, Inc.
200 Adams Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503
(570) 963-6836

Purchasing procedures and property management follow a procedural manual developed to ensure compliance with Federal Procurement Standards listed in Federal register/Vol. 45, No. 83.

The SLHDA adheres to the concept that a good purchasing system entails the use of “maximum open competition.” Maximum open competition is used as the method of ensuring the best price for the best goods available. However, other considerations must be taken into account when making purchases with federal funds including the maximum use of minority businesses, avoidance of conflicts of interest and, where required, prior approval of the funding agency.

The SLHDA Purchasing Agent (PA) holds the responsibility for ensuring that all purchases are in accordance with established procedures and regulations; for documenting the support of all purchases; and for receiving and opening all properly advertised bids. The PA may wish to delegate much of the responsibility

for making the purchases to an individual within the organization who may be more familiar with the needs of the particular SLHDA department. He/she may also wish to delegate the responsibility for developing specifications for products or goods that require particular knowledge to another person. The delegation of authority to others, however, does not relieve the PA of the responsibility of ensuring that purchases are made in accordance with regulations or the responsibility of the PA to develop procedures for formal and informal purchases.

Before the purchasing department proceeds on any purchase they must have a Request for Purchase signed by the Department Director and Executive Director. The purchasing department will follow the following procedures upon receiving an approved request for purchase:

- Verbal quotes will be obtained for purchases under \$500.00. The purchase should normally be made from the vendor giving the lowest price. If not, the reason making another selection should be documented. There are times when, due to emergency needs, the individual department may need to make an immediate purchase. Emergency purchases should be made only for items under \$100.00 and then only in cases of absolute need.
- Three written quotes will be obtained for purchases when a unit cost is over \$1,000.00. A description of the material needed or exact specifications will be listed on a "Request for Bid Form" and sent to a minimum of (3) vendor's following this, the same procedures will be followed above.
- For purchases that the aggregate amount is expected to exceed \$10,000.00, formal bidding will be followed (as described below). This selection process should be the same as listed above, however, if the formal process failed to produce a competitive bid, the Purchasing Agent may resort to negotiations (as described in the last paragraph below and continued on next page).

Formal bidding will be followed when the aggregate cost of the purchase is expected to exceed \$10,000.00. To avoid problems because of the improper bidding, the various steps of a formal bid process should be followed. These steps are as follows:

1. Standards of Specifications

The first step in making a major purchase is developing specifications that the product of goods must meet. These can be industry standards or standards from a similar product used by the SLHDA. Specifications can be simple or as complex as the PA feels is necessary to procure the product. If specifications are coming from a specific brand-named product, then the words "or equivalent" must be

added. Failure to do so eliminates competition and may result in the loss of federal funding.

2. Request for Bid

Once the standards or specifications are developed, the Request for Bid is written. Generally, this is a standard form asking for companies to respond to the specifications and giving the date and time that bids are to be received, when the product needs to be delivered as well as instructions for delivering or mailing the bid.

3. Advertising

The request for Bid will be advertised in a local newspaper as well as posted in the purchasing office. It will also be mailed to all prospective bidders (a minimum of 3) along with the product specifications.

4. Bid Openings

Bids must arrive before the date and time of bid opening to be considered responsive bids. They are held unopened in the purchasing office until the bid opening time. They are then opened, reviewed, and an award made. The award should be made to the lowest bidder unless it can be justified that another vendor should be selected.

If all bids are too high or for some other reason do not meet the requirements in the request for bid or specification, then the purchasing agent can negotiate with one vendor in order to obtain the best price and purchase the product from that vendor. Negotiation should be used only as a last resort in terms of products that should be bid. There are other situations where it is acceptable to negotiate with a vendor. Such cases include: when public needs do not allow for the time consuming process of bidding; when goods or services are available from only one source; and/or when services are to be provided by a university or college. Adequate documentation must be kept on file by the PA to show reasons for negotiation and justification of sole source procurement.

The use of purchase orders are essential for proper control of all procurements as a method of determining financial obligations and insuring receipt of goods. Purchase orders should be pre-numbered, controlled and logged by the purchasing officer. Each purchase order is recorded on the journal with the date of issue, to whom issued, and date goods are received. Purchase orders should be recorded as void if a mistake is made or the order is cancelled. Copies of the purchase orders need to be disbursed to all concerned departments and to the vendors on the following manner: original to the vendor; first copy to the Fiscal department; second copy to the purchasing agent's files; final copy to the

receiving department. All items of \$100.00 or more require a purchase order be issued. No purchase orders are completed for items under \$100.00.

When goods or services are received, the receiving department should sign their copy and return it to the PA along with the vendor's invoices. The PA should then record receipt of the item on the journal after which he/she forwards the purchase order and vendor's invoice to the fiscal department for processing and payment.

No purchase order will be processed for payment until signed, dated, and receiver slip is forwarded to the purchasing agent. If no receiver slip is received by the purchasing agent within two weeks, Program Directors are notified.

Items received in the form of materials or equipment are recorded on the proper inventory upon receipt of the goods. Materials and supplies are recorded on the proper inventory by the warehouseman or supply clerk. Equipment is recorded on the equipment inventory by the office clerk. A physical inventory is completed at least once per annum. Receiving slip is documentation that items purchased have been received, that they do, in fact, meet specifications and are in working order.

As previously stated, the use of Minority Firms owned and operated businesses will be used when all other factors are equal.

Formal Bid Procedures must include statement by vendor/contractor that labor will be paid at the rate specified following principles of DAVIS-BACON ACT.

Property management is handled by the Purchasing Agent with a yearly report submitted to the BWDP with an additional copy on file at the SLHDA, Inc.'s Administrative Offices. Any all non-consumable purchases, regardless of their physical location, are tagged and inventoried on a yearly basis.

C. Procurement

1. The Lackawanna County WIB does not subcontract Adult and Dislocated Worker dollars for any activities, including the award Individual Training Accounts (ITAs); therefore, no process is in effect. Award of all dollars in these funding streams is handled through an individualized voucher system as described previously.

2. Procurement of youth training activities is handled through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, usually conducted once per program year but which can be initiated as needed as determined by the Youth Council. The Youth Council, through standardized voting mechanisms, provides the right to WIA Title I Youth Program staff to disseminate a standard RFP to any/all service providers, both

locally as well as those out-of-area who have expressed an interest in proposing. All RFP Packages contain a letter of explanation, an in-depth proposal request, and a specific time, date and location for submittal. In addition, the RFP is published in a local newspaper to ensure wide-spread public notification.

All proposals considered received in compliance with RFP specifications are then compiled and presented to the Youth Council, at which time, the Council reviews all material submitted and approves, denies, or makes recommendations for negotiations with proposer. If proposer accepts approvals as specified by the Council, subcontracts are awarded on an individualized basis by the WIA Title I staff. All awards are subsequently approved by the full-WIB at its next quarterly meeting.

The Lackawanna County YC, at its bi-monthly meetings, receives in-depth programmatic and fiscal reports which detail individualized provider statistics and data from not only the current year-to-date but from previous years affecting outcomes. This information affords the Council the ability to gauge effective and non-effective services. A summary report of all activities is presented at each quarterly WIB meeting by the YC Chair.

Note: Strict internal, individualized policies dictate that no property management or procurement of services is allowable with any provider/supplier suspected of an/or convicted of debarment and lobbying activities, delinquent obligations or tax liabilities.

D. Appeals Process

As previously stated, no training subcontracts are awarded for Adult and DW activities . For any provider of youth services who wishes to appeal a denial of a request to provide services, the following steps must be taken:

1. All appeals must be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Lackawanna County Youth Council (YC) within thirty (30) days of the denial;
2. The YC Chair will schedule an emergency YC meeting within fifteen (15) days, at which time the appeal will be presented and discussed by the membership with a response formulated and returned to the provider;
3. At such time, if the provider still disagrees with the decision as made by the YC, said provider can appeal to the Chair of the Lackawanna County WIB within thirty (30) days from the date of the YC decision who will then, in turn, schedule an emergency meeting of the Executive Committee of the WIB within fifteen (15) days, to discuss the concern. The Executive Committee of the WIB shall make a determination which will be returned to the provider within ten (10) days and is then considered to be final in nature.

I. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action

1. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action regulations and compliance requirements are overseen by the Scranton-Lackawanna Human Development Agency (SLHDA), Inc. as a large, non-profit Community Action Agency and the WIA Title I Contractor, with specific issue policies incorporated as individual policy statements in a broad operational structure. Areas handled in this manner include debarment and suspension, lobbying regulations, sexual harassment and drug-free workplace, and discrimination. The use of Minority and Women Businesses is handled as policy in the SLHDA's Purchasing Procedures manual as "whenever possible, the use of Minority Firms and operated businesses will be used when all other factors are equal."

The SLHDA's policy, as written below, has been designed to reflect Section 29 CFR Part 37.1 and Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act which "prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries only, citizenship or participation in a WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity."

Strict policy dictates:

"Please be advised that it is against the law for this recipient of federal Financial Assistance to discriminate on the following basis:

- Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief; or
- Against any beneficiary of programs funded under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), on the basis of citizenship/lawful residency/work status or participation in any WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas:

- Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIA Title I-funded program or activity;
- Providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or
- Making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity."

The designated Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer for the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area is:

Attorney Joseph Sileo
Ufberg, Tressler, & Sileo LLP
310 Penn Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503
(570) 341-8800

Additional designated liaisons at the Lackawanna County *CareerLink* are:

Mr. Robert Martucci
CareerLink Supervisor
Lackawanna County *CareerLink*
135 Franklin Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503
(570) 963- 4723

Ms. Catherine Gerard
WIA Adult/DW Operations Director
Lackawanna County *CareerLink*
135 Franklin Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503
(570) 344-7037

2. All information regarding Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action is made available to any/all program staff, participants, and/or customers in print form as they enter any WIA activity or employment. EO information is posted at the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County, at the SLHDA, Inc. Administrative Offices, and at the WIB Offices.

3. Appeal processes to assure that no individual shall be excluded from participation, denied benefit or employment, nor subjected to discrimination under or in connection with, any program or activity for any reasons, including but not limited to: race, color, religion, national origin or citizenship, age, disability, political affiliation or belief are as follows:

“If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a Title I-funded program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation with either:

- ❖ The recipients Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer (or the person whom the recipient has designated for this purpose); or
- ❖ The Director, Civil Rights Center (CRC), U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-4123, Washington, DC 20210.

If you file your complaint with the recipient, you must wait either until the recipient issues a written Notice Final Action, or until 90 days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center (see address above).

If the recipient does not give you a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you do not have to wait for the recipient to issue that Notice before filing a complaint with the CRC. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after the day on which you filed your complaint with the recipient).

If the recipient does give you a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with the CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.

For information or to file a complaint, contact:

Department of Labor and Industry
Office of Equal Opportunity
Room 514 Labor & Industry Building
Seventh & Forster Streets
Harrisburg, PA 17120

(717) 787-1182 TTD 1-800-654-5984
1-800-622-5422 VOICE 1-800-654-5988

All complaints will be handled confidentially.”

The SLHDA, Inc. also maintains a Complaint and Hearing Procedure to supplement the above process. This procedure is as follows:

“Complaints alleging a violation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) or regulations or other agreements under the Act shall seek resolution of such allegation through this procedure as provided.

STEP 1 - The opportunity to file a complaint. **All COMPLAINTS SHALL BE IN WRITING.** The complainant who has an alleged complaint will first meet with the designated representative of the subrecipient or the immediate supervisor, explain the problem, and, together they shall attempt to resolve the issue informally.

STEP 2 - The opportunity for an informal conference. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, he/she must file a complaint within five (5) days, with the WIA administrative entity and request an informal conference. This request must be in writing. The informal conference must be held within ten (10) days from the date of receipt of the request by a designated representative. The complainant and assigned representative will discuss the allegation and attempt to resolve the issue informally. The findings must be submitted to the complainant not later than ten (10) days following the informal conference. Included with the findings, must be notification of the right to request a hearing if a satisfactory resolution is not accomplished.

STEP III - The opportunity for a hearing. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the informal conference, he/she must so inform the WIA administrative entity within five (5) days and request a hearing to seek resolution of this issue.

In honor of this request, an impartial hearing officer will be appointed, who will attempt to resolve the issue and render an independent decision. The requested hearing will be held within thirty (30) days from the date on which the complaint was filed. Written notification of the hearing will be sent out by the hearing officer, stating the date, time and place of hearing and the issues to be heard. All involved parties have the right to be accompanied by an attorney or other duly authorized representative, the right to present testimony, to bring witnesses and records, and must attend the hearing.

A written decision will be issued by the hearing officer to the complainant and all parties who attended the hearing within sixty (60) days of the filing of the complaint and will include: 1) A synopsis of the facts, 2) a statement of reasons for the decision, and 3) notification of recourse. All correspondence will be mailed certified with a return receipt requested.

STEP IV - Notice of Recourse. If the complainant is still dissatisfied, or a decision is not reached within sixty (60) days of filing the complaint, a request to have the complaint reviewed by the Governor should then be made. The request for this review should be submitted to the Deputy Secretary of Labor, 1700 Labor and Industry Building, Seventh and Forster Streets, Harrisburg, PA 17120, within ten (10) days of the receipt of the unfavorable decision or ten (10) days from the date on which the decision should have been received from a hearing officer. The Governor will conduct a review of the complaint and issue a decision within thirty (30) days from the date of receipt of the review request. The decision rendered by the governor will be final.

Complainants who initially file complaints at the State level, on which a decision is not rendered within sixty (60) days, or on which an adverse decision is rendered, will be afforded the opportunity for independent state review by the Governor. A decision based on the independent state review will be issued within thirty (30) days, and the Governor's decision will be final.

In instances where the Governor may fail to issue a decision in the prescribed time frame, the complaint and hearing procedure provides an opportunity to request a determination whether reasonable cause exists to believe that the Act or regulations have been violated, from the Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor. The request for a determination must be submitted to the Secretary within ten (10) days of the date on which the Governor's decision should have been issued. In accordance with Section 629.52 (d)(2) of the regulations, the Secretary shall act within ninety (90) days and, as appropriate, direct the Governor to take further action pursuant to State and local procedures, where there is reasonable cause to believe the Act or regulations have been violated.”

VII PERFORMANCE

A. Performance Management

1. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Board has opted to subcontract all internal monitoring to an independent entity. In doing so, the WIB ensures a non-biased overview of program and fiscal operations.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 requires Local Workforce Investment Boards to provide oversight and monitoring of WIA funded programs and activities. The principle focus of the monitoring effort is to enhance the quality of service by fostering a closer working relationship between Local Workforce Investment Area staff and program vendors and service providers. Monitoring is used to identify weaknesses in the delivery of customer services and to recommend immediate steps to correct those weaknesses. In cases where immediate action is required, the Monitor works closely with the WIB Executive Director and WIA Operations Directors to ensure that recommendations are acted upon in a timely manner.

The principle areas of the monitoring effort are concentrated in the following areas:

- Internal and financial operations of the LWIA NE 055
- PA *CareerLink* through CLQR's and by CLOC's
- Program vendors
- Service providers
- On-The-Job Training (OJT) Contracts

- Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)
- Youth program activities

The LWIA, service providers and the major program vendors are monitored once per program year at a minimum with more frequent visits scheduled as deemed necessary. Fifty percent (50%) of all OJT contracts and ITAs will also be monitored yearly.

The Independent Monitor follows specific procedures established to ensure effective oversight which includes desk reviews; on-site reviews; timekeeping and recordkeeping; interviews with participants, supervisors and staff; records review; payroll, wage and timesheet review; job descriptions; time and attendance records; etc.

The Independent Monitor develops a regular schedule of oversight activities to ensure that all areas are monitored during the applicable program year. Upon completion of a review, the Monitor schedules an exit interview with the WIB Executive Director the individual Operations Director as appropriate. At this time, the Monitor provides an oral summary of the findings and recommends corrective action as appropriate. Following the Exit Conference, the Monitor prepares a follow-up written report, within thirty (30) days of the review date which summarizes the findings. The report will contain the subject areas covered in the review and will cite the findings, including any differences overlooked in the Exit Review.

If problems encountered are determined to be major deficiencies within the system, the Monitor indicates on the written report a follow-up date by which time the recommended actions should be implemented. The monitor will then re-review the issues in question to confirm that all deficiencies are corrected.

Should areas still exist that warrant correction, the Independent Monitor will present the findings to the WIB Executive Director to institute corrective actions to resolve the issue.

2. As mandated by the Commonwealth of PA Department of Labor & Industry computerized system, performance data is captured through outcomes entered by WIA staff through WIA services screens detailing hourly wage, job description, number of hours scheduled per week, training-related employment, receipt of benefits, and payments made to UC fund. This information is compiled to provide specific performance data to the local area, by funding stream, on a quarterly basis.

In addition, local statistics are tracked by WIA staff by program year and training provider to allow for up-to-date management of information for planning and evaluation purposes. All statistics received are compiled and provided to the WIB at quarterly meetings.

3. As previously stated, the PA *CareerLink* Lackawanna County has developed procedures for operations that include all partner/member entities. The development of a monthly calendar of activities specifically defines the provision of services, including those described as core, to prevent duplication in their availability to the universal PA *CareerLink* population. The development and adherence to the monthly calendar of activities is handled through a team approach and shared responsibility of any/all interested partners/members.

4. Through the use of the statistics as described above, the LWIA maintains accurate and up-to-date data which identifies any areas needing improvement. Also utilized are Individual participant Reports provided by the State on a quarterly basis which details employment and credentialing data. The processes used to address any deficiencies include the following: contact with individual training providers to discuss problem areas; review of monthly progress reports that are signed by both students and providers; contacts with students to discuss problem issues; review of weekly time and attendance records; and review of end-of-program year training provider evaluations completed by students.

5. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area ensures effective implementation of Common Measures through the approval of ITAs in high-demand occupational areas; development of youth activities (i.e., targeting high school seniors and, primarily OSY , in training, work experience, and OJT activities) to encourage the building of career plans toward employment; conducting case management essential to insure successful completion of assigned activities; and encouraging the attainment of licensing and certifications, as appropriate. And, as mandated by the Workforce Investment Act, conducting follow-up services to determine retention in employment and to discover if additional services are needed following program exit. All combined, these efforts invoke an operation of structured training, substantive counseling, and quality service provision designed to meet performance requirements.

B. Negotiated Performance

1. The Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area performance standards were negotiated based on the current and projected economic climate within Lackawanna County. Utilizing statistics provided by not only the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis but from an extensive, localized WIB outreach campaign, the Board was able to determine the highest priority occupations and identify five (5) industry clusters. Throughout these clusters, occupations are identified that will allow for self-sustaining wages with an opportunity for advancement; provision of appropriate benefits; career-ladder development; retention of jobs; and development of a skilled workforce for the region;

2. A listing of the Lackawanna County Workforce Investment Area's Performance Standards for the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs that are approved for Program 2006 are included as Appendix E.

IX APPENDICES