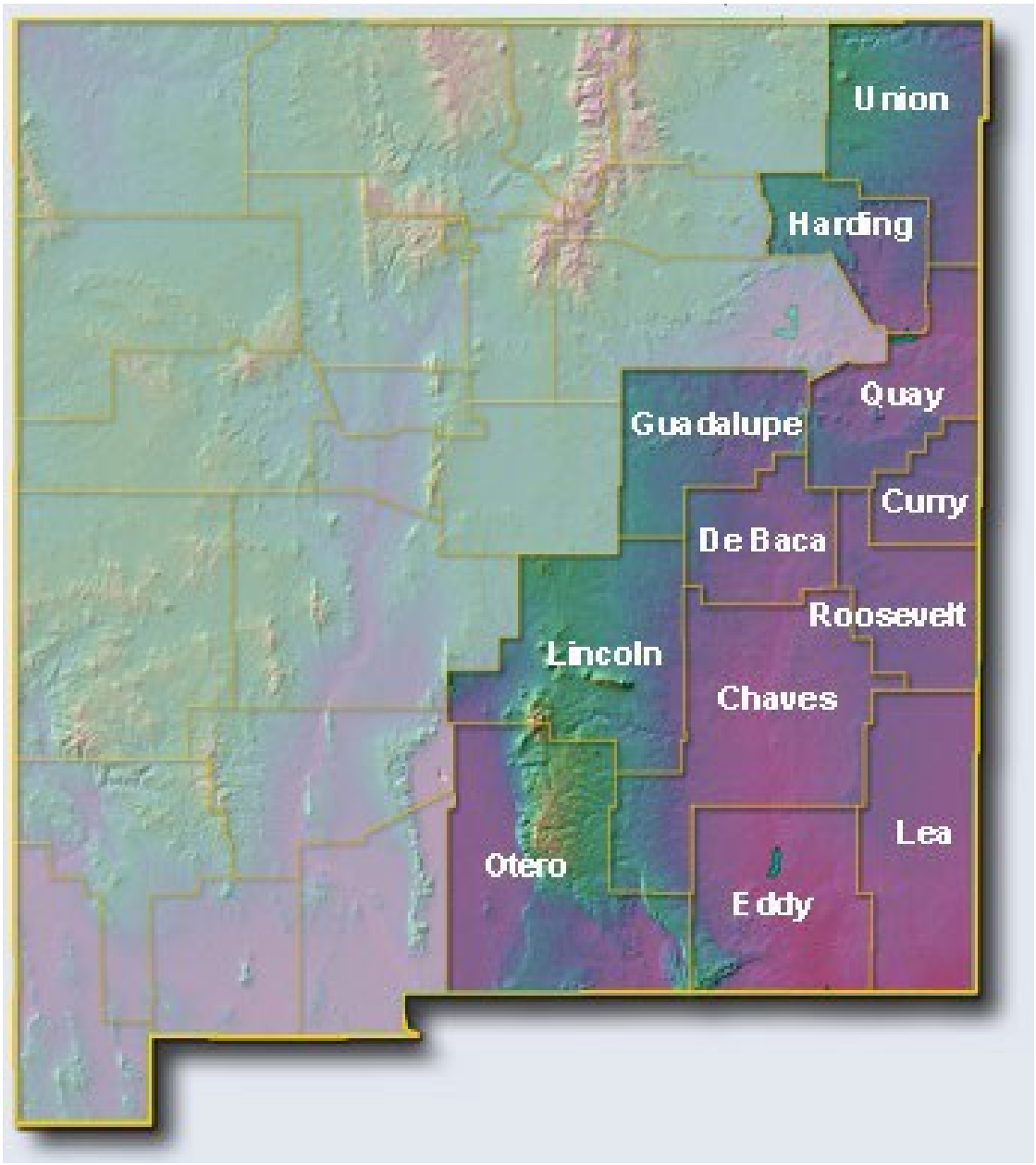


WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)
EASTERN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
LOCAL PLAN 2024-2027

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OVERVIEW

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that local workforce development boards collaborate openly with Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) and WIOA partners to create a comprehensive four-year plan, known as the Local Plan. This plan must align with New Mexico's combined state plan and includes strategic elements such as economic analyses, employer needs assessments, and skills gap evaluations. Its purpose is to enhance the coordination of the local workforce system, ensuring New Mexico businesses can thrive in the global economy.

Aligned with the State's vision outlined in the Combined State Plan, WIOA requires local plans to integrate service delivery strategies that support statewide goals. These strategies focus on:

1. Directing investments in economic, education, and workforce training programs to provide relevant education and training, enabling individuals—including youth and those facing employment barriers—to acquire skills that meet market demands.
2. Implementing job-driven strategies within the one-stop delivery system.
3. Facilitating innovation and alignment among economic, education, and workforce partners to develop a skilled workforce.

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board's (EAWDB) plan articulates its vision for the workforce development system. It serves as a tool to streamline services for businesses and job seekers alike, establishing an integrated workforce system that optimizes resources, minimizes duplication of services, and enhances workforce skills in high-demand industries.

The plan must be available for public comment for thirty days and public comments must be provided to the EAWDB Administrative Entity. The EAWDB ensures transparency by posting the plan on EAWDB.org and distributing it to local partners and CEOs.

Developed with data and partner input, the EAWDB plan sets goals and objectives aimed at improving services for employers, job seekers, and communities, thereby enhancing the skills of the current and future workforce. The EAWDB has strong collaborative relationships with system partners that meet quarterly in local communities for cross training and coordination of services.

STRATEGIC PLANNING ELEMENTS

A. Economic and Workforce Analysis

I. Economic Conditions

Include a regional analysis of economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations

II. Employment Needs of Employers

Include a regional analysis of employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations

III. Knowledge and Skills Needed

Describe the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations

IV. Regional Workforce Information

Include an analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Strategic Planning

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB) area is comprised of twelve counties and encompasses approximately 44,000 square miles. Based on the latest U.S. Census Bureau population estimates, the Eastern Area had an estimated population of 375,927 as of July 1, 2024. This represents approximately 17.6% of New Mexico's total population, which was estimated at 2,130,256 in 2024. From 2020 to 2024, the Eastern Area experienced a net population decline of 1,469 residents, or approximately 0.4%. During the same period, New Mexico's population increased by approximately 0.6%, reflecting an estimated statewide gain of more than 12,000 residents.

The data show that eleven of the twelve counties in the EAWDB area experienced population decline between 2020 and 2024, while Otero County was the only county to experience population growth. Otero County increased from 67,868 to 70,624 residents, a gain of 2,756 residents, or 4.1%. Among counties experiencing population declines, Harding County had the largest percentage decrease, declining from 652 residents in 2020 to 621 in 2024, a decrease of approximately 4.8%. Union County declined by approximately 3.2%, while De Baca County declined by approximately 2.2%. Chaves County

experienced the largest numerical decline, decreasing by 1,408 residents, followed by Curry County, which declined by 995 residents. Other counties experienced more modest population reductions, including Lea County, which declined by less than 1% over the period.

The population trends in the Eastern Area highlight the continued demographic challenges facing many of the region's rural communities. While the overall regional decline is relatively modest compared with the larger decline reflected in previous estimates, population losses across eleven counties may continue to affect the size and availability of the regional workforce. Population trends are particularly important for workforce development planning because changes in the resident population can influence the size of the available labor pool, employer recruitment efforts, demand for training services, and the ability of communities to sustain essential services.

The region's overall decline reflects a diminishing workforce and talent pool across eleven counties, potentially impeding future economic development efforts. This trend also heightens challenges for employers in the region to recruit a qualified workforce, potentially leading to reduced service availability due to workforce shortages. Addressing this ongoing concern remains a priority for the EAWDB.

Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in New Mexico: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2025

Geographic Area	Population Estimate (as of July 1)				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Chaves County, New Mexico	65,154	64,669	63,873	63,662	63,746
Curry County, New Mexico	48,372	47,960	47,422	47,403	47,377
De Baca County, New Mexico	1,687	1,686	1,701	1,671	1,650
Eddy County, New Mexico	62,344	60,880	60,244	60,753	61,799
Guadalupe County, New Mexico	4,440	4,428	4,330	4,325	4,362
Harding County, New Mexico	652	631	626	641	621
Lea County, New Mexico	74,634	73,068	72,260	73,214	74,446
Lincoln County, New Mexico	20,308	20,396	20,329	20,041	20,036
Otero County, New Mexico	67,868	68,516	68,851	69,878	70,624
Quay County, New Mexico	8,714	8,627	8,549	8,615	8,542
Roosevelt County, New Mexico	19,153	18,996	18,894	18,870	18,785
Union County, New Mexico	4,070	4,097	4,002	3,967	3,939

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division
Release Date: March 2026

Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in New Mexico: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2025				
Geographic Area	April 1, 2020 Estimates Base	2023	2024	2025
New Mexico	**2,117,492**	**2,119,349**	**2,126,774**	**2,125,498**
Bernalillo County, New Mexico	676,446	671,767	670,181	667,601
Catron County, New Mexico	3,579	3,821	3,823	3,827
Chaves County, New Mexico	65,156	63,662	63,746	63,364
Cibola County, New Mexico	27,046	26,778	26,755	26,807
Colfax County, New Mexico	12,385	12,333	12,311	12,184
Curry County, New Mexico	48,428	47,403	47,377	46,655
De Baca County, New Mexico	1,701	1,671	1,650	1,647
Doña Ana County, New Mexico	219,563	225,966	228,104	229,091
Eddy County, New Mexico	62,317	60,753	61,799	62,509
Grant County, New Mexico	28,189	27,476	27,491	27,252
Guadalupe County, New Mexico	4,453	4,325	4,362	4,343
Harding County, New Mexico	654	641	621	617
Hidalgo County, New Mexico	4,176	3,977	3,951	3,929
Lea County, New Mexico	74,452	73,214	74,446	74,749
Lincoln County, New Mexico	20,267	20,041	20,036	19,844
Los Alamos County, New Mexico	19,416	19,312	19,427	19,407
Luna County, New Mexico	25,419	25,537	25,623	25,407
McKinley County, New Mexico	72,881	68,802	68,631	68,119
Mora County, New Mexico	4,184	4,122	4,092	4,051
Otero County, New Mexico	67,839	69,878	70,624	70,368
Quay County, New Mexico	8,744	8,615	8,542	8,454
Rio Arriba County, New Mexico	40,349	39,900	39,948	39,832
Roosevelt County, New Mexico	19,193	18,870	18,785	18,615
Sandoval County, New Mexico	148,833	155,833	157,611	159,565
San Juan County, New Mexico	121,665	120,754	120,525	120,340
San Miguel County, New Mexico	27,205	26,637	26,434	26,260
Santa Fe County, New Mexico	154,831	156,379	157,320	156,907
Sierra County, New Mexico	11,572	11,548	11,413	11,395
Socorro County, New Mexico	16,597	15,988	15,930	15,838
Taos County, New Mexico	34,487	34,435	34,441	34,564

Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in New Mexico: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2025				
Torrance County, New Mexico	15,048	15,690	15,942	16,100
Union County, New Mexico	4,082	3,967	3,939	3,844
Valencia County, New Mexico	76,335	79,254	80,894	82,013
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division **Release Date: March 2026**				

Current regional labor market data indicates modest employment growth across the Eastern Area over the next two years. According to JobsEQ data, total employment in the region is approximately 154,747, with overall employment projected to increase by 307 jobs, or 0.1%, over the two-year forecast period. While several industries are projected to experience employment declines, the region continues to

demonstrate opportunities for growth in healthcare, construction, professional and technical services, mining and oil and gas extraction, utilities, and other industries.

Over the next two years, Healthcare and Social Assistance is projected to experience the largest numerical employment growth among the region's major industries, with an estimated 259 additional jobs, representing 0.6% annual growth. The industry currently employs approximately 19,931 workers, has an average annual wage of $55,080, and is projected to have total workforce demand of approximately 4,215 positions over the forecast period. This includes an estimated 1,976 exits, 1,979 transfers, and 259 jobs resulting from employment growth, demonstrating that workforce demand will be driven not only by new job creation but also by the need to replace workers leaving existing positions.

In response to regional labor market conditions and ongoing employer and workforce needs, the EAWDB has identified Healthcare and Behavioral Health, Early Childhood Education, and Construction and Trades as key sectors for strategic focus and planning. These sectors provide opportunities for career entry, advancement, and transition into new occupations and are important components of the region's workforce development strategy. The EAWDB will continue to collaborate with education, economic development, employers, and community partners to increase awareness of career opportunities, and develop career pathways that respond to the needs of both job seekers and employers throughout the Eastern Area.

EAWDB, 2026Q1[1]

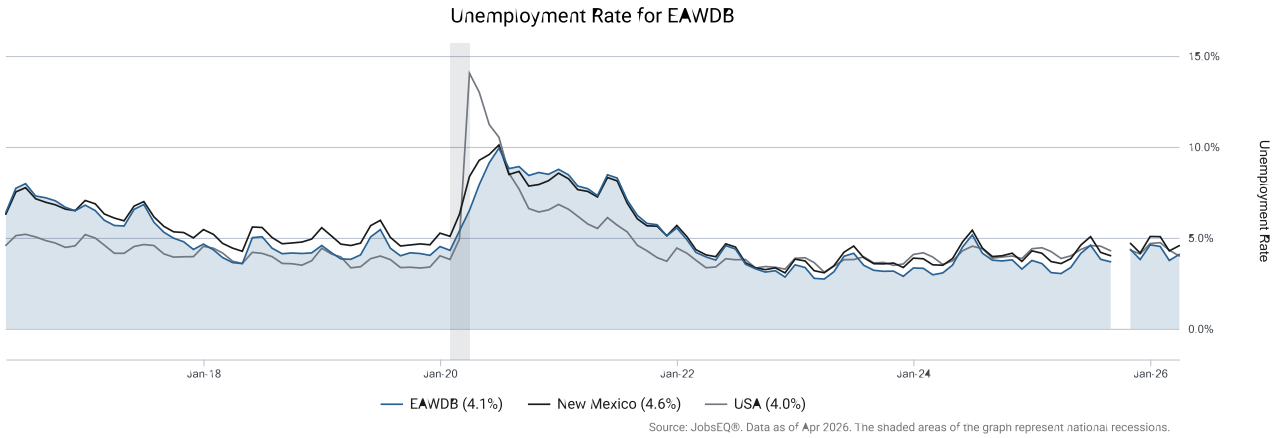
		Current			2-Year History		2-Year Forecast				
NAICS	Industry	Empl	Avg Ann Wages	LQ	Empl Change	Ann %	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Empl Growth	Ann % Growth
72	Accommodation and Food Services	16,519	$26,374	1.23	80	0.2%	5,771	2,543	3,179	48	0.1%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	16,468	$108,129	30.52	1,105	3.5%	3,083	1,095	1,858	129	0.4%
61	Educational Services	13,815	$58,897	1.10	581	2.2%	2,391	1,249	1,334	-193	-0.7%
23	Construction	12,156	$66,747	1.31	196	0.8%	2,131	807	1,202	121	0.5%
92	Public Administration	8,307	$75,966	1.15	230	1.4%	1,466	643	859	-36	-0.2%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	7,435	$77,291	0.95	291	2.0%	1,607	701	877	29	0.2%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	6,417	$62,654	0.69	-69	-0.5%	1,466	622	813	31	0.2%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	6,245	$40,813	0.95	327	2.7%	1,424	619	782	23	0.2%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	5,936	$73,123	3.20	-289	-2.4%	1,321	727	679	-86	-0.7%
31	Manufacturing	4,460	$79,953	0.37	150	1.7%	883	355	524	4	0.0%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4,284	$72,994	0.38	148	1.8%	715	272	404	39	0.5%
42	Wholesale Trade	3,449	$71,847	0.61	283	4.4%	682	275	396	12	0.2%
52	Finance and Insurance	2,612	$69,103	0.43	46	0.9%	426	177	243	6	0.1%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,378	$64,700	0.88	208	4.7%	463	216	237	10	0.2%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,218	$33,614	0.67	-54	-1.2%	653	272	367	14	0.3%
22	Utilities	2,175	$100,659	2.66	262	6.6%	401	148	228	25	0.6%
51	Information	1,139	$53,636	0.39	-71	-3.0%	181	73	115	-7	-0.3%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	588	$80,592	0.24	-80	-6.2%	98	39	57	3	0.2%
	Total - All Industries	154,747	$61,873	1.00	4,665	1.5%	33,377	14,727	18,343	307	0.1%

Source: JobsEQ®
Data as of 2026Q1
Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.
1. All data based upon a four-quarter moving average
Exits and transfers are approximate estimates based upon occupation separation rates.
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The Economic Demographic Profile shows that 57.5% of the civilian population age 16 and older, or approximately 162,710 individuals, is engaged in the workforce in the Eastern Area. This labor force participation rate is nearly identical to New Mexico's rate of 57.4% but remains below the national rate of 63.3%. The Eastern Area's labor force is smaller in absolute size than both New Mexico and the United States, reflecting the region's smaller population base. The Eastern Area's prime-age labor force participation rate is 74.0%, compared with 77.7% for New Mexico and 83.2% nationally. The Eastern Area also has a higher proportion of its labor force serving in the Armed Forces, at 3.0%, compared with 0.9% for New Mexico and 0.5% nationally. The region accounts for approximately 8,845 Armed Forces personnel, or more than 57% of the state's 15,462 Armed Forces labor force. This reflects the region’s significant economic reliance on its military bases.

Economic Demographics Profile						
	Percent			Value		
	USA	New Mexico	EAWDB	USA	New Mexico	EAWDB
Economic						
Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 16 years and over)	63.3%	57.4%	57.5%	170,199,520	975,902	162,710
Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-54)	83.2%	77.7%	74.0%	108,100,165	605,008	99,285
Work from Home	15.1%	12.2%	5.5%	24,042,489	111,722	8,676
Armed Forces Labor Force	0.5%	0.9%	3.0%	1,293,756	15,462	8,845
Veterans, Age 18-64	4.1%	5.1%	5.7%	8,225,965	62,458	12,035
Veterans Labor Force Participation Rate and Size, Age 18-64	77.1%	73.9%	74.1%	6,341,643	46,152	8,915
Median Household Income[2]				$80,734	$64,059	$60,117
Per Capita Income				$44,673	$36,218	$31,685
Mean Commute Time (minutes)				26.4	23.5	20.4
Commute via Public Transportation	3.2%	0.6%	0.2%	5,157,401	5,059	290
Source: JobsEQ®, http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq						
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The following graph depicts unemployment rate trends from 2017 through early 2026. As of April 2026, the unemployment rate in the Eastern Area was 4.1%, slightly higher than the U.S. rate of 4.0%, but below New Mexico's rate of 4.6%. Overall, unemployment in the Eastern Area has remained relatively stable in recent years, generally fluctuating between 3% and 5%, following the significant spike experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. The current rate remains well below the higher unemployment levels experienced during that period and reflects a generally stable regional labor market.

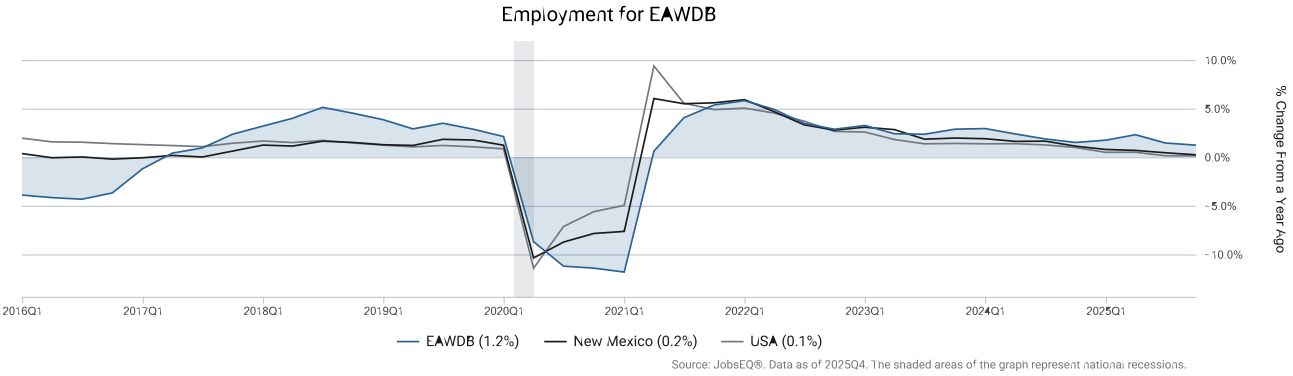


The following table from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program provides a breakdown of labor force, employment, and unemployment information for the Eastern Area by county. As of June 2026, the region had a total labor force of 164,787, with 7,753 unemployed, resulting in an overall unemployment rate of 4.6%. Lea County had the largest labor force with 35,189 workers, while Harding County had the smallest with 312. Collectively, the five largest counties—Lea, Eddy, Chaves, Otero, and Curry—accounted for approximately 85.6% of the regional labor force, with a combined workforce of 141,117 and an unemployment rate of approximately 4.7%. The seven remaining counties had a combined labor force of 23,670 and an unemployment rate of approximately 4.8%. Compared with January 2022, when the regional unemployment rate was 5.8%, the June 2026 rate of 4.63% reflects an overall decline in unemployment, demonstrating continued improvement in regional labor market conditions despite fluctuations among individual counties.

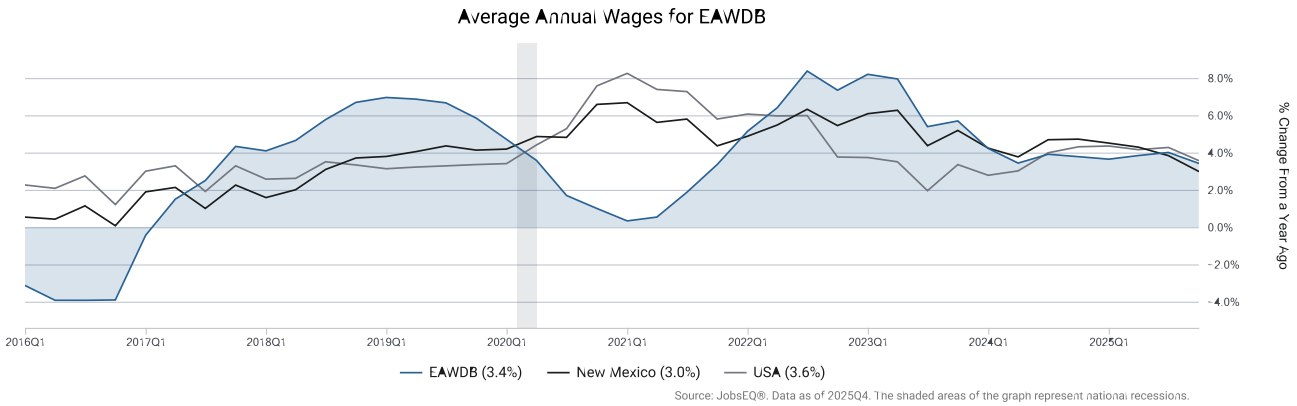
June 2026 Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)				
County	**Labor Force**	**Employed**	**Unemployed**	**Unemp. Rate**
Chaves County	28,148	26,512	1,636	5.80%
Curry County	20,918	20,025	893	4.30%
De Baca County	668	637	31	4.60%
Eddy County	32,916	31,650	1,266	3.80%
Guadalupe County	1,647	1,562	85	5.20%
Harding County	312	302	10	3.20%
Lea County	35,189	33,613	1,576	4.50%
Lincoln County	8,408	8,005	403	4.80%
Otero County	23,946	22,711	1,235	5.20%
Quay County	3,378	3,200	178	5.30%
Roosevelt County	7,844	7,460	384	4.90%
Union County	1,413	1,357	56	4.00%
Eastern Region Totals	**164787**	**157,034**	**7,753**	**4.63%**

Source: NMDWS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics program in conjunction with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The employment data reflected below provides total employment information for the Eastern Area over the last 10 years and the significant fluctuations. Based on the updated data, employment increased by 1.2% over the prior year, compared to 0.2% for New Mexico and 0.1% for the United States, based on a four-quarter moving average.



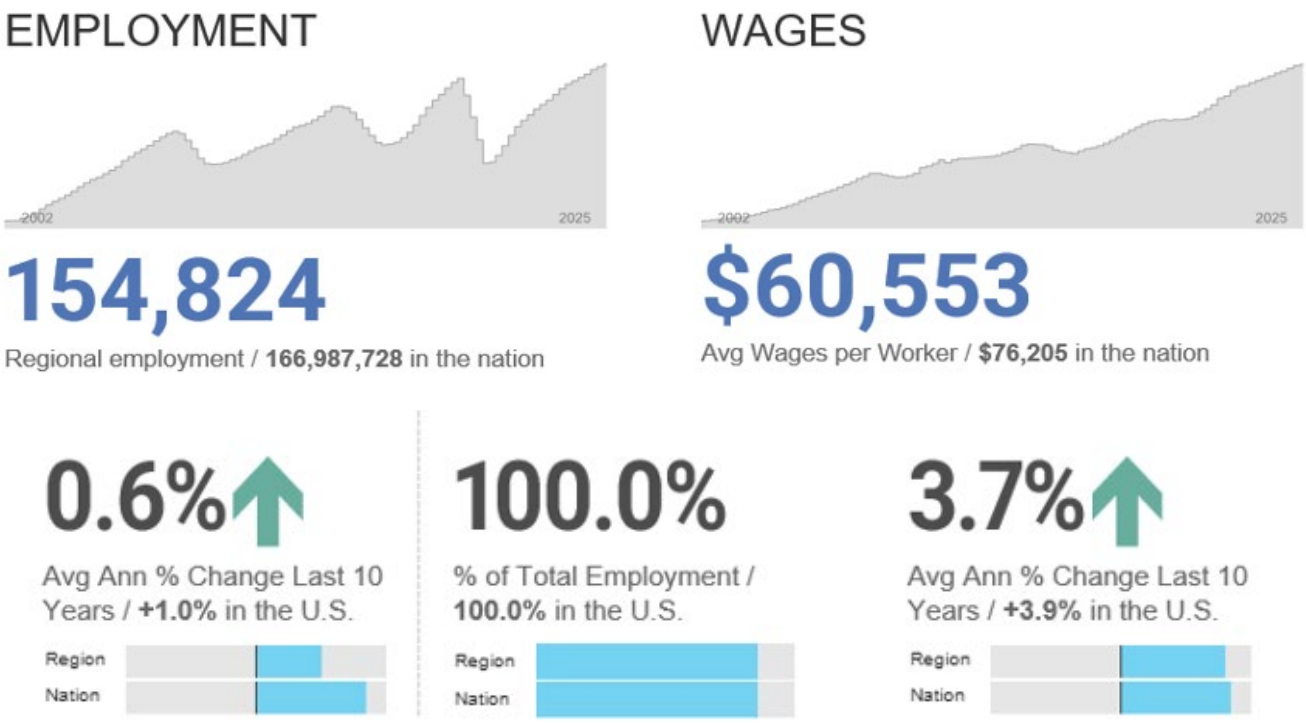
As of the first quarter of program year 2025, the average worker in the Eastern Area earned annual wages of $60,553. This represents a 3.4% increase in average annual wages over the previous four quarters. In comparison, the national average wage was $76,205 for the same period, which is significantly higher. However, the percentage of increase is higher than New Mexico at 3.0%, but slightly lower than the national average of 3.6%. Additionally, the cost of living in the eastern area is 11.9% lower than the national average, balancing the lower wages to some extent.



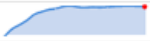
Cost of Living Information			
	Annual Average Salary	**Cost of Living Index (Base US)**	**US Purchasing Power**
EAWDB	$60,553	88.1	$68,746
New Mexico	$61,279	93.3	$65,664
USA	$76,205	100.0	$76,205

Source: JobsEQ®
Data as of 2025Q4
Cost of Living per COLI, data as of 2026Q1, imputed by Chmura where necessary.

As of the first quarter of program year 2025, the eastern area had 154,824 employed individuals, which constitutes approximately 0.1% of total U.S. employment. The average wage per worker in the region was $60,553, compared to New Mexico at $61,279 and the national average of $76,205. The lower cost of living in the region provides residents a higher purchasing power than the balance of New Mexico. Over the past decade, the region's average annual wage growth was 3.7%, slightly lower than the national rate of 3.9%. Employment growth in the region over the same period averaged 0.6% annually, compared to 1.0% nationally.



The current forecast indicates mixed growth among the top ten industries in the eastern area. Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities is expected to experience the strongest annual growth at 1.6%, followed by Home Health Care Services at 1.4%. Crude Petroleum Extraction, which generates the highest average annual wages among the top industries at $152,657, is projected to decline by 0.4% annually. The region's continued reliance on the energy sector is reflected in the high location quotients for Support Activities for Mining (46.74), Crude Petroleum Extraction (36.86), and Oil and Gas Pipeline and Related Structures Construction (19.49). These industry trends highlight the importance of preparing workers for both emerging opportunities and potential shifts in the region's economic base. To address these issues, the workforce system in the East will continue to focus on upskilling the current workforce through sector strategies, stackable credentials, and career pathways, while supporting economic development and effectively recruiting new opportunities for regional workers and employers alike.

5-Digit Industry	Empl	Avg Ann Wages	LQ	5yr History	Annual Demand	Forecast Ann Growth
Support Activities for Mining	11,724	$92,147	46.74		1,112	0.4%
Restaurants and Other Eating Places	11,612	$23,543	1.13		2,100	0.1%
Elementary and Secondary Schools	11,241	$57,891	1.42		959	-0.9%
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	4,698	$71,277	0.78		367	0.2%
Warehouse Clubs, Supercenters, and Other General Merchandise Retailers	4,035	$31,363	1.84		577	0.0%
Crude Petroleum Extraction	3,016	$152,657	36.86		242	-0.4%
Home Health Care Services	3,016	$25,781	1.66		406	1.4%
Oil and Gas Pipeline and Related Structures Construction	2,646	$72,528	19.49		240	0.7%
Supermarkets and Other Grocery Retailers (except Convenience Retailers)	2,588	$29,567	1.05		387	-0.3%
Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	2,430	$23,261	0.95		379	1.6%
Remaining Component Industries	97,794	$52,040	1.15		10,284	0.0%
Total - All Industries	**154,824**	**$60,553**	**1.00**		**16,606**	**0.0%**

The JobsEQ staffing pattern data below shows that Fast-Food and Counter Workers, Cashiers, and Personal Care Aides show high annual demand, indicating robust growth and/or turnover in these sectors. High-wage occupations like General and Operations Managers have lower demand compared to lower-wage positions like Cashiers and Fast-Food Workers. Sectors such as Office and Administrative Support, Construction and Extraction, Transportation and Material Moving, and Food Preparation and Serving Related account for significant shares of regional employment. Overall, the data identifies occupations with high employment and demand and provides insight into labor market trends and potential areas for workforce development and recruitment efforts, particularly among lower-skilled occupations that experience high demand and turnover.

Staffing Pattern

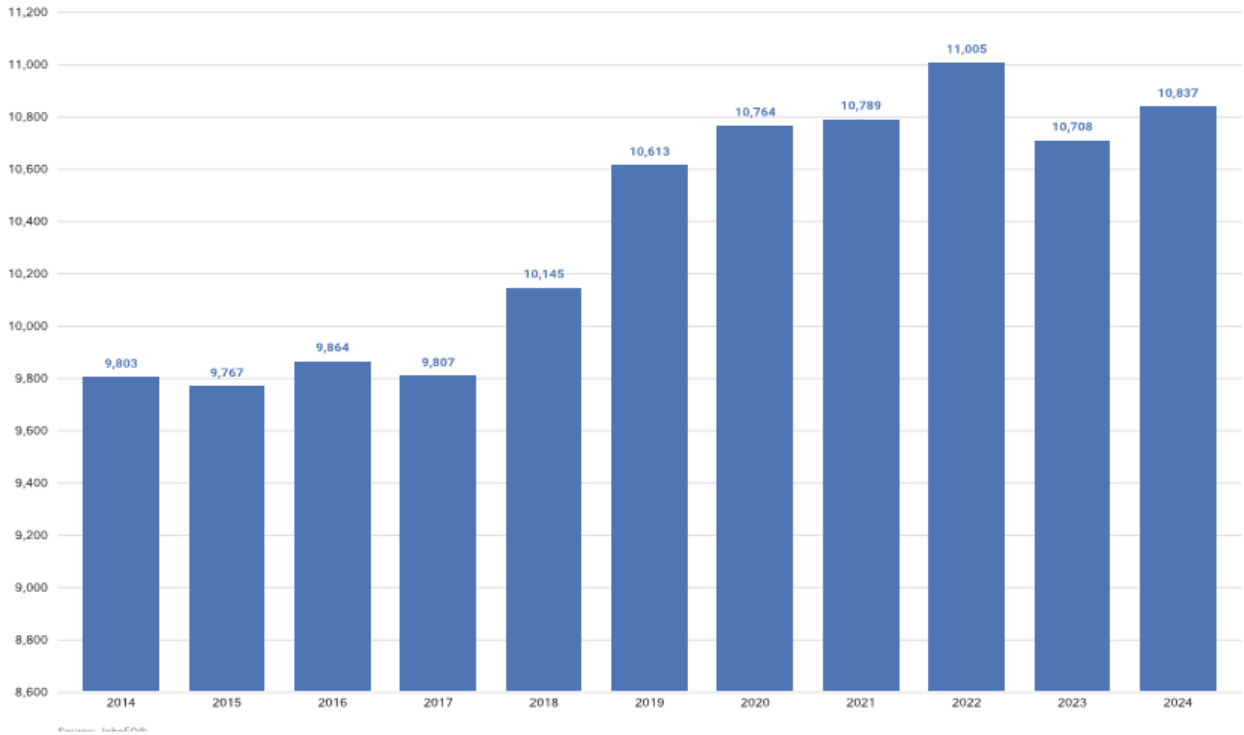


6-digit Occupation	Empl	Avg Ann Wages	Annual Demand
Fast Food and Counter Workers	4,345	$31,200	992
Cashiers	4,311	$31,500	732
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	4,246	$53,000	444
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3,965	$44,700	402
Retail Salespersons	3,755	$35,300	515
Personal Care Aides	3,324	$30,300	558
General and Operations Managers	3,052	$125,300	244
Construction Laborers	2,863	$43,200	247
Stockers and Order Fillers	2,668	$37,600	448
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2,446	$36,700	343
Remaining Component Occupations	119,845	$74,600	12,229
Total	**154,821**		

In 2024, the number of establishments across all industries in the area reached 10,837, marking an increase of 1,034 establishments from 2014. Growth was generally steady over the decade, with minor declines between 2014–2015 and 2016–2017, followed by stronger growth beginning in 2018. The number of establishments reached a ten-year high of 11,005 in 2022, before decreasing by 297 establishments in 2023. In 2024, the region experienced renewed growth, adding 129 establishments and bringing the total to 10,837. Overall, the data reflects a net increase in business establishments over the ten-year period and demonstrates continued economic activity across the Eastern Area. Over the past ten years, the Eastern Area experienced an average annual GDP growth rate of 4.7%, yielding an output of $374,000 per worker. These figures demonstrate the Eastern Area's strong level of economic productivity and its significant contribution to New Mexico's economy.

Establishments

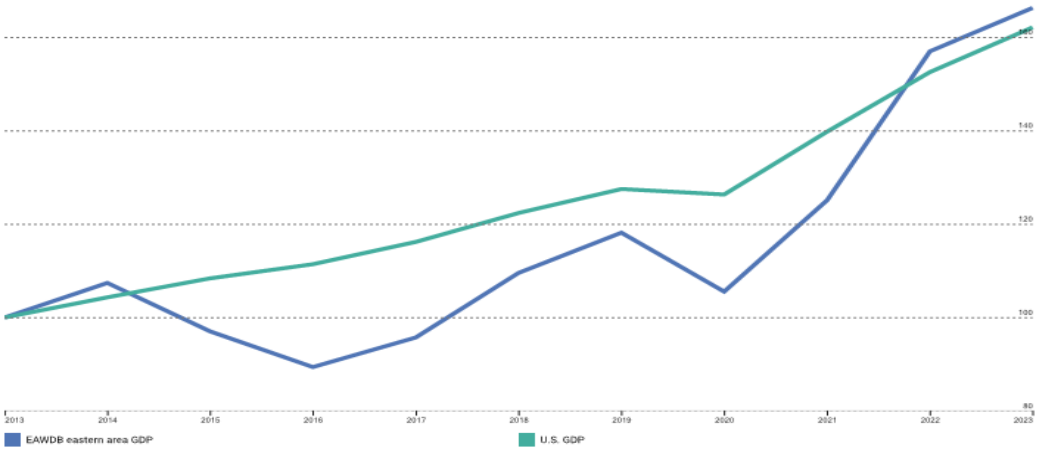
In 2024, there were 10,837 Total - All Industries establishments in the EAWDB (per covered employment establishment counts), an increase from 9,803 establishments ten years earlier in 2014.



GDP & Productivity

In 2023, Total - All Industries produced $31 billion in GDP for the EAWDB eastern area.

GDP: Indexed 2013 = 100



100.0 %

Industry Share of Total GDP / **100.0 %** in the nation

Region
Nation

5.2 %

Avg Ann % Change Last 10 Yrs / **4.9 %** in the nation

Region
Nation

$355k

Output per Worker / **$296k** in the nation

Region
Nation

Source: JobEQ

The EAWDB will work diligently to ensure that the workforce system partners with employers to enhance a workforce system dedicated to ensuring the safety, health and the well-being of the customers we serve. This goal aims to create a thriving environment for families in the eastern area. The urgency for investing in the sectors identified above has become more urgent due to several factors mentioned above. The board intends to treat existing job vacancies as critical elements of workforce development in the area to fill positions quickly and more effectively. For example, the immediate shortages in healthcare, behavioral health, and emergency services are going to require prompt, collaborative action across partner agencies and programs to address the pressing needs of the region.

Skill Needs

In a rapidly changing economy, the landscape of employment and job skills is constantly evolving. As industries transform and new technologies emerge, the demand for a skilled workforce becomes increasingly critical. Recognizing this, the EAWDB's goal is to bridge the gap between job seekers' skills and employers' needs. This means that the skills developed through training programs coordinated in the east are directly applicable to current labor market supply and demand. Training programs are designed in collaboration with employers, ensuring that participants acquire relevant skills tied to in demand occupations.

The board also recognizes that technology is constantly evolving. As fossil fuel supplies decline and the state takes deliberate steps toward developing sustainable energy sources, the impact on our regional workforce will be significant. Therefore, addressing energy transition workforce challenges will be a key focus in the EAWDB's strategy development over the upcoming years.

The table below reflects the non-seasonally adjusted number of unemployed individuals, the number of job openings advertised online, and the ratio of unemployed individuals to job openings in the Eastern Area as of August 2026. There were an estimated 7,112 unemployed individuals in the region and 11,311 job openings, resulting in approximately 0.63 unemployed individuals for every job opening. This equates to approximately 1.6 job openings for every unemployed individual. Overall, the data indicates that job openings continue to exceed the number of unemployed individuals in the Eastern Area, reflecting continued demand for workers and a competitive labor market for employers seeking to fill available positions.

Supply and Demand for Eastern Region – August 2026			
Area	**Unemployed**	**Job Openings**	**Number of Unemployed per Job Opening**
Eastern Region	7,112	11,311	0.63

Source: NMDWS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics program in conjunction with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Online advertised jobs data

The data indicates that the Eastern Region has a favorable overall job market with more job openings available than unemployed individuals, which is a positive sign for job seekers in the area. However, the highest demand areas are largely in retail and services. This combined with the negative growth projections could have a significant impact on the region's economy. Competition for new job postings is higher, as indicated by the higher number of unemployed individuals per new job posting. This is typically not good for economic development. Furthermore, while there are many positions available, most are likely low skilled low wage jobs with the exception of the healthcare and education sectors. The board and partners must work diligently with the region's economic developers to increase workforce skills and economic development's business recruiting power.

When the skills possessed by job seekers do not align with the demands of employers, it is a pressing issue across many sectors. Traditional education pathways often take years to complete, leaving a lag between the rise of new industry standards and the availability of a sufficiently trained workforce. Short-term training programs, however, offer a potentially encouraging response to this challenge. By focusing on durable skills and specific competencies required in the current job market, these programs can provide individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary for immediate employment and to meet employers' specific needs.

The One Stop Operator, the EAWDB, and local partners have a common goal to provide various pathways for individuals to obtain the skills they need to earn gainful employment in a career that leads to self-sufficiency. This includes funding for vocational training, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training. By encouraging and supporting diverse educational opportunities, the system helps ensure that individuals from different backgrounds and skill levels can access the resources necessary to meet their career goals.

The EAWDB facilitates partnerships between public and private sectors, including educational institutions, employers, and community organizations. This collaborative approach promotes innovation in designing training that fosters skills upgrades for our customers and ensures that the skills being taught are up-to-date, relevant and align with occupations that are in demand.

Skilled apprenticeships under WIOA remain a priority for the EAWDB. The board will collaborate with the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, state and regional apprenticeship coordinators, educational

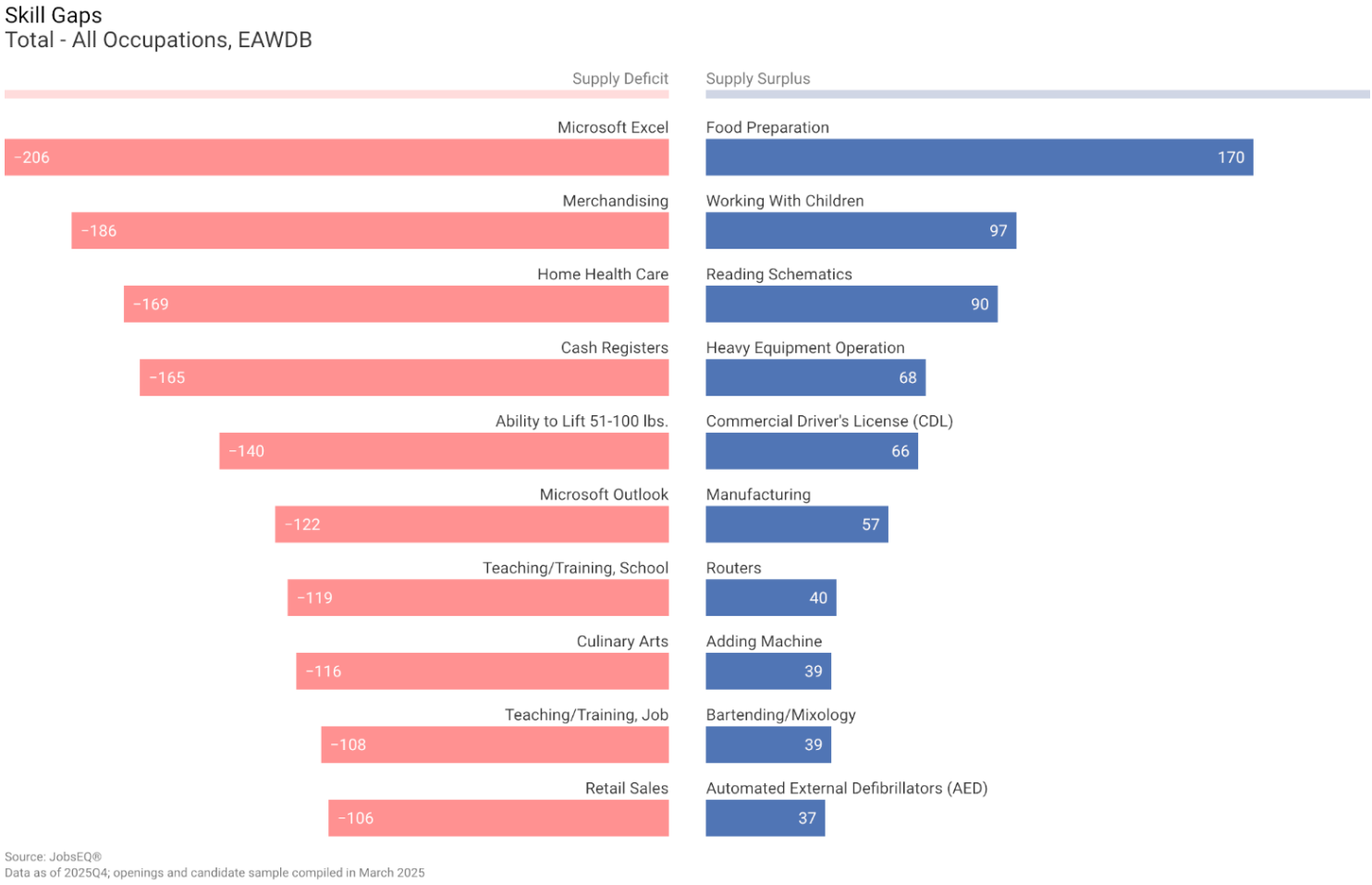
institutions, and employers both locally and statewide. Our goal is to increase participation in existing apprenticeship programs and develop new ones, particularly to support early childhood education and, when opportunities arise, other fields such as construction trades and renewable energy.

As the economy in the east continues to evolve, the importance of skills development remains paramount. EAWDB's commitment to bridging the skills gap helps create a more dynamic, adaptable workforce ready to meet the needs of employers and expand opportunities for the customers we serve. The JobsEQ data on skill gaps in the Eastern Area reveals continued discrepancies between the supply of candidates possessing specific skills and employer demand for those skills. The data also identifies areas where the available supply of skills exceeds current demand. The breakdown and interpretation of the graph is listed below:

- Microsoft Excel: The largest identified skills deficit is Microsoft Excel, with a gap of -206, indicating continued employer demand for candidates with spreadsheet and data-management skills.
- Merchandising: Merchandising has a skills gap of -186, demonstrating a continued shortage of candidates with skills applicable to retail sales, inventory, product presentation, and related occupations.
- Home Health Care: Home Health Care shows a deficit of -169, highlighting continued workforce needs within health care and direct-care occupations and reinforcing the importance of health care as a regional workforce priority.
- Cash Registers: A gap of -165 indicates a shortage of candidates reporting cash register skills, which are commonly needed across retail, food service, and other customer-service occupations.
- Ability to Lift 51–100 lbs.: This skill shows a deficit of -140, reflecting demand for workers able to meet the physical requirements associated with construction, transportation, warehousing, and other labor-intensive occupations.
- Microsoft Outlook: A deficit of -122 indicates a need for additional basic digital and workplace technology skills among job seekers.
- Teaching/Training, School: The region has a deficit of -119, reflecting continued demand for individuals with education and school-based teaching and training skills.
- Culinary Arts: A deficit of -116 reflects demand for workers with specialized food preparation and culinary skills.
- Teaching/Training, Job: A deficit of -108 indicates additional demand for candidates with workplace teaching, training, and instructional skills.
- Retail Sales: The region shows a deficit of -106, demonstrating continued demand for candidates with retail sales experience.

The data also identifies several areas of skills surplus, including Food Preparation, Working with Children, Reading Schematics, Heavy Equipment Operation, and Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Other

identified surpluses include Manufacturing, Routers, Adding Machine, Bartending/Mixology, and Automated External Defibrillators (AED). Even though these occupations show a surplus the region's employers are still stating they are having difficulty filling those positions indicating individuals currently in possession of these skills are changing career pathways or relocating to other areas. These findings help the EAWDB and its Operator identify opportunities to better align training and career pathways with employer demand while also connecting individuals with existing skills to industries and occupations where those skills are transferable.



Education Levels

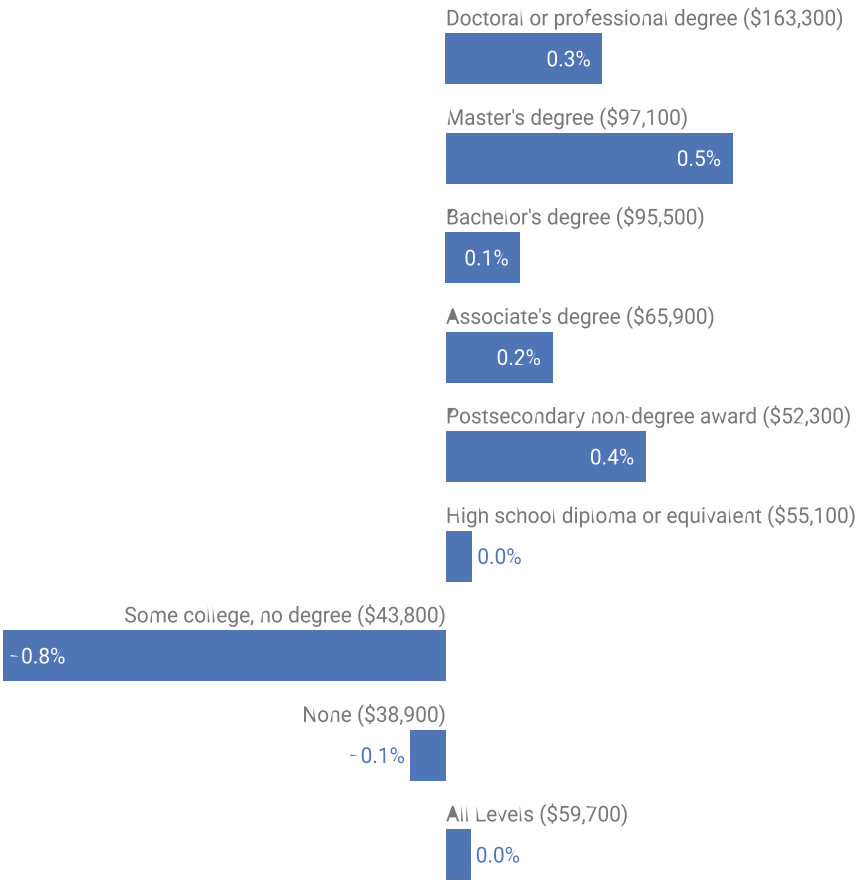
In the area, 16.5% of the workforce—equivalent to 30,139 individuals, lack a high school diploma. This rate is notably higher than the state average of 11.6% and the national average of 9.8%. Conversely, only 19.5% of the workforce holds a bachelor's degree or higher, which is significantly below the state average of 30% and the national average of 37.3%. However, most employment in the region does not require a bachelor's degree. Employment requiring a high school diploma or equivalent is projected to remain relatively unchanged, while employment requiring some college but no degree is projected to decline by 0.8%.

	Percent			Value		
	EAWDB eastern area	New Mexico	USA	EAWDB eastern area	New Mexico	USA
Educational Attainment, Age 25-64						
No High School Diploma	16.5%	11.6%	9.8%	30,139	122,502	17,001,659
High School Graduate	29.3%	26.2%	24.8%	53,485	275,501	42,949,236
Some College, No Degree	24.4%	22.2%	18.9%	44,500	234,189	32,726,555
Associate's Degree	10.3%	10.0%	9.2%	18,892	104,936	15,888,163
Bachelor's Degree	12.0%	17.3%	23.1%	21,868	182,083	40,059,314
Postgraduate Degree	7.5%	12.7%	14.2%	13,708	133,963	24,548,748

This provides an opportunity for the board to collaborate with local communities, schools, employers, and partners to create "earn and learn" programs, such as work experience, on-the-job training (OJT) and apprenticeships, aimed at upskilling the current workforce.

Expected growth rates for occupations differ based on the level of education and training required. While overall employment in the Eastern Area is projected to remain relatively stable, occupations requiring a master's degree are projected to experience the strongest growth at 0.5% annually, followed by occupations requiring a post-secondary non-degree award at 0.4% and a doctoral or professional degree at 0.3%. Occupations requiring an associate's degree are projected to grow by 0.2%, while those requiring a bachelor's degree are expected to grow by 0.1%. Conversely, occupations requiring some college, but no degree are projected to decline by 0.8% annually, while occupations requiring no formal educational credential are projected to decline slightly by 0.1%.

Annual Average Projected Job Growth by Education Levels



Source: JobsEQ®
Data as of 2025Q4

Most job openings are for positions that require only a high school diploma or equivalent, followed by a substantial number of roles needing a bachelor's degree. There is moderate demand for associate and master's degrees, with fewer openings requiring doctoral or professional degrees. The high number of unspecified or other categories indicates a wide variety of roles with flexible or unclear educational requirements.

Openings by Education Levels

Education Levels

Minimum Education Level	Active Job Ads
High school diploma or equivalent	9,641
Bachelor's degree	3,400
Associate's degree	1,477
Master's degree	866
Doctoral or professional degree	335
Unspecified/other	29,689

Source: JobsEQ

EAWDB Sub-regions

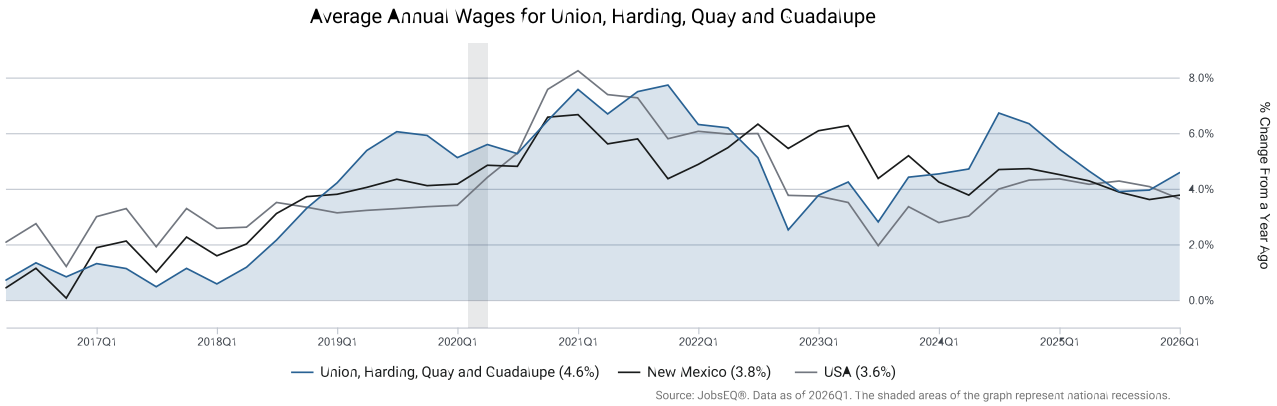
The Eastern Area is vast and diverse in both industry and needs. To effectively develop a strategy for the region, it is essential to analyze the economic sub-regions. As such, the area is divided into four sub-regions, some of which overlap economic regions in neighboring Texas counties. These sub-regions are categorized based on geographic, economic, and employment market similarities and are composed of the following county groupings:

- Union, Harding, Quay, and Guadalupe;
- Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca;
- Lea, Chaves, and Eddy;
- Lincoln and Otero counties.

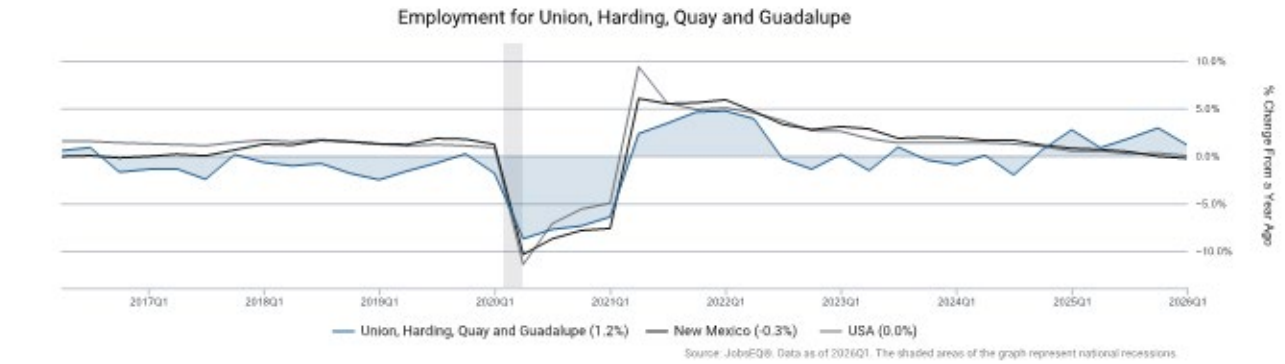
Union, Harding, Quay, and Guadalupe Counties

These four counties make up the northeastern part of the region, with a combined population of 17,257 according to the American Community Survey data for 2020-2025. The sub-region has a civilian labor force of 6,750, with a participation rate of 51.9%. Among individuals aged 25 to 64 in Union, Harding,

Quay, and Guadalupe counties, 20.2% hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 37.3% nationwide. As of the first quarter of program year 2026, the average annual wage in the sub-region was $46,583. This represents a 4.6% increase in average wages over the previous four quarters below the growth for New Mexico but higher than the national average of 3.6%.



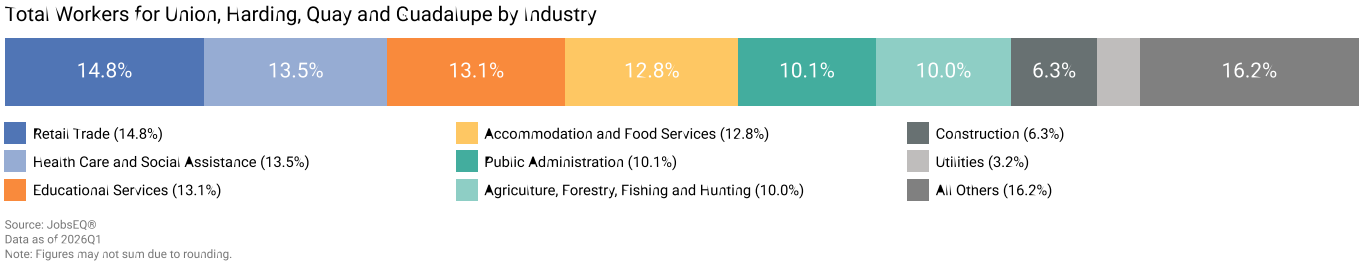
As of the first quarter of program year 2026, total employment in Union, Harding, Quay, and Guadalupe counties combined was 6,290, based on a four-quarter moving average. Over the past year leading up to this period, employment in the region grew by 1.2%, which is above the national average.



Employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2025Q4 with preliminary estimates updated to 2026Q1.

The largest industry sector in this sub-region is Retail Trade, employing 928 workers. The next largest sectors are Health Care and Social Assistance, with 851 workers, and Educational Services, which has 824 workers. This is followed by Accommodation and Food Services. In this sub- region, the sectors that exceed national averages and make up the remaining

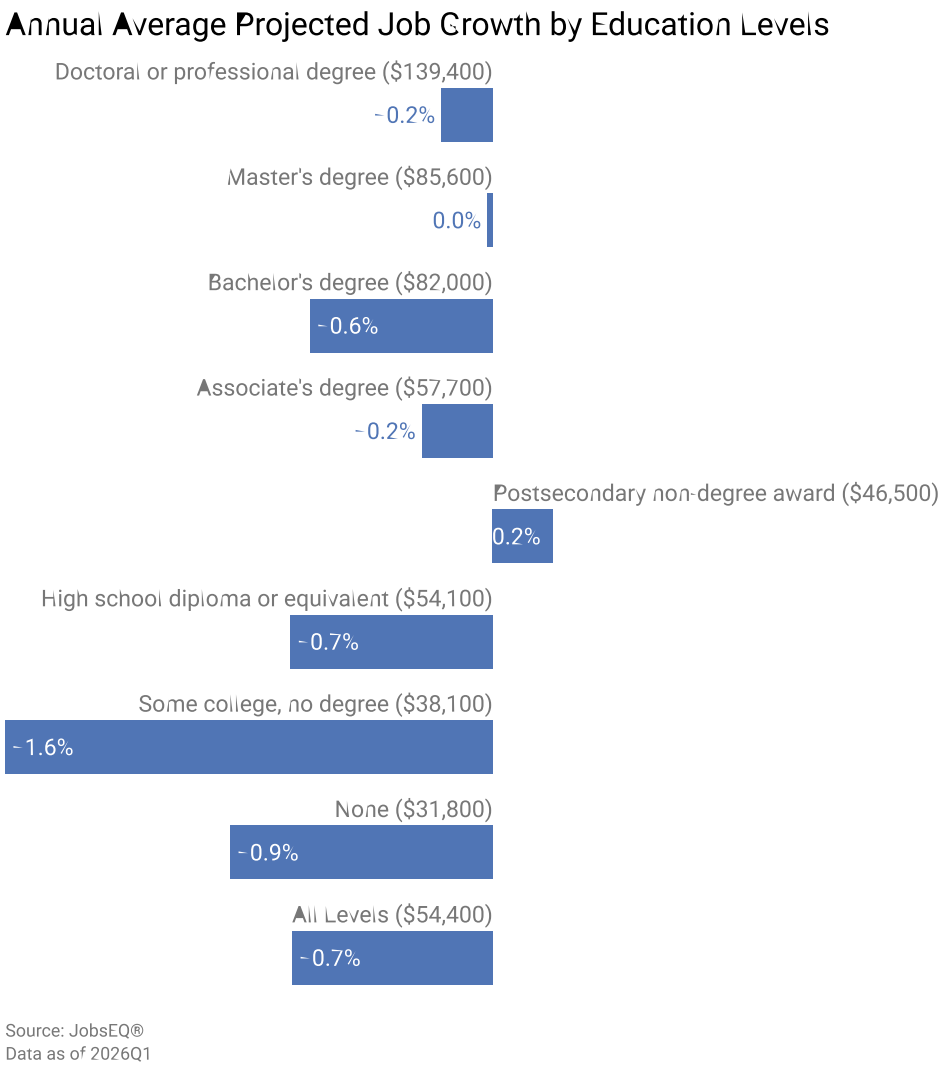
employment opportunities are Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, Utilities, and Public Administration.



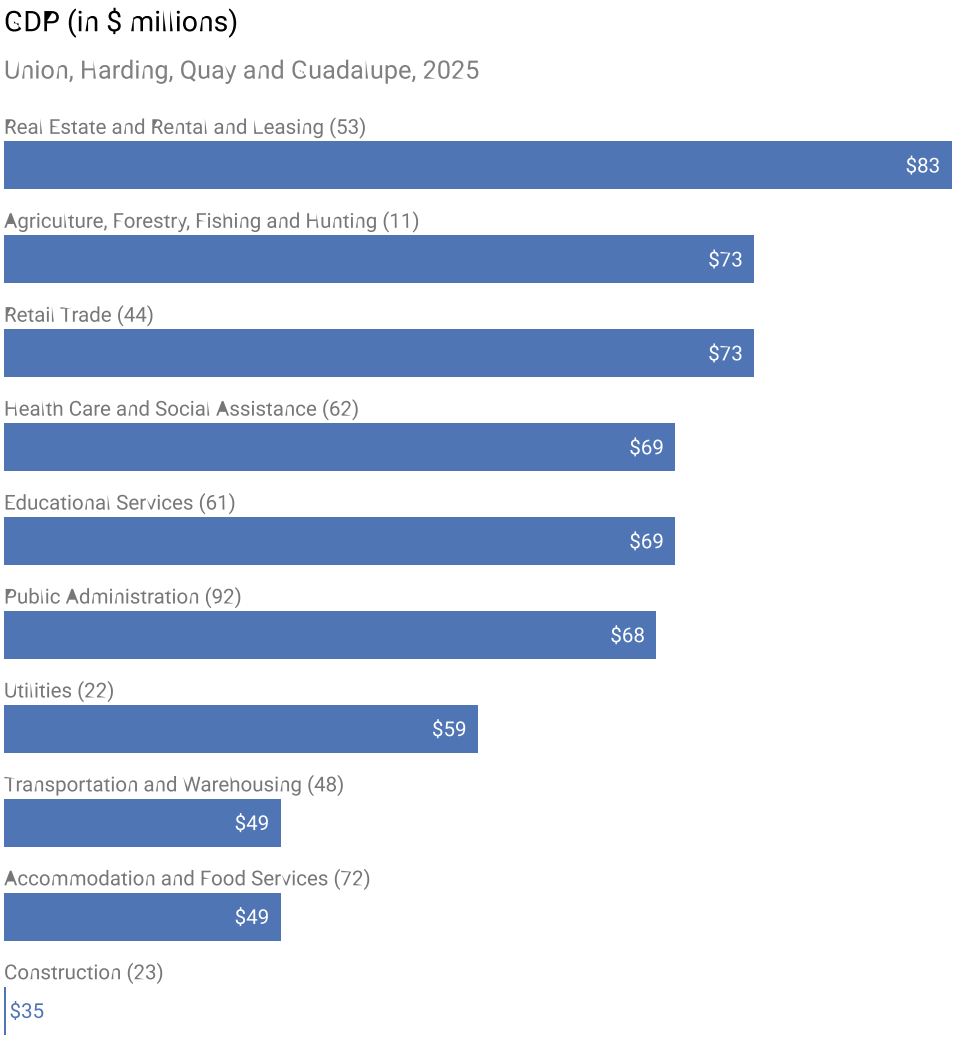
In the sub region, the sectors with the highest average wages per worker are Management of Companies and Enterprises ($94,645), Real Estate and Rental and Leasing ($77,603), and Utilities ($71,529). Over the last four years, sectors with the best job growth or smallest job losses are Educational Services (+202 jobs), Public Administration (+127), and Retail Trade (+75).

Looking ahead, employment in the sub region is projected to decrease by 42 jobs over a one-year period. The fastest growing sector in this sub region is expected to be Utilities, with a 0.5% year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is Health Care and Social Assistance and Utilities.

Expected growth rates for occupations vary based on the level of education and training required. Although overall employment in Union, Harding, Quay, and Guadalupe counties is projected to decline by 0.7% over the next ten years, occupations that typically require a postgraduate degree are expected to contract 0.2% per year. Occupations requiring a bachelor's degree are forecasted to decline by 0.6% per year, while those needing a 2-year degree or certificate are expected to contract by 0.2% annually.



In 2025, the nominal GDP for Union, Harding, Quay, and Guadalupe counties grew by 5.6%, following an increase of 5.2% in 2024. As of 2025, the total GDP for these counties stands at $741,503,000. Of the sectors in this sub-region, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing contributed the largest portion of GDP in 2025, $82,627,000. The next-largest contributions came from Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting ($73,115,000); Retail Trade ($72,750,000); and Health Care and Social Assistance ($68,820,000).



Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca Counties

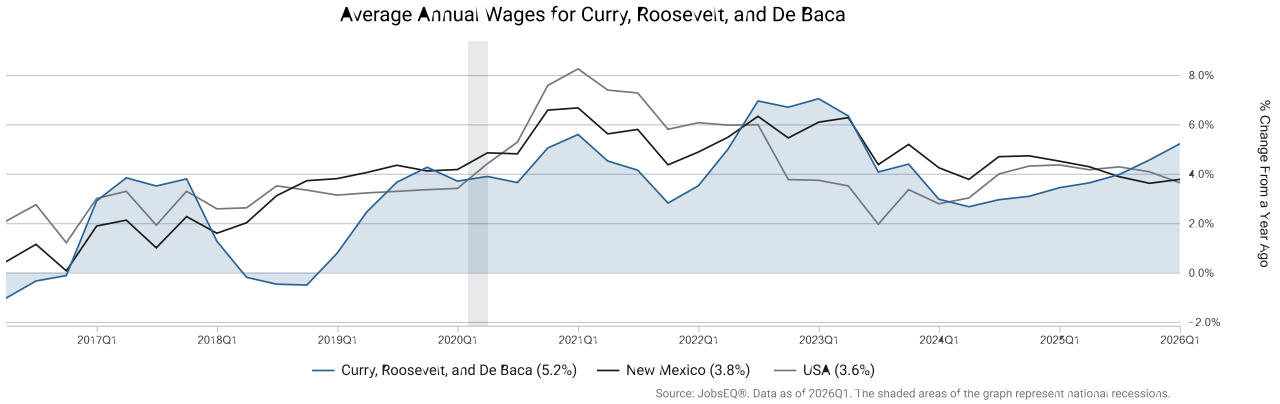
According to the American Community Survey data for 2020-2024, the population of this sub-region is 68,142, approximately 18% of the Eastern Area's total population. The area has a civilian labor force of 29,243, with a participation rate of 60.4%.

	Percent			Value		
	Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca	New Mexico	USA	Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca	New Mexico	USA
Economic						
Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 16 years and over)	60.4%	57.4%	63.3%	29,243	975,902	170,199,520
Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-54)	77.5%	77.7%	83.2%	17,758	605,008	108,100,165

Among individuals aged 25 to 64 in these counties, 22.9% hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 37.3% nationwide.

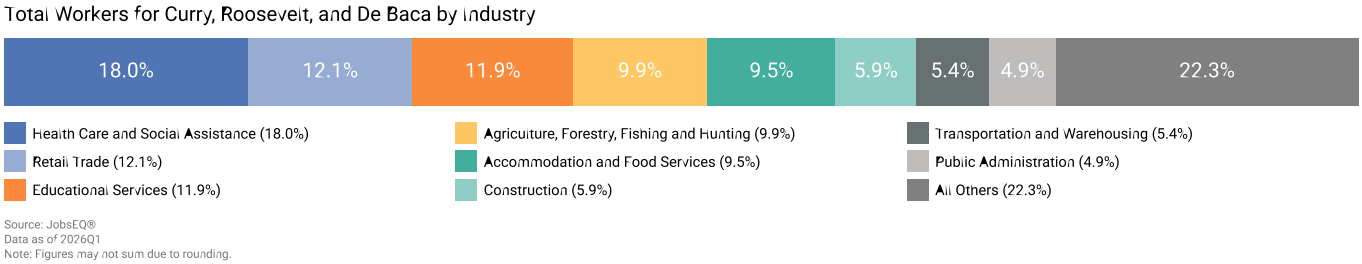
	Percent			Value		
	Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca	New Mexico	USA	Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca	New Mexico	USA
Educational Attainment, Age 25-64						
No High School Diploma	15.2%	11.6%	9.8%	4,937	122,502	17,001,659
High School Graduate	26.4%	26.2%	24.8%	8,597	275,501	42,949,236
Some College, No Degree	25.2%	22.2%	18.9%	8,214	234,189	32,726,555
Associate's Degree	10.3%	10.0%	9.2%	3,356	104,936	15,888,163
Bachelor's Degree	13.7%	17.3%	23.1%	4,442	182,083	40,059,314
Postgraduate Degree	9.2%	12.7%	14.2%	2,988	133,963	24,548,748

As of the first quarter of program year 2026, the average annual wage for workers in Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca counties was $52,135. This represents a 5.2% increase in wages over the previous four quarters.



In Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca counties, the sectors with the highest average wages per worker are Utilities ($92,014), Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting ($78,817), and Management of Companies and Enterprises ($78,120). Regional sectors with the best job growth (or most moderate job losses) over the last 5 years are Educational Services (+602 jobs), Accommodation and Food Services (+389), and Health Care and Social Assistance (+331).

The largest sector in Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca counties is Health Care and Social Assistance, with 4,777 employees representing 18% of the civilian labor force. Following this, the next largest sectors are Retail Trade (3,225 employees) and Educational Services (3,157 employees).

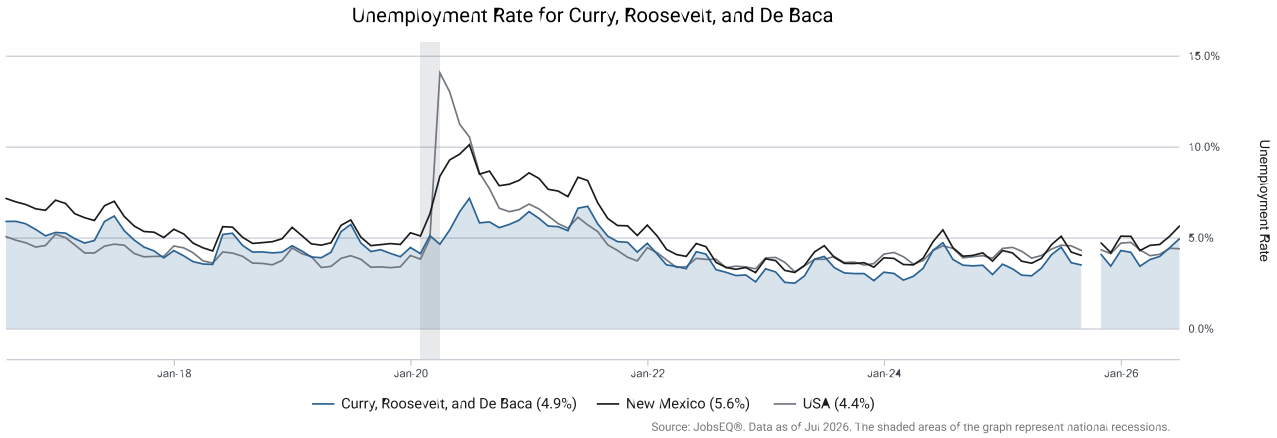


Over the next five years, employment in Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca counties is projected to decline by 443 jobs. The sector expected to experience the highest growth is Utilities with an anticipated annual growth rate of +1.2% year-over-year. The sectors forecasted to see the largest increase in jobs during this period are Health Care and Social Assistance (+73 jobs) and Utilities (+23 jobs).

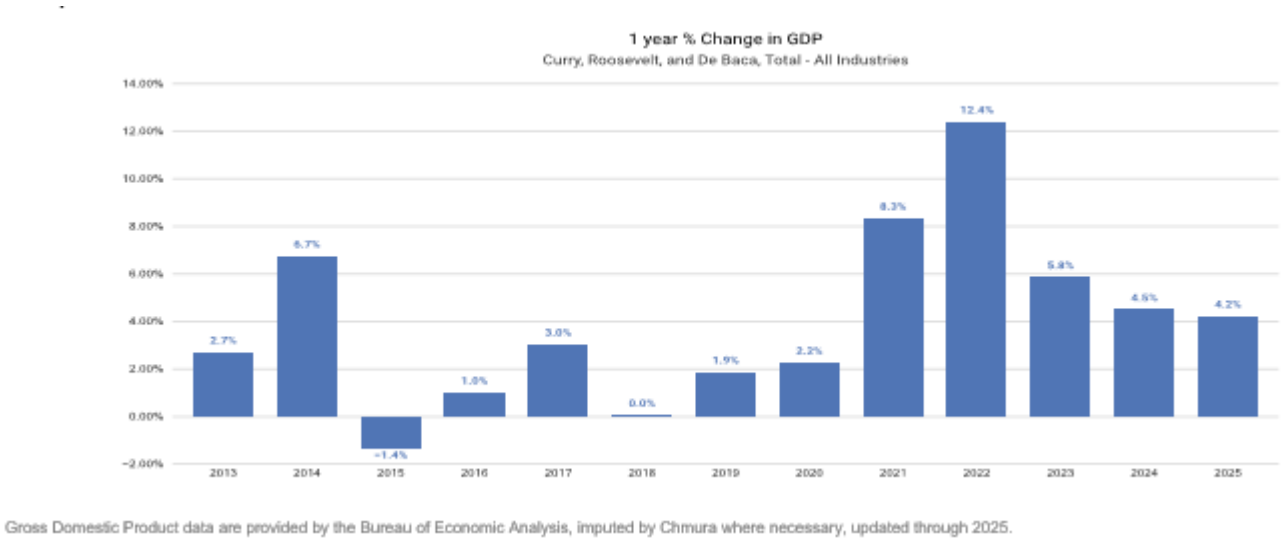
Curry, Roosevelt, and De Baca, 2026Q1[1]												
		Current			5-Year History		5-Year Forecast					
NAICS	Industry	Empl	Avg Ann Wages	LQ	Empl Change	Ann %	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Empl Growth	Ann % Growth
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	4,777	$49,988	1.15	331	1.4%	2,445	1,185	1,187	73	0.3%
44	Retail Trade	3,225	$34,999	1.27	276	1.8%	2,006	970	1,158	-122	-0.8%
61	Educational Services	3,157	$56,876	1.46	602	4.3%	1,344	705	753	-115	-0.7%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,628	$78,817	8.26	-369	-2.6%	1,404	791	739	-125	-1.0%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	2,521	$22,315	1.09	389	3.4%	2,128	962	1,203	-37	-0.3%
23	Construction	1,569	$51,848	0.98	299	4.3%	635	258	385	-9	-0.1%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	1,442	$67,603	1.07	19	0.3%	722	336	420	-33	-0.5%
92	Public Administration	1,302	$64,019	1.05	-29	-0.4%	539	248	332	-41	-0.6%
31	Manufacturing	1,258	$59,662	0.61	47	0.8%	606	249	368	-10	-0.2%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	963	$29,253	0.85	-53	-1.1%	520	236	299	-15	-0.3%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	697	$40,930	0.44	114	3.6%	369	166	218	-15	-0.4%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	580	$67,224	0.30	-29	-1.0%	229	92	136	1	0.0%
42	Wholesale Trade	563	$51,753	0.58	24	0.9%	260	111	160	-10	-0.4%
52	Finance and Insurance	498	$69,538	0.48	-18	-0.7%	190	83	115	-8	-0.3%
22	Utilities	375	$92,014	2.67	116	7.7%	189	65	101	23	1.2%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	338	$25,858	0.60	122	9.4%	245	103	140	2	0.1%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	269	$40,663	0.58	-15	-1.1%	123	61	66	-4	-0.3%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	213	$78,120	0.51	-154	-10.3%	84	35	51	-1	-0.1%
51	Information	148	$48,351	0.30	14	2.0%	57	23	37	-3	-0.5%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	32	$71,623	0.34	2	1.2%	14	5	9	0	-0.1%
	Total - All Industries	**26,551**	**$52,135**	**1.00**	**1,689**	**1.3%**	**13,609**	**6,257**	**7,796**	**-443**	**-0.3%**

Source: JobsEQ®
Data as of 2026Q1
Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.
1. All data based upon a four-quarter moving average
Exits and transfers are approximate estimates based upon occupation separation rates.
Employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2025Q4 with preliminary estimates updated to 2026Q1. Forecast employment growth uses national projections adapted for regional growth patterns.

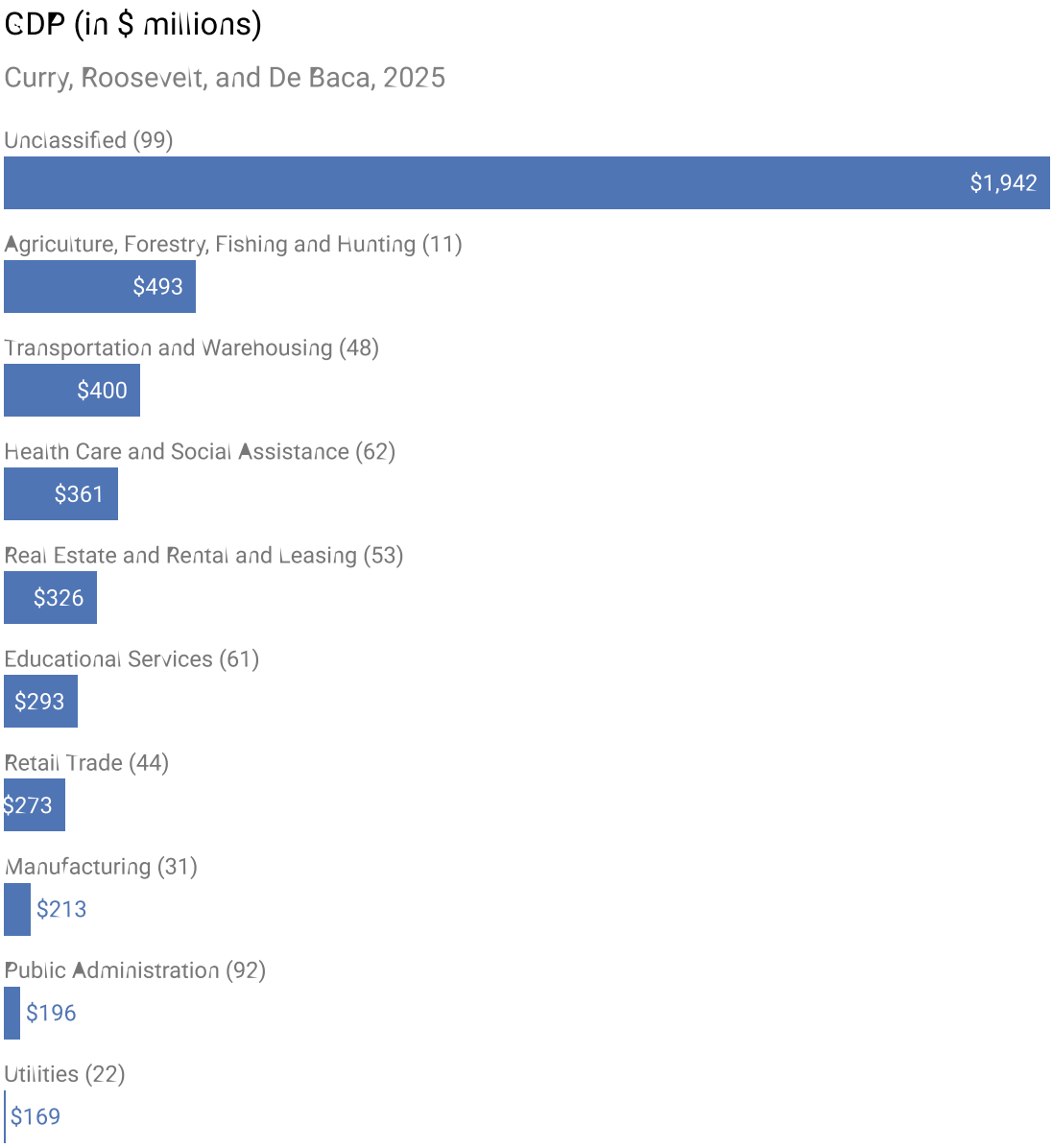
As of July 2026, the unemployment rate in the sub-region was 4.9%, above the national rate of 4.4%. This represents a slight increase from June 2025, when the unemployment rate in the region was 4.5%.



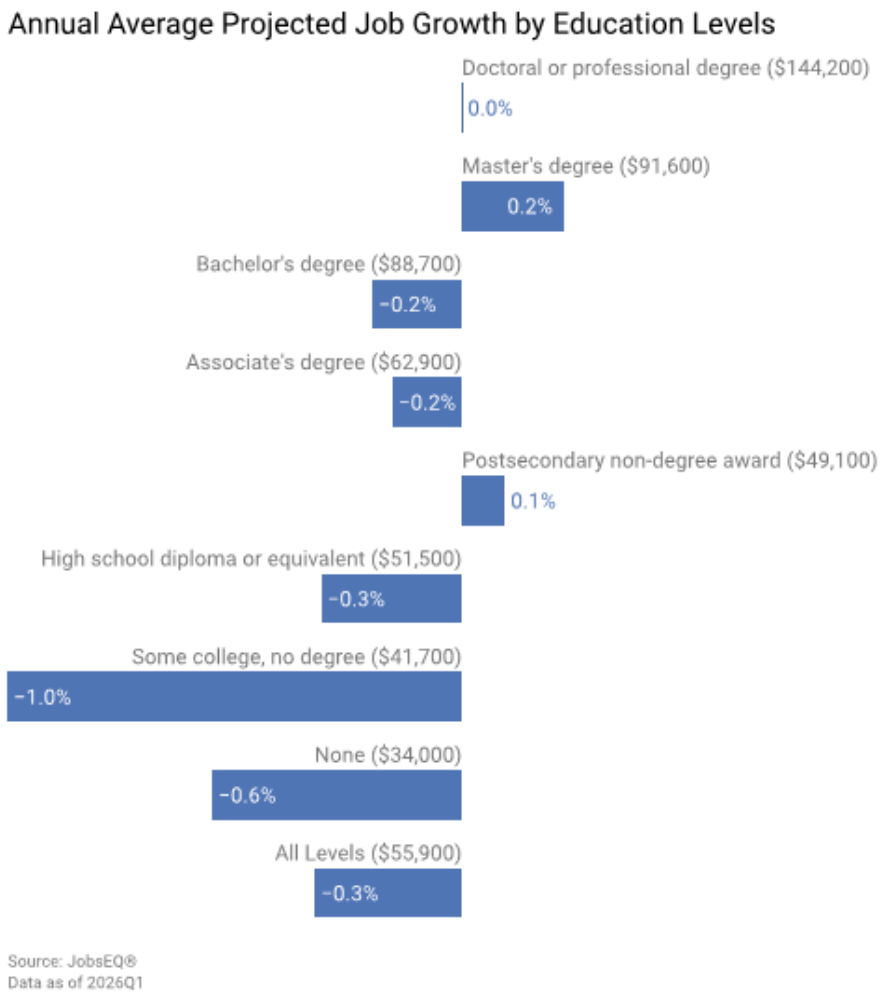
The GDP for the sub-region expanded 4.2% in 2025. This expansion follows growth of 4.5% in 2024. The industry sector that contributed to the largest portion of the GDP in 2025 was Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting. Following Agriculture is Transportation and Warehousing and Healthcare and Social Assistance.



Gross Domestic Product data are provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, imputed by Chmura where necessary, updated through 2025.



Expected growth rates for occupations vary based on the required education and training. While overall employment in this sub-region combined is projected to decline by 0.3% over the next ten years, occupations requiring a postgraduate degree are not expected to grow annually. Also, occupations requiring a bachelor's degree are forecasted to shrink by 0.2% per year, and those needing a 2-year degree or certificate are anticipated to contract by 0.2% annually.

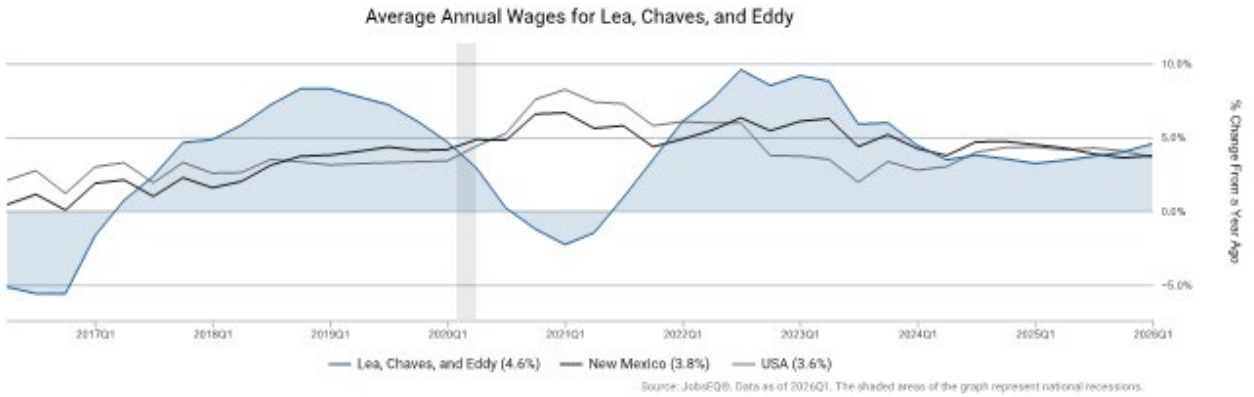


Employment by occupation data are estimates are as of 2026Q1. Education levels of occupations are based on BLS assignments. Forecast employment growth uses national projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics adapted for regional growth patterns.

Lea, Chaves and Eddy Counties

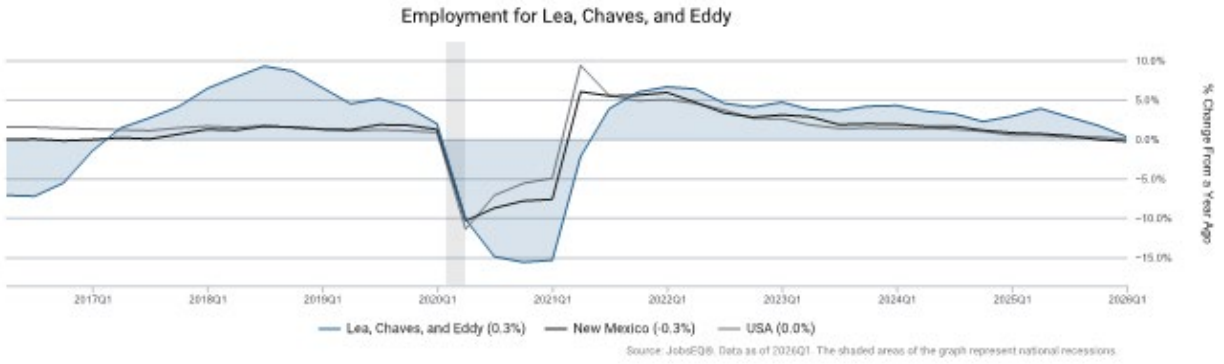
The population in the Lea, Chaves, and Eddy counties sub-region was 199,055 per American Community Survey data for 2020-2025 representing 53% of the population of the Eastern Area. This is because these three counties are part of the Permian basin which is known for high-wage jobs in the oil and gas industry. The region has a civilian labor force of 90,577 with a participation rate of 59.7%. This has increased since 2022, when the total labor force for this sub-region was just over 82,000. The average worker in Lea, Chaves, and Eddy counties combined earned average annual wages of $69,275 as of the first quarter of program year 2026. Industry sectors in the Lea, Chaves, and Eddy with the highest average wages per worker are Utilities ($114,709), Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction ($108,511), and Manufacturing ($93,631). Chaves county has a strong aviation and aerospace industry and is well positioned to provide access to training for future employment than other locations in the state. The board is working with local business to develop strategies for filling the skills gaps and employment

needs of this sector to support continued growth through workforce partnerships and potential apprenticeship opportunities.



Annual average wages per worker data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2025Q4 with preliminary estimates updated to 2026Q1.

Based on the first quarter of program year 2026 employment data, this sub-region employed just over 95,000 individuals, an increase of approximately 5,000 from the same timeframe in 2024. Overall, employment in the sub-region increased by 0.3% from the previous program year.



Employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2025Q4 with preliminary estimates updated to 2026Q1.

The largest industry sector in the Lea, Chaves, and Eddy is Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction, employing 16,192 workers. The next-largest sectors in the region are Retail Trade (10,228) and Health Care and Social Assistance (10,092). Over the next five years, employment in the sub-region is projected to increase by 982 jobs. The sector anticipated to grow the fastest is Health Care and Social Assistance, with a projected annual growth rate of +0.8%. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Health Care and Social Assistance (+373 jobs), Construction (+260), and Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction (+221).

EMPLOYMENT



94,939

Regional employment / **166,987,728** in the nation

1.0%

Avg Ann % Change Last 10 Years / **+1.0%** in the U.S.



100.0%

% of Total Employment / **100.0%** in the U.S.



WAGES



$67,825

Avg Wages per Worker / **$76,205** in the nation

3.6%

Avg Ann % Change Last 10 Years / **+3.9%** in the U.S.



Industry Snapshot

EMPLOYMENT

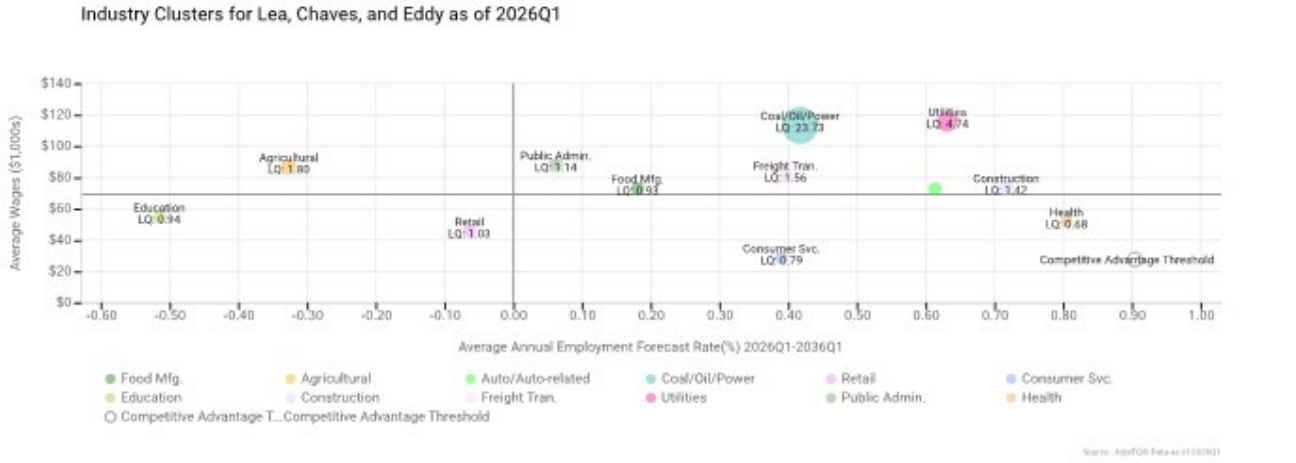


WAGES



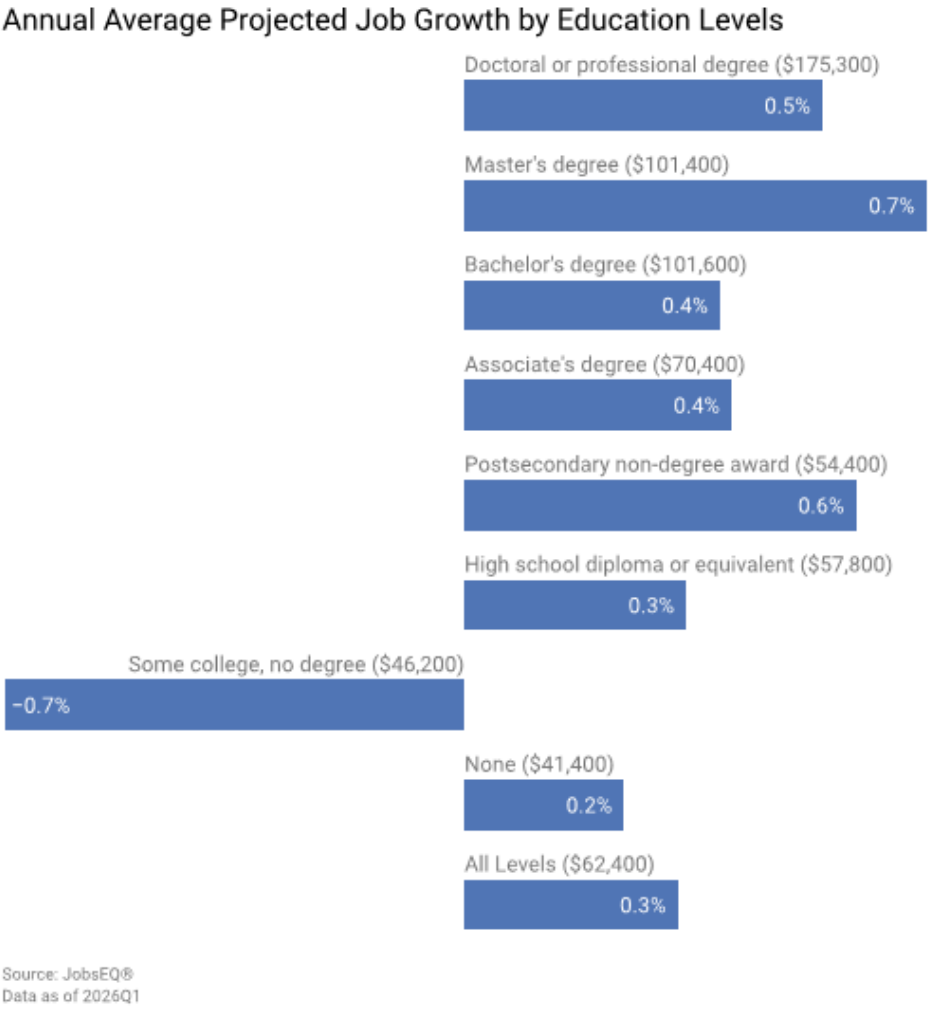
2-Digit Industry	Empl	Avg Ann Wages	LQ	5yr History	Annual Demand	Forecast Ann Growth
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	16,192	$107,026	48.46		1,496	0.3%
Retail Trade	10,288	$38,193	1.13		1,355	-0.3%
Health Care and Social Assistance	10,092	$53,476	0.68		1,073	0.7%
Accommodation and Food Services	9,180	$26,038	1.11		1,612	0.3%
Construction	8,396	$72,842	1.47		744	0.6%
Educational Services	7,483	$59,555	0.97		648	-0.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	5,050	$82,048	1.05		550	0.3%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	4,207	$71,156	0.74		483	0.3%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	3,938	$45,948	0.98		454	0.3%
Public Administration	3,465	$85,206	0.77		313	0.0%
Remaining Component Industries	16,647	$74,001	0.85		1,646	0.2%
Total - All Industries	**94,939**	**$67,825**	**1.00**		**10,343**	**0.2%**

The industry cluster in the sub-region with the highest relative concentration is Coal/Oil/Power. This cluster employs 16,192 workers in the region with an average wage of $107,026. Employment in the Coal/Oil/Power cluster is projected to grow in the region by about 0.4% per year over the next ten years. The development of sector strategies and career pathways around renewable energy as addressed in the state plan could be utilized to maintain growth in this sector in the sub-region.



Location quotient and average wage data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, imputed where necessary, and updated through 2025Q4 with preliminary estimates updated to 2026Q1. Forecast employment growth uses national projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics adapted for regional growth patterns.

Occupational growth rates in the Lea, Chaves, and Eddy regions differ based on the level of education and training required. Overall employment in these areas is projected to grow by 0.3% over the next decade and jobs that require a postgraduate degree are expected to grow by 0.5% annually. Also, positions requiring a bachelor's degree are forecasted to increase by 0.4% per year, while those requiring a 2-year degree or certificate are also anticipated to grow 0.4% per year

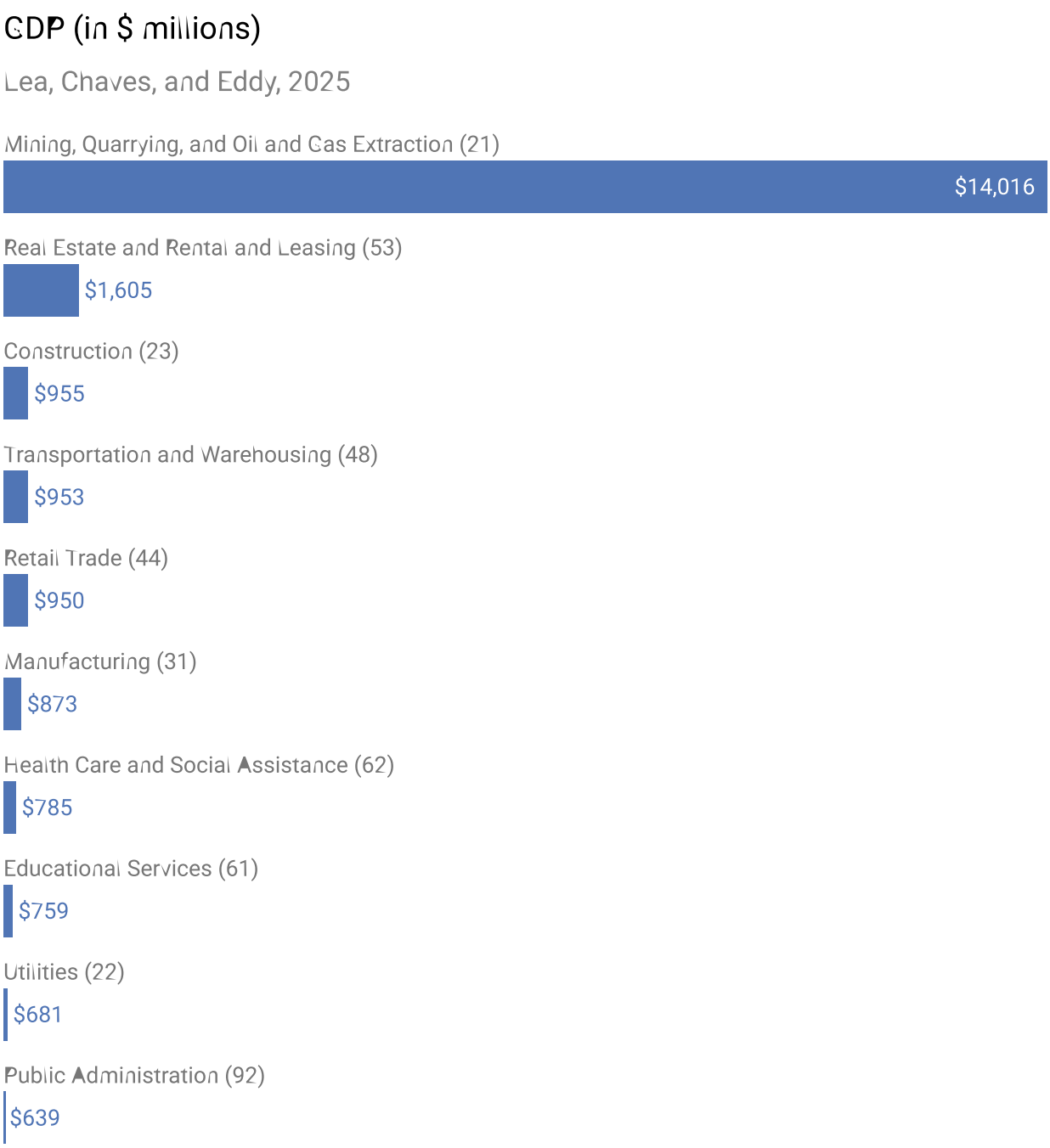


Employment by occupation data are estimates are as of 2026Q1. Education levels of occupations are based on BLS assignments. Forecast employment growth uses national projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics adapted for regional growth patterns.

According to the JobEQ data below, in 2025, the GDP in this sub-region grew by 6%, following an increase of 12% in 2024. By the end of 2025, the total GDP for these regions had reached over $25 billion dollars. Of the sectors in the Lea, Chaves, and Eddy, Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction contributed the largest portion of GDP in 2025, a little over $14 billion dollars. The next-largest contributions came from Real Estate and Rental and Leasing ($1,605,149,000); Construction ($955,092,000); and Transportation and Warehousing ($953,269,000).



Gross Domestic Product data are provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, imputed by Chmura where necessary, updated through 2025.



Lincoln and Otero Counties

The counties of Lincoln and Otero make up the southwestern part of the region, with their economies largely driven by military facilities and tourism. Otero County hosts both White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) and Holloman Air Force Base (HAFB). WSMR draws visitors with its striking white gypsum dunes and its historical significance related to World War II nuclear testing. Lincoln County, known for its scenic mountains, rivers, and lakes, is a popular vacation destination. The county is home to the Mescalero

Apache Tribal Lands which contain the Inn of the Mountain Gods, Casino Apache, and Ski Apache, offering year-round recreational activities.

In June 2024 Lincoln and Otero Counties and the Mescalero Apache Reservation were significantly impacted by the Salt and Southfork Fires. These wildfires swept through rugged terrains and forested areas, bringing destruction and concern to the affected communities. These fires, named after the regions, they ignited in, tested the resilience of local residents.

Despite the efforts of hundreds of firefighters and support personnel, both fires were extremely destructive, leaving a lasting impact on the landscape, scorching thousands of acres of wilderness. The EAWDB understands that these fires are going to severely impact economic and industry projections moving forward and the board will work diligently through the state, federal and local partners to assist in community in clean up and recovery efforts. The economic impact of the Salt and South Fork Fires is projected to be significant, particularly in the short to medium term. These wildfires disrupted local economies, especially in sectors like tourism, agriculture, and forestry, which are heavily dependent on the natural landscape.

The fires damaged key recreational areas, trails, and scenic spots, leading to a decline in visitor numbers. Local businesses that rely on tourism—such as hotels, restaurants, and outdoor adventure companies—experienced losses due to closures and decreased demand. This downturn in tourism could have lasting effects on the region's economy, as it will take time for the natural environment to recover and attract visitors again. For the agriculture and forestry sectors, the fires resulted in the destruction of valuable crops, reservation land, and timber resources. Ranchers and farmers may face increased costs for rehabilitation and recovery, further straining resources in the affected areas.

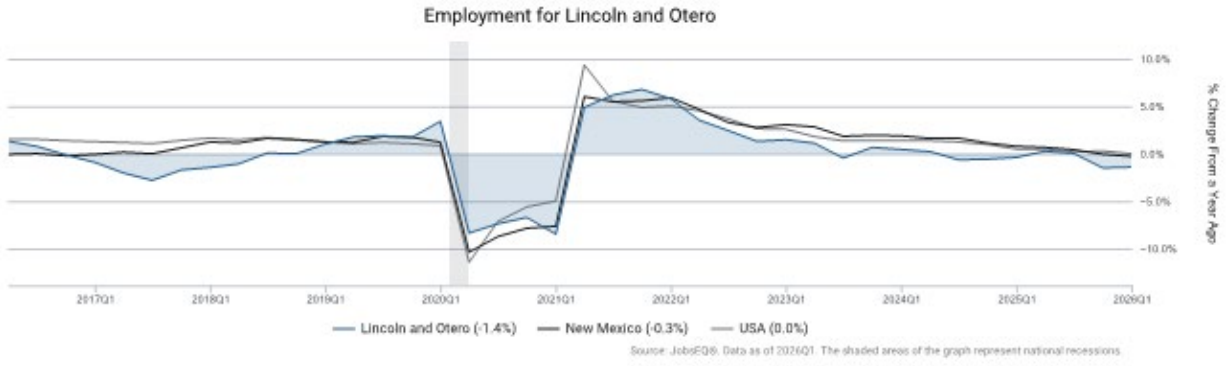
The immediate aftermath of the fires saw a rise in unemployment as businesses shut down temporarily or permanently. The EAWDB understands that local American Job Center (AJC) offices are crucial in helping dislocated workers access unemployment benefits and opportunities to retrain or to assist individual to upskill to provide them with the tools they need to get back to work quickly. However, the overall job market in the affected areas may remain fragile until the economy stabilizes.

In July of 2024 the EAWDB was awarded a National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) to assist with the recovery efforts in Lincoln County. The grant allowed WIOA Title I staff to support disaster recovery efforts, provide occupational skills training, and strengthen partnerships with employers, community organizations, emergency management agencies, and correctional facilities throughout the region. As recovery efforts progressed, the availability of Disaster Relief Employment (DRE) opportunities remained limited by several factors outside of EAWDB's control. FEMA timelines, seasonal weather, repeated flooding, employer participation requirements, and the relocation or closure of some businesses affected the number and timing of available recovery projects. Staff continued to work with county emergency response personnel, FEMA, DHSEM, COAD/LTRG, local employers, and other partners to

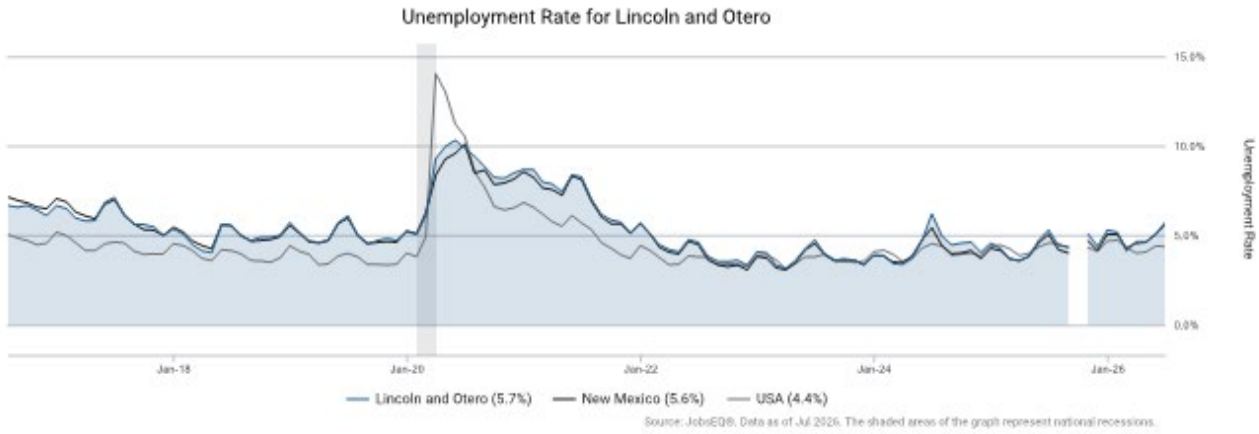
identify opportunities for cleanup and recovery employment. Three participants ultimately completed Disaster Relief Employment and transitioned into gainful employment.

In the long term, the fires may lead to changes in land use and development patterns and labor market projections for the region as well as economic stability. Some areas may see a shift towards more fire-resistant infrastructure and a stronger emphasis on wildfire prevention. While recovery efforts will create temporary jobs and stimulate some economic activity, the overall impact on the region's economy will be felt for several years. Overall, the fires are expected to have a profound economic impact, with losses across multiple sectors and a lengthy recovery process ahead. This area is also well positioned for increases in renewable energy, specifically wind energy, which could help offset some of the loss of employment opportunities that are resulting from the impact of the fires.

According to data from the 2020-2024 American Community Survey and JobsEQ, the population of the sub-region is 89,040. The region's civilian labor force numbers 35,435, with a labor force participation rate of 51.9%. Among individuals aged 25 to 64 in these counties, 22.7% hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to the national average of 37.3%. The median household income in Lincoln and Otero counties was $55,130 as of July 2026. As of the first quarter of program year 2026, total employment in Lincoln and Otero counties was 26,793, based on a four-quarter moving average. Over the year ending in PY 2025 Quarter one, employment in the region saw a 1.4% decrease. The decline in employment in this sub-region is a direct reflection of the Salt and South Fork Fires. The unemployment rate for the sub-region was 5.7% as of July 2026. The sub-region unemployment rate was higher than the national rate of 4.4%. One year earlier, in June 2023, the unemployment rate in the Lincoln and Otero counties combined was 4.3%.



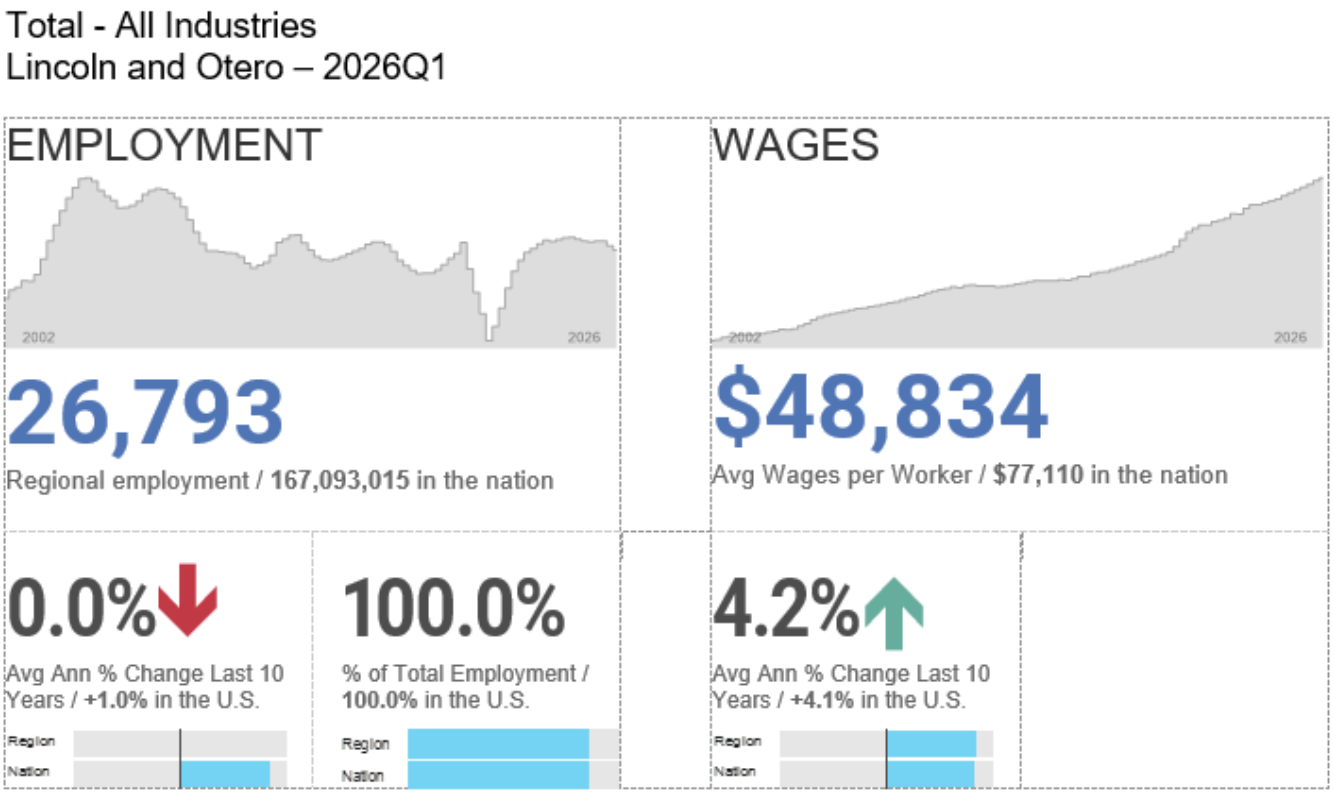
Employment data are derived from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and imputed where necessary. Data are updated through 2025Q4 with preliminary estimates updated to 2026Q1.



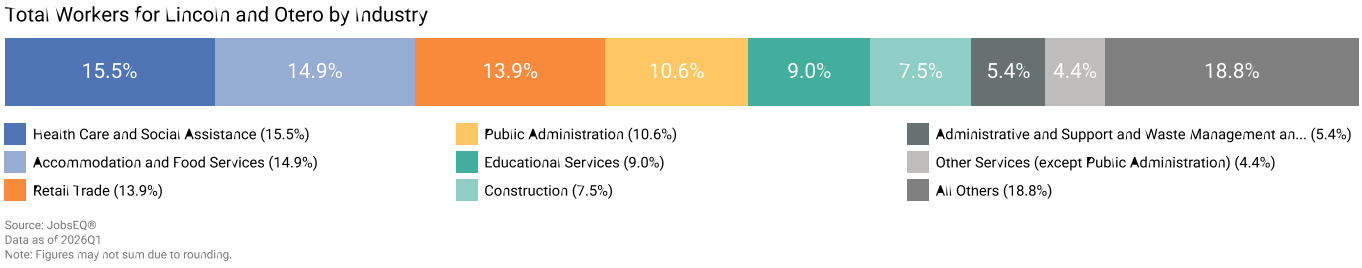
Unemployment rate data are from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and updated through July 2026.

Over the past decade, employment in the Lincoln and Otero sub-region has been somewhat stable, with an average annual growth rate of 0.0%, compared to 1.0% nationally. The sub-region currently supports 26,793 jobs. Wages have shown growth, increasing at an average annual rate of 4.2% over the past ten years, which is comparable to the 4.1% national rate. Despite this wage growth, the region's average annual wage of $48,834 per worker remains well below the national average of $77,110. Overall, the data indicates relatively flat, long-term employment growth in the sub-region, while wage growth has kept pace with national trends, although average wage levels continue to

remain below the national average.



In Lincoln and Otero counties, the Health Care and Social Assistance sector is the largest employer, with 4,158 workers. Following closely behind the Health Care and Social Assistance are the Accommodation and Food Services sector, which employs 3,980 workers, and the Retail Trade sector, with 3,732 workers. These industries play a crucial role in the region's economy, collectively supporting a significant portion of the local workforce.



B. Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

I. Include an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training in the region. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skills needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers.

Regional Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

The EAWDB conducts various workforce activities by forming local partnerships through Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to implement core and partner programs. These successful partnerships, collaborations, and leveraged programs are a key strength in the east. Under WIOA, workforce development activities are organized into three categories: Career Services, Training Services, and Business Services. The workforce development partners in the region include but are not limited to:

- DWS operated workforce programs including but not limited to; Wagner Peyser, Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), Veterans programs, Worker Opportunity Tax Credit, Unemployment Insurance, and Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers;
- Eight postsecondary education institutions made up of 1 four-year university and 7 community colleges as well as several private institutions;
- Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the New Mexico School for the Blind;
- Adult Education and Literacy programs housed on seven community college campuses;
- Carl Perkins Career Technical Education Act in the K-12 and post-secondary systems;
- Job Corps;
- Senior Community Service Employment Program;
- TANF; and
- WIOA the Title I adult, dislocated worker and youth programs operated by the board.

The workforce development system in the area provides a range of essential basic career services to address the needs of the workforce, including support for individuals with disabilities and other employment barriers. These services are available at our AJC offices, virtually, or in community spaces when necessary, and often involve collaboration with internal and external partners and programs. Basic career services include:

- Initial assessment;
- Labor market information;

- Provision of information on demand sectors and occupations as well as the wages and training requirements for those occupations;
- Job search and placement assistance;
- Provision of information regarding the availability of supportive services;
- Provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures;
- Referrals for services and assistance with accessing all partner programs;
- Eligibility determination for WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth services as well as assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial assistance for training not provided by WIOA; and
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing unemployment insurance claims.

Individualized career services are offered by the various partner programs to identify an individual's employment goals, objectives and to determine what services might need to achieve employment goals. These individualized career services offered to targeted populations include:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments and needs;
- Development of employment plans;
- Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring;
- Career planning and case management;
- Short term pre-vocational services;
- Supportive services to assist individuals in obtaining or retaining employment or participating in training services;
- Internships and work experience;
- Workforce Preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out of area job search assistance
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

Another strength in the east is the strong relationships built with our regional training providers and employers. The strong partnership with the training providers has played a crucial role in developing and delivering meaningful training opportunities identified by employers, in high demand industries to individuals in the eastern area. Training services available include:

- Career technical education programs;
- Occupational skills training programs including those specialized for individuals with disabilities;

- On the Job Training (OJT) to provide hands-on, earn while you learn opportunities;
- Workplace literacy programs;
- Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) to help avert potential layoffs or increase the skill levels of employees;
- Customized training designed to increase the skills of workers in emerging technologies or processes;
- Skills upgrade and retraining;
- Entrepreneural training;
- Transitional jobs; and
- Linkages to registered apprenticeships.

There are a variety of services to assist employers in meeting their workforce needs and can provide employers with quality labor market data and wage analysis to assist in forecasting future needs. Services available to employers are:

- Job fairs and hiring events;
- Matching qualified candidates to available jobs;
- Space for interviews and hiring;
- Layoff aversion assistance;
- Pre-screening of candidates;
- Specialized assessments;
- Rapid response activities;
- Assistance with job postings and development of job descriptions;
- Recruiting candidates;
- Partnering with training providers and employers for customized or incumbent worker training and reimbursement for portions of the associated costs;
- Workplace literacy;
- Tax credits for hiring certain categories of workers;
- Assistance with employer related tax issues; and
- On the job training to help offset extraordinary costs associated with training new employees.

Job seekers are enrolled in workforce programs to receive support with job searching and career planning. During enrollment, staff assist individuals in setting employment goals, identifying skill gaps, and exploring training and work-based learning opportunities through WIOA programs. With the one-

stop operator team, EAWDB assisted in developing online workshops on job search skills, including resume writing, interviewing, career exploration, and networking. Additionally, American Job Center staff help match job seekers with open positions through the New Mexico Jobs Online System (NMJOBS), connecting them with local businesses seeking to fill vacancies.

Job seekers needing training assistance work with career coaches to research labor market information, ensuring their training is marketable, in-demand, and likely to provide a sustainable wage. Customer choice is crucial, and individuals are supported in exploring training options through the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in the NMJOBS. In the east, training opportunities are offered by seven local community colleges, one four-year university, several private institutions/training providers, and statewide apprenticeship programs. The EAWDB also encourages new training providers to apply for WIOA eligibility.

From July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, local Job centers provided 81,562 staff-assisted services to over 42,000 job seekers. This included 8,227 office visits where individuals received support. Additionally, job seekers utilized resource room equipment 7,463 times. Title I services, which assist with job training, were provided 1,712 times to 1,676 individuals, and 2,964 supportive services were offered to 1,689 job seekers. These efforts highlight the extensive support provided to the local workforce by office staff in program year 2025.

2025 Eastern Area AJC Center Services		
	Numbers Served	
Services	**Distinct Users**	**Total Services**
Total Served Title III	**21,752**	**33,746**
Office Visits	**8,227**	**22,125**
Resource Room Equipment	**7,463**	**18,309**
UI Interview	**1,382**	**2,020**
Job Fair Participants	**611**	**686**
Title I	**1,676**	**1,712**
Supportive Services	**1,689**	**2,964**

Source: NMJOBS

The eastern area benefits from a strong network of private post-secondary training institutions. These training institutions offer a diverse range of training programs, catering to various career paths and sectors. A key strength of the region's postsecondary system is its comprehensive adult education services, which provide crucial services to individuals who need to enhance basic skills or obtain a high school equivalency diploma. These services include tutoring, training, and high school equivalency exam preparation to name a few. These adult education programs are designed to be accessible to individuals

with disabilities and to address the needs of students facing multiple barriers. Additionally, some institutions offer career and technical education courses that align with specific career pathways and industry-related training.

Another key strength of the region's education system is its flexibility and responsiveness in providing tailored training services. Most institutions in the region can quickly develop programs to meet the needs of various system customers, including individuals with disabilities. Community colleges in the area are particularly adaptable, responding swiftly to the needs of local businesses. They can partner with local workforce partners to create customized training programs and provide incumbent worker training to address specific skill requirements. Additionally, the presence of a centrally located four- year institution allows individuals to pursue advanced education that offers a range of baccalaureate degrees for occupations that are in-demand. This comprehensive and responsive educational system is well-equipped to support workforce development across the region.

Active engagement between workforce development organizations and employers in the region has also proven to be another major strength in the region. The collaboration between workforce partners and local employers ensures that training programs are relevant and aligned with the needs of local industries, helping to address skill gaps and improve employment outcomes for job seekers in the east.

While the EAWDB maintains a strong partnership with its training providers, partners and local employers, the capacity of workforce development programs may be limited by funding constraints and availability of resources. This can impact the ability to expand services, offer more specialized training, or provide sufficient support to individuals with significant barriers to employment, such as individuals who are long-term unemployed, lack of childcare, or transportation issues.

Another challenge we face in the east is despite the availability of training programs, the region’s average wage levels are significantly lower than the national average. Slow wage growth over the past decade suggests that even with training, many jobs in the region do not offer competitive wages, which can make it difficult to retain talent and address long-term economic needs the area faces.

Overall, the region has a strong foundation for workforce development but addressing current and future workforce needs will require continued investment and strategic planning from all stakeholders. To meet the education and skills needs of the workforce—including individuals with barriers to employment—the board will work to better coordinate and align workforce programs by:

1. Expand Funding and Resources: Increasing funding through grants and additional funding opportunities for workforce development programs will allow for more comprehensive services and support. This will expand training programs in in-demand sectors, offering more financial assistance for education, and improving access to supportive services like childcare and transportation.

2. Enhance Employer Partnerships: Strengthening partnerships with local employers will ensure that training programs remain responsive to the evolving needs of the labor market. Employers can provide valuable insights into emerging skills requirements and offer work-based learning opportunities, such as apprenticeships, that bridge the gap between training and employment.

3. Focus on In-Demand Sectors: Prioritizing training and education programs that lead to employment in high-wage, in-demand sectors can help address wage disparities and improve the overall economic health of the region. By aligning workforce development efforts with industries that offer growth potential and competitive wages, the region can attract and retain talent.

4. Improve Outreach and Accessibility: Expanding outreach efforts, particularly in rural and underserved areas, is essential for ensuring that all individuals have access to workforce development services. This will involve leveraging technology for virtual training and support, increasing the presence of rural access points, and collaborating with community organizations.

C. Strategic Vision and Goals

I. Provide a description of the local board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include goals for preparing an educated skilled workforce, and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators.

II. Based on the economic and workforce analysis describe the board's overall strategy for working with the entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

Strategic Vision and Goals

I. Provide a description of the local board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include goals for preparing an educated skilled workforce, and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators.

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB) is committed to fostering regional economic growth by aligning its strategies with the needs of job seekers, key stakeholders and employers in the region. The board's vision is to create a dynamic workforce that meets the current and future demands of the regional economy. This includes collaborating with local businesses, economic development

agencies, and educational institutions to identify sectors and emerging industries, ensuring that the workforce is equipped with the skills required to prosper. The board's focus is on promoting system improvements that encourage business growth, entrepreneurship, and the development of a skilled workforce through upskilling and building potential apprenticeships opportunities.

A major goal of the board is to prepare a highly trained and skilled workforce that can contribute to overall regional economic development in the area. This involves investing in education and training programs that cater to job seekers and employers' needs. The board prioritizes initiatives that support lifelong learning, upskilling, and reskilling, enabling workers to adapt to technological advancements and shifts in the job market. Special focus is given to individuals with barriers, such as low-income individuals, displaced workers, individuals with disabilities, and youth, ensuring they have access to training and employment opportunities that lead them to self-sufficient and stable employment.

As mentioned above, promoting self-sufficiency is a key element of the board's goal and vision during the planning period. By providing individuals with the tools and resources necessary to secure stable, well-paying jobs, the board aims to reduce dependency on public assistance programs and enhance the quality of life for the people we serve in the east. Programs that support entrepreneurship and small business development are also prioritized, as they play a crucial role in driving regional economic growth and creating job opportunities. The board also aims to drive system improvements that stimulate business and economic growth in the region. This includes developing strategies that expand opportunities for upskilling the workforce and advancing policies that support entrepreneurship, apprenticeship programs, and overall business development.

The EAWDB is committed to building a comprehensive workforce development system that addresses the needs of both individuals, including those with significant barriers, and businesses. This strategy ensures that Eastern New Mexico has a skilled workforce capable of competing effectively in the state. By collaborating with workforce partners, EAWDB aims to create a unified approach that integrates education, workforce partners, and economic development resources. This collaboration drives the board's vision of delivering business-driven solutions that allows businesses, individuals, and communities to flourish and contribute to economic growth in the region.

To achieve the board's overall vision, the One-Stop Operator and partners must collaborate to align staff and services effectively, prevent duplication, and maximize resources in support of the combined state plan. Education and training provider programs should be designed and aligned to support career pathways, industry clusters, and credential attainment that are both portable and stackable. Developing work-based learning opportunities—such as work experience, internships, on-the-job training (OJT), transitional jobs, and registered apprenticeships—will bridge academic and occupational learning, enabling job seekers to earn while they learn. These opportunities will help increase earning

potential for job seekers and address employer needs. Work-based learning will be integrated into career pathway training and directly connected to the key employment sectors and clusters identified across the region.

Workforce partnership is key in planning and accomplishing the board's goals and vision. By utilizing a coordinated pipeline that addresses business needs across key sectors while expanding opportunities for individuals. This shared vision is guided by the following concepts, which will drive program service delivery and policy development:

- Business Focus through Sector Strategies: The EAWDB will prioritize a sector-based approach that aligns workforce initiatives with industry demands and the state board's vision for the system.
- Strong Business Partnerships: Collaborating with businesses at all levels will ensure that workforce programs meet employer needs.
- Career Pathways: The board will develop pathways that prepare individuals for both current and future jobs.
- Integrated Service Delivery: Seamless coordination between workforce services ensures effective support for job seekers, youth and employers.
- Access and Opportunity for All Populations: The EAWDB is committed to creating equitable opportunities across all demographics to support inclusivity.
- Cross-Agency Collaboration: Partnerships with various agencies will help develop and promote career pathways and industry-recognized portable and stackable credentials.
- Clear Metrics for Success: The board will establish measurable goals to track progress, success and a means to identify best practices.
- Focus on Continuous Improvement: The EAWDB will prioritize innovation and ongoing enhancements in service delivery.
- Increased Collaboration and Shared Resources: The board will emphasize communication and resource sharing among partners.
- Business Engagement: Business owners and managers will be actively involved as partners in creating solutions.
- Career Pathways and Skill Development: Enhancing skill levels through defined career pathways will be central to the board's efforts.
- Elimination of Barriers: The board will focus on minimizing barriers to education and employment.
- User-Friendly Processes: From intake to exit, the board will ensure that processes and systems are accessible and efficient.
- Increase Access to Rural Areas: Continue to develop and implement Rural Access Point's (RAPs)

- Improved Outreach and Branding: Strengthening outreach efforts and the board's identity will help engage key stakeholders and promote services effectively.

Achieving this is going to require a workforce development system that aligns system partners, education and training providers, economic developers, and small business developers with employers in in-demand or growing industries. To accomplish this, the EAWDB must actively engage with Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) and/or their representatives, as well as local economic development organizations. These stakeholders must be involved in community partnerships, strategy formation, and process development. Clear and consistent communication with them is essential, including updates on state board initiatives that impact the local workforce system. Additionally, the operator and board staff will provide Title I and III program performance data to program and area supervisors at least quarterly. This data will be reviewed and evaluated to assess the effectiveness of current strategies on performance outcomes. Regular analysis and discussion will enable timely adjustments to processes and strategies, helping to prevent significant declines in federal performance measures before they occur.

One of the weaknesses identified during the state planning process was a fragmented system that was duplicative in nature. In response the state has engaged with local boards and stakeholders to work to develop a system for aligned case management where partners can have a universal referral process and a way to review shared information to minimize duplication. This duplication is not just limited to the workforce system staff and partners but also for customers of the system, e.g. provision of the same documentation to multiple partners in order to receive full wrap around services. While this is early in the development process the board is excited to partner with the state and our local partners to bring this to fruition and better utilize our time, resources and funding in a more collaborative and cohesive manner. This is one step in working toward an optimized system as identified in the state plan.

<u>Strategies for working with core programs and partners to align resources and achieve the strategic vision and goals</u>

II. Based on the economic and workforce analysis describe the board's overall strategy for working with the entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

Achieving the goals outlined above will result in a workforce system that is fully designed and aligned to offer comprehensive services and support to both job seekers and employers. For this to be successful, all system partners must collaborate and work toward the shared objective of developing a

highly skilled workforce that meets the needs of employers. The board is committed to fostering collaboration among entities that carry out core programs and will work with partners to ensure we can effectively align resources in the local area. This strategy emphasizes the integration of services and resources across workforce development, education, and economic development sectors. By doing so, the board aims to ensure that all efforts are coordinated towards achieving the strategic vision of creating a highly skilled workforce that meets the needs of job seekers and employers in the region.

The board's operator continues to identify opportunities to work with core partners at each WCC location to optimize co-location, either on a full-time or part-time basis. This may include desk sharing among part-time partners, aligning partner-led workshops in the community wherever feasible, and standardizing tools like assessments and enrollment processes to reduce redundancy for co-enrolled customers.

Additionally, aligning job development and business outreach services across partners is a key priority. Core partners will work together to identify duplicative service delivery processes and parallel documentation requirements. This collaborative effort is essential to:

- Simplify access to seamlessly integrated services,
- Streamline paperwork into a unified structure as much as possible, and
- Create an efficient customer flow within the offices and across the workforce development system, ensuring that all available services are easily accessible to job seekers through a coordinated approach.

The EAWDB, along with its operator and workforce partners, will continue to collaborate to deliver workforce system services in a holistic manner. These efforts aim to strengthen workforce partnerships, including those with employers and postsecondary providers, to develop a talent pipeline that aligns with high-growing, in-demand, or emerging industry needs. This collaboration will help prepare under-skilled adults, the unemployed, dislocated workers, and other populations most in need of sustainable career opportunities while enhancing their understanding of labor market trends. Additionally, the operator will focus on increasing employer awareness of workforce services by establishing and maintaining strong business relationships with employers throughout the region.

As identified in the state plan, one of the overarching goals of the workforce development system is to improve the quality of living in the state and local areas through prioritizing the focus on the "inverted labor market." As mentioned earlier the region has more open positions than unemployed individuals seeking employment. We must not only retain the talent we have but need a healthy and diverse economic environment to enable recruitment of new talent to the region as well as retain the talent that already exists.

In terms of talent retention, it is also imperative to increase the number of individuals engaged in the workforce. That means working through the partner relationships mentioned above to increase workforce participation. Partners will work together to identify, recruit, upskill, and train disengaged individuals in sectors and career pathways that will provide a higher quality of living and economic stability. The Governor's office has several identified priority sectors that apply to the eastern region. These include construction, first responders, education, healthcare and natural resource management. The EAWDB has already established that health care and education are a particular focus for sector strategy development in our region. These sectors are critical to maintaining a high quality of life with a good education available to our young people. The board will partner with the state on other priority sectors such as broadband expansion and natural resource management to help bring new opportunities to the region's citizens.

Technological advancements are going to require an upskilling and retooling of our existing workforce as well as change what the educational system is teaching and how they are teaching it. The area has already experienced increased demand for technology-related jobs such as remote aircraft piloting, which is highly specialized, has high earnings potential and requires a short training period and immediate employment opportunities. The board is currently working with the community colleges to expand training opportunities in this area.

OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

A. Local Workforce System Structure

I. Describe the geographical workforce development area, including the LWDA's major communities, major employers, training and educational institutions, population, diversity of the population and relevant growth trends.

II. Provide a full board roster including the group each member represents (Attachment B). Include a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee.

III. Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in the system, demonstrating regional alignment with economic, workforce and workforce development analysis. Include a list of one stop centers in the local area (ATTACHMENT C) including address and phone numbers. Indicate the one-stop center for each site and whether it's a comprehensive or satellite center. Include a list of the partners physically located at each center and the services provided by the partners.

IV. Describe how the LWDB will support the Strategies identified in the state plan and work with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs including Carl Perkins CTE to support service alignment.

EAWDB Area Information

I. Describe the geographical workforce development area, including the LWDA's major communities, major employers, training and educational institutions, population, diversity of the population and relevant growth trends.

The EAWDB service area spans twelve counties and covers over 44,000 square miles, representing 36.4% of the state's total area. The population density varies significantly across the region: Lea County is the most populous with just over 74,000 residents, while Harding County is the smallest, with fewer than 650 residents. Overall, the total estimated population of the service area is 375,009.

The four largest counties below represent 68% of the region's total population. The largest communities in those counties include:

- Roswell-Chaves County with over 60,000 people,
- Clovis-Curry County with over 45,000 people,
- Hobbs-Lea County with over 74,000 people, and
- Alamogordo-Otero County with over 70,000 people.

Below is a table that shows the population comparisons by county from 2020 to 2023 estimates.

Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in New Mexico: April 1, 2023 to July 1, 2025					
Geographic Area	**Population Estimate (as of July 1)**				
	2023	**2024**	**2025**	**Difference**	**% Change**
Chaves County, New Mexico	63,662	63,746	63,364	-298	-0.47%
Curry County, New Mexico	47,403	47,377	46,655	-748	-1.58%
De Baca County, New Mexico	1,671	1,650	1,647	-24	-1.44%
Eddy County, New Mexico	60,753	61,799	62,509	1756	2.89%
Guadalupe County, New Mexico	4,325	4,362	4,343	18	0.42%
Harding County, New Mexico	641	621	617	-24	-3.74%
Lea County, New Mexico	73,214	74,446	74,749	1535	2.10%
Lincoln County, New Mexico	20,041	20,036	19,844	-197	-0.98%
Otero County, New Mexico	69,878	70,624	70,368	490	0.70%
Quay County, New Mexico	8,615	8,542	8,454	-161	-1.87%
Roosevelt County, New Mexico	18,870	18,785	18,615	-255	-1.35%
Union County, New Mexico	3,967	3,939	3,844	-123	-3.10%
Eastern Area Totals	**373,040**	**375,927**	**375,009**	**1,969**	**0.53%**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division					

Demographic Data and Population Diversity

The latest community survey data from Jobs EQ indicates that the area has a population of 373,936, representing about 17.6% of New Mexico's total population. The demographic breakdown is as follows:

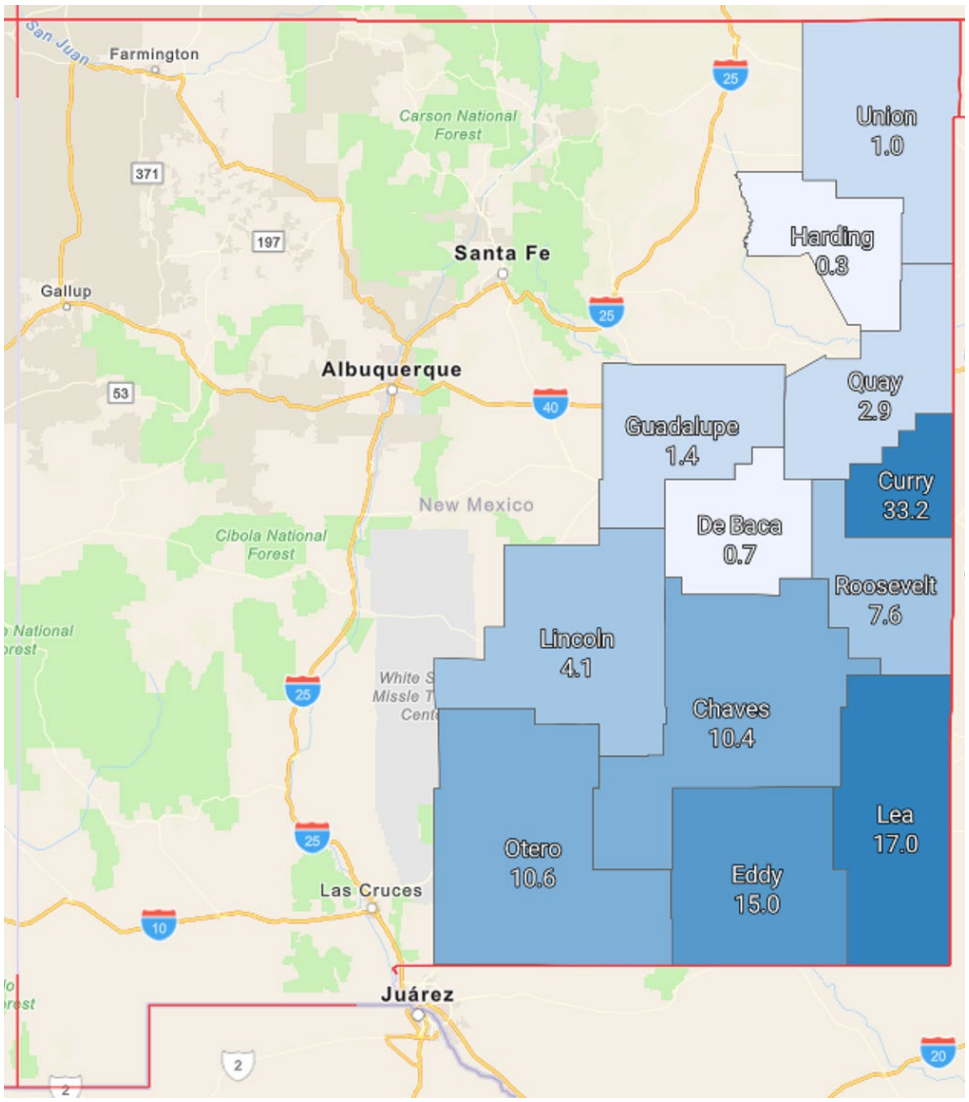
- Prime Workforce Age (25-54): 99,285 individuals, or 26.5% of the total population.
- Veterans (18-64): 12,035, with 8,915 actively participating in the workforce.
- Poverty: 70,900 individuals are living in poverty, and 29,638 households receive food stamp (SNAP) assistance.
- Single-Parent Households: 35,008 children live in single-parent households.
- Individuals with Disabilities (18-64): 34,340, with a labor participation rate of 46%, leaving approximately 54% of disabled residents unemployed.
- Educational Attainment: 30,139 individuals lack a high school diploma, while 33,257 have limited English proficiency. Additionally, 53,485 individuals have a high school diploma, 44,500 have some college education without a degree and 21,868 have a bachelor’s degree.

	Percent			Value		
	EAWDB	New Mexico	USA	EAWDB	New Mexico	USA
Demographics						
Population (ACS)	—	—	—	373,936	2,120,246	334,922,499
Male	51.5%	49.7%	49.5%	192,581	1,053,635	165,808,018
Female	48.5%	50.3%	50.5%	181,355	1,066,611	169,114,481
Median Age[2]	—	—	—	36.2	39.4	38.9
Under 18 Years	24.9%	21.7%	22.0%	93,120	461,141	73,517,834
18 to 24 Years	10.2%	9.3%	9.1%	38,268	197,667	30,597,362
25 to 34 Years	14.0%	13.2%	13.7%	52,231	279,417	45,806,540
35 to 44 Years	12.8%	12.8%	13.2%	47,977	271,040	44,237,292
45 to 54 Years	10.6%	11.2%	12.2%	39,517	237,482	40,743,799
55 to 64 Years	11.5%	12.5%	12.7%	42,867	265,235	42,386,044
65 to 74 Years	9.5%	11.5%	10.2%	35,553	243,152	34,092,907
75 Years and Over	6.5%	7.8%	7.0%	24,403	165,112	23,540,721
Race: White	53.5%	47.8%	61.0%	199,958	1,012,573	204,142,876
Race: Black or African American	2.8%	2.1%	12.2%	10,372	44,773	40,919,547
Race: American Indian and Alaska Native	2.5%	9.5%	0.9%	9,324	202,073	3,095,754
Race: Asian	1.1%	1.8%	6.0%	4,215	37,128	19,937,283
Race: Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	310	1,871	631,517
Race: Some Other Race	13.5%	13.0%	7.1%	50,384	275,236	23,884,085
Race: Two or More Races	26.6%	25.8%	12.6%	99,373	546,592	42,311,437
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	50.7%	48.4%	19.3%	189,694	1,026,614	64,759,370
Economic						
Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 16 years and over)	57.5%	57.4%	63.3%	162,710	975,902	170,199,520
Prime-Age Labor Force Participation Rate and Size (civilian population 25-54)	74.0%	77.7%	83.2%	99,285	605,008	108,100,165
Work from Home	5.5%	12.2%	15.1%	8,676	111,722	24,042,489
Armed Forces Labor Force	3.0%	0.9%	0.5%	8,845	15,462	1,293,756
Veterans, Age 18-64	5.7%	5.1%	4.1%	12,035	62,458	8,225,965
Veterans Labor Force Participation Rate and Size, Age 18-64	74.1%	73.9%	77.1%	8,915	46,152	6,341,643
Median Household Income[2]	—	—	—	$60,117	$64,059	$80,734
Per Capita Income	—	—	—	$31,685	$36,218	$44,673
Mean Commute Time (minutes)	—	—	—	20.4	23.5	26.4
Commute via Public Transportation	0.2%	0.6%	3.2%	290	5,059	5,157,401
Educational Attainment, Age 25-64						
No High School Diploma	16.5%	11.6%	9.8%	30,139	122,502	17,001,659
High School Graduate	29.3%	26.2%	24.8%	53,485	275,501	42,949,236
Some College, No Degree	24.4%	22.2%	18.9%	44,500	234,189	32,726,555
Associate's degree	10.3%	10.0%	9.2%	18,892	104,936	15,888,163
Bachelor's Degree	12.0%	17.3%	23.1%	21,868	182,083	40,059,314
Postgraduate Degree	7.5%	12.7%	14.2%	13,708	133,963	24,548,748
Social						
Poverty Level (of all people)	19.6%	17.8%	12.5%	70,900	370,915	40,735,661
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	21.0%	19.2%	12.1%	29,638	160,911	15,572,114
Enrolled in Grade 12 (% of total population)	1.4%	1.3%	1.3%	5,323	28,435	4,441,917

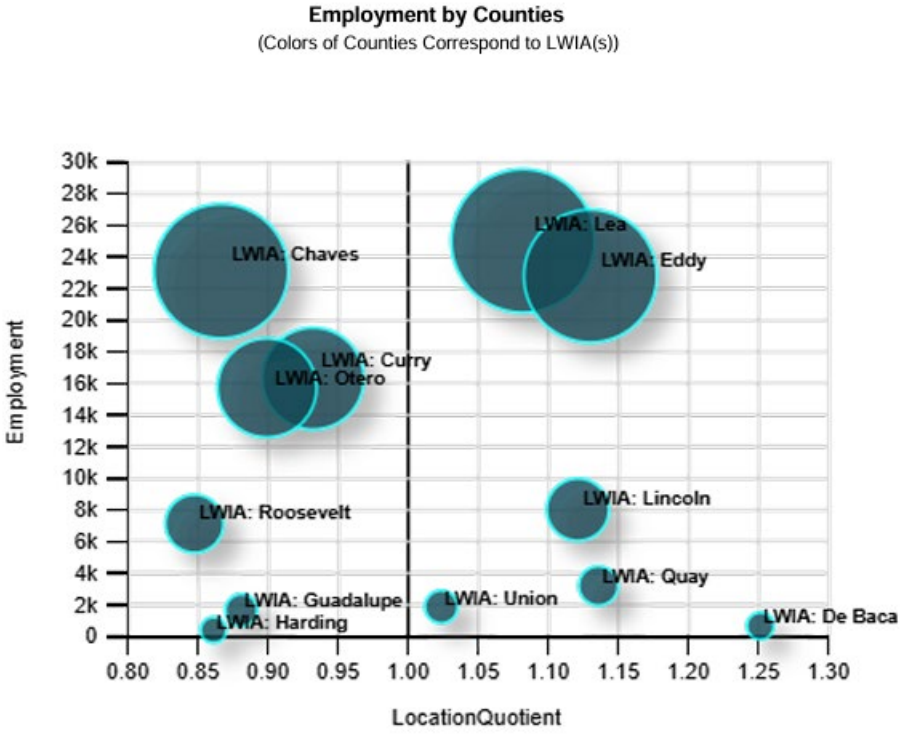
	Percent			Value		
	EAWDB	New Mexico	USA	EAWDB	New Mexico	USA
Disconnected Youth[3]	3.3%	3.6%	2.4%	696	4,098	430,721
Children in Single Parent Families (% of all children)	40.4%	44.7%	33.9%	35,008	192,380	23,651,363
Uninsured	11.0%	9.6%	8.4%	39,284	200,435	27,734,911
With a Disability, Age 18-64	16.7%	14.5%	10.9%	34,340	176,971	21,803,902
With a Disability, Age 18-64, Labor Force Participation Rate and Size	46.0%	45.0%	48.5%	15,800	79,721	10,583,510
Foreign Born	10.6%	9.4%	14.1%	39,806	199,738	47,349,078
Speak English Less Than Very Well (population 5 yrs and over)	9.5%	9.0%	8.6%	33,257	180,595	27,139,643

To retain local talent, particularly in rural communities throughout the eastern area, the board will focus on building strong connections between local employers and educational institutions. By aligning training programs with the specific needs of local industries, we can ensure that residents obtain relevant skills that lead to sustainable employment within their communities. Additionally, partnerships that support entrepreneurship, remote work opportunities, and small business development will help create more diverse job opportunities locally, reducing the need for our local talent to seek employment elsewhere. Expanding access to career counseling, mentorship programs, and community engagement initiatives will further reinforce the value of staying in their local community.

The Eastern Area is predominantly rural, with an overall population density of approximately 8.5 people per square mile across the 12-county region. Population density varies considerably by county, reflecting the region's mix of larger population counties and sparsely populated rural communities. The data shows that Curry County continues to have the highest population density at 33.2 people per square mile, followed by Lea County at 17.0 and Eddy County at 15.0. In contrast, the region's most rural counties remain less populated, with Harding County having the lowest population density at just 0.3 people per square mile, followed by De Baca County at 0.7 and Union County at 1.0. Overall, the map illustrates the distinctly rural character of the Eastern area, with population more heavily concentrated in Curry, Lea, Eddy, Otero, and Chaves Counties.



According to EconoVue data, employment across the Eastern area is concentrated in the region's larger counties. Lea County has the highest employment, with approximately 25,000 workers, followed by Chaves and Eddy Counties with approximately 23,000 workers each. Curry and Otero Counties also represent significant employment numbers, with approximately 16,000–17,000 workers each. In contrast, the region's more rural counties have substantially smaller employment bases. Harding and De Baca Counties have the lowest employment levels, each with fewer than 1,000 workers, while Guadalupe and Union Counties each have approximately 2,000 workers. The data shows the significant variation in employment concentration across the Eastern area's larger and rural counties.



The table below identifies the 10 largest employers in the Eastern area, ranked by employment, along with their material change descriptions. Material change descriptions provide insight into significant recent changes or trends that may affect an employer's operations, financial position, or overall performance. Bam Pizza Management Inc. is currently the region's largest employer, with 2,405 employees, and is identified as stable. Cal's Convenience, Inc. is the second-largest employer with 1,637 employees, followed by the Mescalero Apache Housing Authority with 1,188 employees and Border States Electric Supply of Minnesota, Inc. with 1,173 employees. The data reflects a mix of business conditions across the region, including stability, organic growth, increased borrowing, spending growth, early signs of decay, and decreases in scale. Overall, the employer profile demonstrates the diversity of the Eastern area's employment base and highlights the importance of continuing to monitor employer and industry trends to identify emerging workforce needs, potential employment opportunities, and areas where workforce services may be needed.

10 Largest Companies - Eastern Area

Company Name	City	Employment	MaterialChangeDesc
Bam Pizza Management Inc.	Roswell	2,405	Stable
Cal's Convenience, Inc.	PORTALES	1,637	Early Signs of Decay
Mescalero Apache Housing Authority	Mescalero	1,188	Stable
Border States Electric Supply of Minnesota, Inc.	Hobbs	1,173	Organic Growth
Presbyterian Healthcare Services	Ruidoso	1,129	Early Signs of Decay
Alamogordo Board of Education	Alamogordo	960	Increase in Borrowing
Bamtastic Pizza, LLC	ROSWELL	785	Stable
Hobbs Municipal Schools	HOBBS	695	Decrease in Scale
Roswell Hospital Corporation	ROSWELL	670	Decrease in Scale
Mescalero Apache Tribe	MESCALERO	600	Spend Growth

The EconoVue data below provides an insight into changes in the number of businesses, employment, average salary, and location quotient across the Eastern area from October 2024 through July 2026. During this period, the number of businesses increased from 16,316 in October 2024 to 18,688 in July 2026, representing an increase of 2,372 businesses, or approximately 14.5%. Business counts reached a high of 18,797 in January 2026 before declining slightly during the following two quarters.

Employment experienced greater fluctuation during the period reported in the data. Employment decreased from 144,566 in October 2024 to 117,432 in January 2025, followed by steady growth throughout the remainder of the period. By July 2026, employment had increased to 124,702, representing a gain of more than 7,000 jobs from the January 2025 low, although employment remained below the October 2024 level. The average salary remained constant at $55,442 throughout the reporting period.

The average location quotient remained relatively stable but showed a gradual increase, moving from 0.77 in October 2024 to 0.80 by July 2026. Because the location quotient remains below 1.0, the data indicates, on average, the Eastern area has a lower concentration of employment in the measured industries relative to the national average. However, the gradual increase suggests that the region's employment concentration has strengthened somewhat over the period.

Business Summary Over Time - Eastern Area				
Year	**Businesses**	**Employment**	**Avg Salary**	**Avg Location Quotient**
2024_10	16,316	144,566	$55,442	0.77
2025_01	16,149	117,432	$55,442	0.77
2025_04	16,183	118,524	$55,442	0.77
2025_07	17,367	121,367	$55,442	0.77
2025_10	18,633	124,374	$55,442	0.78
2026_01	18,797	124,484	$55,442	0.79
2026_04	18,754	124,721	$55,442	0.79
2026_07	18,688	124,702	$55,442	0.80

JobEQ data indicates that the fastest growing occupation group in the Eastern area is expected to be Healthcare Support Occupations with a +1.1% over the next four years. The strongest forecast for the number of jobs over this period is expected for Construction and Extraction Occupations (+361 jobs) and Healthcare Support Occupations (+305). Over the same period, the highest separation demand (occupation demand due to retirements and workers moving from one occupation to another) is expected in Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (10,428 jobs) and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (7,336).

Eastern Area Training and Educational Institutions

The Eastern area benefits from a robust network of post-secondary training institutions. It is home to seven community colleges, one private four-year university, and one public four-year university. We also partner with several for-profit private training providers. These institutions provide a diverse range of training and educational opportunities for individuals seeking to advance their skills and qualifications. The programs offered at these training providers are designed to be accessible to individuals with disabilities and can accommodate students facing multiple barriers to learning.

Board and Committee Structure

II. Provide a full board roster including the group each member represents (Attachment B). Include a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Sections 107(a)-(c) outline the procedures for nominating and selecting members across different membership categories. Specifically, WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(A) mandates that business representatives make up most of the Workforce Development Board (local board). Additionally, WIOA Section 107(b)(3) stipulates that the chairperson of the local board must be a business representative.

In compliance with these requirements, the Eastern Area Workforce Development Board appointed its members according to WIOA Section 107(b)(2). Also, the local board chairperson was elected from among the business representatives on the board, in accordance with WIOA Section 107(b)(3).

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board consists of 17 members, with 53% representing the private sector (see Attachment B). The board operates through four standing committees: Operations and Finance, One-Stop Service Delivery, Youth Services, and Individuals with Disabilities.

The Operations and Finance Committee serves in an advisory role to the EAWDB, providing recommendations on fiscal oversight, budgeting, technology and automation, grants to enhance program capabilities, requests for proposals for contractors, and Quality Assurance oversight. The committee may also address other relevant matters as deemed appropriate.

The One Stop Service Delivery Committee advises the EAWDB on matters including the establishment and operational procedures of One-Stop Centers in the area. This includes recommendations on Business Services, on-the-job training, customized training, and any other relevant issues the committee deems necessary.

The Youth Services Committee advises the EAWDB on the following matters:

1. Coordinating youth activities in the area;
2. Developing sections of the local plan focused on eligible youth;
3. Recommending eligible youth providers, subject to local board approval;

4. Overseeing eligible providers of youth activities in the local area; and
5. Performing additional duties as authorized by the local board.

The EAWDB does not maintain a standing Individuals with Disabilities Committee. However, the Board remains committed to ensuring that the needs of individuals with disabilities are considered within the workforce system. When specific issues, needs, or initiatives related to individuals with disabilities arise, the EAWDB may convene an ad hoc committee made up of Board members, workforce partners, service providers, and other subject matter experts. This approach allows the Board to bring together the appropriate expertise as needed to address accessibility, service delivery, and workforce participation for individuals with disabilities. The One Stop Service Delivery Committee will oversee any disability related system needs.

Eastern Erea Workforce Development System Regional Alignment with Economic Development and Core programs and the State Plan

III. Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in the system, demonstrating regional alignment with economic, workforce and workforce development analysis. Include a list of one stop centers in the local area (ATTACHMENT C) including address and phone numbers. Indicate the one-stop center for each site and whether it's a comprehensive or satellite center. Include a list of the partners physically located at each center and the services provided by the partners.

IV. Describe how the LWDB will support the Strategies identified in the state plan and work with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs including Carl Perkins CTE to support service alignment.

The EAWDB fully supports the state's plan to foster a system of partnership, collaboration, and coordination among partners. The plan emphasizes eliminating duplication of efforts and leveraging resources to better align with employer needs. This approach is designed to drive economic development and growth both locally and statewide. Recognizing the decline in funding for some workforce programs, the EAWDB understands that this alignment is not only beneficial but essential. The board, along with its operator, like in previous years is actively working with partners to identify

opportunities to increase co-location and co-enrollment with partners in the American Job Centers (AJC). As previously mentioned, the board has partnered with the state to begin work on an aligned case management system. This will help provide tools and resources necessary to enable partners to provide a seamless referral system as well as improve the collaborative case management necessary to achieve an optimized workforce development system for all the partners. This will also assist with minimization of duplication and allow for better resource management and alignment.

The board recognizes that while communication with partners in the eastern area has significantly improved over the past four years, there is still a need for further enhancement to ensure consistent information sharing across all partner agencies, regardless of their co-location at local AJCs. To address this, the one-stop operator has initiated Quarterly Partner Meetings throughout the region. These meetings offer a platform for community partners to come together, discuss their ongoing initiatives and projects, and identify opportunities for co-enrollment and collaboration on projects. This approach aims to provide participants with comprehensive, wraparound services.

In early 2024, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) Workforce Information Technology Support Center (Workforce ITSC) partnered with the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) through a series of facilitated sessions to discuss and identify opportunities and options for a referral system to align case management efforts amongst partners that serve similar populations. This project was called the Universal Partner Information Network (UPin). This collaborative effort resulted in recommendations designed to enhance service delivery and improve the customer experience within New Mexico's public workforce system. This team initially decided that UniteUs was the best available platform for its first UPin pilot project.

The UniteUs closed-loop referral system is a tool that enhances coordination and efficiency in delivering workforce and supportive services. The closed-loop referral system connects partner organizations through a secure, shared platform, that enables seamless referrals, real-time communication, and tracking of client progress across multiple service providers and partners. This system is intended to reduce duplication of effort but also ensures that job seekers and community members receive timely, comprehensive support tailored to meet their needs.

During PY 2025, the UPIN project continued efforts to strengthen regional coordination and improve how individuals are connected to workforce and supportive services. The project evaluated UniteUs as a potential referral platform and identified several system challenges during the pilot. The One-Stop Operator (OSO) team worked with the Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS) to document findings and evaluate whether the identified issues could be addressed.

A second referral platform pilot, Findhelp was launched during PY 2025. Following initial training, the OSO team and American Job Center (AJC) staff were provided access to a sandbox environment to evaluate the platform's functionality. Staff reported that the system was intuitive and easy to navigate, while DWS continued to assess its capabilities against the needs identified through the UniteUs pilot. The UPIN project was subsequently placed on hold pending review by the New Mexico Governor's Office and consideration of feedback from the pilot activities.

While the project is under review, AJCs and partner agencies continued referral coordination through existing resources, including the area's One Stop Operator and the Wagner-Peyser 211 Activity Report in NMJOBS. This ensured that participants continued to receive connections to workforce assistance, housing, healthcare, and other community-based resources.

The workforce development system in the local area is a comprehensive network designed to support the region's economic and workforce needs through a variety of programs and services. The system includes programs such as, but not limited to:

1. WIOA Title I Programs: These programs focus on adult, dislocated worker, and youth services, offering job search assistance, training opportunities, and supportive services as needed. The goal is to enhance the employability and skill levels of participants, aligning them with the needs of local industries so participants obtain gainful employment.

2. WIOA Title II - Adult Education and Literacy: This program provides foundational education services, including literacy, numeracy, and high school equivalency preparation. It also offers English language attainment for non-English speakers, to prepare them to participate in the workforce.

3. WIOA Title III - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services: These services include job search assistance, labor market information, and referrals to employers. The program supports job seekers and employers to meet their specific needs.

4. WIOA Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation Services: This program assists individuals with disabilities in obtaining and retaining employment. It includes job training, assistive technologies, and career counseling, ensuring that all community members have access to meaningful and equitable work opportunities.

5. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): This program offers support to low-income families, helping them achieve self-sufficiency through employment and job training services.

6. Career and Technical Education (CTE): CTE programs, offered through local educational institutions, provide technical and vocational training aligned with the demands of regional industries. These programs ensure that students are equipped with the skills needed for in-demand careers.

7. Apprenticeship Programs: These programs combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction, offering a pathway to skilled trades and other professions. They are particularly valuable in aligning workforce skills with the needs of local employers.

8. Job Corps: A program that offers free education and vocational training to young adults, helping them acquire the skills necessary for gainful employment.

9. Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP/Goodwill): This program provides job training and employment opportunities for older adults, allowing them to remain active in the workforce.

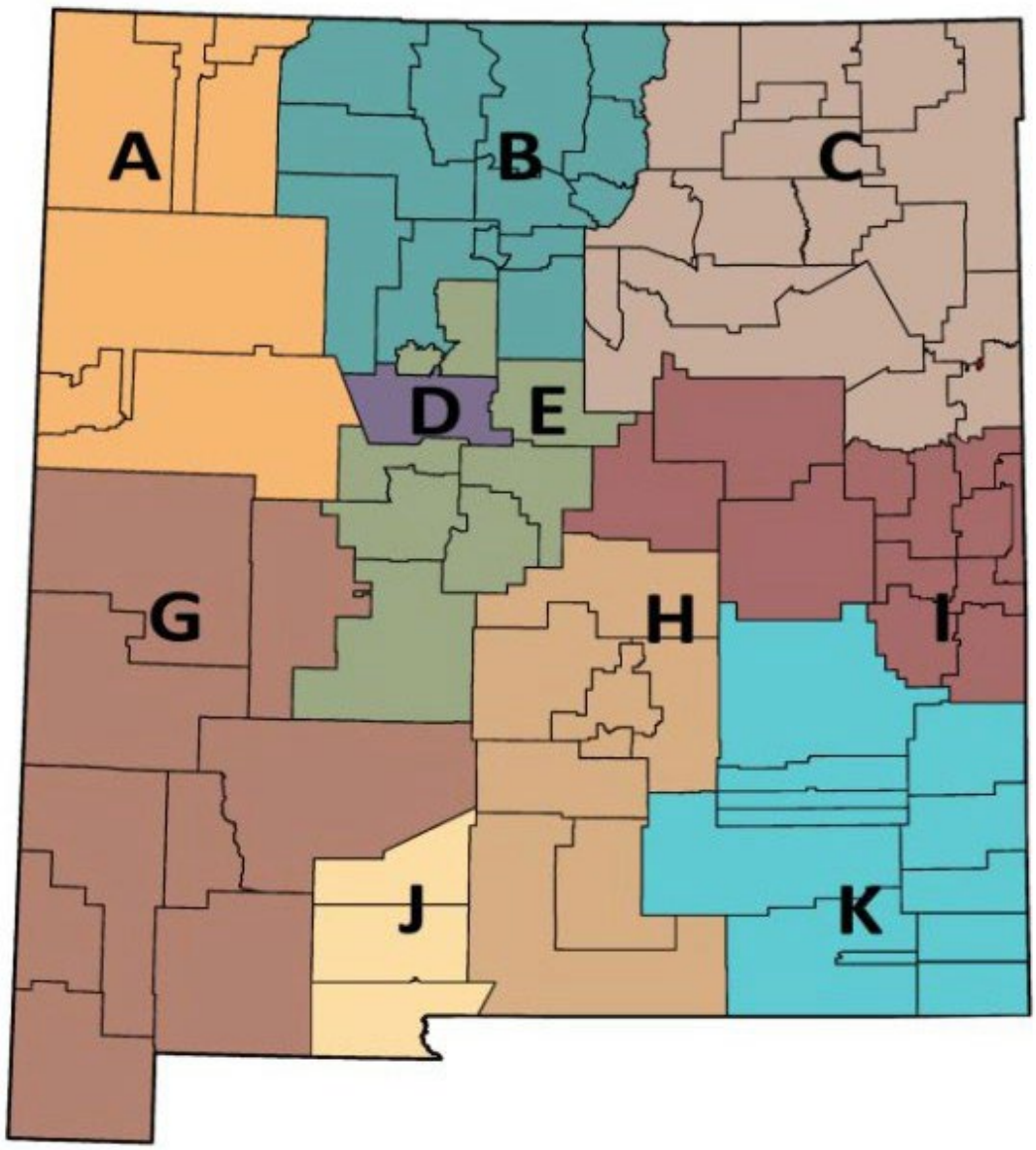
10. Economic Development Partners: Collaborating with local chambers of commerce, business development organizations, and regional economic development agencies ensures that workforce development strategies are aligned with the economic priorities of the region.

11. Community and Faith-Based Organizations: These organizations play a critical role in providing additional supportive services, such as housing assistance, food security, and childcare, which are essential for workforce participation.

By integrating with these programs, the workforce development system is better aligned, ensuring that resources are effectively deployed to meet the needs identified in the region. A united system emphasizes collaboration among partners to address skills gaps, support emerging industries, and promote sustainable economic growth throughout the region. This alignment ensures that both job seekers and employers are supported in ways that contribute to the overall prosperity of the community each partner serves.

The EAWDB has always led the region in coordination, collaboration and integration of a workforce development. These efforts have largely been embraced by partners in the area and continues to support the state's vision of coordinated and seamless service delivery. As previously discussed the aligned case management system and remote access points modernizes the workforce development system and enhances the ability to provide a broader array of services to improve the skills of the existing and emerging workforce in alignment with the state's vision and goals.

New Mexico requires a regional-association organizational structure where Career Technical Education funding decisions for secondary and postsecondary institutions are prioritized by all members of the regional, workforce-aligned association. Funded programs of study must meet Perkins V criteria related to size, scope, and quality and be aligned to in-demand industry sectors to be considered for federal Perkins funding or designed to meet local education or economic needs. The board and operator staff participated in CTE planning sessions during program years 2023 and 2025 to provide information on local labor market analysis, insight on in-demand sectors and local employer information. Below is a map and table of the CTE regions and priorities for each. Areas in regions C, I, H and K are all operated in the eastern area.


A
B
C
D
E
G
H
I
J
K

Region	Workforce Region	REGIONAL PRIORITIES
A	Northern	Construction, Agriculture, and Healthcare
B	Northern & Central	Construction, Healthcare & Human Services, Hospitality, Events & Tourism
C	Northern & Eastern	Agriculture, Construction, Hospitality, Events and Tourism
D	Central	Advanced Manufacturing, Arts, Entertainment & Design, Healthcare & Human Services
E	Central & Southwestern	Agriculture, Construction, Healthcare & Human Services
G	Southwestern	Agriculture, Construction, Healthcare & Human Services
H	Eastern	Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Hospitality, Events and Tourism
I	Eastern	Agriculture, Construction, Healthcare & Human Services
J	Southwestern	Agriculture, Construction, Healthcare and Human Services
K	Eastern	Agriculture; Energy and Natural Resources; Healthcare and Human Services

The EAWDB, through its operator will work to enhance program relations and ensure the inclusion of programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment. The board is committed to strengthening service alignment through ongoing coordination and planning efforts with Carl D. Perkins staff and program leadership.

B. Local Workforce Development System Alignment

I. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.

II. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate in core programs.

III. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including industry recognized certificates or certification, portable and stackable).

Working with Core Programs to Expand Access to Employment, Training, Education and Supportive Services for Eligible Individuals, Particularly Those with Barriers to Employment

I. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.

The local board is committed to creating a comprehensive and inclusive workforce development system that ensures eligible individuals, particularly those facing barriers to employment, can access the support they need to succeed. This commitment is reflected in the board's strategic partnerships and collaboration with entities responsible for carrying out core programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

To make services more accessible, the board through its operator will promote integrated service delivery through opportunities for co-location and the use of AJCs. By bringing multiple services under one roof, the board simplifies the process for individuals seeking assistance, reducing the need for them to navigate a complex network of agencies. Additionally, streamlined intake and referral processes ensure that eligible individuals are quickly identified and connected to the appropriate services, minimizing delays, and improving outcomes.

Recognizing the importance of reaching underserved populations as part of increasing workforce participation, the board and operator will work closely with core program entities to identify opportunities for targeted outreach and recruitment efforts. By identifying individuals with specific barriers to employment—such as veterans, justice involved individuals, individuals with disabilities, single parents, or displaced homemakers—the board ensures that these groups are prioritized in service delivery. Collaborating with community-based organizations and other local partners further

extends the reach of these efforts, making it easier for individuals from diverse backgrounds to access the resources they need.

The collaboratives will focus on developing strategies to enhance outreach efforts, particularly targeting populations with barriers to employment. They will also work to facilitate co-enrollment of customers by effectively issuing and tracking referrals and coordinating integrated case management. Outreach services are being delivered by various partners through workshops and events within the system. The vision is that comprehensive cross-training of partner staff will create a system where staff are well-versed and confident in promoting the services of all partners. This approach aims to reduce service duplication and ensure better alignment across all services.

In response to the demands of the local labor market, the board actively engages with employers and industry leaders to design customized training and education programs. These programs will be tailored to meet the current and future needs of employers, ensuring that individuals who complete training are equipped with skills to allow them opportunities to obtain employment in high demand occupations. The board also facilitates on-the-job training (OJT) and apprenticeship opportunities through its subrecipient and the Apprenticeship Coordinator, allowing individuals to gain valuable work experience while earning a paycheck.

Continuous improvement is a key priority for the EAWDB. By working with core program entities to establish performance metrics and track outcomes, the board can assess the effectiveness of its strategies and make data-driven adjustments as needed. Regular feedback from employers, service providers, and participants also plays a crucial role in refining services and addressing any gaps in the system. The board will continue to use SurveyMonkey to gather feedback from employers, service providers, and participants. This feedback will inform ongoing improvements in service delivery and ensure that programs are effectively meeting the needs of all stakeholders.

Working with Core Programs to Develop Career Pathways and Co-enrollment

II. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate in core programs.

The operator and board staff have initiated meetings with Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, early college programs, and secondary and postsecondary institutions. Many of these programs have already developed career pathways, while others are realigning their offerings to meet emerging workforce needs. Some secondary CTE programs are integrated into early college initiatives, enabling students to earn both a high school diploma and an associate degree within the traditional high school timeframe. This model seamlessly combines academic and occupational learning, resulting in stackable credentials.

The board and operator staff will continue to strengthen program relationships and ensure the inclusion of programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. This effort aims to enhance service alignment across the workforce system. The board is committed to fostering service alignment through continuous coordination and planning with Carl D. Perkins staff and program leadership.

Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)

The EAWDB collaborates with the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) and its Adult Education Division to ensure that Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) activities align with regional workforce needs. As part of this collaboration, the Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB) reviews grant applications submitted by eligible providers to NMHED. This review ensures that the proposed adult education programs not only meet the educational needs of individuals but also align with the board's local plan priorities, goals, and strategies. By closely coordinating with NMHED, the local board fosters stronger integration of workforce development and adult education efforts in the region.

The adult education program in New Mexico serves individuals aged 16 and older who require support to enhance their core academic and workplace readiness skills. Across the state, AEL programs offer education and training opportunities aimed at helping all eligible New Mexicans improve their skills, earn a High School Equivalency (HSE) Credential, learn English as a second language (ESL) and Civics, pursue higher education, and gain meaningful employment. These programs are essential for creating pathways to success, ensuring that individuals have the necessary tools to thrive in both academic and workplace environments.

According to the National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education, Adult Education programs across the state served 8,680 participants during Program Year 2024, representing a 9% increase in enrollment from 7,884 participants in PY 2023. Program performance also continued to improve, with 56.66% of participants achieving a Measurable Skill Gain, an increase from 51.46% in the previous program year. The credential attainment rate reached 43.07%, exceeding the state’s negotiated target of 31%. Overall, New Mexico exceeded its negotiated PY 2024 targets across all five core Adult Education performance indicators, demonstrating continued progress in educational achievement, credential attainment, employment outcomes, and earnings.

This data highlights the critical importance of strong partnerships between local workforce development boards and AEL programs. By working together, these entities can ensure that individuals receive the support and resources needed to enhance their education, improve their skills, and access better employment opportunities. The collaboration is essential for driving successful outcomes for participants and strengthening the overall workforce in the region

In program year 2023, AEL programs in the region served a total of 2,049 students. The distribution of students across the individual programs is as follows:

- ENMU-Roswell: 731 students, making it the largest program in the region.
- New Mexico Junior College: 375 students.
- Clovis Community College: 326 students
- Southeast New Mexico College: 297
- ENMU-Ruidoso: 175
- NMSU-Alamogordo: 102
- Mesalands Community College: 43

According to the NRS, in PY 2024, AEL programs serving the Eastern area served a total of 2,318 participants, an increase from 2,049 participants in the previous program year. This represents an increase of approximately 13.1%, demonstrating continued demand for Adult Education and Literacy services throughout the region. According to AEL annual reports, all seven programs in the East increased enrollments in PY 2024. NMHED's statewide FY24 comparison data show particularly large numerical increases for ENMU-Roswell (+130 participants), NMJC (+45), Mesalands (+34), Clovis (+31), and Southeast New Mexico College (+25).

These figures reflect the essential role each institution plays in providing adult education services, with ENMU-Roswell serving the highest number of students. The wide distribution of participants across various institutions further demonstrates the importance of a coordinated effort to address the educational needs of adults in the region.

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB) acknowledges that education plays a critical role in strengthening both the existing and emerging workforce. Developing and improving basic literacy skills is seen as a key foundation for building a skilled workforce, essential for driving economic growth and ensuring individuals have the tools needed to succeed in today’s labor market. The board remains committed to integrating education into workforce strategies to enhance the region's overall capacity and competitiveness.

In the eastern region, the percentage of individuals aged 25 and over without a diploma or its equivalent is 16.5%, significantly higher than both the state and national averages. New Mexico's average is11.6%, while the national average is 9.8%. This disparity highlights the pressing need for robust educational initiatives and targeted interventions in the region to address the skills gap and improve access to opportunities for adult learners. The data further underscores the importance of coordinated efforts between local workforce board and AEL programs to ensure that individuals in the eastern area can obtain the education and training they need for career advancement.

Many AEL programs in the east offer hybrid educational models that enable individuals receiving AEL services to co-enroll in community colleges for career pathway training or post-secondary coursework while improving their literacy skills or working toward earning their HSE. These Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs have expanded technology-based learning opportunities, which are particularly valuable for individuals in rural communities who may have limited access to in-person services. These opportunities are being expanded on and aligned with workforce system sector priorities and demand occupations.

Local AEL providers and the EAWDB are collaborating to conduct joint outreach activities aimed at encouraging individuals with low literacy levels or those lacking a high school diploma or HSE to take advantage of available educational opportunities. The Title I program plays a key role in supporting these efforts by offering various supportive services to eligible individuals, helping to increase their potential for success. These services include transportation assistance for attending classes, assistance

with HSE testing fees, childcare assistance, and support for technological access, such as internet services or laptops. These resources are particularly beneficial for youth, helping them overcome barriers and ensuring they can fully participate in education and workforce development activities

Working with Core Partners to Improve Access to Programs Leading to Recognized Credentials, Including Industry Recognized, Portable and Stackable)

III. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential including industry recognized certificates or certification, portable and stackable).

The local board is committed to enhancing access to activities that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials, including industry-recognized certificates, certifications, and stackable, portable credentials that equip individuals for success in the workforce. To achieve this, the board will work collaboratively with entities administering core programs under WIOA and other key system partners. A primary focus of the board will be to continue building on already strong partnerships with educational institutions, training providers, and employers. The board will work closely with these entities to align training programs with industry needs, ensuring that participants can obtain credentials that are both relevant and valued by employers. This alignment will include the development of stackable credentials, allowing individuals to build on their skills over time and advance in their career pathways.

To make credentialing opportunities more accessible, the board will engage in targeted outreach, particularly to underserved populations and those with barriers to employment. By working with community-based organizations and other partners, the board will raise awareness of available programs and ensure that individuals from diverse backgrounds can access the training and education needed to earn recognized credentials.

The board will also promote co-enrollment and integrated service delivery, allowing participants to access multiple resources seamlessly. By coordinating services across core programs, the board will ensure that individuals receive the necessary support—such as financial assistance, career counseling, and supportive services—to complete their credentialing programs.

In addition to these efforts, the board will work to reduce barriers to participation by offering supportive services, such as childcare and transportation assistance. These services will help support participants to complete their credential programs, leading to better outcomes and increased goal attainment and employment opportunities.

C. Local Strategy Implementation

I. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

II. Describe strategies and services that will be used in the local area to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.

III. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.

IV. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

V. Describe how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and small business services.

VI. Describe how the local board will develop and implement training across systems for all core partners to ensure a unified approach to service delivery including vocational rehabilitation.

<u>Local Employer Engagement and Strategies to Meet Employer Needs</u>

I. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

II. Describe strategies and services that will be used in the local area to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.

The board will continue its proactive approach to include local employers in targeted sector strategy discussions to ensure alignment with demand industries and growing sectors. This strategic engagement involves a series of initiatives led by the Title I program, which is focused on expanding outreach and enhancing service delivery to employers. To align strategies laid out in the state combined plan, the board will also facilitate conversations with employers to collaborate efforts to build a workforce system that enhances the ~~the~~ safety, health, and well-being of New Mexico families.

Engaging local chambers of commerce, economic developers, and employers in the eastern area is crucial for delivering effective business services. All local AJCs are encouraged to actively participate as members of their local chambers and to have staff regularly attend and engage in community business events for outreach purposes. Additionally, the one-stop operator, who facilitates community partner

meetings, is encouraged to involve chambers of commerce in these gatherings to strengthen community engagement and collaboration.

To effectively address employment needs, it is imperative that employers are fully informed about the services available to them through the EAWDB and American Job Centers (AJCs). Without this knowledge, the partnership between the EAWDB, workforce centers, and employers cannot reach its full potential. To bridge this gap, the EAWDB, in collaboration with the operator, will work on strategies on how to disseminate information on the full range of services available to them through their local AJCs, including, but not limited to:

- Employee recruitment and screening
- Posting job openings
- Organizing and participating in hiring events
- Receiving and forwarding applicant resumes
- Prescreening and referral of qualified job seekers
- Work-based learning opportunities
- Information on tax credits
- Access to labor market information
- Guidance on labor law compliance
- Rapid Response Program support

By ensuring that employers are well-informed about these services, the board strives to strengthen its collaboration with local businesses, leading to better employment outcomes for the entire region.

Utilizing local labor market information (LMI) is crucial to developing strategies and services that effectively support a local workforce development system tailored to the needs of employers in the region. By leveraging data on employment trends, industry demands, skill gaps, and economic conditions, the local board can ensure that workforce development initiatives are closely aligned with the needs of employers.

LMI serves as the foundation for data-driven decision-making when working to meet employer needs. The board will review local and current LMI to identify in-demand industries and occupations, forecast future job growth, and understand the specific skills and qualifications that employers are seeking. This information will guide the design and implementation of training programs, ensuring that they are accessible and meet the need of the employer.

The JobEq LMI data below is based on job openings that were active from September 2024 to September 2025 in the eastern area.

Openings by Occupations

Occupations

SOC	Occupation	Active Job Ads
29-1141.00	Registered Nurses	6,725
29-1123.00	Physical Therapists	1,316
41-1011.00	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	1,312
41-2031.00	Retail Salespersons	1,222
11-9111.00	Medical and Health Services Managers	1,206
49-9071.00	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,102
29-2061.00	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,099
53-3032.00	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	839
29-2034.00	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	812
29-2031.00	Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	799

Openings by Locations

Locations

Location	Active Job Ads
Carlsbad, New Mexico	6,302
Roswell, New Mexico	5,348
Alamogordo, New Mexico	3,677
Clovis, New Mexico	3,281
Hobbs, New Mexico	2,880
Artesia, New Mexico	1,563
Ruidoso, New Mexico	1,211
Portales, New Mexico	1,201
Carlsbad, NM 88220	672
Hobbs, NM 88240	621

Openings by Job Titles

Job Titles

Job Title	Active Job Ads
RN - MedSurg	199
RN - ICU	196
RN - ER	157
Registered Nurse	156
Travel Physical Therapist	151
Physical Therapist	150
CT Technologist	146
Cashier	119
Cook	118
Retail Merchandiser	103

Job openings require specific hard and soft skills. The most common hard skills include the ability to lift 40-100 pounds and proficiency in Microsoft Office. The most common soft skills identified are communication, teamwork, customer service, and organizational skills. When these skills are identified as necessary, staff can guide job seekers or employers to self-paced courses that help develop or enhance these skills. One resource available for this purpose is Alison.com, an online training platform accessible through the NMJOBS system, which provides a wide array of courses to improve both hard and soft skills.

Openings by Hard Skills

Hard Skills

Skill Name	Active Job Ads
Ability to Lift 41-50 lbs.	2,717
Microsoft Office	2,472
Ability to Lift 51-100 lbs.	2,400
Microsoft Excel	2,165
Retail Sales	1,252
Spanish	1,221
Cash Handling (Cashier)	1,086
Microsoft Outlook	1,059
Bilingual	1,005
Nursing	977

Openings by Soft Skills

Soft Skills

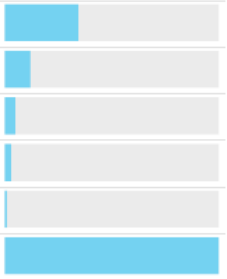
Skill Name	Active Job Ads
Communication (Verbal and written skills)	19,453
Cooperative/Team Player	13,142
Customer Service	7,447
Adaptability/Flexibility/Tolerance of Change and Uncertainty	5,766
Organization	5,686
Detail Oriented/Meticulous	4,650
Self-Motivated/Ability to Work Independently/Self Leadership	4,452
Ability to Work in a Fast Paced Environment	4,050
Interpersonal Relationships/Maintain Relationships	3,636
Supervision/Management	3,560

Most job openings in the area require a high school diploma or equivalent, with some positions requiring an associate or bachelor's degree. When an individual needs a high school equivalency (HSE), they can be referred to the WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs for eligibility and enrollment. Additionally, they may be directed to the Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program for further support in obtaining their HSE and potential co-enrollment.

Openings by Education Levels

Education Levels

Minimum Education Level	Active Job Ads
High school diploma or equivalent	9,814
Bachelor's degree	3,419
Associate's degree	1,425
Master's degree	849
Doctoral or professional degree	310
Unspecified/other	28,652



Strategies and Services to Better Coordinate Workforce Development Programs and Economic Development

III. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.

Alignment with Economic Development (ED) is essential for creating a dynamic workforce that meets the evolving needs of local businesses while driving sustainable economic growth in the region. One strategy for better coordination is building stronger partnership opportunities between the board and economic development entities throughout. The local board will actively engage with economic development agencies, chambers of commerce and industry associations through its one stop operator. This ensures that workforce initiatives are aligned with regional economic goals.

Also, The ED representative on the local board is actively engaged with organizations throughout the region, with a strong emphasis on enhancing both the existing and emerging workforce. Additionally, the local board ED representative is a member on the One Stop Service Delivery Committee of the board. This participation ensures that the needs of employers across the region are considered and that strategies are developed to effectively address their needs.

Services and Strategies to Strengthen Linkages to UI Programs

IV. Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

To strengthen the linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance (UI) programs, targeted strategies and services have been implemented areawide to ensure seamless support for individuals navigating unemployment and workforce re-entry. AJCs in the eastern area offer a

wide range of workforce programs all within a single location, streamlining access to numerous services for job seekers. A key program available at these centers is the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program.

Under this program, state Unemployment Insurance (UI) staff use specific criteria to identify individuals who are at a higher risk of exhausting their UI benefits. These individuals are then referred to the RESEA program. The primary goal of RESEA is to connect these individuals with dedicated staff and services aimed at accelerating their reemployment process. Through RESEA, participants receive targeted support, including career counseling, job search assistance, and access to training opportunities, all designed to help them re-engage in the workforce more quickly and effectively.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) designates the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program as a required partner within the one-stop system. To strengthen this partnership and enhance services for individuals receiving UI benefits, the EAWDB works with WIOA Title I, Wagner-Peyser, and UI program partners to carry out a model that improves access to skills development services.

Coordination of Workforce Investment Activities with Regional Economic Development Activities and Promotion of Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Small Business Services

V. Describe how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and small business services.

The EAWDB is committed to coordinating local workforce investment activities with regional economic development efforts and promoting entrepreneurial skills training and small business services. The EAWDB will implement strategies to ensure alignment between workforce development and economic growth while fostering a supportive environment for entrepreneurship and small business development.

The board, its operator, Title I and AJC employment services staff will coordinate business services across workforce and economic development programs to ensure a seamless experience for employers. This includes offering integrated support for recruitment, training, and employee development. By streamlining business services, the board aims to reduce duplication and enhance the overall effectiveness of workforce and economic development efforts.

The local board will offer a range of services designed to support small businesses, including access to training, technical assistance, and financial resources when possible. Coordinating services with local Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) will be imperative to tailored to the needs of small business owners and start-ups, helping them to improve their operations, expand their workforce, and enhance their competitive edge.

Development and Implementation of Training across Core Partners to Ensure a Unified Approach to Service Delivery

VI. Describe how the local board will develop and implement training across systems for all core partners to ensure a unified approach to service delivery including vocational rehabilitation.

In April 2024, the one-stop operator team hosted an area-wide All System Training event that brought together internal and external partners for a full day of professional development and cross training opportunities. The training session was designed to enhance collaboration and service delivery across the workforce system. DWS staff trainers conducted conflict resolution training, which was targeted at both frontline staff and managers, equipping them with essential skills to manage workplace conflicts effectively.

The training also covered critical topics such as co-enrollment and performance management, which are vital for ensuring that clients receive comprehensive support across programs. A partner panel featured representatives from key programs, including WIOA Title I, Title III Employment Services, the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, and Veteran Services. These representatives provided valuable insights into their respective programs, fostering a deeper understanding among all participants. The event concluded with a question-and-answer session, which allowed for open dialogue and clarification on several topics, proving to be an extremely valuable component of the day.

Recognizing the significant benefits of this training, the one-stop operator team plans to hold these sessions at least annually to continue building a cohesive and effective workforce development system.

The one-stop operator has also implemented Quarterly Partner Meetings across the region to foster potential cross-training opportunities, collaboration and strengthen partnerships. These meetings provide a valuable forum for community partners to come together, share updates on their initiatives, and explore opportunities for cross-training and joint projects. This approach's main goal is to enhance coordination among partners, enabling them to deliver comprehensive, wraparound services to participants more effectively.

D. One Stop Delivery System

I. Include a description of local employers, and job seekers. Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible training providers through the system and how such providers will meet the employment needs of employers.

II. Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one delivery system including in remote areas through the use of technology and other means.

III. Describe how entities within the One Stop delivery system including One Stop Operators and the One Stop Partners will comply with nondiscrimination regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and

materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

IV. Describe the specific roles and resource contributions of the One Stop Partners to date. Please include the process for updating cooperative agreements, resource sharing agreements and memoranda of understanding relevant to the WIOA. Please include copies (Attachment D)

IV. Describe how entities within the One Stop delivery system, including One Stop Operators and One Stop Partners will provide for the accessibility for English language learners.

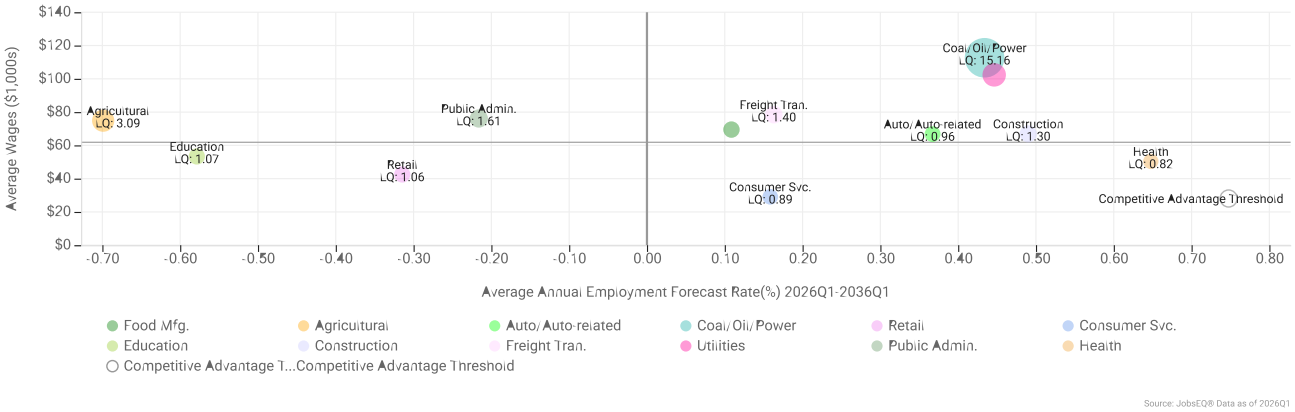
Eastern Area Employers, Workers and Job Seekers and Continuous Improvement of Eligible Training Providers

I. Include a description of local employers, and job seekers. Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible training providers.

The EAWDB serves a diverse range of employers and job seekers across the expansive geographic area. The region is characterized by industries such as oil and gas, agriculture, healthcare, manufacturing, and education. Local employers range from large, established companies in the multiple sectors to small businesses in rural communities. These employers face unique challenges, including workforce shortages, the need for specialized skills, and retention issues, particularly in the more rural areas of the region.

As of the first quarter of PY 2026 total employment in the east was 154,747 based on a four-quarter moving average. Ove the year ending in the same quarter, employment held steady with 0.0% increase or decline. Industry clusters that employ the most individuals in the area are Coal/Oil/Power, Utilities and Agriculture. These are the same clusters from the previous year.

Industry Clusters for EAWDB eastern area as of 2026Q1



The data shown below on job openings by job title provides a snapshot of the labor market demand within the eastern area. The most in-demand positions highlight a mix of healthcare, retail, and service industry roles, reflecting both the region's economic landscape and the ongoing need for skilled professionals in these fields. The data suggests that the region's workforce needs are diverse, spanning high-skill healthcare roles and essential service industry jobs. The EAWDB will continue to focus on aligning training programs with these demands, ensuring that job seekers are equipped with the necessary skills to fill these critical roles.

Openings by Job Titles

Job Titles

Job Title	Active Job Ads
RN - MedSurg	199
RN - ICU	196
RN - ER	157
Registered Nurse	156
Travel Physical Therapist	151
Physical Therapist	150
CT Technologist	146
Cashier	119
Cook	118
Retail Merchandiser	103

The JobsEQ table below shows the ten employers in the Eastern area that have the most active job openings as of the first quarter of PY 2025 and the EconoVue table reflects the ten largest employers in the region.

Openings by Companies

Companies

Company	Active Job Ads
Community Health Systems	637
Christus Health	614
Allied Resources Medical Staffing	518
Presbyterian Healthcare Services	497
Department of the Navy	449
Coast Medical Service	384
MedPro Healthcare Staffing	381
Walmart	371
United Supermarkets, LLC	347
State of New Mexico	343

10 Largest Companies - Eastern Area

Company Name	City	Employment	MaterialChangeDesc
Bam Pizza Management Inc.	Roswell	2,405	Stable
Cal's Convenience, Inc.	PORTALES	1,637	Early Signs of Decay
Mescalero Apache Housing Authority	Mescalero	1,188	Stable
Border States Electric Supply of Minnesota, Inc.	Hobbs	1,173	Organic Growth
Presbyterian Healthcare Services	Ruidoso	1,129	Early Signs of Decay
Alamogordo Board of Education	Alamogordo	960	Increase in Borrowing
Bamtastic Pizza, LLC	ROSWELL	785	Stable
Hobbs Municipal Schools	HOBBS	695	Decrease in Scale
Roswell Hospital Corporation	ROSWELL	670	Decrease in Scale
Mescalero Apache Tribe	MESCALERO	600	Spend Growth

The EAWDB expanded its network of training providers and increased access to occupational skills training aligned with regional workforce needs. The addition of Pinnacle Training Institute in Alamogordo created new training opportunities in healthcare and administrative occupations, including Medical Assistant, Dental Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, Phlebotomy, and Medical Billing and Coding. As part of this expansion, the first Dental Assistant cohort enrolled participants in a 14-week evening training program. Offering training during evening hours provided greater flexibility for individuals balancing employment, family responsibilities, and other commitments. The expansion supports the EAWDB's

ongoing efforts to increase access to industry-relevant training, address healthcare workforce needs, and provide participants with pathways to credentials and employment in high-demand occupations.

To create a more inclusive and equitable workforce, the board and its operator will work with local employers to develop strategies aimed at educating employers to dismantle bias against people with disabilities, individuals reintegrating into society, and working caregivers. The board will advocate for flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and flexible hours, which are beneficial for working caregivers and individuals with disabilities. Moreover, the board will promote reentry support programs that assist formerly incarcerated individuals in successfully reintegrating into the workforce. These initiatives will demonstrate to employers that supportive policies are key to retaining a diverse and capable workforce. These strategies align with the state combined plans vision for a more inclusive workforce and are also designed to raise awareness, promote fair treatment, and create supportive workplace environments that allow all individuals to thrive.

Job seekers in the area are equally diverse, encompassing individuals from various backgrounds and skill levels. This includes recent high school and college graduates, individuals transitioning from other industries, dislocated workers, and those re-entering the workforce. The region also has many job seekers facing employment barriers, such as individuals with disabilities, veterans, and those needing retraining due to industry shifts.

In the Eastern area, 57.5% of individuals aged 16 and older are actively engaged in the workforce. Among employed workers and job seekers over the age of 25, the majority— 53.7%—have a high school diploma or some college education. However, only 12% of this group holds a bachelor's degree. While the data shows that workforce participation has increased over the last two years, this affords the board and its partners a significant opportunity to engage this population through targeted outreach activities.

Additionally, 16.5% of the population aged 25 and older in the Eastern area do not have a high school diploma, making them ineligible for traditional postsecondary occupational skills training. To address this, targeted outreach by AJC offices and Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs can help enroll these individuals in AEL services and WIOA Title I programs. By doing so, more people can obtain a high school diploma or equivalency certification, making them eligible for college-level courses and further assistance.

Furthermore, the creation of training programs that integrate academic and occupational learning can shorten the time it takes for these individuals to acquire the skills needed to improve their earning potential. This approach not only increases access to education but also accelerates their pathway to better job opportunities.

The Eligible Training Provider (ETP) list serves as a key resource for identifying training programs that can be funded through WIOA. All approved programs on this list result in recognized credential

attainment if completed by individuals successfully. The ETP list is accessible through the New Mexico Jobs Online System (NMJOBS).

Under the oversight of the state's Adult/Dislocated Coordinator, local boards are responsible for monitoring and maintaining the list, ensuring that only high-quality programs are approved and active. Training programs are required to be adaptable, addressing the evolving needs of the eastern area and aligning with the demands of the industries they serve. This approach ensures that training remains relevant and effective in preparing individuals for successful careers.

The EAWDB is dedicated to the continuous improvement and enhancement of training programs, ensuring that the ETP list features high-quality programs that lead to successful outcomes for both job seekers and employers. To achieve this, the region has established strong policies and procedures to effectively monitor and evaluate the programs on the list. Career coaches are tasked with tracking the progress of all participants enrolled in WIOA programs throughout the duration of their training. They identify patterns of strength, weakness, or deficiencies in the programs. This valuable feedback is communicated to board staff by Title I service providers.

In response, the board collaborates with service providers, the operator, and training providers to address identified issues and needs alike. This collaborative effort aims to improve training programs, enhancing the overall effectiveness and ensuring better outcomes for participants and employers alike.

Facilitation of Access to Services Through the Use of Technology

II. Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.

NMJOBS serves as the primary management information system and service delivery platform in New Mexico. This versatile online platform enables employers to post job openings, review resumes, and conduct candidate searches based on specific skills, all from any internet-connected device such as a computer, tablet, or smartphone. By extending beyond local community boundaries, significantly broadens access to job seekers, connecting employers with a wider pool of talent. Additionally, the platform provides employers with an effective virtual gateway to the full range of services typically available at local AJCs. This ensures that employers, regardless of their location, can easily access and utilize the full array of services offered through local AJCs.

The board invested in a business Zoom license that equips the one-stop system with individual accounts for all field staff. This license, managed and monitored by the operator, ensures that staff have reliable access to virtual meetings and communication tools. Additionally, these Zoom accounts are available for use by employers, facilitating seamless virtual interactions to discuss recruiting efforts with AJC staff, provide access to virtual job fairs, interviewing and any other virtual service the employer may need.

During program year 2023, the one-stop operator team was committed to enhancing accessibility and service delivery for job seekers and employers in rural areas through developing and implementing Rural Access Points (RAPs). These RAPs are designed to bridge the gap between remote communities and the comprehensive services offered through the AJCs. Each RAP is equipped with necessary tools, including computers, high-speed internet, and video conferencing software. This framework enables users to access virtual services, complete online job applications, and consultations with career coaches regardless of where an individual lives. RAPs are also stocked with informational materials about workforce programs, job search tools, and educational resources. This ensures that visitors have access to relevant and up-to-date information. The operator team started with two RAPs, one in Portales, New Mexico and another in Santa Rosa, New Mexico. The team continues to expand this effort with new RAPs being developed quarterly.

Since the first RAP was created in 2023 several others have been added throughout the eastern area. The one stop operator continues to partner with community agencies areawide to identify new opportunities, mostly in our most rural areas to develop new RAPs increasing access to services in the rural communities.

Compliance with Nondiscrimination Regarding Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services, Technology and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities, Including Staff Training

III. Describe how entities within the One Stop delivery system including One Stop Operators and the One Stop Partners will comply with nondiscrimination regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB), along with its subrecipient and American Job Centers (AJC), are dedicated to ensuring the highest level of accessibility for facilities, programs, and services, particularly for individuals with disabilities. This commitment includes adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other pertinent regulations.

Accessibility Compliance and Monitoring:

- Physical and Programmatic Accessibility: The AJCs are designed to meet all physical and programmatic accessibility requirements as outlined by the ADA. This includes ensuring that all facilities are accessible to individuals with mobility impairments and that programmatic access is provided through appropriate accommodations.
- Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity: The EAWDB is responsible for implementing and monitoring compliance with nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions under WIOA,

ADA, and other relevant laws. This involves regular oversight to ensure that all services and facilities meet legal requirements and provide equitable access to all individuals.

Collaborative Efforts for Accessibility:

- Partnership with DVR: The EAWDB collaborates closely with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to evaluate center accessibility. This partnership helps in assessing physical spaces and providing necessary staff training on accessibility requirements to ensure compliance and enhance service delivery.
- Accessibility Technologies: The board works with DVR partners to identify and integrate accessibility technologies that assist individuals seeking employment and training. This includes exploring and implementing technological solutions that improve access to services for those with disabilities.

Center Evaluations and Modifications:

- Upgrades and Modifications: Based on evaluations completed by the operator with assistance from DVR staff, AJCs have undergone modifications to improve physical accessibility when issues are identified. Examples include the installation of automatic door openers and other enhancements that facilitate easier access for individuals with mobility challenges.

Roles and Resource Contributions of the One Stop Partners to Date, Processes for Updating Cooperative Agreements, Resource Sharing Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding Relevant to WIOA

IV. Describe the specific roles and resource contributions of the One Stop Partners to date. Please include the process for updating cooperative agreements, resource sharing agreements and memoranda of understanding relevant to the WIOA. Please include copies (Attachment D).

For several years, Wagner-Peyser (WP) and WIOA Title I program staff have been integrated into the AJCs through a co-location strategy. Additionally, the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program is co-located at the Ruidoso center. This co-location model ensures that these programs function as integrated partners within the workforce system and align seamlessly with the customer flow of the offices. The operator is continuously working to integrate additional partners into the centers to enhance service delivery and collaboration.

Responsibilities of each partner are clearly outlined in the office Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), while cost distribution among partners is managed through Resource Sharing Agreements (RSAs) within the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA). MOUs and IFAs are reviewed at least annually, or more frequently if there are changes in partner participation or staffing levels. RSAs are reviewed quarterly to ensure accurate verification of actual costs and proper billing to system partners.

Allocations for co-located partners are determined based on their number of staff and the total square footage of office space they use. Costs for shared areas, such as resource rooms, lobbies, and hallways, are divided proportionally according to each partner's share of total staff in the center. Partners may request a review of the Resource Sharing Agreements (RSAs) if staff relocations impact the allocation of square footage. Additionally, the operational costs of the comprehensive centers in Clovis and Roswell are distributed among internal and external partners based on the benefits each partner program receives.

Provision of Accessibility for English Language Learners

V. Describe how entities within the One Stop delivery system, including One Stop Operators and One Stop Partners will provide for the accessibility for English language learners.

To ensure that language barriers do not limit access to service provision, American Job Centers (AJC) in the eastern area are equipped to provide translation services, with a particular focus on Spanish, the most widely spoken non-English language in New Mexico. Bilingual staff members are actively recruited to meet this need, and when bilingual staff are not available, telephonic interpreter services through Linguistica, a service that provides telephonic translation and interpretation assistance, are offered. For individuals who are hearing impaired, sign language interpreters and translators are contracted as needed. Also, most written materials, including orientation information about workforce system services, are available in both English and Spanish to facilitate effective communication.

Additionally, the local area utilizes the state’s New Mexico Jobs Online System (NMJOBS), which provides a portal for basic career services and links to the Unemployment Insurance website through single sign-on. Both systems are accessible in English and Spanish.

Individuals identified at American Job Centers (AJCs) will be referred to the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program. Serving English Language Learners (ELLs) is a high priority for our Title II partners, as providing English language instruction is a core component of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA). This includes English language acquisition activities and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education when needed, as outlined in Section 203 of WIOA. Although offering ELL programs is not a mandatory requirement for AEFLA subgrantees, all applicant programs must assess the need for such services in their respective areas.

E. Service Implementation

1. Youth

I. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area including activities for youth with disabilities and other barriers such as homeless youth, foster and former foster youth, and expecting or parenting youth.

II. Describe how the local board is planning or working to fulfill specific youth requirements as laid out in the WIOA including:

- How the board is providing for the 14 required youth service elements;
- Approach toward meeting the 20% work experience, including the use of registered apprenticeship as a service strategy;
- Approaches toward meeting the 75% OSY minimum expenditure;
- A description of changes in the youth providers' service delivery models;
- A description of any changes in outreach activities around youth; and
- Any changes in youth case management approach including the use of supportive services

EAWDB and its youth committee recognize that investing in our youth is an investment in our future. Alignment of partner services is not only a WIOA requirement but a necessity when serving the youth population. The EAWDB and subrecipient continue to align the provision of and access to services with the oversight and support of the youth committee. The program's service delivery is regularly reviewed to drive continuous improvement and to develop innovative strategies aimed at attracting and retaining youth participants as well as to evaluate the quality of services being provided.

In rural New Mexico, services to youth and their availability vary in each local community. For example, many communities lack local access to alternative high schools, high school equivalency tutoring, and/or testing; homeless programs; mental health and/or substance abuse counseling; post-secondary or CTE training; transitional foster care; pregnancy/parenting support; or vocational rehabilitation services. With the rurality of the area and the inconsistencies in service availability, it is imperative that the partners, community leaders and CEOs work together to bridge gaps to develop solutions to provide access to much-needed services and support.

A variety of youth workforce activities are available, tailored to meet the needs of young individuals, including those with disabilities and other barriers to employment, such as homeless youth, foster and former fostered youth, and pregnant or parenting youth.

The subrecipient, with the one stop operator, developed a great collaboration with local vocational rehabilitation agencies to ensure a seamless integration of service provision. These partnerships provide youth with comprehensive support, including career counseling, job placement, and follow-up services,

to ensure better opportunities to sustain employment. The one stop operator ensures all workforce centers provide access to assistive technologies that cater to various disabilities empowering youth customers to fully participate in training programs and work environments. As mentioned above, the subrecipient provides reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities as a supportive service.

Recognizing the unique challenges faced by homeless youth, a range of resources and supportive services intend to stabilize their living situation and equip them with the skills needed for school, training, and employment. In the east, we collaborate with local housing authorities and shelters to provide temporary housing solutions. These partnerships help homeless youth secure safe and stable living conditions, which are critical for successful participation in workforce programs.

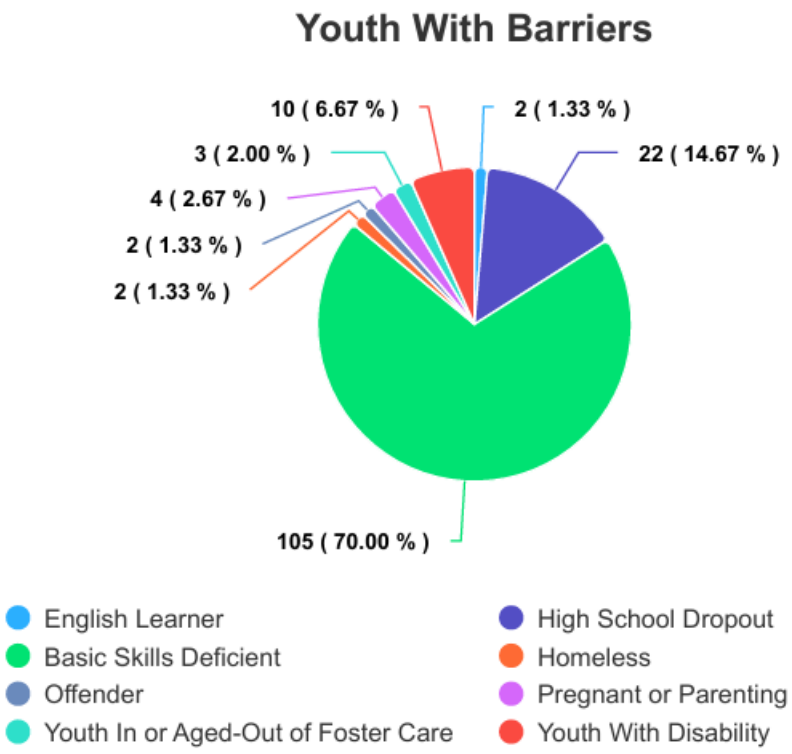
Financial literacy, one of the 14 WIOA youth program elements, is a key component of our approach, offering workshops and one-on-one counseling to help youth manage their finances, establish savings, and plan for their future. Local career coaches work closely with partners in each community to develop and foster the most collaborative environment possible to help youth succeed. This includes working with various community organizations to help bridge gaps to find solutions that fit the needs of the youth we serve. For example, working with local community leaders, partners, and organizations to identify temporary housing possibilities for homeless youth in communities that do not offer or have minimal access to those services.

Foster and former fostered youth also face significant barriers as they transition to adulthood. Some services are designed to address these challenges through life skills training, education support, mentorship programs, and transition planning. The subrecipient has collaborated with different rehabilitation and foster care centers in several counties offering collaborative group case management for these individuals.

Pregnant and parenting youth require specialized support to balance their roles as parents with their educational and career goals. The east will focus on meaningful resources that will provide flexible scheduling, support networks, and parenting classes when needed. Currently the local staff are working with different education programs that accommodate the demands of parenting, offering flexible schedules for their education programs such as alternative high schools, Adult Education and Literacy (AEL), and online schools that the subrecipient is collaborating with to better serve youth. Youth participants are also referred to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and to the Children, Youth, and Family Division (CYFD) when needed. Career coaches collaborate closely with enrolled parenting youth to identify service gaps and provide the necessary support to help them participate in training and work-based learning opportunities. Acting as system navigators, the career coaches assist in applying for and coordinating various services, ensuring the youth have the resources needed to succeed.

Many eligible youth participants in the area face multiple barriers to both employment and post-secondary education. The EAWDB, one stop operator, and Title I team work diligently to identify and

communicate available community resources and to build strong relationships with these partners. However, due to the disparity in available services, the area's Title I youth provider is responsible for ensuring access to and delivery of all 14 WIOA program elements. A graph is provided below showing the percentage of youth with barriers served in program year 2025.



Source: NMJOBS

Youth facing significant barriers to employment are referred to partner programs with the most expertise in serving that population. The board then collaborates to support those programs' efforts and integrate WIOA program elements into the youth's individual employment plan (IEP). For example, youth with disabilities are referred to the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) for assessment and eligibility determination. If they qualify for DVR services, DVR becomes the primary point of contact for identifying the best training path for the participant. The WIOA career coach aligns the youth's IEP goals with the DVR employment plan. Similarly, services for youth in or aging out of foster care are coordinated with the CYFD case manager.

Tutoring services are provided through several mechanisms. Where appropriate tutoring and study skills training are coordinated through co-enrollment with AEL programs. When this is not possible, career coaches may: provide direct tutoring to youth; pay a stipend to one youth to tutor another; or locate

and contract with a qualified tutoring service. Many youth participants are actively enrolled in education support programs that assist with high school completion or high school equivalency (HSE) attainment. Strong partnerships with the AEL program continue to work well for attainment of a high school equivalency.

Connections with high schools and alternative high schools throughout the region are expanding, especially for youth with an IEP. Other partner connections involve the Roswell Job Corps Center. This program provides a dedicated support system for youth in attaining their high school equivalency. The youth program also uses a tool called Study Buddy that can be issued to students to help with their High School Equivalency preparation. The tool continues to be exceedingly popular with the students and has yielded excellent results.

When a high school dropout enrolls in the program, every effort is made to re-engage them in secondary education. There are alternative schools in the area and since the pandemic, there has been a notable increase in the number of homeschooling options and online secondary schools which are utilized to support youth in the region.

Job readiness training, including essential soft skills development such as communication, teamwork, résumé writing, and interview techniques, is offered to youth through the Career EDGE platform. Career EDGE features comprehensive training modules, life skills and professional development tools, interview simulations, and résumé-building resources, along with assessments and labor market information. Specifically designed for our region, Career EDGE enables participants, especially those in rural areas, to access these critical soft skills training through a convenient, web-based platform. The Career EDGE interview simulator is a tool that helps job seekers prepare for interviews by providing a mock interview experience. It provides tips on proper interviewing etiquette, provides a mock interviewer who asks common job interview questions and allows job seekers to record and critique their mock interview.

Work Experience activities can include summer employment opportunities, employment opportunities available throughout the year, internship and job shadowing, pre-apprenticeship programs, on-the-job training, and virtual work experience opportunities. The subrecipient, in conjunction with the one stop operator will continue to work together to identify more opportunities for paid internships, pre-apprentice and apprenticeship training for youth that is connected to academic and occupational learning opportunities. As more apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities are developed and made available in the area, youth will be encouraged to participate in apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training in their chosen career pathways. The subrecipient is working to align work experience activities with career exploration and educational services to provide a more well-rounded experience for the youth and increase their knowledge of educational and occupational skill requirements within their areas of interests.

To enhance the effectiveness of our occupational skills training programs, the objective is to expand industry partnerships, strengthening connections with local businesses to align training with current

and future labor market demands. The goal is for participants to earn industry-recognized credentials, certifications, or degrees in in-demand sectors and to increase access to these training opportunities for underserved youth populations, including those in rural areas, youth with disabilities, and those facing economic hardships.

To keep pace with the evolving workforce, it is necessary to regularly update training curricula to incorporate emerging technologies and industry trends and to develop pathways for youth to earn stackable credentials, allowing them to progressively build skills and qualifications for advanced training and higher-paying jobs. Another goal for the board is to expand access to online and hybrid training programs that lead to an industry recognized credential, to accommodate youth who face transportation or scheduling challenges, so that all participants can benefit from these essential training opportunities.

Goals for education offered concurrently with workforce preparation and training program element are aimed to develop integrated learning pathways that seamlessly blend academic instruction with vocational training, ensuring that youth gain both the knowledge and practical skills necessary for success in their chosen careers. We will collaborate with educational institutions and industry partners to create dual-enrollment opportunities, allowing participants to earn academic credits while receiving hands-on workforce training.

Additionally, we plan to implement contextualized learning approaches, where academic subjects are taught through the lens of specific industries, making education more relevant and engaging for the youth participant. Our goal is to increase the number of youths who complete both their educational and vocational training programs, leading to a higher rate of credential attainment and employment. This integrated approach will better equip youth with the skills and qualifications needed to excel in today's competitive job market. The youth provider continues to develop On-The-Job training opportunities for participants. On-the-job training opportunities help employers with placement and to place youth on a career pathway.

To enhance leadership development opportunities programs, we aim to create a diverse range of activities that foster leadership skills and personal growth among youth. The board has set goals to establish mentorship programs with the Roswell Job Corps Center, NM Youth Challenge, and AEL that already pair participants with experienced leaders who can provide guidance and support, while also facilitating leadership training workshops. Also, we will work to introduce opportunities for youth to lead and organize peer-led initiatives, empowering them to take charge of their own development and that of their peers. By providing these comprehensive leadership development opportunities, it is intended to equip youth with the skills and confidence needed to become effective leaders and active contributors in their communities and future careers.

Like tutoring, adult mentoring services are provided through a variety of mechanisms. They receive consistent mentoring and coaching from their career coaches as they work through the program goals. As mentioned previously, goals are to establish mentorship programs with Roswell Job Corps Center and Adult Education that already connect youth with experienced leaders as mentors. They can also receive mentoring through work site supervisors when appropriate. Additional mentors are identified and utilized as appropriate to meet the needs of each individual youth and are sought to assist these youth in transitioning to the world of work and training.

Supportive services are an integral component of the WIOA Title I youth program. Supportive services provide necessary support to maximize the success potential of youth. Supportive services are utilized to assist with things such transportation, emergency housing assistance, appropriate work attire or protective gear, child or dependent care, reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities, legal aid services, auto repairs, assistance with post-secondary education books or fees, or payments and fees for employment and training related applications, test, and certifications as well as to incentivize program goal completion such as attainment of high school equivalency (HSE) or post-secondary credentialing, obtainment of unsubsidized employment, and completion of post-test indicating a skill level gain for measurable skills gain.

To strengthen follow-up services, a comprehensive support system that continues to assist youth after they complete their initial program participation is created. Our goals include implementing a structured follow-up plan that provides ongoing career counseling and job retention support for at least 12 months post-program. We will establish regular check-ins and progress reviews to address any emerging challenges and offer tailored guidance to help participants achieve their long-term career goals. Additionally, we plan to enhance our referral network to connect youth with additional resources, such as further training opportunities, advanced education programs, and community support services. Through these initiatives, we seek to provide continuous, meaningful support that helps youth transition smoothly from program completion to long-term professional achievement.

To enhance comprehensive guidance and counseling services, the board, and its subrecipient have common goals that include expanding individualized career counseling to address each participant's unique needs and aspirations. Career coaches provide regular one-on-one sessions that cover career exploration, goal setting, and personal development. Additionally, we plan to integrate specialized counseling for issues such as mental health, substance abuse, and financial literacy to offer holistic support. We will also develop and distribute targeted resources to help participants navigate their educational and career pathways effectively. This comprehensive approach will ensure that participants receive the guidance and support necessary for long-term success. The EAWDB recently updated the Youth Services Policy that allows mental health assessments more accessible under WIOA.

Financial literacy education program includes exploring new curriculum to cover essential topics such as budgeting, saving, investing, understanding lines of credit and to offer interactive workshops and

online modules that engage participants and provide practical, real-world applications. Partnering with financial experts to deliver hands-on training and personalized financial coaching is crucial when delivering financial literacy services to youth participants. The goal is to equip youth with the skills and confidence to manage their finances effectively, setting them on a path toward long-term financial stability and independence.

Career exploration and guidance activities focus on career planning and counseling, helping youth identify their interests, skills, and potential career pathways. Staff utilize the NMDWS website, NM Career Solutions resource page with their participants to identify careers of interest. The Career Exploration and Why I Work tools are great mechanisms to use to translate the information appropriately to the youth population. Staff also utilize the New Mexico Jobs Online System (NMJOBS) to provide youth with updated labor market and employment information.

Youth with high school diplomas or HSE are encouraged to enroll in post-secondary education leading to a credential that is linked to career pathways in high demand occupations. To support youth in preparing for and transitioning to post-secondary education and training, staff offer tailored guidance, academic support, and access to resources that facilitate this critical step. Staff provide college and career counseling and help with financial aid applications. Youth staff connect the youth with the TRIO program, if available on campus, for mentorship opportunities and exposure to post-secondary institutions through campus visits and tours. Other connections that are made are with other student outreach programs located in the post-secondary institutions that help in preparing students in the post-secondary institutions. Staff equip youth with the knowledge and confidence needed to navigate the transition successfully, ensuring they are well-prepared to pursue further education or vocational training.

With WIOA's increased emphasis on developing skills essential for success in the workplace, the Act mandates that 20% of youth funds be allocated to work-related activities. The EAWDB has long recognized that direct engagement with employers in a real work environment is the most effective way to learn appropriate workplace behaviors, interpersonal and transferable skills, and a strong work ethic. As such, this has always been a priority for the board and its youth program. The only challenge the area has faced in meeting this requirement, even under WIA, was during the shutdown caused by the pandemic.

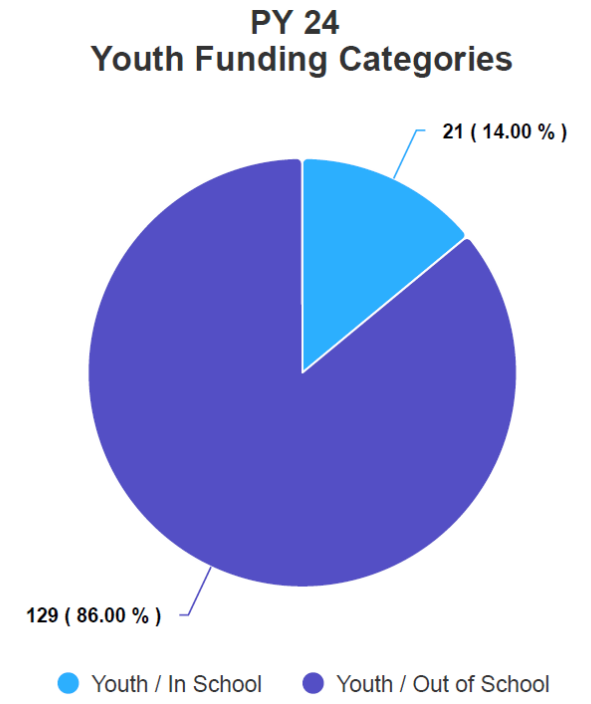
Like the work experience requirement, the youth program in the east shifted seamlessly into the 75% out of school expenditure requirement. Below is a comparison chart of the youth funding categories for program years 2023 and 2024, showing the funding percentages comparisons. Training providers in the east have partnered with and recruited heavily from the adult education programs. With the expanded age range under WIOA the outreach through this program expanded.

A strengthened partnership and co-enrollment model have been established between the EAWDB and the Roswell Job Corps Center (RJCC) to enhance services for youth enrolled in the program. This

collaboration also facilitates a seamless transition for program completers by connecting them with local American Job Center (AJC) staff in their home areas, ensuring they receive continued support and assistance with job placement upon their return.

The subrecipient forged a strong partnership with the New Mexico Youth Challenge (NMYC) in Chaves County in PY 2023, delivering work readiness skills to cadets through the Career EDGE platform. This collaboration was instrumental in equipping NMYC cadets with essential soft skills, résumé- building tools, and interview preparation resources. Over the final four cohorts, the subrecipient was actively involved in co-enrolling NMYC cadets into the WIOA youth program, ensuring they received comprehensive support and resources to transition successfully into the workforce.

Although the subrecipient previously maintained a successful partnership with NMYC in Chaves County, this partnership is no longer active. NMYC elected not to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the EAWDB, resulting in the discontinuation of formal collaboration and coordinated WIOA youth services.



PY 24
Youth Funding Categories
21 (14.00 %)
129 (86.00 %)
Youth / In School
Youth / Out of School

New Mexico Jobs Online System (NMJOBS)

As previously discussed elsewhere in this plan, the board's WIOA Title I youth provider continues to utilize the virtual services platform offered by Career Edge to expand and enhance services to youth. The platform has many tools that assist with delivery of the 14 WIOA program elements. The Title I

provider is currently utilizing the Career Edge platform that provides a workflow and fillable forms that will offer the ability for a youth participant to apply for services from their mobile device or a computer and securely upload eligibility documents. Individuals can request a meeting with a career coach virtually or request a virtual appointment. WIOA system partners with co-enrolled customers can be provided service reports from Career Edge to work collaboratively to achieve service strategy goals and objectives for both programs without duplication. This helps keep youth engaged and allows program staff to accurately record and uniformly report services provided to those individuals within the system. The ability to provide virtual access to the workforce system, including face to face meetings with their career coach or partners, provides youth in rural and remote areas access to the entire workforce system.

In program year 2023, the youth team successfully rebranded and renamed the WIOA youth program in the eastern region, making it more relatable to potential participants and their communities while aligning with the program's mission. Proposed names were presented to both the Youth Committee and the One-Stop Services Committee, with the final name revealed at the EAWDB board meeting. The youth program, now called "Unearthing Future Opportunities" (UFO), reflects the creativity and aspirations of the young people it serves. This participant-driven branding initiative has also sparked efforts to develop a more engaging and age-appropriate array of services. The program's new logo is displayed below.



During PY 2025, the UFO youth Program experienced several significant transitions that affected program capacity, participant enrollment, and continuity of service delivery. These included a change in service provider, staff turnover, leadership transitions, and a decline in youth enrollments and services provided. Program staff and leadership worked throughout these changes to maintain services for existing participants while preparing for the transition and identifying opportunities to strengthen program delivery moving forward.

Staffing shortages also affected coordination with key workforce partners. The program's partnership with Adult Education declined since late 2023, in part due to the reduced number of career coaches available throughout the Eastern area. Limited staffing capacity made consistent communication, coordination, and participant referrals more challenging, resulting in a significant delay and decreases in referrals for several months. Re-establishing regular communication and developing consistent referral processes with Adult Education will be a priority as the program moves into PY 2026.

The uncertainty surrounding the continuation of Job Corps services in Roswell also affected participant continuity and partnership coordination during PY 2025. Some participants relocated while the future of the center was uncertain, disrupting established connections and referral processes. Following the reopening of the Job Corps center, the UFO Program began efforts to reconnect with newly hired and returning staff and re-establish regular coordination. Strengthening this partnership will remain a priority to support consistent referrals and ensure eligible Job Corps participants have access to appropriate WIOA youth services.

Looking ahead, the UFO youth Program will focus on rebuilding program capacity, strengthening existing partnerships, increasing outreach, and expanding connections with organizations serving youth throughout the Eastern Area. Priorities include strengthening partnerships with Job Corps and Adult Education and increasing coordination with probation offices across the region, traditional high schools, foster homes, Fostering Connections, and the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD). The program also plans to develop a new partnership with the New Mexico Corrections Department to support High School Equivalency enrollment and provide re-entry preparation and skills through Eckerd Connects programming. Together, these efforts are intended to expand referral networks, increase youth enrollment, reconnect underserved populations with workforce services, and strengthen pathways to education, training, credentials, and employment.

2. Adults and dislocated workers

I. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area, including services targeted toward adult populations with barriers, such as displaced homemakers, homeless adults, ex-offenders, single parents, and pregnant women, and/or long term unemployed.

The American Job Centers (AJCs) in the eastern area house staff from the WIOA adult/dislocated worker and youth programs, as well as Wagner Peyser (WP). This setup ensures that a comprehensive range of WIOA basic and individualized career and training services is available across all twelve counties. While some counties offer services on an itinerant or as-needed basis, as detailed in the one-stop office listing

in Attachment C, the full spectrum of services outlined below is accessible to individuals in the region. AJC staff provides many employment and training services to adults and dislocated workers through the centers. These services are designed to address the diverse needs of job seekers, including those facing significant barriers to employment.

Basic career services include but are not limited to:

- Adult, dislocated Worker and youth program eligibility determination;
- Outreach, intake and orientation to information and other services available through the one stop delivery system;
- Initial Assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities and supportive service needs;
- Labor exchange services;
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services including those within the one-stop delivery system, and when appropriate, other workforce development programs;
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional and national labor market areas;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers;
- Provision of information about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures and any additional performance information relating to the area's one stop delivery system;
- Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance,
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA; and
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims under UI programs.

Individualized career services must be provided when deemed appropriate to help individuals obtain or retain employment. These services include, but are not limited to:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers;
- Development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her goals;
- Group and/or individualized counseling and mentoring;

- Career planning and/or case management;
- Short-term pre-vocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
- Internships and work experience linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities that help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education, training or employment;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out of area job search assistance and relocation assistance;
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.
- Follow-up services as appropriate.

Training services should be aligned with in-demand employment opportunities either within the region or in areas where the adult or dislocated worker is willing to commute or relocate. The selection of training services must prioritize customer choice, focus on in-demand occupations, be guided by the performance of relevant training providers, and be coordinated with other available sources of assistance according to WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)). Training services include, but are not limited to:

- Occupational skills training linked to in-demand occupations;
- On-the-Job Training;
- Incumbent worker training;
- Apprenticeship;
- Skills upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training, and
- Transitional jobs.

Services tailored to specific populations, such as displaced homemakers and individuals with disabilities, include targeted outreach and comprehensive case management. These services assess individuals holistically to identify their unique needs to better customize requested services accordingly. Additionally, as highlighted elsewhere in the local plan, training and cross-training for partner programs will be provided and adjusted based on identified needs. Case management training for individuals with disabilities or multiple barriers to employment will be sought from partner staff and programs recognized as subject matter experts in these areas, such as those specializing in services for individuals with disabilities and disabled veterans.

In program year 2023, WIOA Title I, the operator in partnership with Mountain View Vocational Institute (MVVI), the New Mexico Department of Corrections (DOC) and the New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) built on the "Prison Project" previously launched in 2019. The prison project is a collaborative initiative between the above-mentioned community partners working together to address major challenges faced by justice-involved individuals as they reintegrate into the community. Since its inception, the prison project's primary focus has been on equipping incarcerated individuals with employability and occupational skills to enhance their employment opportunities upon release. Another major focus with this project is to provide a trained workforce to businesses that have high employment vacancies and reduce recidivism rates.

This collaboration allowed the Title I team the opportunity to enroll a small cohort of incarcerated individuals in a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) training program. MVVI brought their trucks directly to the Roswell Correctional Facility to conduct the driving portion of the training. Upon successful course completion, the MVD administered the written portion of the Class A License within the facility. Once these individuals are released, the goal is to provide them with career services. The American Job Center (AJC) teams will assist with job search, resume building, and finding gainful employment post-release.

With momentum from PY 2023 the board and it's subrecipient continued their strong relationships with correctional facilities, education and training providers, and other workforce partners to expand the "Prison Project" even further and increase access to workforce development services for justice-involved individuals during program years 2024 and 2025. Through these collaborative efforts, participants at correctional facilities in Roswell and Santa Rosa received occupational skills training in areas such as Residential Construction and Residential and Commercial Maintenance, providing opportunities to develop practical, industry-relevant skills and earn credentials prior to release.

The EAWDB also expanded these partnerships to support the development and delivery of Wildfire Resiliency Training. This initiative provides participants with skills related to post-fire restoration, pre-fire mitigation, and wildfire resiliency, while responding to workforce and community needs throughout the region. Together, these initiatives demonstrate the Board's continued commitment to expanding career pathways for justice-involved individuals through hands-on training, credential attainment, and connections to employment opportunities.

Sector and industry-specific training opportunities also expanded with continued emphasis on preparing participants for high-demand occupations and addressing regional workforce needs. One notable initiative was the development of an all-female Class A CDL training cohort serving women in Otero and Lincoln Counties. The cohort was implemented through collaboration among WIOA Title I, State partners, MVVI, and local county partners. The initiative expanded access to career opportunities in the transportation industry while demonstrating the effectiveness of regional collaboration, targeted recruitment, and coordinated funding strategies. Efforts such as this support the EAWDB's broader sector strategy by

connecting participants with industry-recognized training and credentials that align with employer demand and provide pathways to sustainable employment.

Employer engagement also resulted in additional training opportunities. Through outreach connected to the CDL initiative, the EAWDB developed an Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) opportunity with Otero County Electric Cooperative that provided Class A CDL training to eight employees. All eight employees successfully completed the training and received pay increases. The EAWDB also partnered with local governmental agencies and MVVI to expand Heavy Equipment training, including an evening cohort that served six participants and created additional pathways into construction and infrastructure occupations.

3. Individuals with Disabilities

I. Describe how individuals with disabilities will be served through the one-stop center system in the local area, including copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements between the LWDB and the local office of a designated state agency administering programs carried out under the Rehab Act, with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information and resources, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination, such as improving or creating referral processes, joint enrollment and case management.

The EAWDB and its operator meet, when necessary with DVR regional staff to foster a highly integrated system across programs. These discussions focus on enhancing collaborative and coordinated case management and improving co-enrollment processes. The operator will continue to work closely with DVR to enhance the accessibility of services for individuals with disabilities, including those with visual impairments or blindness, ensuring that all customers receive equitable access to the resources and support they need.

As part of the cross-training initiative aimed at enhancing staff capabilities, several AJC staff across the region are enrolled in the University of New Mexico's College of Employment Services (CES) program to obtain their Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) certification. This comprehensive training includes 11 self-paced learning modules, totaling 26 hours of content.

The modules cover a range of essential topic:

- Foundations of Employment Services
- Funding Employment Services

- Principles of Career Development
- Networking
- Using Work Incentives to Increase Self-Sufficiency
- Strategies for Job Development (Parts 1 and 2)
- Business Perspectives
- Job Creation
- Performance Coaching and Supports (Parts 1 and 2)

Upon completion, local staff will be equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide integrated employment services tailored to individuals with disabilities.

4. Veterans

I. Describe the board's strategic approach to serving Veterans to improve employment outcomes for this population, including priority of service efforts.

Veterans and covered persons in the eastern area are given priority for all services offered at the American Job Centers (AJCs), including 24-hour access to newly posted job orders. This priority aligns with the state combined plan and adheres to state and federal policies and regulations. For programs that have specific eligibility criteria, veterans and covered persons must meet those requirements to receive priority service. In programs targeting specific populations without specific eligibility requirements, covered persons are given the highest priority for enrollment, like the priority applied in universal access programs. The EAWDB ensures that the AJCs in the local area implement a Veterans Priority of Service standard that complies with the state combined plan and the law.

When veterans enter an AJC and identify themselves as veterans, staff conduct a one-on-one initial assessment to determine if they face significant barriers to employment. If no significant barriers are identified, the veteran is referred to WP employment services staff for registration, completion of background information, and further needs assessment. Skills development and employment services staff, in collaboration with local veterans' employment representatives (where available), assist with the veteran's training and employment needs.

The Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) staff actively engage with the local veteran community throughout the region by visiting Veterans of Foreign War (VFW) offices and the area's two military bases. During these visits, they provide valuable information to transitioning service members and their families about the services available to them through the American Job Centers (AJCs). This outreach ensures that veterans and their families are aware of the resources and support available to assist them in their transition to civilian employment.

The board and one-stop operator will collaborate with area-wide partners to implement targeted outreach strategies aimed at serving veterans who face significant challenges in accessing services, such as those who are incarcerated or disabled. These efforts will also work to engage employers, with a focus

on emphasizing the valuable skills that veterans bring to the workforce. By highlighting the unique capabilities and experiences of veterans, the board and its operator aim to foster stronger connections between veterans and potential employers, improving employment outcomes for this population.

5. Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers

I. Describe, as appropriate, the board's approach to serving migrant seasonal farmworkers within its respective area to increase education and employment outcomes for this population.

The Eastern area has a smaller population of migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs) compared to other regions in the state. When MSFWs seek services at the center, they are provided assisted with services tailored to meet their specific needs. Identification of MSFWs triggers coordination with the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS), which employs full-time outreach staff to connect with migrant workers and deliver necessary services. Additionally, collaboration occurs with the local National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) when relevant.

6. Native Americans

I. Describe, as appropriate, the board's approach to serving Native Americans within its respective area to increase education and employment outcomes for this population.

The EAWDB is committed to enhancing education and employment outcomes for Native Americans in the eastern area through a culturally responsive and inclusive approach. Recognizing the unique challenges and needs of this population, the board is dedicated to ensuring effective support and service delivery for Native Americas in the region.

The WIOA administrator on the Mescalero reservation refers individuals to the Title I programs located in Alamogordo or Ruidoso, depending on their location, when it is deemed beneficial for their needs. The EAWDB is dedicated to expanding services for Native American populations and is actively working to enhance staff competencies in cultural sensitivity. To support this commitment, all local board and WIOA Title I staff successfully completed the Cultural Competency Training provided by the NMDWS and Native Workforce Partners (NWP). This training strengthened staff awareness of cultural differences and reinforced the importance of providing respectful, inclusive, and culturally responsive services to individuals from diverse backgrounds, including Native American communities. These ongoing efforts aim to improve the effectiveness of service delivery and better address the unique needs of Native American communities.

The EAWDB has also worked closely with tribal administration and leadership to assist in response and recovery efforts resulting from the wildfires.

7. Individuals with low income

I. Describe how the board will identify and work with low-income individuals, including any plans to coordinate locally with the TANF program to serve this population as well as to serve TANF exhaustees.

The Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB) is committed to supporting low-income individuals, including those receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, TANF exhaustees, and individuals who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. To effectively identify low-income individuals, the EAWDB leverages information from local agencies, including the New Mexico Health Care Authority (HCA) Career Link program, which plays a critical role in this effort. Collaboration with Career Link and other local community organizations allows for outreach and identification of individuals who could benefit from additional support offered through local AJCs.

While numbers of individuals that have exhausted TANF benefits are low in the east, it is important to support these individuals when they do visit our AJCs. To provide continued assistance, the board will:

- Increase partnership and collaboration with the TANF program to identify individuals before they exhaust their benefits to transition them off benefits and support them during the transition.
- Tailor Services: Offer specialized services to address the unique needs of TANF exhaustees, such as job search assistance, resume building, and career counseling.
- Provide Access to Training and Education: Exhaustees are given priority for enrollment in training programs that align with in-demand occupations. Staff will coordinate with training providers to ensure these individuals receive the skills necessary for sustainable employment.
- Continued Coordination: Maintain ongoing communication with TANF program staff to monitor progress and address any additional needs that may arise during service delivery.

The EAWDB will seek additional opportunities to expand its services to low-income individuals and TANF participants. This includes increasing staff competencies regarding cultural and socioeconomic differences to provide more effective support. Strong partnerships with TANF programs and other community resources will create a comprehensive support network that enhances education and employment outcomes for low-income individuals in the eastern area.

8. Older Individuals

I. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title 1 workforce investment activities with the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to serve the employment needs of older individuals.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) has a longstanding and productive partnership with the EAWDB and its local AJCs. This program focuses on two primary objectives: helping

income-eligible New Mexicans aged 55 or older secure employment and offering community service opportunities through paid, part-time training positions.

When appropriate, SCSEP participants are referred to staff at the AJCs for assessment and eligibility determination. This collaboration ensures that older adults receive tailored support and access to valuable resources that facilitate their successful transition into employment while contributing to their communities through meaningful service opportunities.

The EAWDB also understands that digital literacy is a critical skill and teaching it to older individuals is essential for building an inclusive workforce. Providing digital literacy education empowers older adults to participate fully in the modern workforce, access valuable resources, and enhance their economic self-sufficiency. It also benefits employers, who gain access to a more technologically proficient and experienced talent pool. By prioritizing digital literacy for older workers, WIOA programs can help bridge the generational digital divide and create a more resilient and adaptable workforce.

9. Individuals with Low Literacy Levels

I. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title 1 activities with AEL activities under WIOA title II. Describe the joint planning processes planned or underway that will enhance the provision of services to individuals receiving adult education services, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, sharing resources, sharing of information, cooperative efforts to improve or create referral processes, joint enrollment, and case management. Include how the local area will carry out the review of local applications submitted under title II.

At the AJCs, a basic skills assessment is conducted for all individuals seeking services who do not have a recent assessment, such as a TABE. If the assessment reveals a need for basic skills improvement, particularly for those without a high school diploma or those interested in on-site learning opportunities, individuals are referred to the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program. The AEL program provides further evaluation and targeted services to address these needs and support educational advancement, and the partners determine if co-enrollment is appropriate. For individuals that would like to work on their own, they are instructed on how to access online resources to improve their basic skills, like Alison courses through the NMJOBS.

The Title I youth and AEL programs have been well aligned for quite some time. and coordinate services to co-enrolled customers regularly. The operator will work with the Title I program to increase co-enrollment between the Title I adult/dislocated worker and AEL programs to increase access to support activities and career planning to those individuals.

F. Coordination of services across programs

The plan must describe how services are coordinated across programs, including:

1. Wagner Peyser

I. Provide a description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.

The Eastern Region comprises seven offices, each serving various customer groups within their local communities. While each office caters to a unique subset of customers, they all share a common objective: to offer exceptional customer service and earn the trust of those they assist. This trust enables customers to follow the guidance provided by their career coaches, who are dedicated to guiding individuals toward long-term, meaningful employment. In addition, each office supports employers through a range of business services, including, but not limited to, connecting employers with qualified job seekers, organizing employment events, providing information on Work Opportunity Tax Credits and Federal Bonding, and facilitating job development and on-the-job training opportunities. These business services aim to bridge the gap between employers and job seekers.

The American Job Center offices in the Eastern Region are in Hobbs, Carlsbad, Artesia, Alamogordo, Ruidoso, Roswell, and Clovis. Each office is tasked with serving a diverse range of customers, including Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants, veterans, eligible veterans, and job seekers looking to obtain employment. Office staff also assist referrals from various partners, such as the Step-Up program from the Child Support Enforcement Division, returning citizens referred by justice system partners, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) referrals from New Mexico Works, under-employed individuals, WIOA Title I UFO (youth), WIOA Title I adult and dislocated worker programs, English Language Learners (ELL), and walk-in customers facing employment barriers.

Basic Career Services are available in each office and delivered by Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff in coordination with other one-stop partners. WP Employment Services staff may also make available Individualized Career Services, particularly for those individuals with barriers to employment. WP employment services staff work with the EAWDB, the One Stop Operator team, and other workforce partners, to effectively serve both employers and jobseekers. Job center staff in each office coordinate customer flow and service delivery with internal partner staff to ensure great customer service and complete customer satisfaction. The customer experience begins with a welcome from staff at the front desk. All staff are trained to deliver customer service from the front desk to identify the needs of the customer and their next steps. Effective case management involves regular follow-up with customers to ensure their needs are being met. Additionally, follow-up is crucial for tracking the success of job seeker-employer connections, documenting outcomes, and reconciling filled positions.

Business Services play a crucial role in connecting employers who need recruitment assistance with job seekers working with job center staff. Business Services staff are instrumental in organizing and facilitating events that offer networking opportunities between job seekers and employers within each community. Area Managers in each office are tasked with achieving a 15% penetration and retention rate with services provided to established employers in their respective counties. This target aims to boost employer activity in the New Mexico Connection Jobs Online System (NMJOBS), resulting in more frequent and effective connections between job seekers enrolled in career services and potential employers.

New WP and internal partner staff in each office receive training to assist with unemployment insurance (UI) claims and perform initial career readiness assessments. It is essential for each new claimant to be enrolled in Wagner-Peyser career services to ensure they receive the necessary support and to determine potential eligibility for partner programs. Office staff will enroll claimants in Wagner- Peyser as part of the new unemployment claim process.

UI claimants may follow one of two pathways:

1. Scheduled Appointment: A UI Customer Service Agent (CSA) will schedule an appointment 48 hours in advance for claimants to visit the local office and begin career consultation after their initial claim is processed. AJCstaff will provide a courtesy call prior to the appointment to initiate service.

2. Identification Issues: Occasionally, new claimants may face account lockouts due to fraud prevention measures. These claimants are directed to the local office to provide proof of identity, which is then faxed to the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS). NMDWS has established a rapid claim unlock procedure using a chat function to expedite the process, allowing for better customer service and facilitating Wagner-Peyser enrollment while the claimant is in the office.

Wagner-Peyser staff will enhance case management and customer support by engaging with clients at the start of a new UI claim. Completing Wagner-Peyser enrollment, along with a thorough profile review and assessment, is essential for maximizing the chances of connecting clients with suitable employers or resources. Additionally, opportunities for co-enrollment are identified during a claimant's Re-Employment Services (RESEA) meeting, and customers who are co-enrolled in partner programs will benefit from integrated, collaborative case management.

2. Rapid Response

I. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) employs a full-time Rapid Response Coordinator who oversees services for individuals facing layoffs or business closures. Once a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) or layoff notice is received, local board staff engage in rapid response activities. Wagner-Peyser, WIOA, and Unemployment Insurance teams conduct site visits to assist both employers and employees with job search registration, UI registration, and initial eligibility assessments for career and training services. The team also provides information on services available through the WIOA adult and dislocated worker programs and other services offered at our American Job Centers (AJCs). These rapid response activities are delivered collaboratively across all partners.

3. Secondary and postsecondary education system

I. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

II. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

The EAWDB, through the one stop team will continue to cultivate strong partnerships with secondary and postsecondary educational institutions to ensure alignment between educational programs and workforce needs. Regular meetings and joint planning sessions will be held with educators, administrators, and workforce partners to discuss current labor market trends, skill requirements, and program effectiveness. Through these meetings, we hope to align curriculum and training programs required by local employers. Additionally, by integrating industry-recognized certification opportunities, portable and stackable credentials, the board will help ensure that students are prepared for in-demand careers.

The EAWDB will leverage the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and work with local training providers to enhance services by ensuring that the training programs available to job seekers are of high quality, relevant to current labor market demands, and align with goals and strategies. The board will work with local providers to align their training programs with the current and projected needs of the current local labor market. This includes collaborating with employers and industry leaders to ensure that training programs are designed to address skill gaps and meet the requirements of in-demand occupations.

The EAWDB will collaborate with entities carrying out core programs to enhance access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials, including industry-recognized certificates or certifications that are portable and stackable by:

- Partnership Development and Collaboration
- Development of Integrated Pathways and Services
- Work to Align Services with Industry Needs
- Ensure Programs are Accessible and Inclusive
- Resource Sharing

The board has established strong partnerships with core program providers, such as secondary and post-secondary institutions, adult education, vocational rehabilitation, and Titles I and III to align efforts in supporting credential attainment and enhancing access for customers to either up-skill or re-skill. Partner engagement will play a critical role in ensuring the above-mentioned collaboration efforts are successful.

4. Supportive Services

I. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title 1 Workforce activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

According to Federal Law, supportive services for adults and dislocated workers are defined in WIOA Sections 3(59) and 134(d)(2) and (3), while youth supportive services include those listed in WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(G). Supportive services are essential assistance services such as transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments, which are necessary to enable individuals to participate in activities authorized under WIOA Title I.

WIOA Title I staff assess the supportive service needs of each individual to be enrolled based on an objective assessment and documented justification, as outlined in the participant's Individual Employment Plan/ Individual Service Strategy (IEP/ISS). Participants must demonstrate that they have been denied access to support from all other community agencies or resources, and documentation of this denial is kept in the participants' electronic file. Also, the board has developed local policy to ensure that the coordination and allocation of supportive services is appropriate for each participant.

Supportive services, such as transportation assistance, are coordinated across various partners and service providers in the area. Customers in need of supportive services are referred to partner programs for eligibility determination. Once participants are deemed eligible for assistance through these partner programs, WIOA programs will assess the level of service provided. If additional support is needed beyond what the partner programs offer, WIOA will supplement the services to meet the participants' needs.

Transportation services, like other supportive services, are coordinated to ensure individuals can participate in training and employment-related activities. Efforts are made to provide necessary assistance, including purchasing bus passes for participants as needed. If public transportation is not

available or practical, alternatives such as Van Pool Express, Uber, Lyft, or taxi fares may be provided. Mileage reimbursement is also available for personal vehicle use. Additionally, support for car repairs is offered up to a specified cap. In cases where no other transportation options are feasible and employment or training activities are within a reasonable distance for bicycling, a bicycle may be purchased. Local policy also includes provisions for minor vehicle repairs and Uber or Lyft rides in areas where these services are accessible.

5. Follow-up Services

I. Provide a description of the board's follow-up policy and procedures for each of the targeted groups in section E.

The board is currently drafting updates to its follow-up services policy, with completion and submission for board review and approval planned for March 2027. The revised policy will mandate follow-up services for individuals at the highest risk of unemployment or economic insufficiency. In compliance with federal regulations, youth participants will receive follow-up services for at least twelve months after exiting the program. To streamline this process, the EAWDB has implemented a follow-up agreement form, which participants must sign and upload to indicate whether they opt in or out of follow-up services.

The same follow-up services will apply to other targeted groups identified in Section E who are receiving individualized career services. Since the performance outcomes of these individuals affect both partner programs, providing follow-up services will be a shared responsibility. Site managers will coordinate with the one stop operator to develop a process that ensures shared responsibility in delivering these services. Additionally, this information will be incorporated into the customer's employment plan (IEP) promptly and effectively.

6. Coordination of Service Priorities

I. Describe direction given by NMDWS and LWDB to the operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

The NMDWS's guidance for prioritizing career and training services are incorporated into the board's eligibility policy, as outlined in Attachment A. The board has directed the One Stop Operator and service providers to actively perform outreach activities to recruit targeted populations for these services. Title I staff actively participate in outreach activities to obtain a robust applicant pool of individuals that meet the above-mentioned priority categories. When said pool is established, applications for training services are ranked based on the order of priority as set forth in federal, state, and local policies. This ensures that individuals from targeted populations receive prioritized access to career and training services in line with the established guidelines.

7. Coordination of Outreach Efforts

I. Describe how the local board will coordinate outreach efforts across partner programs for shared customers and target populations.

The board, through its operator, collaborates with partner staff responsible for outreach activities to develop a unified approach. This approach ensures that potential customers receive pertinent partner information about all available services within the workforce development system in the east and clear guidance on how to access them.

Much like previous years, the board utilizes Constant Contact to engage in outreach area wide. Constant Contact is an email marketing platform that assists in creating and sending professional email campaigns, newsletters, and other marketing materials. Constant Contact also integrates with social media, making it a versatile tool for managing customer engagement and communication. Constant contact allows the team to reach out to targeted populations in the east through outreach campaigns that include specific information around barriers and priorities.

During program year 2023 the one stop operator team developed a “One Stop Newsletter”. This letter was designed to promote workforce activities taking place in communities throughout the eastern area. The operator anticipates expanding this newsletter to allow for partner agencies to collaborate on and add community events to the letter to reach targeted populations. The one stop operator, with assistance from board staff, is working to increase a more active presence on social media to highlight upcoming events throughout the region. Finally, the team is working to enhance overall online communication through the MyHub platform. MyHub is a centralized digital platform designed for managing information, communication, and coordination among various stakeholders. The team anticipates expanding access to the MyHub platform to support coordinated outreach efforts amongst internal and external partners.

8. Professional Development

I. Describe how professional development activities will be coordinated across partner programs staff.

Professional development is a vital component of career growth and organizational success. It not only enhances individual skills and job performance but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement that benefits the entire workforce system. In April 2024, the one-stop operator team held an areawide All System Training where internal and external partners participated in a full day of professional development. DWS staff trainers conducted conflict resolution training for frontline staff and managers. Other topics covered were, co-enrollment and performance management, and a partner panel where

representatives from WIOA Title I, Title III Employment Services, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Veteran Services provided key information to the group about each of their programs. There was also a question-and-answer session which proved to be extremely valuable. Because of the value this added to the system, we anticipate holding these training sessions at least annually.

Cross-training is vital in the workforce system. As outlined in other sections of the local plan, training and cross-training for partner programs will be conducted and requested as specific needs are identified. The board and operator will continue to work with partners to identify training needs and board staff with the operator will coordinate training for provider and partner staff.

The Certified Workforce Development Professional (CWDP) credential, offered by the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP), recognizes individuals who have demonstrated expertise and competence in workforce development. This certification is tailored for professionals in various roles, including case management, job placement, career counseling, and program management. Currently, the board has four staff members who hold the CWDP certification, along with four Title I Career Coaches. Also, three other coaches are completing their certification

9. Coordination of Referrals

I. Describe how the board will coordinate customer referrals across partner programs.

Referring customers across area-wide partners has been challenging due to application and technological limitations within the workforce system and the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS). Despite these challenges, the operator has collaborated with partners to implement a referral page within the MyHub platform. As previously mentioned in the local plan, MyHub is a centralized digital platform designed to manage information, communication, and coordination among various stakeholders. The team plans to expand access to MyHub to further support coordinated outreach efforts among internal and external partners. The operator conducted training with partners in late 2022 and the MyHub referral process was fully implemented in January 2023. The operator coordinates training and access to new partners as needed.

The EAWDB and its workforce partners continue to prioritize effective referral processes to ensure individuals are connected to the workforce, education, supportive, and community-based services needed to achieve successful employment outcomes. In early 2024, the National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) Workforce Information Technology Support Center (Workforce ITSC) partnered with the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) to explore opportunities for improving referral coordination and aligning case management efforts among workforce system partners serving shared populations. This initiative, known as the Universal Partner Information Network (UPIN), resulted in recommendations intended to strengthen service integration, reduce duplication, and improve the customer experience across New Mexico's public workforce system.

As part of the UPIN initiative, Unite Us was selected for the initial pilot of a closed-loop referral platform. The pilot explored the use of a shared system to facilitate referrals between partner organizations, improve communication, track referral outcomes, and help ensure customers successfully connect with referred services. During PY 2025, the One-Stop Operator (OSO), American Job Center (AJC) staff, and State partners continued evaluating the platform and identified several system challenges. The OSO worked with NMDWS to document feedback and assess whether the identified issues could be addressed.

A second referral platform, Findhelp, was piloted during PY 2025 to further evaluate options for a coordinated referral system. Following initial training, OSO and AJC staff received access to a sandbox environment to evaluate system functionality and usability. Staff found the platform intuitive and easy to navigate, while NMDWS continued assessing its capabilities in relation to the needs and challenges identified during the Unite Us pilot. The broader UPIN initiative was subsequently placed on hold pending review by the New Mexico Governor's Office and consideration of feedback gathered through the pilot activities.

While a statewide referral platform is under review and development, the EAWDB and its partners continue to maintain referral coordination through existing workforce system resources and established partner relationships. The One-Stop Operator plays a key role in facilitating communication and strengthening referral processes among required and community partners, while AJCs continue to utilize available resources, including the Wagner-Peyser 211 Activity Report in NMJOBS, to document and support referrals. These processes help maintain continuity of services and connect individuals with workforce assistance, education and training, housing, healthcare, supportive services, and other community resources. Moving forward, the EAWDB will continue working with State and local partners to strengthen referral processes and promote a more coordinated, accessible, and customer-centered workforce system.

After this project began, the board and operator made the decision to eliminate the platform MyHub from its referral processes.

Currently, shared or aligned case management across WIOA partner programs is facilitated through ongoing communication, coordinated referrals, and collaboration among AJC staff and partner agencies. When individuals are identified as receiving or needing services from multiple programs, staff coordinate referrals, share relevant information in accordance with applicable confidentiality requirements, and communicate regarding customer needs and service progress to minimize duplication and ensure continuity of services. Although a fully integrated shared case management platform has not yet been created, partners continue utilizing existing referral processes, NMJOBS activities, and direct communication to coordinate services and support co-enrolled customers.

10. Coordination with other Partner Programs

I. Describe any other services provided in the one-stops to support the local workforce development system and customers. Include any coordination plans or activities the board has with any other partner programs such as AmeriCorps, job corps, youth build, mission, graduation, innovate educate etc.

The EAWDB, along with its operator and subrecipient, continually strives to identify community partners who can provide or enhance the services needed to support the success of our participants. The team began a partnership with Job Corp and Youth Challenge in Roswell, NM. Staff are working with these agencies to provide work-readiness opportunities. Youth Challenge cadets have been afforded the opportunity to utilize Career Edge while enrolled in the Title I program. Career Edge is a professional development and work readiness program designed to help individuals enhance their skills and improve their employability. The program offers a range of workshops, tools, and resources aimed at preparing the cadets for the workforce after completing their time at Youth Challenge.

G. Fiscal and Performance Management

I. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds described in WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III).

II. Provide a detailed description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA title I activities. (Please provide a copy of the board's procurement policy or policies, including conflict of interest provisions as a part of **Attachment A**.)

III. Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor (NMDWS) and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area, in **Attachment E**. Note: New performance goals are scheduled to be negotiated with NMDWS in September 2026 and will be updated and included with the local plan when completed.

IV. Describe the actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing workforce development board.

V. Describe how training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts, and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

VI. Boards may implement a pay-for-performance contract strategy for certain elements, for which the board may reserve and use not more than 10 percent of the total funds allocated to the board under WIOA Section 128(b). Describe any plans the board may have to use pay-for-performance contracts to communicate performance expectations to service providers.

VII. The local board grant agreements require boards to achieve or exceed a Minimum Training Expenditure Requirement of 60%. Local boards should obligate a minimum of 80% and expend a minimum of 40% of current year funding by the end of the third quarter of the program year. Please report on the local board's expected obligation and expenditure rates for PY 2023.

VIII. Describe how one-stop centers are planning to implement or transition to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

Responsibility for Disbursal of Grant Funds

I. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds described in WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III).

The EAWDB serves as the administrative entity responsible for receiving and disbursing grant funds. As a governmental agency and instrumentality of the State of New Mexico, as defined by the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, the EAWDB has been designated as the CEO-approved fiscal agent. Additionally, the EAWDB employs a full-time Financial Specialist to assist the Executive Director with managing its financial operations.

II. Provide a detailed description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA title I activities. (Please provide a copy of the board's procurement policy or policies, including conflict of interest provisions as a part of **Attachment A**.)

The EAWDB adheres to the New Mexico Procurement Code (NMAC 1.4.1.1 – 1.4.1.95) for all procurement activities. When required by the code, the EAWDB issues Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for sub-grant awards and contracts. The process includes, but not limited to, the following steps:

- Preparing the RFP: Develops the RFP with five key elements: what the offeror must provide, mandatory and/or desirable responses, parameters or restrictions, submission instructions, and evaluation criteria.
- Review and Approval: The RFP is reviewed and approved by the EAWDB.
- Public Notice: Issues a public notice of the RFP to ensure awareness.
- Bidders Conference: Hosts a conference to provide instructions and address questions from potential bidders.
- Submission Deadline: Establishes a deadline for receiving proposals.
- Compliance Review: Conducts a review for compliance, scores, and ranks proposals.
- Notice of Award: Issues a notice of award and notifies unsuccessful bidders.
- Approval: Secures approval from the EAWDB and, if necessary, the CEO's.
- Final Negotiations: Engages in final negotiations with selected bidder.
- Contract Approval: Approves the contract, with final authorization from the EAWDB and, if needed, the CEO's.

All review processes and final determinations are documented and filed for each procurement.

Local Performance Levels and Fiscal Performance in Grant Agreements

III. Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor (NMDWS) and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area, in **Attachment E**. Note: New performance goals are scheduled to be negotiated with NMDWS in September 2022 and will be updated and included with the local plan when completed.

The EAWDB continues to address fiscal performance, with noticeable improvements in obligation and expenditure rates. To enhance grant funding expenditure rates, the EAWDB focuses on these key areas:

1. Staffing and Recruitment: The EAWDB encourages sub-grantees to achieve full staffing by actively recruiting high-quality candidates, offering competitive salaries that align with required education and experience, and providing robust staff development opportunities.
2. Board Staffing and Training: The EAWDB is committed to addressing staffing and training concerns within the board to ensure that funding is used effectively and sustainably.
3. Outreach and Co-Enrollment: The EAWDB aims to develop innovative outreach strategies and co-enrollment processes to increase participation and engagement.

The EAWDB Executive Director has submitted the proposed performance measures for Program Years 2024 and 2025 to NMDWS, as required by WIOA Section 16(c). Although these measures are still pending approval, they are designed to evaluate the performance of the local area. The local board will use these measures to assess the performance of the fiscal agent, eligible providers, and the one-stop delivery system in the eastern region.

Becoming a High Performing Board

IV. Describe the actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing workforce development board.

The EAWDB has maintained its commitment to developing a high-functioning board by focusing on cultivating strategic and policy-driven decision making. This includes enhancing the engagement of the CEO board to ensure increased community oversight and participation. Becoming a high-performing workforce development board also involves several strategies and best practices to ensure effectiveness and regional impact. Here are some essential components to achieve and maintain high performance:

- Clear Vision and Strategic Planning
- Strong Governance and Leadership
- Data-Driven Decision Making
- Partner Engagement and Collaboration
- Focus on Employer Needs
- Effective Service Delivery
- Professional Development and Training
- Fiscal Management and Accountability
- Continuous Improvement
- Compliance and Best Practices

The EAWDB is committed to establishing a forward-thinking vision for workforce development in the east that aligns with regional economic needs, sector focus, and industry trends. By creating comprehensive strategic plans with specific, measurable goals and objectives the EAWDB can maintain its high standards of performance. Another key factor the board is committed to is to establish and monitor performance measures and labor market information to track program progress and to identify areas that can be improved upon.

Fostering strong partnerships with employers, educational institutions, community organizations, and other stakeholders will allow for the board to work collaboratively with partners to align resources, share information, and coordinate services to ensure service delivery efforts are not duplicative and shared participants receive wraparound services when needed. Another important component is

maintaining strong relationships and communication with local employers. By actively engaging with employers the board will better understand their workforce needs and ensure that training and services are aligned with those needs.

Investing in continuous professional development for board members, staff, and subrecipient staff to enhance skills and knowledge is another goal for the EAWDB. The board encourages staff to obtain relevant certifications, like the CWDP as previously mentioned in the local plan, and to attend professional conferences when the budget allows. By implementing the strategies above, the board can strive for continuous improvement.

Provision of Training Services through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

V. Describe how training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts, and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) emphasizes training as a critical component in building a highly skilled workforce. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) remain the primary method of participant funding, with most of the funding directed toward these training accounts. Outreach efforts are ongoing, and Title I career coaches actively encourage jobseekers to pursue training opportunities when appropriate. To maximize participant benefits, training limits are regularly reviewed and updated as needed. Additionally, board staff continuously evaluate policies and procedures to ensure timely payments, clear documentation, and accurate reporting.

Under WIOA Section 134, training services are provided through a combination of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and, in some cases, contracts for training services. These services are structured and coordinated to ensure informed customer choice as outlined below:

Provision of Training Services Through ITAs

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs):

- Customer Choice: ITAs allow eligible individuals to select their training programs from a list of approved training providers housed in the NMJOBS statewide Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). This choice is guided by the individual's career goals and labor market needs.
- Funding Allocation: The EAWDB allocates funding to ITAs based on the individual's eligibility and training needs. This funding is used to cover the costs of tuition, fees, and other related expenses as needed.

- Approved Training Providers: Training providers are selected based on their inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), which is maintained by state and local administrative staff to ensure quality and relevance of training programs.

Coordination with Contracts for Training Services

- Use of Contracts: The EAWDB uses contracts for training services for in-demand occupations or when customized training solutions are needed for employers.
- Coordination: When contracts are used, they are coordinated with ITAs to ensure a comprehensive approach to training. For example, contracted training services might be available to address gaps not covered by ITAs or to provide specialized training aligned with local industry needs.
- Integration: The board ensures that there is a clear process for integrating contracted training services with ITAs, including communication with subrecipient staff, training providers and customers to avoid duplication and ensure that all training opportunities are utilized effectively.

Ensuring Informed Customer Choice

Informed Decision-Making:

- Training Provider Information: The EAWDB provides detailed information on approved training providers, including program offerings, costs, outcomes, and performance data, to help customers make informed decisions.
- Career Counseling and Assessment: Career coaches assist individuals in understanding their options, evaluating training programs, and selecting the most appropriate training based on their career goals and the local labor market and demand.

Equitable Access:

- Access for All: The EAWDB ensures that all individuals regardless of type of contract (ITA or other contracted services) have equal access to information and opportunities. This includes providing support to those who may need assistance navigating the training options available to them.

By effectively managing ITAs and other contracted services, and by focusing on informed customer choice, the EAWDB aims to provide high-quality, relevant training services that meet the needs of both individuals and employers in the eastern area.

<u>Pay for Performance</u>

VI. Boards may implement a pay-for-performance contract strategy for certain elements, for which the board may reserve and use not more than 10 percent of the total funds

allocated to the board under WIOA Section 128(b). Describe any plans the board may have to use pay-for-performance contracts to communicate performance expectations to service providers.

The EAWDB currently does not utilize any pay for performance contracts. If the board chooses to implement pay-for-performance strategies in the future, it will fully comply with all WIOA rules and regulations. Also, any such strategies will be clearly communicated to all contracted subrecipients through the RFP process.

Expected Obligation and Expenditure Rates (PY 2023)

VII. The local board grant agreements require boards to achieve or exceed a Minimum Training Expenditure Requirement of 60%. Local boards should obligate a minimum of 80% and expend a minimum of 40% of current year's funding by the end of the third quarter of the program year. Please report on the local board's expected obligation and expenditure rates for PY 2023.

The local board's grant agreements mandate a minimum training expenditure requirement of 60%. Additionally, local boards are expected to obligate a minimum of 80% and expend at least 40% of the current year's funding by the end of the third quarter of the program year.

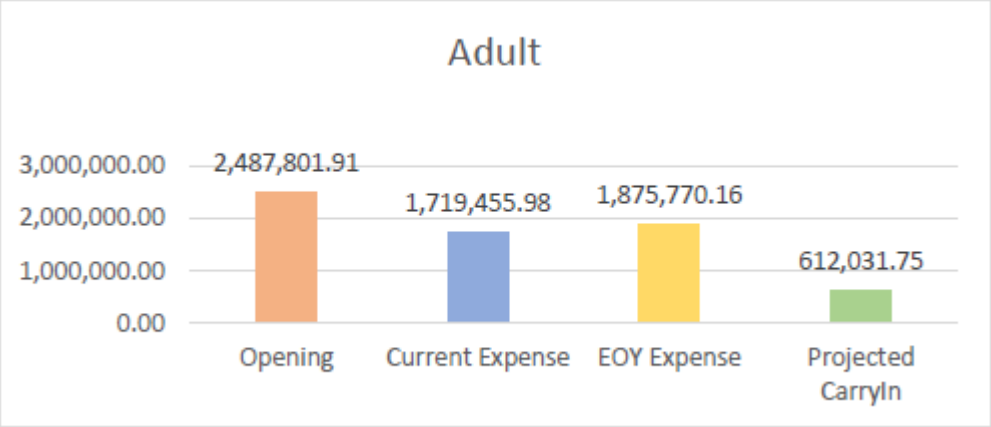
The EAWDB currently holds a waiver from the NMDWS that exempts us from the requirement to expend 60% of adult and dislocated worker funding directly on participant services, as outlined in our grant agreement. Given the unique challenges of our region—including its vast geographic area, the number of job centers, and rising WIOA expenditures—meeting this requirement would necessitate significant reductions in services provided to both employers and job seekers. The eastern area is the largest geographic region in the state, with seven AJC offices. When compared to the Southwest region, which also has seven offices, the Eastern area shares similar characteristics in terms of geography, population, and Title I staffing levels. The eastern area's population is about 369,000, while the Southwest's is 304,055. Additionally, Title I adult and dislocated worker staffing levels are almost identical. However, despite these similarities, the eastern area has served significantly more adults and dislocated workers—712 as of July 1, 2023, compared to 343 in the Southwest—and yet the Eastern region is receiving less funding for program year 2023.

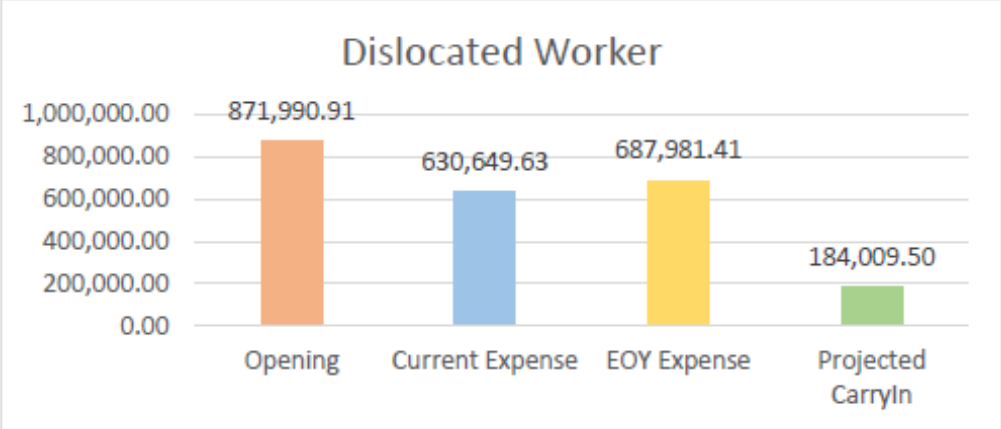
With the combined factors of the eastern area being the lowest funded region and decreased carryover due to increased spending it is impossible to meet this requirement without reducing staff and/or

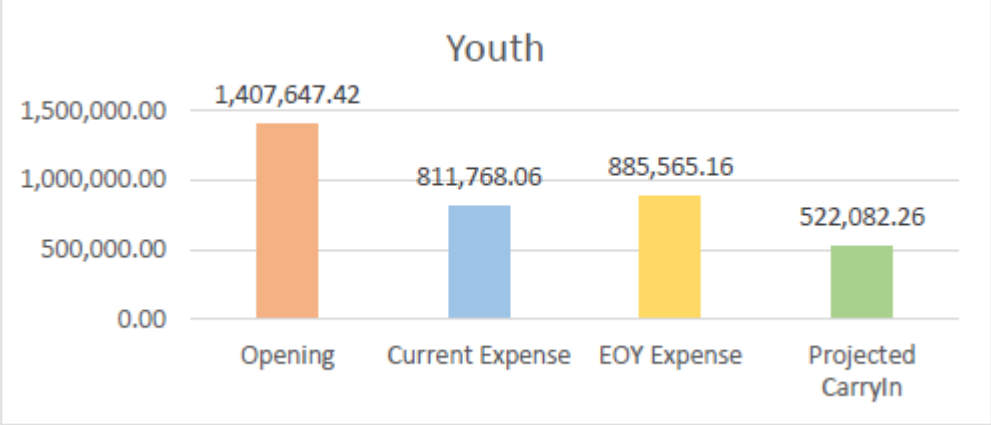
offices. Therefore, NMWDS granted the waiver request to return us to the previous requirement of 40% direct participant expenditures.

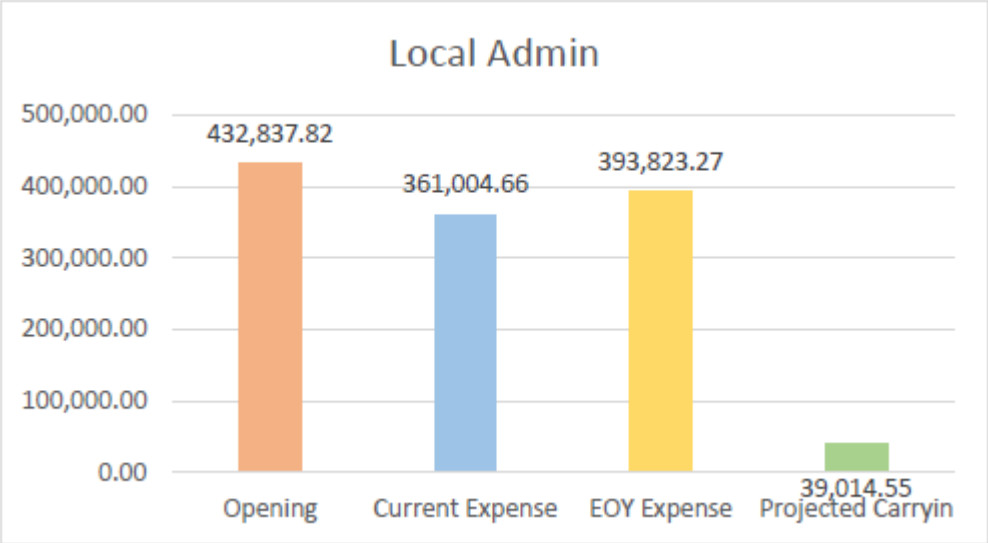
As reflected on the EAWDB's financial scorecard below, the board achieved a 46.73% training expenditure rate as of June 2026. Although this rate falls short of the standard requirements outlined in the grant agreement, it complies with the waiver in place with the NMDWS. With the inclusion of the DWG funding this percentage is close to 60%.

EAWDB Financial Scorecards

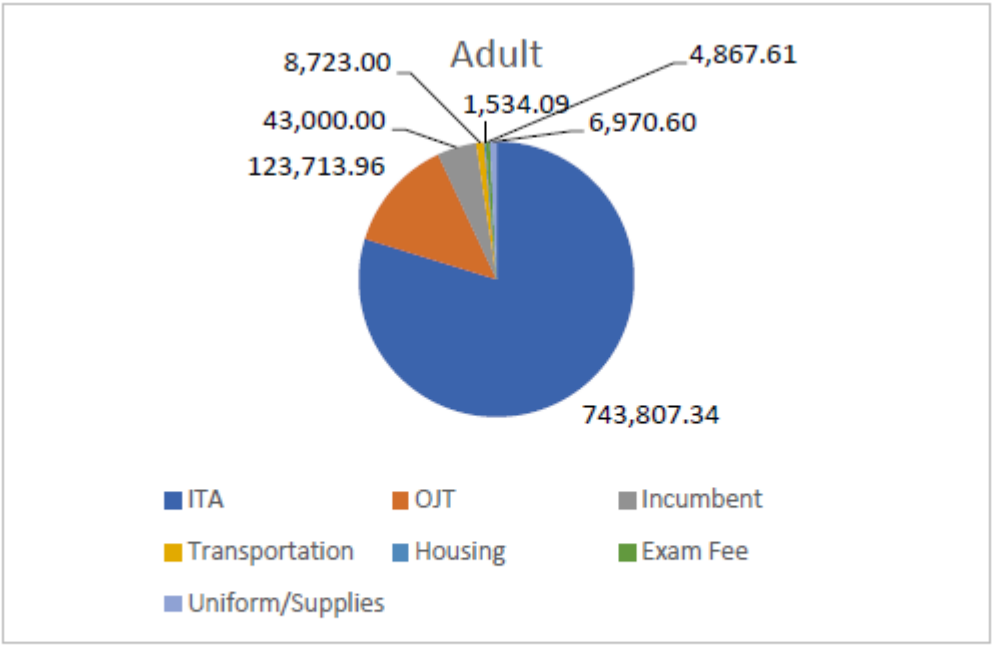




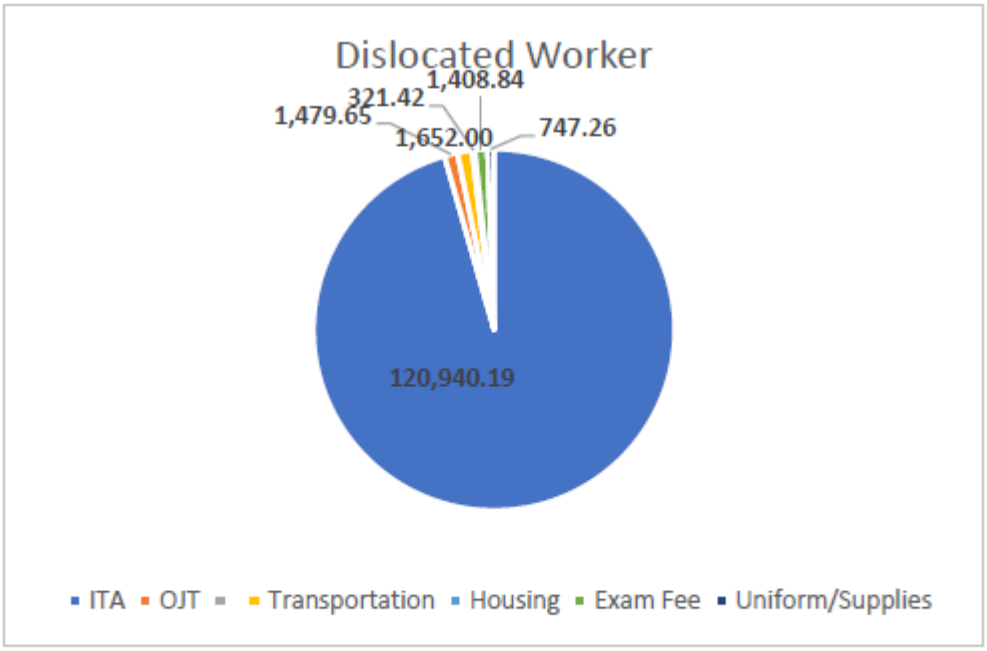




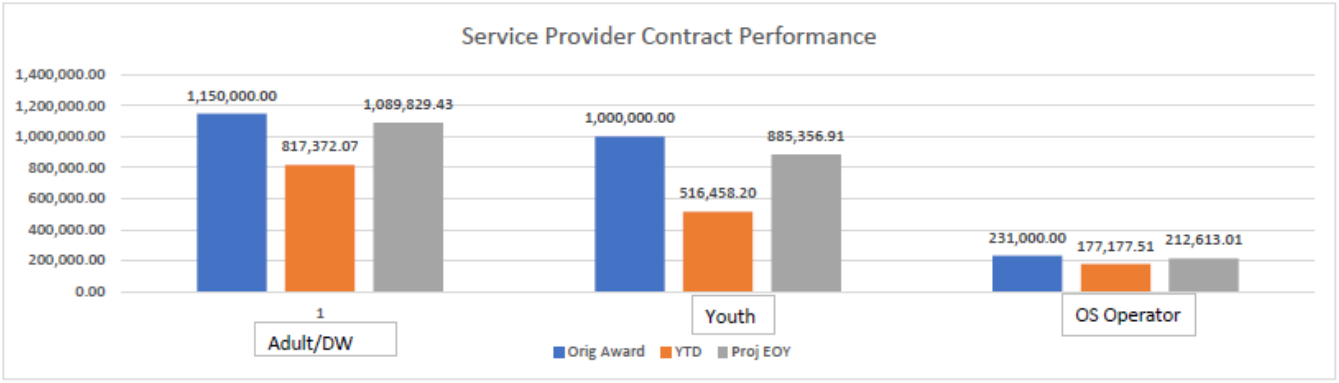
Participant Expenditures



Adult Participant Expenditures - Expended: 78%
Total Budgeted: $1,125,000.00 Total Expended: $932,616.60

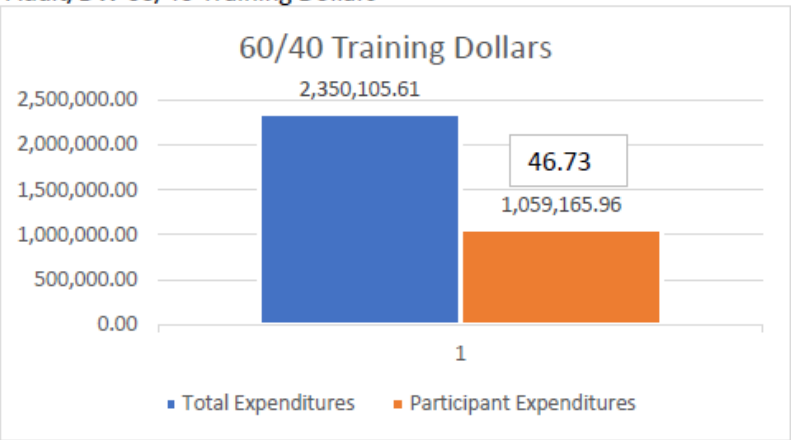


DW Participant Expenditures - Expended: 85%
Total Budgeted: $150,000.00 Total Expended: $126,549.36

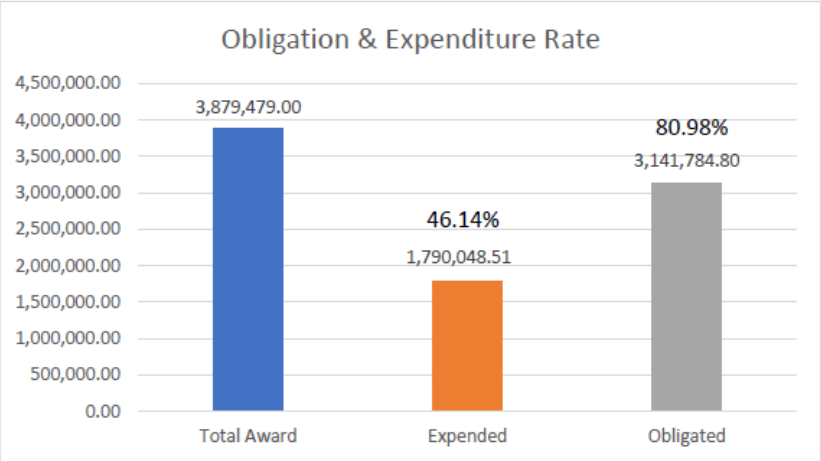


Grant Required Performance Measures

Adult/DW 60/40 Training Dollars



Current Year Funding - Obligation/Expenditure Rate



Implementation or Transition to an Integrated, Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management Information System for WIOA Programs and Partners

VIII. Describe how one-stop centers are planning to implement or transition to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

The system purchased through the State Administrative Entity (SAE) is the New Mexico Jobs Online System (NMJOBS). This web-based platform supports intake, document storage, case management, and placement services. Users with system access can directly upload eligibility and other relevant documents. Currently, all American Job Center (AJC) offices utilize this system, and access is shared with

partners located within the One-Stop. The system is also available to all partners through the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the SAE.

The SAE has expanded the use of the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS) to include external partners, enabling them to upload shared customer documentation directly into the system. This enhancement allows One-Stop partners to share necessary information without placing the burden on customers to obtain certain documents. For instance, if a WIOA participant needs to provide documentation to their WIOA Title I career coach, the coach can simply request the required document from the participant's Health Care Authority (HCA) caseworker, who can then upload it directly to the participant's electronic file in WCOS.

H. Definitions

I. Because the State has chosen not to define “additional assistance,” as it relates to WIOA youth program eligibility, each local board has the responsibility for determining its own definition of this eligibility category. If the local board wishes to use this eligibility category, a local policy must be developed that specifies what conditions must be met for a youth to require “additional assistance” and what documentation is needed to demonstrate this eligibility category. In each area, not more than five percent of the in-school-youth under WIOA Section 129(3)(B) may be eligible under “individual who requires additional assistance” to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. If applicable, provide the definitions the board uses for “requires additional assistance” and a copy of the related local policy as a part of **Attachment A. (eligibility policy)**

The EAWDB subrecipient makes limited use of the "youth requiring additional assistance" barrier. The specific definition and criteria for this barrier are outlined in the youth section of the area's eligibility policy in Attachment A.

I. The state defines “basic skills deficient” for adults and youth as follows.

- For adult – An individual who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society.
- For youth – An individual who computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the eighth-grade level on generally accepted standardized test or comparable score on a criterion-referenced test.

  Please describe the process the board uses to test individuals for basic skills deficiency.

Basic skills testing for adults, dislocated workers, and youth is conducted as part of the assessment and intake process. The state's WorkKeys Career Readiness Certification, which includes bronze, silver, and gold levels, is used to measure career readiness. For adults and dislocated workers not currently enrolled in postsecondary education, the WorkKeys test is administered during intake. Those who score below the gold level are considered basic skills deficient. For participants already enrolled in post-secondary education at the time of registration, their college entrance or placement exam results can also be used to assess basic skills.

In compliance with federal regulations, all youth must undergo basic skills testing within ninety days of enrollment. In areas where adult education services are readily available, youth are referred to Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs for testing. The type of assessment used aligns with the tests administered in adult education programs, which can vary. Schools in the region often utilize the TABE assessments, though programs have the flexibility to choose different assessment tools. For youth in more remote communities, the youth subrecipient has TABE testing materials, and youth career coaches are trained to administer and score the tests. Additionally, English Language Learners (ELL) are referred to adult education providers for further support when needed.

Note: Letter I not a requirement in NM

J. Assurances

#	Assurance	Indicate Yes or No
1.	The LWDB obtained input into the development of the Local Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs and other programs included in the Plan, other primary stakeholders, and the general public, and the Local Plan is available and accessible to the general public.	Yes
2.	The LWDB has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts.	Yes
3.	The LWDB has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of local boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes.	Yes

4.	The LWDB has established fiscal control and fund accounting procedures necessary to ensure the proper accounting for funds paid to the local boards for adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs to carry out workforce investment activities under chapters 2 and 3 of subtitle B.	Yes
5.	The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program.	Yes

6.	Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate.	Yes
7.	The LWDB has implemented a policy to ensure a process is in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.	Yes
8.	The LWDB established procedures that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members.	Yes
9.	Priority of Service for covered persons is provided for each of the Title I programs; and	Yes
10.	The LWDB has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900 and WIOA 184(a)(3).	Yes

K. Attachments

Attachment A	Provide, on a flash drive, copies of all LWDB policies relevant to the implementation of WIOA. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.)
Attachment B	Provide a full roster of local board membership, including the group each member represents. Include a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.)

Attachment C	Provide a list of the one-stop centers in the local area, including address and phone numbers. Indicate the one-stop operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center. Include a list of the one-stop partners physically located at each of the one-stop centers in the local board area, and the services provided by these partners.

Attachment D	Provide copies of any draft or completed cooperative agreements, resource sharing agreements, and memoranda of understanding relevant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
Attachment E	Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor (NMDWS) and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area, for PY 23 and PY 24. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.) *Performance negotiations are currently underway and final levels of performance will be attached to the final version of the EAWDB PY 2024-2027 Local Plan.

Clay Kiesling (Nov 26, 2026 07:13:51 MST)

11/23/2026

Clay Kiesling
EAWDB Lead CEO

Date