



MERRIMACK VALLEY WORKFORCE BOARD

WIOA Local 4-Year Plan 2026 – 2029



Table of Contents

Strategic Planning Elements	4
Economic Conditions	4
In-Demand Industries (Top 15)	5
In Demand Occupations (Top 15)	6
Top 10 Job Postings Occupations	7
Most Requested Skills	8
Top Common Skills	9
Top Software Skills	9
Top Certifications	10
Education and Experience Required by Employers	10
Merrimack Valley Unemployment	12
Workforce ¹⁵	13
Educational Attainment	14
Salaries by Education Level	15
2024 Living Wage Estimates	15
Living Wages Calculation https://livingwage.mit.edu/	15
Recognizing Pathways to Family-Sustaining Employment	16
High School, Trade, or Non-Degree Certification	17
Associate Degree or Some College	18
Bachelor's Degree	19
Master's Degree	21
Doctorate or Professional	21
Advertised Salaries for Merrimack Valley	22
Total Jobs by Year 2022-2023	22
Employee Inflows and Outflows for Jobs in Merrimack Valley	23
	2

Strengths & Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities	25
Strengths	25
Weaknesses	26
Core Goals for Workforce Development	27
Youth Engagement	27
Barrier Reduction	27
Performance Accountability & Outcomes	27
Key Strategies for Success	27
Equitable Access	27
Data-Informed Adaptation	27
Incumbent worker training	35
On-The-Job training	36
Customized Training Programs	36
Industry / Sector Strategies	36
Career Pathways	36
Utilization of effective business intermediaries	36
Adult & Dislocated Worker Job Seeker Activities	40
Basic Career Services	40
Individual Career Services	40
Training	40
Employer Services	42
Northeast Regional Labor Market Blueprint	48
Performance Measure	51
On-the-Job training	53
Job Seeker Outreach & Virtual Pathway	58
Signatories Fiscal & Attachments	59

WIOA Local 4-Year MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board Plan 2026 – 2030

Strategic Planning Elements:

- 1) *A regional (local) analysis of:*
 - a) *Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.*
 - b) *Employment needs of businesses in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.*
 - c) *As appropriate, your local area may use an existing analysis, which is a timely current description of the regional economy, to meet the requirements of paragraphs (a)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section.*

The Northeast Labor Market Blueprint, which encompasses the Merrimack Valley, Greater Lowell, and North Shore regions of Massachusetts, and from which we draw much of the local region’s strategic priorities was completed in 2024 and was updated in 2025. The content below highlights more local dynamics and data points. For more information on our 2024 Regional Blueprint, please visit: <https://bit.ly/4j11oOr>

Economic Conditions^{1 2 3}

Merrimack Valley Average Household Income	\$146,598
Population	372,753
Employed	206,411
Unemployed	11,965

¹ Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Data Portal, <https://mvpc.org/data-portal/>

² Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Data Portal, <https://mvpc.org/data-portal/>

³ Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Labor Force and Unemployment Report, <https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/LMI/LaborForceAndUnemployment>

There had been an increase in total number of jobs from 2020 to 2022 despite the COVID-19 downturn in 2020 and 2021. However, in 2024 a decrease in jobs appeared compared to 2023. Total jobs of 148,819 for 2023 compared to 147,639 for 2024. Priority industry will continue to rise and currently there is high demand for vacancies across the Merrimack Valley. Average household income has continued to rise and can still be attributed to a tight labor pool.

In-Demand Industries (Top 15)⁴

Industry Title	Employment 2022	Employment 2032	Change Level	Change Percent
Health Care and Social Assistance	27,714	32,401	4,687	16.91%
Manufacturing	23,319	24,249	930	3.99%
Educational Services	13,944	15,786	1,842	13.21%
Accommodation and Food Services	11,129	12,704	1,575	14.15%
Retail Trade	11,305	12,327	1,022	9.04%
Social Assistance	9,878	11,600	1,722	17.43%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	8,442	11,108	2,666	31.58%
Administrative and Support and Waste Ma	9,577	9,615	38	0.40%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Se	9,132	9,595	463	5.07%
Administrative and Support Services	8,981	8,986	5	0.06%
Self Employed and Unpaid Family Workers	8,100	8,416	316	3.90%
Total Self Employed and Unpaid Family Wo	8,100	8,416	316	3.90%
Construction	8,180	8,351	171	2.09%
Specialty Trade Contractors	5,993	6,162	169	2.82%
Wholesale Trade	5,538	5,916	378	6.83%

The region is projected to see increases in jobs in Health Care & Social Assistance, Manufacturing, and Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services, among others. Per the Northeast Regional Blueprint⁵, and the 2024 Blueprint update⁶ the highlighted industries have been identified as priorities. Ambulatory Health Care Services will see the biggest percentage increase followed by Social Assistance, then by Accommodation & Food Services

⁴ Massachusetts Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Long-term Industry Projections, <https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/LMI/LongTermIndustryProjections>

⁵ Northeast Labor Market Blueprint 2024, Priority Occupations, <https://masshiremvwb.org/wp-content/uploads/Blueprintsigned3-30-18FINAL.pdf>

⁶ Northeast Labor Market Blueprint 20224, <https://www.mass.gov/doc/northeast-regional-final-report/download>

In Demand Occupations (Top 15) ⁷

OCCUPATION	MAY 2025
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	17,080
Production Occupations	11,820
Healthcare Support Occupations	11,320
Management Occupations	10,680
Sales and Related Occupations	10,480
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	9,410
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	9,240
Educational Instruction, and Library Occupations	9,210
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	9,140
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	8,120
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	7,120
Construction and Extraction Occupations	6,280
Cashiers	4,780
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	4,730
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	4,440

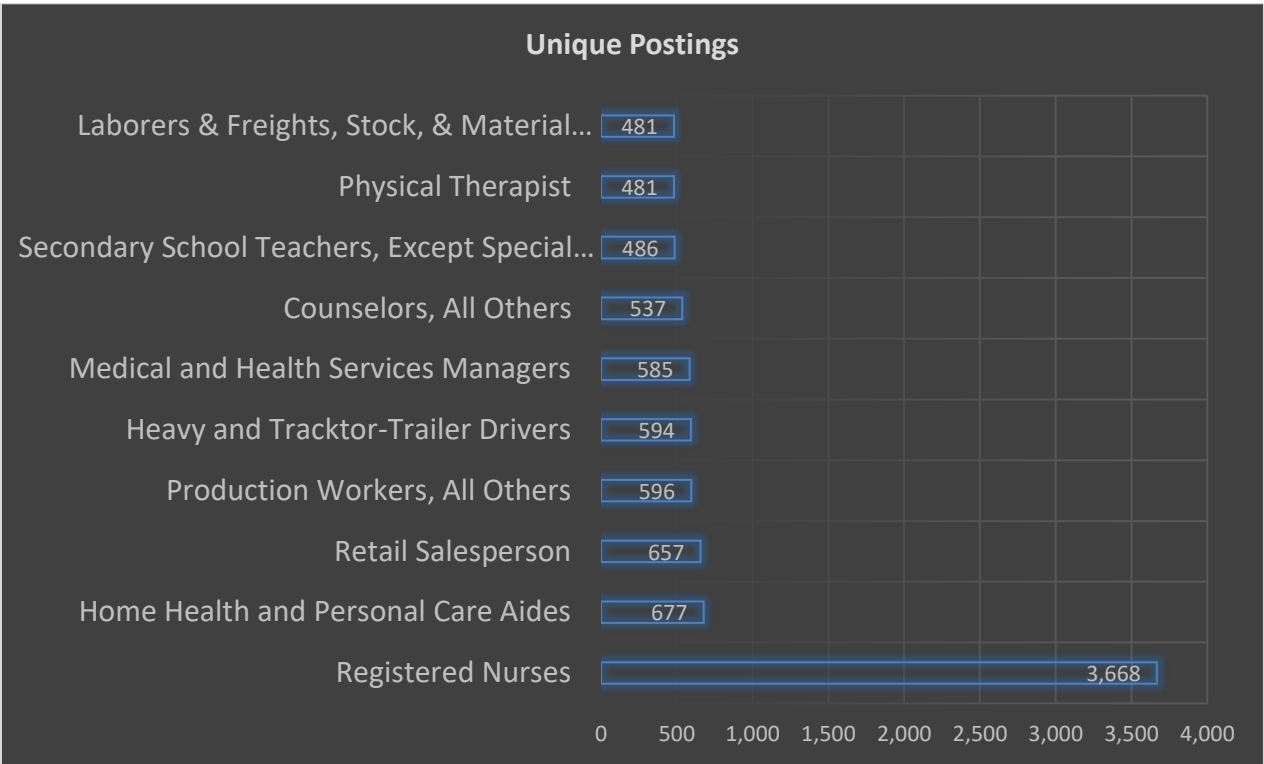
The chart above highlights the occupations with the most employees in the region. The highlighted occupations are ones that have been highlighted in the Northeast Region's Local Market Blueprint⁸. The chart below tells a similar story of active job postings reflecting occupations with the highest demand in real time.

⁷ Massachusetts Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, <https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/LMI/OccupationalEmploymentandWageAllIndustries#>

⁸ Northeast Labor Market Blueprint 2024, Priority Occupations,

<https://www.masshiremvwb.org/wp-content/uploads/NE-Mass-Labor-Force-Blueprint-Final-August-2024.pdf>

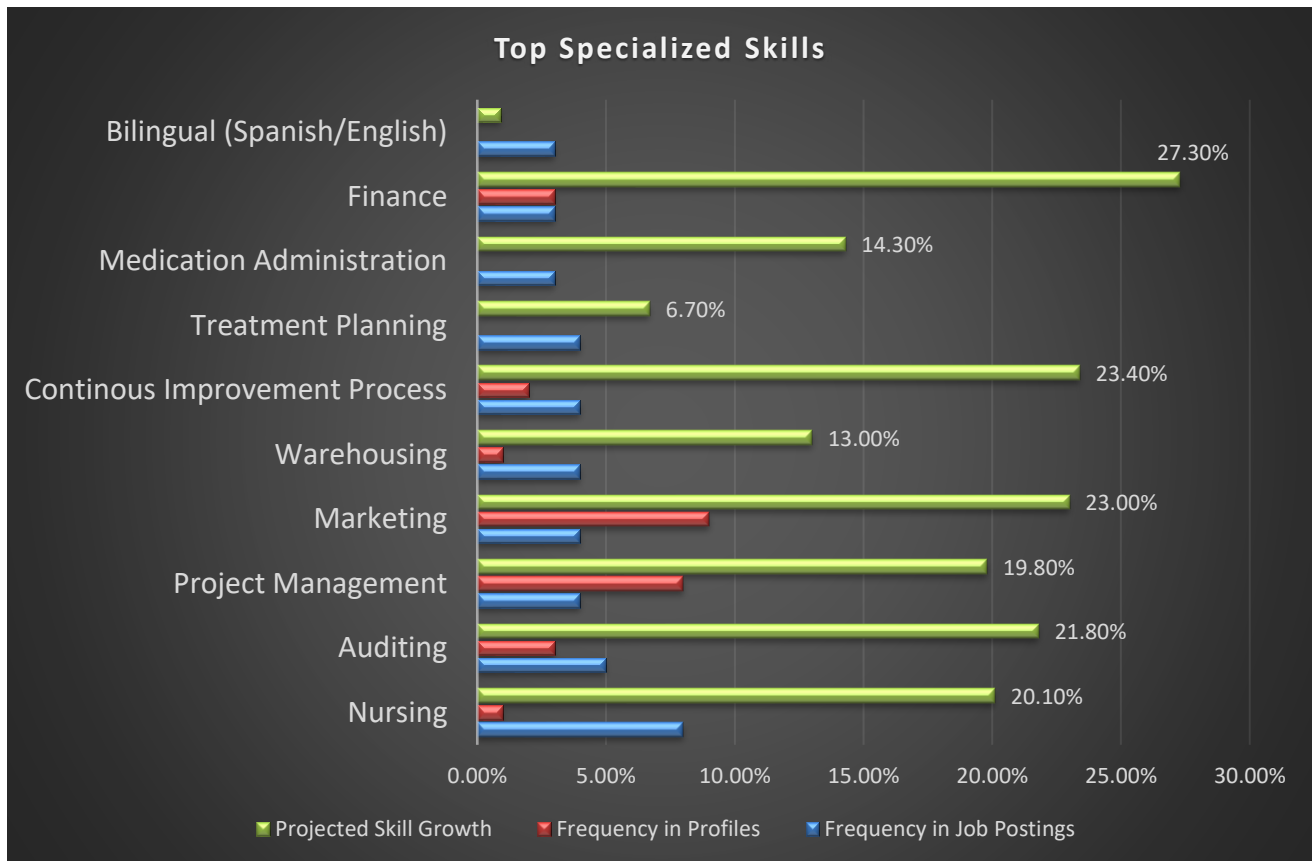
Top 10 Job Postings Occupations ⁹



⁹ Lightcast Labor Insight, Regional Analysis, Lower Merrimack Valley WDA, Jun. 30, 2025

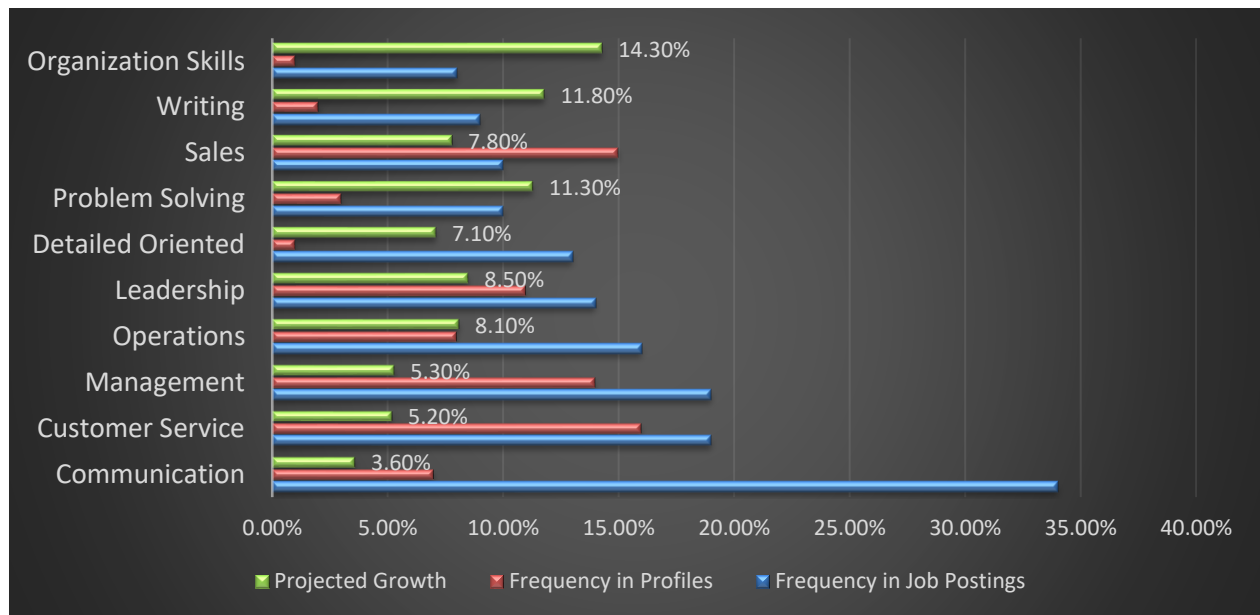
(2) Describe the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the businesses in your region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Most Requested Skills¹⁰

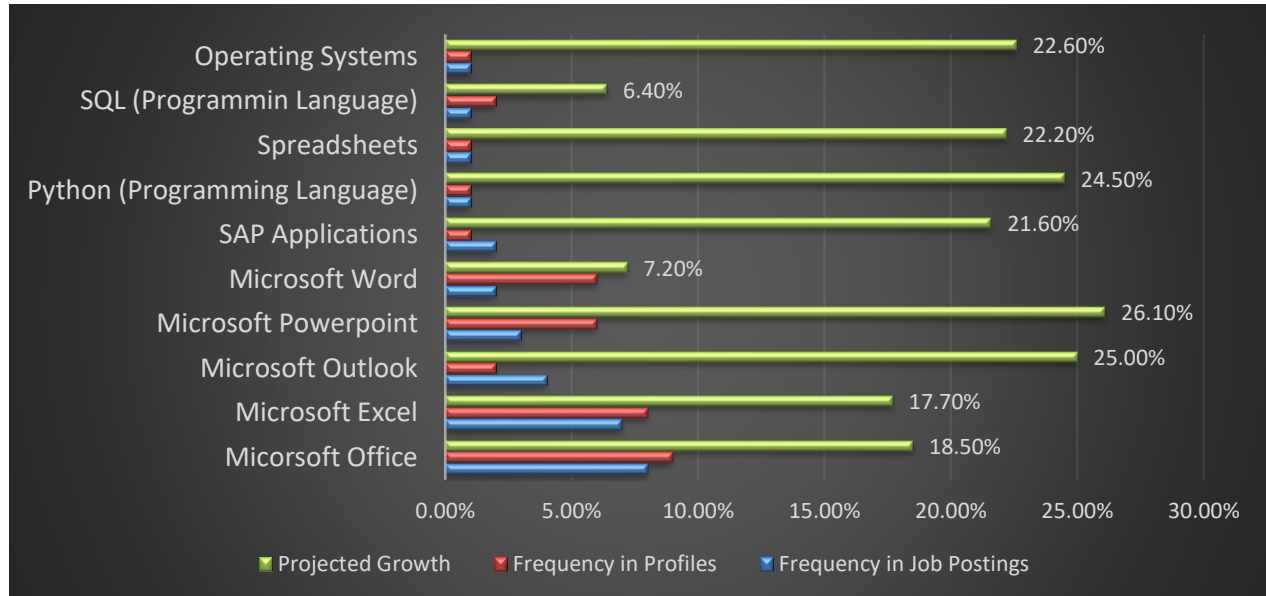


¹⁰ Lightcast Labor Insight, Regional Analysis, Lower Merrimack Valley WDA, Jun. 30, 2025

Top Common Skills¹¹



Top Software Skills¹²

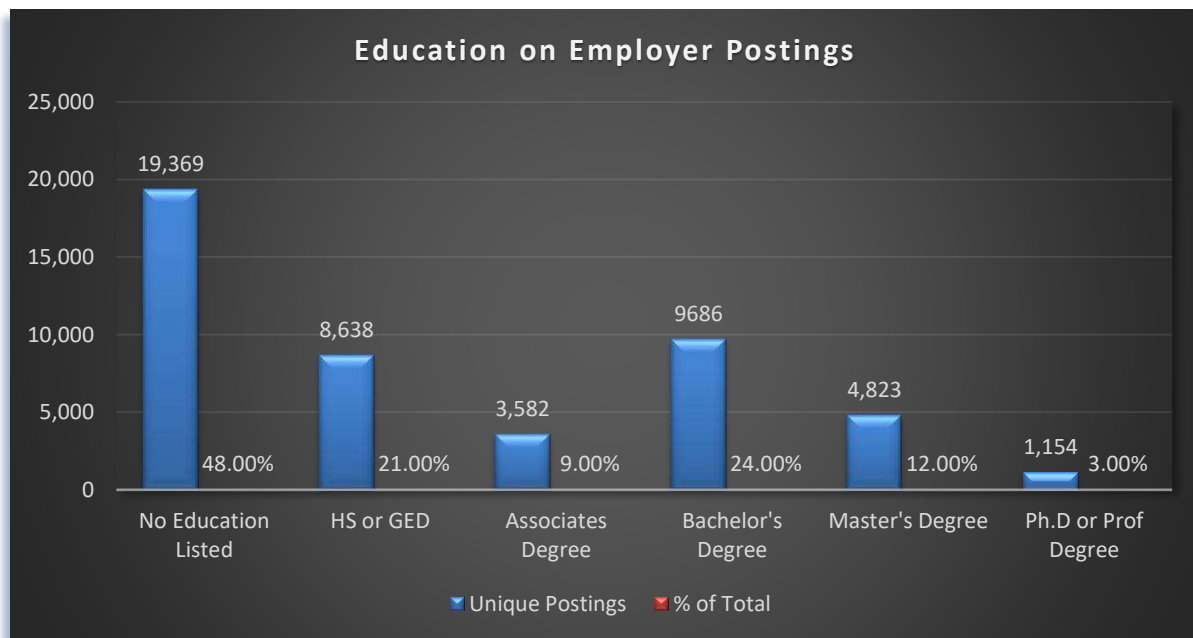


¹¹ & ¹² Lightcast Labor Insight, Regional Analysis, Lower Merrimack Valley WDA, Jun. 30, 2025

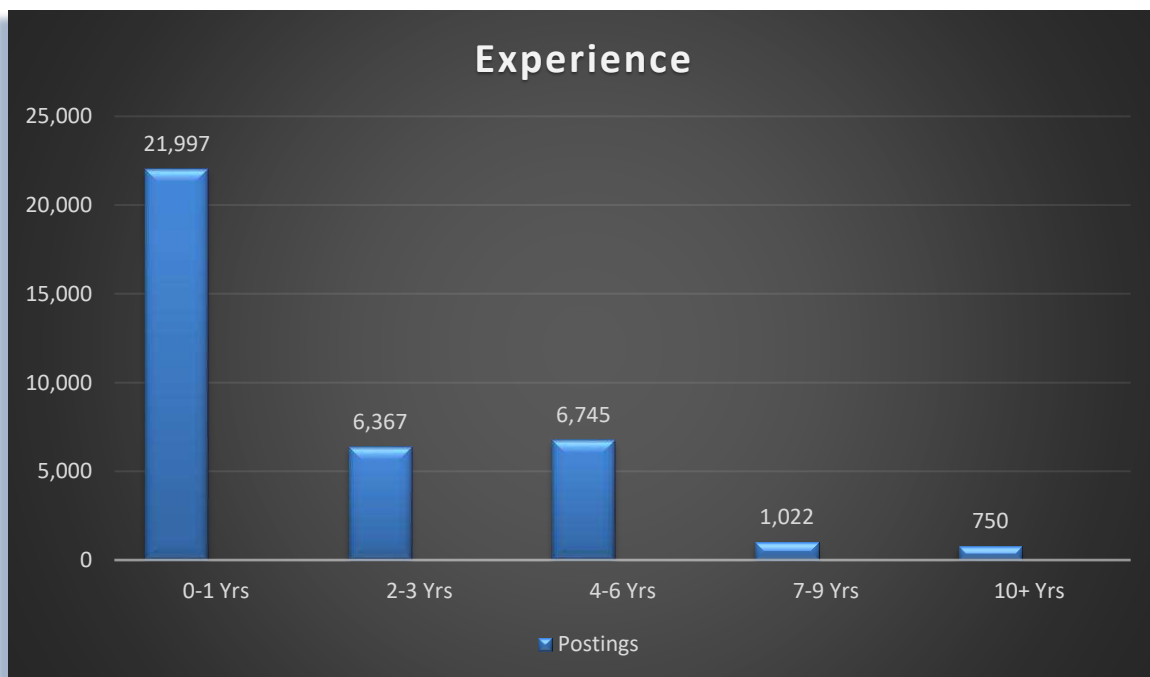
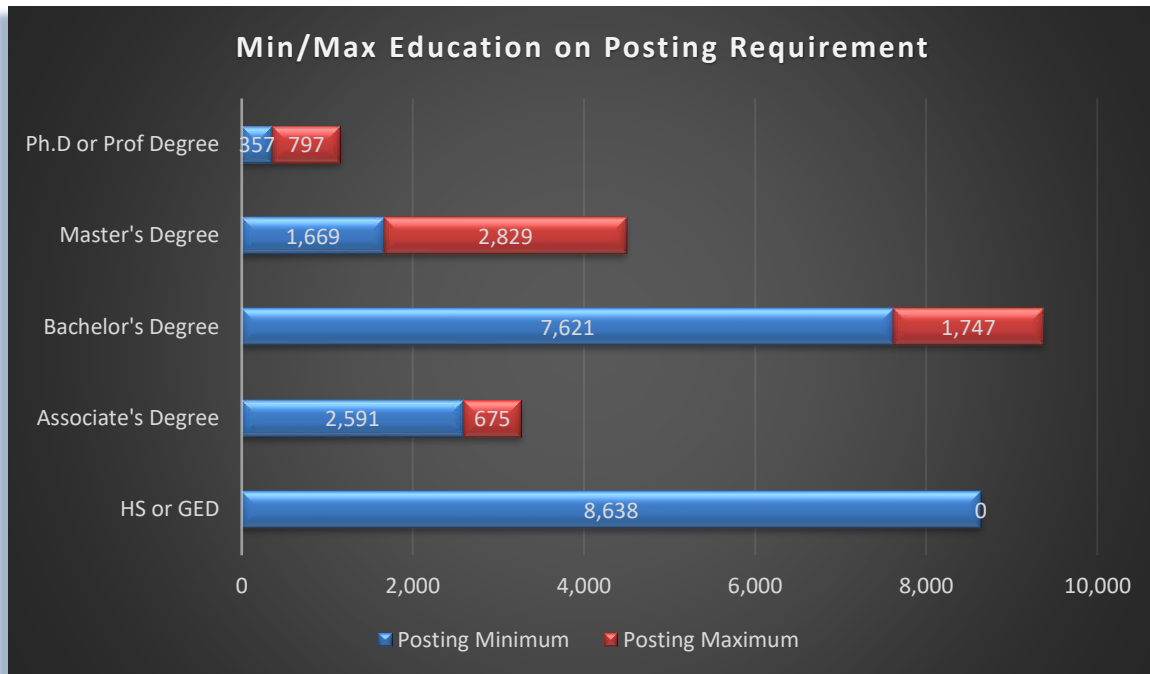
Top Certifications¹³



Education and Experience Required by Employers¹⁴



¹³ & ¹⁴ Lightcast Labor Insight, Regional Analysis, Lower Merrimack Valley WDA, Jun. 30, 2025

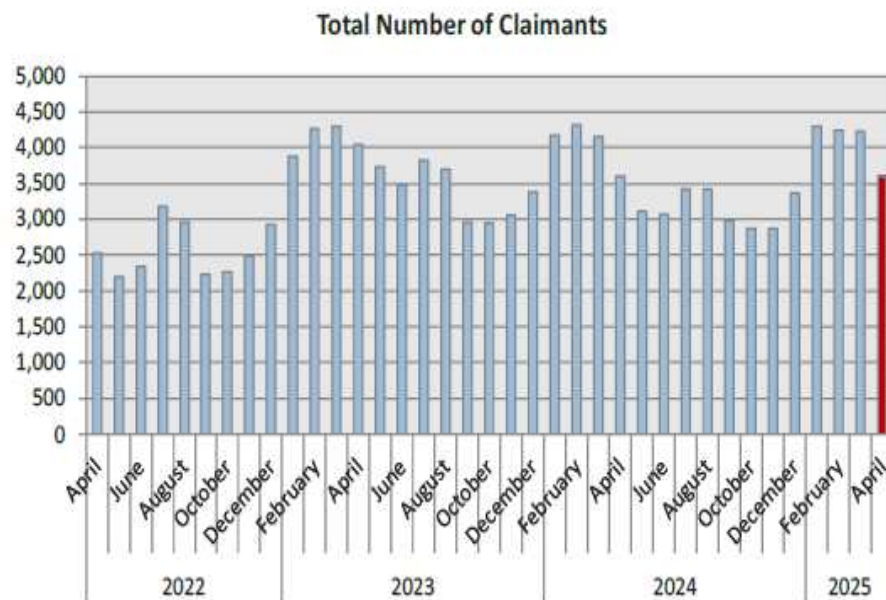


¹⁴ Lightcast Labor Insight, Regional Analysis, Lower Merrimack Valley WDA, Jun. 30, 2025

(3) Please provide an analysis of your 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.

Merrimack Valley Unemployment¹⁴

As the chart below shows, the claimants for the Merrimack Valley week ending April 12, 2025, the number of unemployment claims in the Merrimack Valley remained under 4,400 from 2022 to April 2025.



¹⁴ Massachusetts Department of Unemployment Assistance, UI Claimant Characteristics, Week Ending Apr. 12, 2025, <https://lmi.dua.eol.mass.gov/LMI/ClaimantProfiles>

Workforce¹⁵

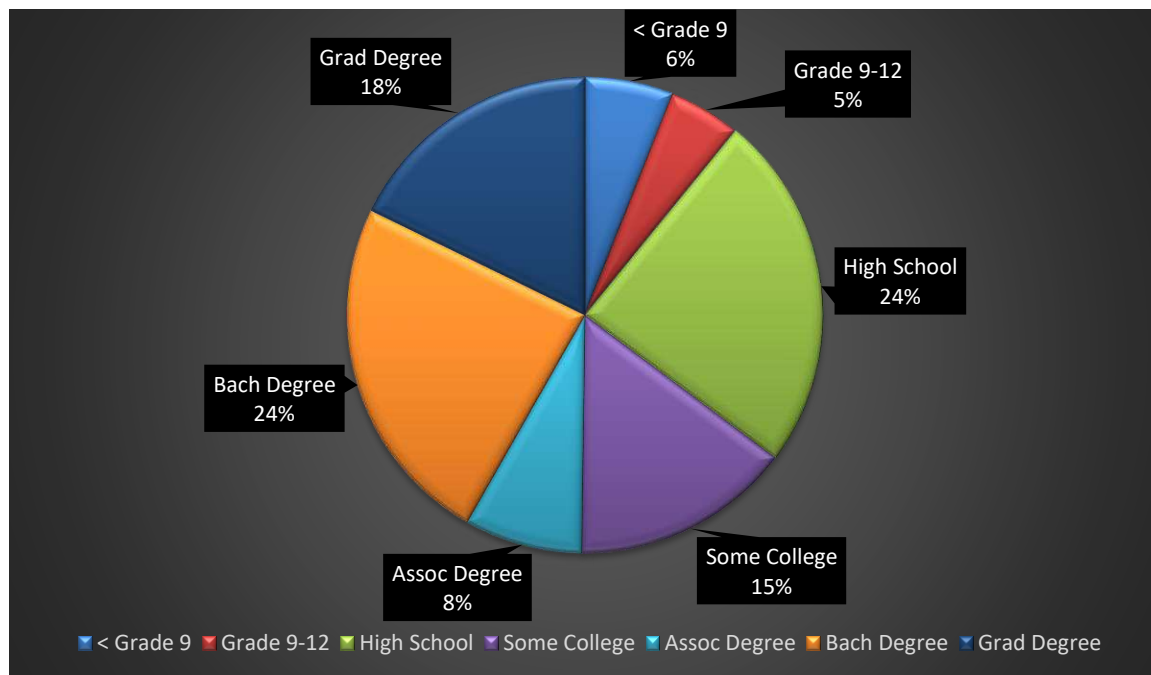
Month	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Area Rate	MA Rate
2025 May	206,814	195,344	11,470	5.5	5.2
2025 April	206,070	195,825	10,245	5	4.6
2025 March	205,743	195,002	10,741	5.2	5
2025 February	205,585	194,921	10,664	5.2	5
2025 January	206,142	195,989	10,153	4.9	4.7
2024 December	204,788	195,743	9,045	4.4	4.1
2024 November	203,937	195,464	8,473	4.2	3.9
2024 October	203,889	195,221	8,668	4.2	3.9
2024 September	202,234	193,830	8,404	4.1	3.8
2024 August	204,902	195,320	9,582	4.6	4.3
2024 July	205,786	195,891	9,895	4.8	4.5
2024 June	205,433	196,175	9,258	4.5	4.2
2024 May	201,952	193,594	8,358	4.1	3.8

Merrimack Valley's workforce has increased steadily since May 2020, the height of layoffs during the COVID-19 pandemic. From the previous 4-year plan, the unemployment rates in the Merrimack Valley have been reduced 50% across the board for each month and year. For the first time in the last 40 months, beginning in January 2025, the unemployed exceeded the 10,000+ mark.

The labor force increased over 20,000+ during December 2024 and remained over 20,000+.

¹⁵ Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Labor Force and Unemployment Data

Educational Attainment¹⁶



In the Merrimack Valley, 89% of the population has a high school degree or above. A high high-school graduation rate suggests a strong foundation for skilled labor, vocational jobs, and further education.

Many residents likely pursue higher education or technical training, as the region is near institutions like UMass Lowell, Merrimack College, and Northern Essex Community College.

Industries like healthcare, education, manufacturing, and technology benefit from an educated labor pool.

Affluent towns (e.g., Andover, North Andover) likely have even higher rates, with many residents holding bachelor's or advanced degrees.

Urban areas (e.g., Lawrence, Haverhill) may have slightly lower rates due to socioeconomic disparities, immigration, and language barriers.

While 89% is strong, there's still an 11% gap—likely concentrated among older adults, low-income populations, and non-native English speakers. Programs like adult education initiatives and community colleges play a key role in bridging this gap.

¹⁶ Merrimack Valley Planning Commission Data Portal,

Salaries by Education Level ¹⁷

Degree	Median Salary
No formal Educational credential	\$59,699.10
High School or equivalent	\$61,662.28
Some College, no degree	\$58,202.00
Postsecondary non-degree award	\$60,881.32
Associates	\$74,885.96
Bachelor	\$108,503.48
Master Degree	\$95,294.50
Doctoral or professional degree	\$180,983.75

Living Wage in the Merrimack Valley, Massachusetts

A living wage is the income needed for a worker to meet basic needs (housing, food, healthcare, transportation, childcare, etc.) without public assistance. For the Merrimack Valley estimates vary based on family size and local costs.

2024 Living Wage Estimates

Living Wages in Massachusetts					
Number in Household	Type of Wages	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
1 Adult	Living Wage	\$27.59	\$53.98	\$69.16	\$84.14
2 Adults (1 Working)		\$37.40	\$45.08	\$49.33	\$55.83
2 Adults (Both Working)		\$18.70	\$29.40	\$37.17	\$43.85
1 Adult	Poverty Wage	\$7.52	\$10.17	\$12.81	\$15.46
2 Adults (1 Working)		\$10.17	\$12.81	\$15.46	\$18.10
2 Adults (Both Working)		\$5.08	\$6.41	\$7.73	\$9.05
	Minimum Wage	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00	\$15.00

Living Wages Calculation <https://livingwage.mit.edu/>

DHHS Office of the Assistant for Planning & Evaluation <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>

Recognizing Pathways to Family-Sustaining Employment

While a four-year college degree is not the only path to economic success, the data clearly shows that nearly all family-sustaining, living-wage jobs in the Merrimack Valley require education or training beyond high school. This includes industry-recognized credentials, apprenticeships, associate degrees, and other high-quality workforce training programs. To ensure all residents can access these opportunities, this plan sets the following goals:

1. **Expand Access to Non-Degree Credentials & Training** – Increase the number of participants enrolled in WIOA-funded programs that lead to in-demand, stackable credentials aligned with regional employer needs.
2. **Strengthen Employer-Educator Partnerships** – Collaborate with industry leaders, community colleges, and training providers to develop short-term, high-impact programs that prepare workers for living-wage careers.
3. **Prioritize Equity in Upskilling** – Target outreach and support to underrepresented populations, ensuring barriers to postsecondary education and training are reduced.
4. **Measure Success by Wage Growth & Job Quality** – Track not only job placement rates but also wage progression, benefits, and career advancement opportunities for participants completing training programs.

The following tables, in the next pages, are a breakdown of the regional employment by education, sorted by the highest number employed and includes annual salary breakdown.

High School, Trade, or Non-Degree Certification

SOC Code	Occupation Title	Employment	Median Annual	Mean Annual	Entry Annual	Experienced Annual
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	16000	49543	54445	38577	62379
51-0000	Production Occupations	12680	45920	50621	35011	58427
11-0000	Management Occupations	12160	134411	151806	77518	188949
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	12140	37445	41325	37041	43466
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupati	11680	35980	40272	33405	43706
25-0000	Educational Instruction, and Library Occupation	11130	76422	84040	42507	104807
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	9530	40520	61861	33486	76049
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupation	8980	41819	46247	34178	52281
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupation:	8800	83598	96627	56067	116907
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupa	8780	94136	112550	57856	139897
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	6390	77751	80671	50206	95903
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	4950	113271	122050	73745	146203
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	4530	100797	106469	68697	125355
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupati	4280	62169	67127	43860	78761
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenan	4200	44095	46378	34912	52112
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	4160	35234	35733	32950	37125
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	3150	38939	45566	33588	51555
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations	3030	58793	63364	42371	73860
41-2011	Cashiers	2600	34555	35281	31896	36973
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	2430	36057	42316	33277	46836
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and House	2390	39573	41975	34027	45949
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	2120	95493	101033	61905	120597
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations	1970	70868	68247	40122	82309
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Mover	1500	45120	46287	36523	51170
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	1380	62012	73723	41546	89812
53-7064	Packers and Packagers, Hand	1310	33906	35875	31334	38145
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	880	46648	48203	38527	53041
47-2061	Construction Laborers	840	63390	69425	46806	80734
23-0000	Legal Occupations	760	102314	138982	63666	176640
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	580	36862	40177	33727	43401
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	450	37655	41203	36262	43674
51-6011	Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	400	34505	34603	32268	35770
51-3011	Bakers	350	37430	40259	33609	43584
43-5052	Postal Service Mail Carriers	320	60029	61081	45075	69085
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	300	47172	46007	37690	50166
35-2012	Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	290	46264	46072	39647	49284
53-3053	Shuttle Drivers and Chauffeurs	270	37637	39848	35876	41834
47-2141	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	240	59696	64408	44389	74418
51-6031	Sewing Machine Operators	200	35062	40044	33656	43238
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants	180	33337	34677	31438	36297
41-2021	Counter and Rental Clerks	160	43471	45347	35705	50168

41-2022	Parts Salespersons	130	38662	44780	35677	49332
51-3022	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	110	34984	35918	33894	36930
53-7061	Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	80	37223	41868	34500	45551
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	80	42970	46307	36279	51320
43-5051	Postal Service Clerks	80	58677	59632	45968	66465
51-3021	Butchers and Meat Cutters	70	56647	58362	39853	67617
53-6021	Parking Lot Attendants	50	36708	37101	33312	38996
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and	40	42068	44196	35880	48355

Associate Degree or Some College

SOC Code	Occupation Title	Employment	Median Annual	Mean Annual	Entry Annual	Experienced Annual
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Educa	770	45969	48161	37282	53601
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	250	101676	99946	91418	104209
17-3023	Electrical and Electronic Engineering Techn	220	64439	67927	52206	75788
17-3026	Industrial Engineering Technologists and Te	210	64421	67631	50632	76131
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	180	82929	87378	64101	99017
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	180	69442	72208	55251	80687
29-2056	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	150	50101	50160	40250	55115
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	120	77214	76243	65360	81684
29-2035	Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologist	100	90609	84225	54764	98955
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	100	79182	82429	67613	89836
19-4031	Chemical Technicians	100	61806	65928	53444	72169
31-2011	Occupational Therapy Assistants	90	77141	75029	57915	83586
17-3013	Mechanical Drafters	80	63069	68588	46629	79567
17-3029	Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, i	70	64685	69517	53295	77627
49-9062	Medical Equipment Repairers	60	77445	77179	49504	91016
15-1231	Computer Network Support Specialists	50	72384	87221	51687	104988
29-2051	Dietetic Technicians	50	37994	41920	35095	45332
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	50	99530	99843	79788	109871
17-3027	Mechanical Engineering Technologists and	40	74415	72563	54181	81754
43-4161	Human Resources Assistants, Except Payr	40	52201	55311	43050	61441
29-2031	Cardiovascular Technologists and Technic	30	100888	105803	65154	126127
29-2033	Nuclear Medicine Technologists	20	106231	102083	88754	108748
23-2099	Legal Support Workers, All Other	20	55192	65084	46947	74153

Bachelor's Degree

SOC Code	Occupation Title	Employment	Median Annual	Mean Annual	Entry Annual	Experienced Annual
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	3890	117973	141027	63023	180029
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2820	97514	101556	74234	115217
15-1252	Software Developers	2300	131775	139217	91638	163007
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Speci	2080	83543	91134	57202	108101
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Specia	1520	99157	99520	65499	116530
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	1180	90855	100474	66158	117632
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special ar	1010	104050	103589	66686	122041
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	960	75590	80917	50929	95911
11-3031	Financial Managers	930	162860	175458	102973	211700
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	860	102912	108894	80142	123270
13-1082	Project Management Specialists	850	102804	111919	68679	133539
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing S	850	80745	92240	53468	111625
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Manag	700	170189	184025	134680	208697
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	690	104946	113771	78890	131212
13-1111	Management Analysts	640	106452	137461	77291	167546
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	620	113518	139500	83632	167434
13-1020	Buyers and Purchasing Agents	590	79143	87170	53731	103890
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	540	86010	94259	55731	113522
13-2081	Tax Examiners and Collectors, and Revenu	540	63024	62909	49398	69665
21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	530	62845	66077	46605	75813
11-9199	Managers, All Other	500	175070	174510	117050	203240
11-2022	Sales Managers	490	159516	172675	92796	212615
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	470	135205	132835	90239	154132
11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	460	175517	188156	141845	211312
11-2021	Marketing Managers	430	167700	171771	101566	206874
11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	430	133232	140022	96033	162016
29-2010	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Tech	400	64171	71078	49736	81749
41-4011	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Mar	380	107797	117652	63945	144505
15-1211	Computer Systems Analysts	370	108835	119708	80058	139533
13-1151	Training and Development Specialists	370	73156	76470	39175	95117
11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	340	76665	82845	56478	96029
13-2051	Financial Analysts	320	101627	120590	71436	145168
13-1041	Compliance Officers	320	83512	89196	57727	104931
15-1299	Computer Occupations, All Other	310	103191	115709	62534	142296
15-1244	Network and Computer Systems Administr	310	103163	105253	74100	120830
25-2052	Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten i	300	98199	100365	63858	118618
11-9021	Construction Managers	280	132360	140642	99245	161340
19-2031	Chemists	280	107709	108886	73328	126665
41-3031	Securities, Commodities, and Financial Se	270	76523	98716	49612	123268

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17-2051	Civil Engineers	260	101060	111487	77158	128652
11-3012	Administrative Services Managers	250	114827	123504	81693	144409
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	240	66469	76543	48638	90496
11-3121	Human Resources Managers	230	168291	172296	106767	205060
13-1051	Cost Estimators	220	93761	96690	62276	113898
17-2072	Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	210	106697	116887	81495	134584
25-2032	Career/Technical Education Teachers, Sec	210	99596	111269	77839	127984
11-9121	Natural Sciences Managers	200	216090	213463	135899	252244
11-3061	Purchasing Managers	200	161965	163872	122173	184721
25-2012	Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Edu	200	109703	107770	57458	132926
19-4021	Biological Technicians	200	69058	69263	53723	77033
27-1024	Graphic Designers	200	66784	68556	45308	80180
11-3013	Facilities Managers	190	119306	122736	79629	144290
17-2199	Engineers, All Other	190	117329	140073	87673	166273
13-1081	Logisticians	180	99903	98056	65519	114325
25-2058	Special Education Teachers, Secondary Sc	180	99147	101417	63988	120132
13-2052	Personal Financial Advisors	180	98711	160923	59147	211810
25-3031	Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	180	38028	46031	33306	52393
13-2072	Loan Officers	170	90760	110677	61260	135386
15-2051	Data Scientists	140	120416	121550	70727	146962
15-1253	Software Quality Assurance Analysts and T	140	109287	111895	76160	129763
25-2057	Special Education Teachers, Middle Schoo	140	81962	80435	53431	93937
13-1131	Fundraisers	140	74012	78648	54423	90761
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	130	101713	121431	86564	138864
15-1241	Computer Network Architects	120	150961	147316	90589	175680
15-1251	Computer Programmers	120	111931	112921	82168	128297
11-9031	Education and Childcare Administrators, P	120	63813	72991	54544	82215
17-2061	Computer Hardware Engineers	100	135620	145424	97303	169485
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	100	96552	106319	75690	121634
19-5011	Occupational Health and Safety Specialist	100	94443	94124	66995	107688
41-9031	Sales Engineers	90	97721	106691	74574	122749
29-1031	Dietitians and Nutritionists	90	75427	77823	53429	90021
13-2031	Budget Analysts	80	88358	93206	69854	104882
15-1255	Web and Digital Interface Designers	70	109331	117663	74721	139134
13-1141	Compensation, Benefits, and Job Analysis	70	90056	88595	60119	102833
27-3042	Technical Writers	70	82672	92611	50154	113840
17-1022	Surveyors	70	81996	88371	72881	96116
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	70	81256	96559	66392	111643
27-3041	Editors	70	66130	75366	45038	90530
11-2032	Public Relations Managers	60	129002	149197	91772	177909
15-1254	Web Developers	60	86242	95286	52007	116926
13-2099	Financial Specialists, All Other	60	82312	88001	60878	101562
11-2033	Fundraising Managers	50	136901	154081	101793	180225
17-2081	Environmental Engineers	50	107494	105330	75586	120202
15-1242	Database Administrators	50	102024	107659	59253	131862
13-2041	Credit Analysts	50	71675	95087	58187	113537
27-2012	Producers and Directors	50	61294	69351	45317	81369
21-1099	Community and Social Service Specialists,	50	52213	60616	38822	71513
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	50	48310	57341	41973	65025

27-1021	Commercial and Industrial Designers	40	101033	94322	65217	108875
27-1011	Art Directors	40	91532	106102	59483	129412
13-2020	Property Appraisers and Assessors	40	80651	97011	52824	119104
27-3043	Writers and Authors	40	66515	70113	48638	80850
21-1091	Health Educators	40	55474	67150	37309	82070
11-3131	Training and Development Managers	30	136997	146252	94848	171953
11-9039	Education Administrators, All Other	30	77708	98482	57567	118940
19-1031	Conservation Scientists	30	66763	72370	47952	84580
13-2071	Credit Counselors	30	49496	56655	41356	64305
27-1014	Special Effects Artists and Animators	20	81742	83434	59836	95233
21-2011	Clergy	20	68590	68357	49804	77633

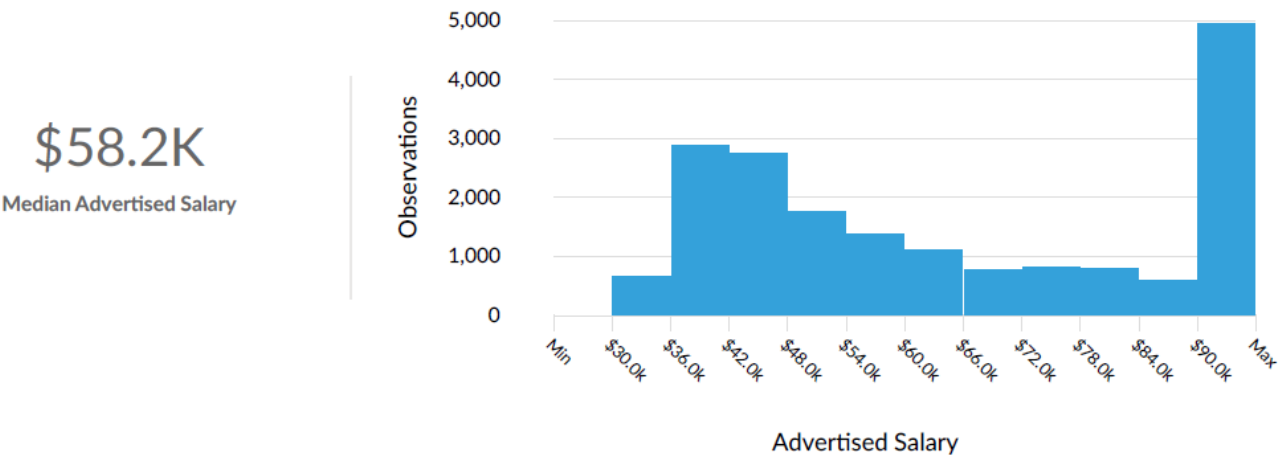
Master's Degree

SOC Code	Occupation Title	Employment	Median Annual	Mean Annual	Entry Annual	Experienced Annual
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and	670	57075	59553	43038	67810
11-9032	Education Administrators, Kindergarten thr	620	129610	127020	85723	147669
21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	410	58793	64843	50878	71826
21-1012	Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocati	300	89045	94218	55741	113456
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	290	136475	144389	109979	161594
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	270	95832	94432	71876	105710
21-1023	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Socia	230	62135	68537	50857	77378
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	230	103238	110232	73621	128538
21-1015	Rehabilitation Counselors	220	46653	56293	37881	65499
25-4022	Librarians and Media Collections Specialis	180	75481	74677	51109	86461
29-1071	Physician Assistants	150	143184	140986	95624	163667
25-9031	Instructional Coordinators	150	83589	91685	58929	108062
19-3034	School Psychologists	80	115491	125200	81892	146853
19-3051	Urban and Regional Planners	40	81812	86032	63109	97494
15-2041	Statisticians	30	114078	113595	77167	131809
29-9091	Athletic Trainers	20	63241	73020	48101	85479

Doctorate or Professional

SOC Code	Occupation Title	Employment	Median Annual	Mean Annual	Entry Annual	Experienced Annual
23-1011	Lawyers	550	130894	163648	78935	206004
29-1051	Pharmacists	320	132162	126799	94321	143038
29-1123	Physical Therapists	310	101956	102293	79536	113672
19-1042	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	300	105980	113842	70483	135521
29-1021	Dentists, General	130	199991	222134	111276	277563
29-1229	Physicians, All Other	100 ***		298430	182990 ***	
29-1215	Family Medicine Physicians	100	220784	266945	151607	324614
29-1131	Veterinarians	90	130145	153779	95232	183052

Advertised Salaries for Merrimack Valley ¹⁸



Total Jobs by Year 2022-2023¹⁸

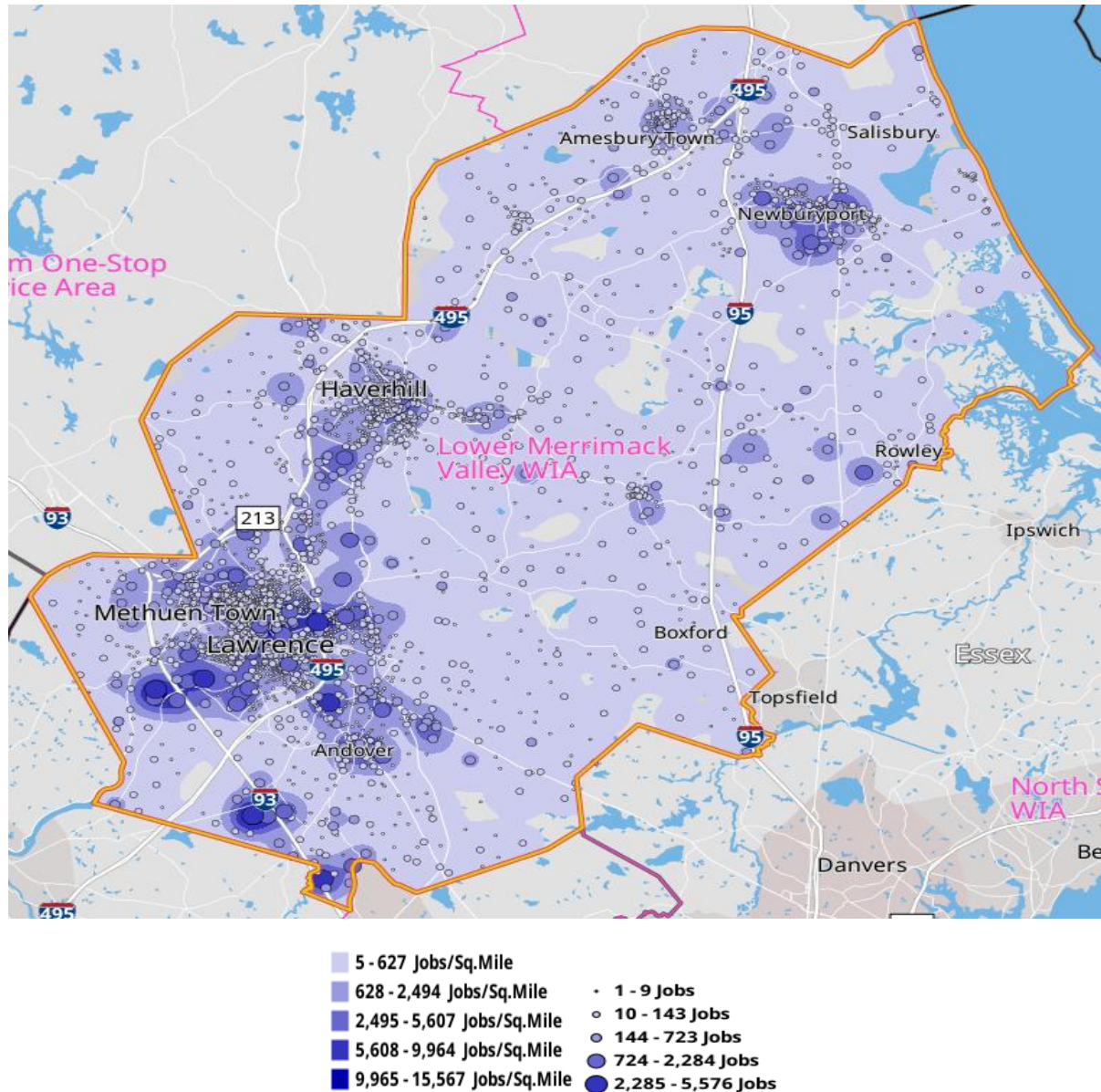
Total Jobs by Year		
Year	Total Jobs	Total Yearly Regional Wages
2022	148,576	\$11,052,178,778
2023	148,819	\$11,776,207,813
2024	147,639	\$11,600,666,704

There has been a decrease of approximately 1,180 jobs in the region since 2023 for 2024. Although a decrease in total jobs was reflected, personal wages increased, even though there was a slight decrease in total wages in the Merrimack Valley for 2024.

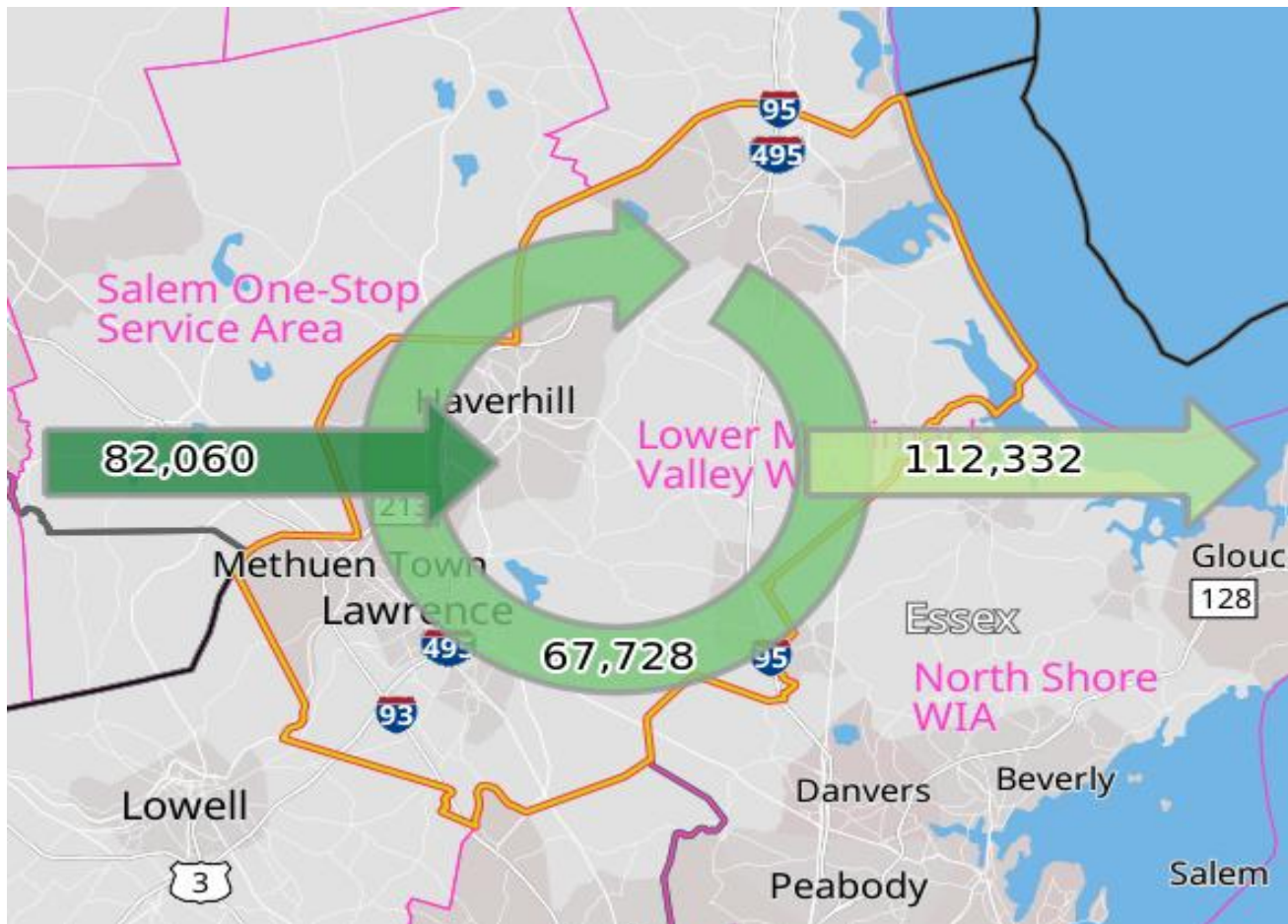
¹⁷ Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) 2024
¹⁸ Lightcast Labor Insight, Regional Analysis, Lower Merrimack Valley WDA, Jun. 30, 2025

Employee Inflows and Outflows for Jobs in Merrimack Valley¹⁹

The “Heat Map” below shows the concentration of jobs/employment within the region. The larger and darker the area the greater the concentration of jobs.



¹⁹ US Census, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, OnTheMap, Regional Analysis, 2025, <https://lehd.ces.census.gov/>



Inflow/Outflow Job Counts (All Jobs) 2022		
	Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area	149,788	100.00%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	82,060	54.80%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	67,728	45.20%
Living in the Selection Area	180,060	100.00%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	112,332	62.40%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	67,728	37.60%

²⁰ US Census, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, Inflow/Outflow Analysis, 2025, <https://lehd.ces.census.gov/>

(4) Please provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the local area. This analysis must:

- a) include strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities*
- b) address the capacity to provide the workforce development activities around:*
 - I. Education and skill needs of the workforce.*
 - II. individuals with barriers to employment.*
 - III. employment needs of businesses.*

The Merrimack Valley Workforce Board sees itself as crucial to meeting the workforce needs of the region. The region has taken several steps and layers of interventions to support members of the 15 communities. The Merrimack Valley has a diverse economy with strengths in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and education. However, workforce development efforts face challenges in aligning training programs with employer needs, supporting marginalized populations, and addressing skill gaps.

The strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities outlined below have been carefully reviewed by the workforce board, which recognizes both as critically important to advancing workforce readiness, supporting job seekers, and meeting the evolving needs of employers. By addressing these key areas—ranging from successful industry-education partnerships to gaps in accessibility and skills alignment—the board aims to refine strategies that foster inclusive economic growth. A balanced approach, leveraging strengths while mitigating weaknesses, ensures that workforce development efforts remain responsive to the demands of both workers and businesses, ultimately driving regional prosperity.

Strengths & Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Strengths

- Strong Community College & Training Partnerships –Northern Essex Community College (NECC), Middlesex Community College, and UMass Lowell offer targeted programs in healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and IT.
- Industry-Aligned Programs – Initiatives like Lawrence Partnership’s "Workforce Development Gaps" and MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board connect employers with job seekers. Partnership with the Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (NAMC) is a key workforce development initiative in Massachusetts, particularly relevant to the Merrimack Valley due to its strong manufacturing base.
- State & Federal Funding – Access to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) grants and Massachusetts Workforce Development System supports training programs.
- Focus on Immigrant & ESL Workforce – Organizations like Lawrence CommunityWorks and,

Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, Northern Essex Community College, and International Institute of New England provide ESL and job readiness training.

Weaknesses

- Mismatch Between Skills & Employer Needs – Some training programs lag emerging tech (e.g., automation, AI) in manufacturing.
- Transportation Barriers – Although public bus transportation is free, it still difficult for low-income workers to access jobs/training due to time schedules and destination of routes outside of the Merrimack Valley.
- Underutilization of Employers in Curriculum Design – Some programs lack direct employer input, leading to less relevant training.
- Fragmented Services – Nonprofits, colleges, and state agencies sometimes duplicate efforts instead of collaborating. State funding is spread to non-profits to work on workforce development and creates a conflicting and competing environment for funding, sources, and job seekers. Many times, some of these organizations are novices in the workforce development area, and/or do not seek partnership with the workforce development board/career centers.

Despite numerous efforts, challenging and persistent issues remain that need to be addressed. The aging workforce in manufacturing and various sectors has created challenges for many employers in their recruitment initiatives. This same ageing population, along with a significant number of retirements in our healthcare system and hospital bankruptcies, has led to heightened demands on our healthcare system that we are unable to meet.

(5) Please describe your Board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in § 677.155(a)(1). The primary indicators of performance include:

- a) The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;*
- b) The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;*
- c) Median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;*
- d) The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attained a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program.*

The Merrimack Valley Workforce Board is committed to driving sustainable economic growth and economic self-sufficiency by developing a highly skilled, inclusive workforce that meets the evolving needs of regional employers. Our strategic vision focuses on bridging opportunity gaps, fostering career pathways, and delivering measurable results aligned with WIOA performance standards.

Core Goals for Workforce Development:

Building an Educated & Skilled Workforce - Expand Access to High-Demand Training: Partner with Northern Essex Community College, UMass Lowell, and industry leaders to deliver programs in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, clean energy, and IT—sectors critical to the Merrimack Valley’s economy.

Youth Engagement: Strengthen youth apprenticeships, STEM initiatives, and early college programs to prepare the next-generation workforce.

Barrier Reduction: Provide targeted support for individuals facing employment challenges (e.g., ESL learners, justice-involved individuals, people with disabilities) through wraparound services, mentorship, and employer-linked training with the assistance of the new On-Stop Career Center operator.

Performance Accountability & Outcomes: Aligned with § 677.155(a)(1), we have set ambitious targets to ensure program effectiveness:

a) Unsubsidized Employment (Q2 after exit): Achieve $\geq 80\%$ employment retention in the second quarter post-exit through personalized career coaching and employer partnerships.

b) Unsubsidized Employment (Q4 after exit): Maintain $\geq 70\%$ employment retention by the fourth quarter, emphasizing upskilling and advancement opportunities.

Median Earnings Growth: Increase median earnings by $\geq 20\%$ for employed participants, prioritizing high-growth, living-wage careers.

Key Strategies for Success: Employer-Driven Solutions - Collaborate with Merrimack Valley manufacturers, healthcare systems, and tech firms to design OJT, customized training, and apprenticeship pipelines.

Equitable Access: Deploy mobile career center (in the near future), bilingual outreach, and assist in training people for childcare positions to offset the childcare issue to engage underserved communities in Lawrence.

Data-Informed Adaptation: Use real-time labor market analytics to assist in refining partner training programs and respond to emerging industry needs.

(6) Taking into account analyses described in 1 through 4 above, what is your regions strategy to work 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 described in paragraph (a)(5) of this section.

The Merrimack valley Workforce Board convenes the WIOA Partners MOU participants regularly. The group is tasked with identifying opportunities for collaboration to include how to best service shared customers, ensuring a seamless transition of our customers when referring, and developing a system to track performance. Additional specifics on how the partners will collaborate are in the MOU document. The member organizations include:

- Lawrence Adult Learning Center
- Northern Essex Community College
- Methuen Adult Learning Center
- Haverhill Community Action Inc.
- Notre Dame Education Center – Lawrence
- International Institute of Greater Lawrence
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission
- Massachusetts Commission for the Blind
- Department of Unemployment Assistance
- Department of Transitional Assistance
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Greater Lawrence Community Action Council
- YouthBuild Lawrence
- Shriver Job Corps

However, Building on the analyses outlined in sections 1-4, the Merrimack Valley Workforce Board will implement a coordinated, resource-aligned strategy with core program partners and required stakeholders to achieve our vision of economic growth and workforce readiness. Our approach focuses on leveraging partnerships, eliminating duplication, and maximizing impact. The first is to continue to formalize the cross-system alignment. The MVWB will continue to work at a Merrimack Valley Workforce Collaborative with mandated partners (MassHire, DTA, DCS, DYS, adult education providers) to conduct quarterly resource-mapping sessions to identify/gap analysis, develop unified intake processes across programs, create shared performance dashboards tracking §677.155(a)(1) metrics.

Additionally, the MVWB will focus on resources. By aligning funding streams (WIOA, TANF, SNAP E&T) will support Advanced Manufacturing Pipeline, Healthcare Pathways, and Language Access Initiative (for Lawrence – utilizing city funds to provide basic ESOL work language training), and combining ESOL, vocational English and job training funds for immigrant populations.

Strategies to barrier-reduction infrastructure will include coordinated support services with

-Transportation solutions through MEVA partnership, childcare navigators that could possibly be co-located at MV Career Center (or with partnership through the new career center operators), and integrated case management for justice-involved participants.

The decision making will be data-driven. Launch a regional workforce data hub that trades real-time labor market analytics with partners, employers, and training providers, provides partners with unified participant tracking and enables rapid program adjustments based on performance metrics.

Our employer engagement Framework will include expanding business partnership to validate training curricula annually with industry input, scale work-based learning opportunities, and develop talent pipeline strategies for key growth sectors.

Our performance approach will be managed, as we monitor progress, monthly cross-partner scorecard reviews, biannual community impact reports, annual return on investment analysis by sector.

This strategy ensures every dollar and service is strategically deployed, we believe will meet our WIOA performance targets, address identified skills gaps, serve populations with barriers, and respond to employer's needs.

The Board will convene all required partners quarterly to assess alignment progress and make necessary adjustments to maintain focus on our shared vision for regional prosperity.

In addition to the partners noted above, the region has strong working relationships with area high schools, and several nonprofits, primarily in Lawrence, that deliver workforce development programs and often require MMVWB support.

(b) Under WIOA, the plan must include a description of the following requirements (WIOA secs. 108(b)(2)–(21)):

(1) Identify the following elements of the workforce development system in your local area:

(i.) Programs that are included in your local workforce system (please list programs)

The MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center and / or the MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board operate or host the following programs within our local workforce:

- Wagner-Peyser Act Program (as amended by Title III) WIOA Title I Adult Program
- WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program
- WIOA Title I Youth Program Veterans Programs
- TRADE Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Workers Programs whose activities are authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974
- MassHire BizWorks / Rapid Response

- Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment RESEA Services
- National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) programs Adult Education Programs (Title II)
- Lawrence Adult Learning Center
- Community Action Inc.
- Methuen Adult Learning Center
- Notre Dame Education Center – Lawrence
- International Institute of Greater Lawrence
- Northern Essex Community College / CAE
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MCB), Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS)
- Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), EOHHS Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), EOHHS
- School to Career Connecting Activities (MA DESE)
- YouthWorks Summer subsidized employment/training (Commonwealth Corporation)
- YouthWorks Year-Round grant (Commonwealth Corporation)
- Leadership, Employment, Advocacy Development program (LEAD), formerly Bridging the Opportunity Gap Program (BOG), Department of Youth Services, EOHHS
- Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (NAMC) funded advanced manufacturing occupational skills training and apprenticeships.
- Regional Labor Market Blueprint implementation plan funding (MA Department of Career Services)
- Senator Kenneth J. Donnelly Workforce Success Grants for ESOL-Enhanced Training (Manufacturing) and Placement Programs
- Northeast HealthCare HUB Workforce Consortium, led by the MassHire North Shore Workforce
- Northeast Behavioral HUB Workforce Consortium, led by the MassHire Greater Lowell Workforce
- Board in partnership with MassHire Greater Lowell Workforce Board and MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board to ultimately design programs for targeted healthcare occupations and build capacity
- Career Technical Initiative aimed at training skilled trades workers over the next four years to help close skills gaps and meet the needs of businesses across the Commonwealth.

(ii.) How your Board will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including 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 MassHire MVWB supports and works with the Greater Lawrence Community Action Council (GLACA) operator of the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center which carries out

WIOA Title I and Title III core programs. MassHire MVCC is staffed by both NECC and our partners of MassHire Department of Career Services staff. An annual umbrella contract governs our relationship, and the MassHire MVWB provides oversight and monitoring of all key performance indicators established in the work statements of each program operated by MassHire MVCC.

Collaboration with OSCC Partners, many whom carry out WIOA Title II and Title IV core programs, was outlined in the WIOA Partners MOU ensures service alignment. The key areas of focus are highlighted in the following 10 Assurances found in the MOU:

1. Enter a local MOU with the MassHire Workforce Board relating to the operation of the MassHire Career Center delivery system.
2. Participate in the operation of the MassHire Career Center delivery system consistent with the terms of this MOU, the requirements of WIOA, and the requirements of Federal laws authorizing the programs and activities.
3. Agree to serve Shared Customers and define how multiple providers, services and resources should support youth, job seekers, and businesses.
4. Utilize the MassHire Career Center Customer Flow and incorporate partner agency points of referral whether in-person or virtual to ensure accessibility and availability of programs and services for shared customers.
5. Ensure the effective use of modern tools and technology that enable shared customers to access needed services to complete program participation and achieve training and employment goals.
6. Develop a process for partner communication, referrals, enrollment, and sharing outcome information on shared customers to staff. Develop a process to review data on shared customers.
7. Use a portion of the funds available for programs and activities to maintain the MassHire Career Center delivery system, including infrastructure and shared costs of MassHire Career Centers, through methods agreed upon by the Local Board, Chief Elected Official, and Partners. If no consensus on methods is reached, the Governor, after consultation with the Chief Elected Official, Local Board, and State Board shall determine the portion of funds to be provided (WIOA sec. 121(a)(h)(1)(C)).
8. Provide representation on the Local Workforce Boards to the extent possible and/or participate in Local Board ad hoc activities/events or on standing committees.
9. Convene locally as an MOU Team at least quarterly and agree to the roles and responsibilities each Partner will have in the development of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive integrated service delivery strategy that meets the needs of customers and businesses.
10. The MOU will be reviewed, and if substantial changes have occurred, renewed, not less than once every 3-year period to ensure appropriate funding and delivery of services. The MOU must be updated to reflect any change in the MHCC Partner infrastructure cost contributions.

Further, the MassHire MVWB works in close collaboration with the programs of study authorized

under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to ensure service alignment. These include Greater Lawrence Technical School (GLTS) (located in Andover) and the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School (Whittier Tech) (located in Haverhill). Both GLTS and Whittier Tech are approved for the Eligible Training Providing List and their adult education offerings are available for WIOA Individual Training Account (ITA) training funds. NAMC sponsored advanced manufacturing training courses are offered at both schools. Many of the MassHire MVWB non-formula funded group training programs have contracted with GLTS to provide occupational skills training. These include both the LTE AMPP program for pre-school parents, WCTF MAT program for incumbent workers and the RECP program for returning citizens. We are exploring offering landscaping / hardscaping occupational skills training to be supported with YouthWorks funding.

Our Connecting Activities program provides internship support to both programs.

(2) Please describe how your Board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:

- (i.) Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.*

MassHire MVWB collaborates with the career center and WIOA partners to enhance access to employment, training, education, and support services through a four-pronged approach:

1. Providing outstanding customer-focused career services daily that are universally available to all workers, including those eligible individuals facing employment barriers. Continuous improvement is embedded in service delivery, allowing for innovation based on customer needs to be incorporated into updated service flow and design.
2. Co-locating WIOA Partners at MassHire MVCC to ensure effective coordination of referrals and services to optimally serve shared (and potentially shared) customers.
3. Fostering ongoing business engagement and opportunities for collaboration throughout the business cycle as key priorities for achieving success in the workforce system.
4. Continuous development and execution of specialized programs – based on sector partnerships to meet the workforce needs of specific industries, or on the service needs of at-risk populations, or both – to enhance and broaden the workforce system service offerings in the region.

- (ii.) Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and*
- (iii.) Improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable);*

Facilitating the creation of career pathways is a continuous effort that is fundamental to the Board's objective of enhancing local prosperity by providing opportunities for workforce advancement. This initiative is primarily executed in partnership with the MassHire MVCC,

incorporating feedback from other organizations that implement core programs, educational institutions, and local workforce-focused entities.

We collaborate with partners to develop career pathways by outlining training and education entry points, the credentials or degrees to be obtained, and how these relate to entry-level or advanced positions in priority industries. This information guides the occupational skills training and educational programs available to WIOA customers through ITAs. All offerings approved by ITA must lead to industry-recognized credentials, ideally stackable. Our group training programs, which are not funded through formulas, enhance access to credentials and raise awareness of career opportunities. Specific instances of this work include collaboration between NAMC, GLTS and NECC to explore articulation agreements to provide college credit for NAMC courses. Working with Lawrence Public Schools, the Lawrence Partnership and healthcare employers, we established a healthcare pathway program for LHS grads to train for CNA or Medical Assisting credentials, be hired by partner employers, and then advance on the healthcare career ladder.

Ensuring co-enrollment of customers whenever possible and appropriate between different core programs is also a priority of the Board. Co-location of WIOA core partners at MassHire MVCC facilitates this process, and career center staff has received training in partner programs, and vice versa, to better determine which customers are a fit for co-enrollment. We are also in the process of streamlining eligibility and enrollment between WIOA and non-formula funded programs so customers can access all services for which they qualify, and which would be beneficial. The WIOA partners will meet regularly in 2026 and beyond to further advance co-enrollment and ensure access to career pathways.

(3) Please describe the strategies and services that will be used in your local area:

(i.) To facilitate engagement of businesses in workforce development programs, including small businesses and businesses in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;

The region is striving to establish a more effective network of organizations that engage with employers, enhancing its ability to communicate with them. Employers have raised concerns about the multitude of agencies and nonprofits reaching out without a clear understanding of how these organizations interact with one another. The region continues to rely on the Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (NAMC) for direct engagement with employers. NAMC has demonstrated an exceptional capability to link employers to the resources of the workforce system, especially in relation to apprenticeships. Furthermore, the newly established Northeast HealthCare HUB Workforce Consortium is actively collaborating with a major regional hospital and community health center. Like NAMC, the Business Service Unit plays a vital role in our business engagement efforts, often serving as the primary point of contact and facilitator for newly engaged businesses.

(ii.) To serve agricultural businesses including plans to improve those services;

The Merrimack Valley has limited to no interaction with agricultural businesses. The Merrimack Valley Workforce Board (MVWB) recognizes agriculture as a vital but underserved sector in our regional economy and will be creating a future strategy to address the agricultural business to tackle the current challenges in Agricultural Workforce Development. These include, seasonal employment patterns creating instability, language/cultural barriers (many workers are Spanish), limited access to technology training for modern farming techniques, lack of clear career pathways in agribusiness, transportation barriers to rural worksites.

(iii.) To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses;

The MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center has revamped its approach to engaging with employers. MMVCC now aligns its initiatives with specific industry sectors, which encompass Health Care, Trades, Manufacturing, and Professional Services. This strategy enables our business service representatives to gain a deeper insight into the unique needs of employers in the region. Additionally, it is recognized that business requirements do not solely revolve around Workforce solutions. To enhance support for businesses, there is an ongoing commitment to cultivate and strengthen relationships with our agency partners.

(iv.) To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development;

The MassHire MVWB collaborates closely with the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC). The previous Executive Director of the MassHire MVWB was instrumental in creating MVPC's 2018-2023 Merrimack Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, which was finalized in June 2018.

The current Executive Director has initiated the preparation of city-specific gap analysis reports for each city and town in the Merrimack Valley. This effort includes the completion of Lawrence's Workforce Gaps Analysis Report, as part of its collaboration and membership in the Lawrence Partnership Workforce Subcommittee.

(v.) To strengthen linkages between reemployment assistance and unemployment insurance programs;

MassHire MVCC staff connect unemployment assistance with the reemployment support provided by the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program, which aims to expedite the return to work for unemployment insurance claimants. Those who have been permanently separated from their jobs must take part in the RESEA program. This program features a Career Center Seminar, a Career Action Plan, and personalized assistance.

Additionally, the DUA is a partner in the WIOA initiative, participating in regular meetings to explore ways to enhance service delivery for our mutual clients.

(vi.) Describe how your Board coordinates workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide Rapid Response activities;

The MassHire MVWB maintains regular communication with the statewide MassHire BizWorks Rapid Response team based in our career center, specifically with Norca Disla-Shannon and Ken Messina (recently retired). We consistently receive and review the monthly Rapid Response WARN and Rapid Response Employer / Employee Trends Reports.

As Rapid Response addresses the needs of local businesses undergoing transitions, such as significant layoffs and plant closures, we, along with our career center, are prepared to offer pre-layoff and post-layoff services, as well as any necessary additional support to the affected companies and their employees. If TRADE certified, the career center is equipped to provide counseling and assist clients in meeting eligibility requirements and selecting appropriate training. When suitable, the MassHire MVWB seeks funding through a National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) to create a strategy for managing the dislocation event. At present, the Board is the recipient of the Southwick NDWG.

(vii.) Please describe procedures to offer MassHire Career Center Business Services and MassHire BizWorks programs to local businesses;

BizWorks programming plays a crucial role in the MassHire MVWB's initiatives to engage employers. Periodically, the region organizes BizWorks workshops for employers, providing them with direct access to partner agencies. The services offered, along with their packaging, are regarded as a significant asset for effective employer engagement.

(viii.) Describe the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional businesses. These initiatives must support the strategy described in paragraph (b)(3) of this section;

The workforce system in the Merrimack Valley has a variety of strategies and services designed to execute the initiatives mentioned in the previous question. All of these are incorporated into the Business Services package offered by the career center during employer meetings. Specific initiatives that are either in the planning stages or currently in progress include:

- **Incumbent worker training:** BSRs and the MassHire Workforce Board consistently engage with employers to discuss ways to work together in offering subsidized pre-employment training for workers aiming to qualify for entry-level positions. Subsequently, employers are encouraged to enhance their workforce and advance individuals by investing in incumbent worker training. This approach has proven effective in the youth healthcare program outlined in section 2. iii, as well as in our EPA-funded training initiatives, where employers uphold worker qualifications by facilitating short-term incumbent worker training.

- **On-The-Job training:** In 2018, MassHire MVCC recruited a BSR who brought extensive experience in OJTs. With this new expertise, the career center has increased OJT placements throughout the 3-year planning period. During this time, we aim to enhance OJTs as a component of the region's apprenticeship and internship programs.
- **Customized Training Programs:** MassHire MVWB currently operates three customized training programs, Healthcare Hub, Behavioral Health Hub, and Advanced Manufacturing (partner with Helfrich Brothers) An incumbent worker training also available to unemployed and underemployed.
- **Industry / Sector Strategies:** Our most successful sector strategy is NAMC, which addresses employer labor market demand in advanced manufacturing. We have developed a healthcare sector strategy in collaboration with the state's initiative, and we are still considering consolidating our construction-related programs into a trades sector strategy initiative.
- **Career Pathways:** Strategies discussed in section b) 2. (iii.)
- **Utilization of effective business intermediaries:** Select business intermediaries, in the form of reputable staffing agencies, are considered employer partners in the Merrimack Valley workforce system. They are identified and recruited in two ways. First, through the Business Service Unit at the career center. Business Service Representatives engage with staffing agencies to understand their labor needs and how they coincide with the employment needs of job seeker customers. Staffing agencies are included in hiring events and their vacancies are included in job listings. Second, business intermediaries are sometimes partners in our grant funded job training programs. In both cases, the employment opportunities offered by staffing agencies fulfills the needs of some job seekers – especially those who lack transportation so are served well by an agency located close-by, or for those who need work experience to be competitive for direct hire. As a rule, both the Board and the Career Center refer job seekers to direct hire employment with priority industry employers, rather than through a business intermediary, whenever practicable.

(4) Please provide a description of how your Board:

- *Coordinates local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities*

As previously mentioned, economic development activities often serve as a key indicator for the requirements of workforce development. Engaging representatives who are attuned to the local environment will enable the workforce system to address employer needs more proactively. The Northeast Region, by creating the Regional Blueprint, has emphasized the involvement of economic development professionals, in all planning initiatives. Specifically, we intend to:

1. Regularly engage economic development partners at both the municipal and regional

- Level. This includes attendance at regional economic development planning meetings. The board currently has economic development directors of two municipalities on its board.
 - 2. Develop familiarity with municipal master plans and/or economic development priorities.
 - 3. Request and/or seek out permitting activity from local Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals Boards that may indicate development activity.
 - 4. Continue to leverage local chambers and board members to connect to other employers.
- *Promotes entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services;*

The MVWB has provided support services to businesses. More specifically, the MVWB along with MVCC will deliver:

1. A job fair, or series of job fairs, designed to provide qualified workers to businesses who lost their workforce during a period of closure and now need new workers to continue and grow their businesses
2. Training for business owners and/or current workforce on a topic or topics to be determined (possibilities include ESOL, Operating a Small Business, Finances and Emergency Loans for Small Business Owners)
3. Training and job placement services for workers who have lost their jobs due to slowed business or closure of their employer who was affected by the gas explosions and fires, as well as unforeseen political circumstances related to funding.

Participating in this effort will bring added relevance to the workforce system in the region while delivering much needed support to business. Further, we hope this effort serves as a model for support in other communities in our region.

(5) Please describe the MassHire Career Center system in your area, including:

- (i.) How your Board ensures the continuous improvement of eligible providers through the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local businesses, workers and job seekers;*

While planning new group training programs for high-demand occupations, we establish employer advisory groups to provide guidance on the necessary soft and hard skills, as well as credentials, required to equip job seekers for these roles. Subsequently, we collaborate with local or regional educational institutions to ensure the availability of training. If such training is not currently offered, we have brought in trainers to our area, supported local trainers in launching new courses, or provided transportation assistance for trainees to reach the training locations. Additionally, we advise trainers on how to qualify for the Eligible Training Provider List and secure approval for courses under Section 30 in our region, enabling the use of WIOA training funds through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for these new trainers and their courses.

The MVWB continues to identify training providers that deliver the services that most reflect the needs of employers. For the training providers we do have, we plan to continue to assess their performance based on placement rates, average wages, and overall compliance with our ITA policy.

(ii.) How the Board facilitates access to services provided through the MassHire Career Center(s), including in remote areas, through the use of virtual services, technology and other means;

The Merrimack Valley Workforce Development Area is comprised of towns, cities, and suburbs, with no truly remote areas. Nonetheless, we are facilitating access to MassHire MVCC services using technology and plan to continue expanding this ability over the next three years.

The COVID-19 pandemic put the development of virtual services on a fast-track for MMVCC. Shortly after the onset of the pandemic, MMVCC converted all services to virtual. This included welcoming membership desks and communication with customers; delivery of career center seminars and workshops; individual employment counseling sessions; basic skills assessment; access to online basic, computer and software, and job readiness skill development; and employer recruitment, job fairs, and other services.

Tools that have been launched and for which staff have been trained to use include MS Teams for interoffice messaging and impromptu online meetings; Google Voice for phone communication with customers; Amazon WorkDocs and OneDrive to replace in-office user file storage with a cloud-based system; MS SharePoint to replace local server files with a cloud-based system that staff can use to collaborate on projects and store and share documents; MS Outlook with the encrypted email feature active; Commonwealth Secure Email System for sensitive customer document requests; Zoom, WebEx, and GoToMeeting FaceTime, Microsoft Teams, and

WhatsApp; used for audio and video remote communication with customers; Premier Virtual for virtual job fairs; WorkKeys for math and reading level assessment and skill level improvement; SkillBase – platform developed by Harvard University that contains curated sites where customers can study and practice basic English language skills, improve math and reading skills, and reinforce job search skills; an enhanced version of Rosetta Stone to practice English language skills; and an enhanced version of Professor Teaches to study Microsoft Office Suite programs online.

On-site technology upgrades have been made to enhance both virtual and in-person services including an upgrade of the Lawrence Computer Lab with state-of-the-art computers; webcams added to all staff computers; new headsets issued to all staff that interface with customers; new printers that can wirelessly print from a mobile device; single sign-on using Windows Hello to simplify staff computer access; dedicated workstations equipped with video cameras and headphones that customers can utilize to attend online workshops/webinars and virtual job interviews - workstations will be pre-loaded with remote tools such as Zoom, Teams, and WebEx; and iPads deployed for proprietary Apple apps such as FaceTime and employer chat using iMessage for companies.

This description is provided to illustrate MMVCC's capacity to use technology to provide services virtually when determined to be needed and to best serve customers.

As the pandemic subsided, decisions made regarding the menu and mix of services that will be

provided both virtually and in-person remain the same. Providing high quality services that meet customer needs and demand will drive decisions regarding the mix of in-person and virtual services.

- (iii.) How entities within the MassHire Career Center system, including Career Center operators and partners, will comply with WIOA sec. 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) 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 MassHire MVWB is active in the disability service community, both among required WIOA partners and other service providers in our region. The MassHire MVCC management understands ADA regulations and follows all access and programmatic requirements. The center possesses appropriate assistive technology and regularly conducts staff training.

- (iv.) The roles and resource contributions of your Partners – please describe how these relationships are sustained and kept productive;*

The roles and responsibilities of all WIOA career center partners are listed in the MOU and will be updated each year. Resource contributions of each partner is decided at the state level and

allocations are added to the integrated budget when disbursed to the local level. Relationships are sustained and kept productive through regularly scheduled high level partner meetings, and through meetings with individual partners to review issues related to shared space, customers, and services.

Many of the partners are on-site in the Lawrence career center, including: WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; Job Corps; Wagner Peyser; VR (MRC); AEFLA represented by the Lawrence Adult Learning Center; SCSEP; Trade; JVSG; UI; and TANF. Partners on-site in at the Haverhill career center include WP; VR (MRC); AEFLA represented by CAI; and JVSG. Partners not on-site at either location: YouthBuild; Native American; VR (MCB); Perkins; CSBG; and HUD. Volunteers of America have staff onsite to assist shared customers who are participants in their Department of Labor funded program for reentering adults. Partners currently on-site have space that meets their needs and published schedules that facilitate referral. On-site plans may change due to COVID restrictions and staggered staffing plans.

- (6) Please provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in your local area.*

The MassHire MVCC is a comprehensive one stop career center with offices in downtown Lawrence and was in downtown Haverhill. The new MVCC operators will be opening Haverhill Career Center once again as part of the board demand. They (or will provide in Haverhill once opened) provide a full range of WIOA adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities as described in

the table below.

ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKER JOB SEEKER ACTIVITIES		
BASIC CAREER SERVICES	INDIVIDUAL CAREER SERVICES	TRAINING
WIOA BASIC CAREER SERVICES ARE SELF-SERVICE AND/OR INFORMATIONAL.	WIOA INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES ASSIST THROUGH THE EXPLORATION OF CAREERS, TRAININGS, AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.	TRAININGS ARE FUNDED BY WIOA AND OTHER SOURCES; TRAINEES MUST MEET SPECIFIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA TO PARTICIPATE.
Outreach, intake and orientation to the information, services, program tools and resources available in the local workforce system.	Comprehensive & specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs.	Occupational skills training through WIOA funded Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)
Initial assessment of skill level(s), aptitudes, abilities & support service needs.	Development of an Individual Employment Plan (also known as a Career Action Plan) to ID employment goals and services to achieve goals.	On-The-Job Training
In- and out-of-area job search assistance (including information on in-demand industry sectors & non-traditional employment.	Information on eligible training providers and referral to training.	Registered apprenticeship work & learning opportunities
Information on labor market demand, vacancies, and job skills needed to apply	Individual counselling & career planning	Industry sector partnership training, such as through NAMC.
Eligibility determination for Adult, DW & Youth programs	Case management for individuals seeking training, and for individuals during job search, referral, and placement.	Incumbent worker training
Referrals to & coordination of activities with other programs, esp. WIOA partners, and services, esp. support services.	Workforce preparation workshops on job seeking and job readiness topics such as punctuality, communications, resume writing, interviewing skills, financial literacy, professional conduct, etc.	Grant funded group occupational skills plus soft skills training opportunities for in demand occupations
Performance of local area on accountability measures	Work experience, transitional jobs, registered apprenticeships, & internships	Referrals to adult education & literacy activities in combination with training services (all provided by AEFLA providers)

Information in Spanish – the 2nd most common language in the region.	Post-employment follow-up services and support, including additional counselling, contact with employer, peer support,	
Information & assistance on UI claims.		
Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid for non-WIOA programs.		

Customer surveys are also completed to assess satisfaction with services. Business customers complete them after job fairs and other events. Job seeker customers complete surveys after career center seminars and all workshops. Survey results are reviewed by managers and BSRs (for business customers) and presenters and counselors (for job seekers). Survey results inform changes to improve delivery service. Survey results so far have shown good customer satisfaction with new service delivery models; feedback is reviewed systematically by management to influence service delivery to continually improve responsiveness and customer satisfaction.

Employer Services are an integral part of a demand-driven workforce development system. Therefore, these are included as a core component of the MassHire MVCC service delivery system. The MassHire MVCC Business Services Unit offers Employer Services to all employers in the 15 cities and towns of the Merrimack Valley Workforce Development Area. This is done through Industry Sector Teams divided into Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, Professional, Technical and Scientific, and Construction and Other. Services provided are listed on the table below.

EMPLOYER SERVICES		
Provide and follow established protocol with businesses, responding to all requests in a timely manner	Provide information and services related to Unemployment Insurance taxes and claims	Assist with disability and communication accommodations, including job coaches
Conduct outreach regarding Local workforce system's services and products	Conduct on-site Rapid Response activities regarding closures and downsizings	Develop On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts, incumbent worker contracts, or pay-for-performance contract strategies
Provide access to labor market information	Provide customized recruitment and job applicant screening, assessment, and referral services	Provide employer and industry cluster- driven Occupational Skills Training through Individual Training Accounts with eligible training providers
Assist with the interpretation of labor market information	Consult on job description development and industry trends	Develop customized training opportunities to meet specific employer and/or industry cluster needs
Use of one-stop center facilities for recruiting and interviewing job applicants	Provide information on disability awareness issues	Coordinate with employers to develop and implement layoff aversion
Post job vacancies in the state labor exchange system and take and fill job orders	Provide information regarding assistive technology and communication accommodations	Provide incumbent worker upgrade training through various modalities

Provide information regarding workforce development initiatives and programs		Develop, convene, or implement industry or sector partnerships
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- (7) *Please provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in your area including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. Please include an identification of successful models of such activities.*

The MassHire MVWB ensures a robust set of workforce investment activities available to youth aged 16-24 in the Lower Merrimack Valley. We understand the critical importance of guiding in-school and out-of-school youth in exploring career pathways and connecting them with educational opportunities to ensure future prosperity for individuals and the region.

As a foundation, the Basic and Individual Career Services described in section 6 above are all available to area youth who are determined eligible for WIOA services. The 14 WIOA Youth Elements are additionally available to youth through MassHire MVCC offerings and /or provided by outside vendors. Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange services are also youth accessible. When youth enter the career center, they progress along the customer flow diagram shown in Attachment 1, with the caveat that placement in post-secondary education is an acceptable outcome in addition to job placement. At least 75% of our annual WIOA Youth funds are expended on Out-Of-School Youth; 20% are utilized for Work Experience. Occupational skills training is available for WIOA ITAs. We have developed a strategy to offer training and work experience through the following programs:

- Youth ITAs with work experience
- Signal Success career / work readiness workshop series coupled with subsidized work
- SkillsBuild Pre-Apprenticeship program (training & work experience) The MassHire MVWB operates two programs that target court-involved youth.

- a. *Please also provide a description of youth workforce investment activity coordination with the Department of Transitional Assistance, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind.*

All three agencies are WIOA Partners in the MassHire MVWB partner MOU and make referrals to our youth programs. All MassHire MVWB / MVCC youth programs are open and accessible to all youth regardless of ability.

- (8) *Please explain how your Board coordinates relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.*

In providing workforce investment activities for In-School-Youth, the MassHire MVWB acts as a

team with our local high schools and post-secondary education programs to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication. We implement two wide-reaching programs for In-School-Youth each year. They are:

- Connecting Activities - which links schools to careers in area priority industries. It is operated in collaboration with 10 local high schools, including Lawrence High School, Lawrence Learning Center, Methuen HS, Triton Regional, Haverhill HS, Newburyport HS, Amesbury HS and Whittier Regional Technical School, Crest Collaborative, and Greater Lawrence Technical School. Our school year 2024-2025 goal was to place 2000.
- Youthworks Summer – subsidized employment for in school and out of school income eligible youth between the ages of 14 and 21 who live in Lawrence, Haverhill, or Methuen. At the beginning of summer 2025 we enrolled over 331 youth in YouthWorks. They will gain employability skills, exposure to career pathways and the opportunity to identify their areas of interest through a series of workshops. Then all will participate in subsidized work experience with a local non-profit, public or private sector employer, where feedback on performance will be gained through the Work-Based Learning Plan. This program enhances school-year internships and job shadow days held by schools and / or our Connecting Activities program.

(9) *How does the Board coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area? Please include a description of how other programs and services in your local area are leveraged to compliment workforce investment activities.*

The Board coordinates WIOA Title I workforce development activities with transportation and other support services in the Lower Merrimack Valley through the guidelines delineated in our Supportive Services and our Needs Based Payments Policies.

Supportive Services are provided with the understanding that customers will not become dependent upon such services, but rather self-sufficient and able to make their own arrangements by the time they complete participation in program(s) accessed through MassHire MVCC. Such services are provided only to customers who are without the means to pay for such services themselves or through other resources. Therefore, we partner with local WIOA Partners and nonprofit agencies to refer customers for assistance prior to being considered for WIOA Support Services.

A transportation stipend is available to eligible enrolled WIOA Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth (which would nearly always be Out-of-School Youth) who travel in their own vehicles during WIOA training, job search or during the first weeks of a new job if required to obtain or retain employment. The stipend varies according to distance travel and customers must maintain 80% attendance in training and document travel. Support service funds also may be used, under

specific circumstances, to support driver's education, testing and license fees, vehicle insurance, and repairs. MEVA buses are now free and available to customers who do not own a vehicle. To complement our resources, we partner with the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority to connect customers to Special Needs public transportation. Northern Essex Community College offers a free bus service from its Lawrence to its Haverhill campus. Finally, WIOA customers who are co-enrolled in grant funded training programs may be eligible for transportation support, via local private sector van transport, to make training accessible.

Additional appropriate support services are provisioned to coordinate with WIOA Title I workforce investment activities. This includes support for medical services, High School Equivalency Test (HiSET) costs, uniforms & tools, childcare, other testing, and certification fees. WIOA customers must follow the Support Services Policy guidelines and prescribed process to receive support service benefits.

(10) What plans, assurances, and strategies do you have in place for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services and other services provided through the Career Center delivery system?

In the Lower Merrimack Valley Northern Essex Community College operates the One Stop Career Center, using MassHire MVCC and MassHire Department of Career Services staff. Together they form an integrated structure in providing both Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I service. This integrated structure allows maximum coordination, an avoidance of duplication of services, and well managed service delivery. All services are delivered in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. The MassHire MVWB monitors the career center, and both meet on a regular basis to review system operation and areas for improvement.

(11) How will career and training services, required under WIOA, be provided to Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs) through the MassHire Career Center(s)?

The MassHire MVCC rarely serves MSFWs, however staff are trained and prepared to do so as required under WIOA. Spanish and English signage is available in the MassHire MVCC, and persons who identify themselves as a MSFW are provided with information and services regarding their specific needs. Under universal access, all persons receive access to the same services, resources, referrals, and services, as MSFWs. The Career Center Seminar reviews the definition and services available to MSFWs - this provides an orientation for MSFWs to understand what is available.

Employment Counselors and all members of the Industry Sector Team address the specific needs of the individual MSFW.

(12) Please describe how the Board coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA title II? This description must

include how the Board carries out the review of local applications submitted under title II consistent with WIOA secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232:

Each eligible provider desiring a grant or contract from an eligible agency shall submit an application to the eligible agency containing such information and assurances as the eligible agency may require, including a description of –

- a) of how funds awarded under this title will be spent consistent with the requirements of this title;*
- b) any cooperative arrangements the eligible provider has with other agencies, institutions, or organizations for the delivery of adult education and literacy activities;*
- c) how the eligible provider will provide services in alignment with the local plan under section 108, including how such provider will promote concurrent enrollment in programs and activities under title I, as appropriate;*
- d) how the eligible provider will meet the State adjusted levels of performance described in section 116(b)(3), including how such provider will collect data to report on such performance indicators;*
- e) how the eligible provider will fulfill Career Center partner responsibilities as described in section 121(b)(1)(A), as appropriate;*
- f) how the eligible provider will provide services in a manner that meets the needs of eligible individuals; and*
- g) information that addresses the considerations described under section 231(e), as applicable.*

There are a wide variety of strategies used by the MassHire MVWB to coordinate WIOA Title I activities with WIOA Title II adult education and literacy activities. Strategies are implemented by both the board and MassHire MVCC and include:

- Participation in MA DESE Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) Multi-Year Open and Competitive Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for Adult Education and readiness to participate in upcoming RFP reviews as called on
- Participation in program quality reviews / monitoring and selected site visits
- Development of effective employer partnerships to place adult education graduates
- Support and guidance to local adult education programs related to developing career pathways for Lower Merrimack Valley adult learners
- Co-locating adult education staff at the career center to assess customers for adult education services, and referral to adult education providers
- Coordinating with adult education providers on service provision to shared customers
- Partnering with adult education providers and other community organizations to support non WIOA funded occupational skills training for adult learners
- Participation in networks of adult education service providers in Lawrence and Methuen to ensure collaboration
- Providing representation of the workforce system at adult education sponsored community events.

(13) *Please provide the name and contact information of your Fiscal Agent.*

The MassHire MVWB has been designated by the City of Lawrence to be the Fiscal Agent. Executive Director Frank Bonet is the contact person; his phone number is (978) 857-5394, and his email address is fbonet@masshiremvwb.org.

(14) *Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements, MOUs, ISAs, or other agreements between required partners 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 your local Career Center delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA sec. 107(d)(11)) between the Board or other local entities described in WIOA sec. 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under title I of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (other than sec. 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to sec. 121(f)) in accordance with sec. 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C.*

721(a)(11)) 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, cooperative efforts with businesses, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

Describe how the Local Board/Career Center intends to build upon/increase collaboration with existing partners and in establishing new partnerships with local service providers (including any approximate timelines for establishing agreements or building upon existing agreements). (Note: There is a statewide collaborative agreement in place between DCS and the New England Farm Workers' Council (NEFWC), the WIOA Sec. 167 Grantee. A copy of the agreement will be included as part of the consolidated State Plan).

Please find attached the executed Memorandum of Understanding between required WIOA partners, which defines how all local service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in our Career Center delivery system, including efforts to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. The MassHire MVWB intends to build upon our already existing collaboration with partners through maintaining quarterly meetings as described in Section IV., Assurances of the MOU. The Assurances found in Section IV. of the MOU also describe how relationships will be maintained, and joint service delivery will be continuously improved.

Closer partnerships have been established with the adjacent workforce boards – the MassHire North Shore WB and the MassHire Greater Lowell WB. Linkage has been strengthened through the Regional Labor Market Blueprint development process, where together we also formed much stronger ties with economic development agencies, private sector employers, and institutions of higher education and vocational schools. Shared goals for the 2025-2028 are listed below:

Northeast Regional Labor Market Blueprint		
By 2024, we accomplished...	By 2025 we accomplished...	By 2026, we will...
<p>Increased understanding of the region's economic development, workforce development, and education services resources through completion of first annual resource inventory focused on education and training opportunities for our priority industries. This included a review of existing ESOL programs, particularly those that are focused on our urban areas, to ascertain where additional resources should be focused.</p> <p>Increased participation in the Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Coalition (NAMC) cross-region sector initiative by 100 students and 10 industry participants.</p>	<p>Additional awareness of the Northeast Regional Planning Team's efforts by increasing the distribution list, use of social media, by 50%.</p> <p>Advised the State in establishing and providing data for a dashboard. Identify key data points and sources and establish regular data reporting times from all partners.</p> <p>Increased the number of completions in priority occupations by 1% or 100 completions per year.</p> <p>Established a second industry sector initiative from among the priority industries and targeted training to serve the industry sector</p>	<p>See positive movement in the total job numbers for priority industries.</p> <p>Increase number of completions in priority occupations by 1% or 100 completions per year.</p>

Partnerships

Through the Healthcare Hub Planning grant, we envision developing a healthcare consortium to mirror the success of our advanced manufacturing consortium – NAMC. During the plan phase we will bring together three MassHire workforce regions North Shore, Merrimack Valley, and Greater Lowell Workforce Boards to establish an employer lead healthcare consortium that will assess and identify the current industry needs. This ‘demand driven’ consortium will ultimately ensure development of healthcare related training related programs for residents that meet the needs of the healthcare industry identified.

The Northeast Healthcare Hub (Hub) will recruit healthcare stakeholders including educators and employers representing acute care/outpatient services, long-term Care, community health, and home care services. A Business Leadership Team (BLT) will be developed comprising healthcare employers interested in and capable of providing quality direction and support to the Hub. BLT will ensure that all curriculum developed and implemented meets the real-time needs of the Healthcare industry. In addition, there will be an Educational Leadership Team, comprised of community colleges and other training providers to respond to the ideas and concerns expressed by the Business Leadership Team, and to develop training responses as requested and requested. To identify current Healthcare industry needs members of the Hub will develop surveys and evaluation questions to disseminate to and interview healthcare employers. Evaluation will occur through surveying, one-on-one interviews, or focus groups. This data will be collected and analyzed along with quantitative data gathered through real-time labor market databases. The Hub will meet monthly to assess the data gathered, provide information on immediate industry needs, provide directions on how to meet these needs, and advice on how to determine training.

In addition, we hope to build a stronger understanding and a new consortium around IT. This could involve a gathering of CIOs/CTOs from across the region, which would provide the basis upon which we move forward in this industry/occupation.

Employer Engagement

Engagement with employers remains a crucial aspect of the activities in the Northeast region. This encompasses focus groups with employers from priority and critical sectors. As noted earlier, the planning grant for the Healthcare Hub will significantly rely on the involvement of employers from acute care and outpatient services, long-term care, community health, and home care services. Their insights and recommendations will shape the forthcoming actions in the region.

In terms of manufacturing, NAMC is directed by the business leadership team of the consortium. This team consists of regional employers who convey their requirements for workforce development, training, and general business operations. NAMC actively seeks funding opportunities that will specifically address these needs.

Strong collaborations are established between the MassHire MVWB, MassHire MVCC, and local non-profit service providers, training vendors, and educational institutions to implement grant-funded occupational skills training programs. These collaborations are either governed by Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) or are based on contracts. Participants often receive co-enrollment in WIOA or access Wagner-Peyser services alongside grant-funded workforce development initiatives. The programs are tailored to specific industry sectors and focus on particular special populations. The partnerships created are further developed and serve as a foundation to enhance the workforce system's effectiveness.

Examples of these partnerships include those formed for the Environmental Technical Training Program, Reintegration through Construction Pathways, Advanced Manufacturing for Pre-School Parents, Reentry Opportunities for Youth, NAMC advanced manufacturing training, Healthcare Hub, ESOL-Enhanced Manufacturing, and Medical Assistant Training. Continuous partnerships are also a defining feature of our youth programs, which include Leadership, Employment, Advocacy Development; Connecting Activities; and YouthWorks Summer / Year-Round.

(14) *Please describe the competitive process that will be used to award the sub grants and contracts for WIOA title I activities.*

The competitive process that is and will be used by MassHire MVWB to award sub grants and contracts for WIOA title I activities follows the guidelines set forth in MA Issuance 100 DCS 01.102 as well as our local Procurement Policy updated 11.7.16. Our Board has a single contract for its regional WIOA Title I activities with the Greater Lawrence Community Action Council (GLCAC) which was selected through a competitive process to operate MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center. This process must take place at least once every 4 years and be done in accordance with WIOA, and state laws and policies governing One-Stop Operator procurement. Our second procurement process was completed in April 2025, and the Greater Lawrence Community Action Council (GLCAC) was selected the operations of the OSCC. A review committee comprised of Board members and local WIOA partners reviews proposals and makes recommendations for selection.

(15) *Please provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of your local area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the performance of your local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the Career Center system in the local area.*

Local Boards may insert or provide a link to local performance goals. Link must be accessible to ACLS bidders.

The following local levels of performance were submitted to the MDCS as the MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board proposed levels of performance:

Performance Measure

A PERFORMANCE MEASURE	FY2024 <input checked="" type="radio"/> Use FY24 State Goals <input type="radio"/> Propose New FY24 Goals			
	STATE		LOCAL AREA	
	B FY 2023 STATE GOAL	C FY 2024 STATE GOAL	D FY2023 PROPOSED LOCAL GOAL	E FY 2024 PROPOSED LOCAL GOAL
WIOA ADULT MEASURES				
Employment Q2	79.0%	79.0%	79.0%	79.0%
Employment Q4	78.0%	78.0%	78.0%	78.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$6,300	\$6,400	\$6,300	\$6,400
Credential Rate	73.5%	73.5%	73.5%	73.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%	40.0%
WIOA DISLOCATED WORKER MEASURES				
Employment Q2	83.0%	83.0%	80.0%	83.0%
Employment Q4	83.0%	83.0%	75.0%	83.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$10,000	\$10,500
Credential Rate	71.0%	71.5%	68.0%	71.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	45.0%	45.5%	38.0%	45.5%
WIOA YOUTH MEASURES				
Employment/Education Q2	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%
Employment/Education Q4	72.0%	72.0%	72.0%	72.0%
Median Earnings Q2	\$3,600	\$3,700	\$3,600	\$3,700
Credential Rate	65.0%	65.0%	65.0%	65.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%	45.0%

The MassHire MVWB has not yet established the performance goals for FY25 for the new career center operators. It is anticipated that performance goals with the new operator will be established by August 2025.

(16) What are the actions and activities that support the MassHire Board's continued status as a high-performance workforce board?

a) What trainings are applicable to Board members?

All members that join the board are provided with full orientation on matters relating to the board. They include a review of all funding sources, including WIOA and the corresponding activity.

Members are informed of their role on how they can positively affect the board's mission and vision. The Executive Director will also plan regular reminders for the entire board.

b) How do business Board members contribute to workforce development in your region?

Board members are expected to be active participants in the collective effort to carry out the mission and vision of the board. More specifically members:

- Actively participate in meetings
- Serve on committee's when called upon
- Assist in connecting MVWB staff with industry colleagues
- Develop knowledge on workforce system programs and how it applies to them and others in their industry
- Champion the boards programs and initiatives
- Help the boards role as a convener

c) How does your Board support the business services in the career centers?

Many of the board members have been customers of the career center at one point while serving as a board member giving them a good perspective of how the system works. The board also regularly interacts with career center staff at our quarterly board meetings. A new initiative that we plan to roll out is asking board members to facilitate workshops for the Career Centers Business Service Unit. This will allow staff to better understand business needs.

d) To what extent does inter-/intra-Board collaboration result in positive outcomes for job-seekers and businesses?

All the mentioned activities contribute to the overall workforce system in the Merrimack Valley.

These initiatives assist the system in providing optimal service to both clients and enterprises.

(17) How will training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 be provided through

the use of individual training accounts? if contracts for training services are or will be used, how is/will the use of such contracts be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts?

- (i) How does the Board ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided?*

Training services, as specified in WIOA section 134, are available in the Lower Merrimack Valley workforce investment area via Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).

Our MassHire MVCC delivers career services to Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth customers to assess their eligibility for WIOA training.

WIOA training is exclusively provided through ITAs, rather than through contracts for training services, with the exception of a portion of Youth funding allocated for Work Experience (also distributed on an individual basis).

The career center adheres to the MassHire MVWB ITA Policy and Procedures for managing ITA trainings. Training providers are required to be listed on the MA Eligible Training. Provider List and courses must be approved by the MVWB to be available to customers in our region.

Informed customer choice is ensured in the selection of training programs because of the procedures outlined in our ITA Policy. Customers must be interviewed, evaluated, or assessed, and then receive career planning services so they have the breadth of knowledge necessary to select training linked to employment opportunities in our area or further if they are willing to commute or relocate. In addition, we have customers visit training providers to select which is most appropriate for them. MassHire MVWB also continues to expand training offers to give customers more choices. The Greater Lawrence Technical School and Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School have had new courses approved for ITAs.

- (18) Please describe the local area strategy and service plans for utilization of the following work-based training models:*

- a) On-the-Job Training, including use of the Commonwealth's waiver to provide up to 90% employee wage reimbursement to businesses with fewer than 50 employees*

On-the-Job training is one of the services offered to employers by the Business Services Unit of MassHire MVCC. Standard Operating Procedures outlines the strategy and service plan for utilizing OJT in our region, with the local MassHire MVWB OJT Policy, and MDCS Issuance 100 DCS 07.101.1 serving as primary reference for implementation. A Business Service Representative has recently been hired by the career center with extensive experience in OJT, so we anticipate expanding our use of OJTs with area businesses soon. However, in the last 4 years the regional career center

has not processed any OJTs.

MassHire DCS issuance DCS 13.110 provides guidance for OJT in Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs and issuance 100 DCS 07.100.1 provides the same for OJT through the Workforce Training Fund Program.

b) Apprenticeship

The MassHire MVWB is working in collaboration with the Northeast Advanced Manufacturing Consortium (NAMC) on apprenticeships in our region; the focus is on advanced manufacturing apprenticeships. We anticipate building on this success to develop apprenticeships in other industry sectors.

NAMC is spearheading the Massachusetts Apprentice Initiative for the manufacturing sector both in our region and across the Commonwealth. Under this program NAMC helps manufacturing companies throughout the state develop Registered Apprenticeship (RA) Programs. Ras are intended to develop a new generation of skilled manufacturing employees within a cross section of job categories that are common across several advanced manufacturers in the region. The program targets full time employees (either incumbent or specifically hired for the RA) and requires a combination of on-the-job training delivered during work hours, and outside Related Technical Instruction (RTI). Successful completion of an RA program results in a certification that is recognized throughout the state and country. We can help develop Ras that are unique to each company's needs.

Additionally, to address critical workforce shortages and create sustainable career pathways, the MVWB will launch a Regional Apprenticeship Initiative targeting high-demand sectors through innovative partnerships and wraparound supports. This four-pronged strategy could include:

1. Employer Incentive Program Tax Credit Navigation: Help businesses access MA Apprenticeship Tax Credits (\$4,800/employee), OJT Wage Subsidies: Cover 50% of wages for first 6 months, and Consortium Model: Pool small employers (e.g., 5 machine shops = 1 shared apprentice).
2. Education Partner Integration: NECC/Middlesex CC: Influence changes into a conversion existing program into apprenticeship-degree hybrids (e.g., 2 days class/3 days' work), influence UMass Lowell: Stackable credentials in Industry 4.0 manufacturing, High Schools: influence Pre-apprenticeships with articulated college credit.
3. Barrier Removal Supports: Transportation- shuttle partnerships, Childcare: Influence sliding-scale vouchers via GLCAC, Language Access: Bilingual (Spanish) mentors in target industries.
4. Marketing & Outreach: "Earn While You Learn" Campaign, Social media targeting young adults (18-24) and career changers, Multilingual outreach at Lawrence, Methuen, Haverhill communities, mobile recruitment at high schools & correctional facilities.

One of our most innovative approaches is to encourage and train Workforce Boards to become

Apprenticeship Sponsors. This transfers much of the administrative burden from the companies to the Workforce Board. Beyond this, each Workforce Board and Career Center in the NAMC region contributes to the project through outreach to companies and potential employees, monitoring of each RA's progress, and development of appropriate RTI programs at regional educational partners.

c) Incumbent Worker Training

Customized Incumbent worker training is available in our region through Workforce Training Fund Program grants to employers. Our NAMC partnership has also yielded training for incumbent workers in the advanced manufacturing sector. We also have reviewed WIOA regulations as regards incumbent worker training and are aware that we can use up to 20% of our adult and dislocated worker allocations to provide for the cost of providing such training. This is a strategy which we have not yet deployed in our WIOA Annual Plan but will consider in the next planning cycle.

d) Work Experiences (paid or unpaid)

Work experience is available in our region through our youth programs. The MassHire MVWB WIOA Youth strategy features work experience, since it is mandated that 20% of our local area WIOA Youth funds are utilized on this work-based training model. Therefore, we offer the following options in our WIOA Youth program that is operated by the career center, and which focuses on

Out-of-School Youth:

1. Individual Training Account occupational skills training combined with subsidized work experience
2. Participation in pre-apprenticeship work experience
3. Job readiness / job seeking skills workshops coupled with subsidized work

Further, our Connecting Activities program provides internships and co-op experiences at a variety of high school and vocational technical schools; Youth Works Summer is also well known as a valuable work experience opportunity that is available each year. The MassHire MVWB is also just initiating a DOL funded reentry program for court involved youth that includes a subsidized work experience component.

e) Transitional jobs (§ 680.190 – one that provides a time-limited work experience, that is wage-paid and subsidized, and is in the public, private, or non-profit sectors for those individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have inconsistent work history, as determined by the Local Board. These jobs are designed to enable an individual to establish a work history, demonstrate work success in an employee-employer relationship, and develop the skills that lead to unsubsidized employment).

While Transitional Jobs (TJs) are time-limited, subsidized work experiences designed to help

individuals with significant barriers to employment (e.g., justice-involved, homeless, or long-term unemployed) gain skills, stability, and a pathway to unsubsidized employment. These programs

combine paid work, skill-building, and supportive services to bridge gaps in work history while meeting regional labor needs, the MVWB does not currently included in the MassHire MVWB strategy and service plan for utilization of work-based training models.

- f) Online remediation tools for OJT/apprenticeship screening in support of cultivating and demonstrating workplace competencies.*

The MassHire MVWB uses the Career Ready 101 tool as a remediation tool to cultivate and demonstrate workplace competencies.

- (19) Please describe the process the Board uses, consistent with WIOA sec. 108(d), to provide up to a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of your local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations.*

The Merrimack Valley Workforce board will make the plan available for a 21-day review for public comment between the dates of July 15, 2025, until August 4, 2021. In addition to posting the plan on the front page of our website, the plan will also be sent to email distribution lists, board members (including all committees, agency partners, and local elected and appointed officials.

- (20) Describe progress made implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology- enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by system partners.*

At the point of intake, all individuals desiring service from the career center, including WIOA partner shared customers, currently complete a membership form which is data-entered by staff into MOSES. Case management and other services are entered into MOSES by counselors and tracked through this system. WIOA partner program shared customers are identified through use of career center specific buttons (MRC, MCB, DTA, SCSEP, etc.). The career center intends to move toward the use of technology that will enable individuals to enter membership information at intake through use of tablets.

- (21) Please describe how the Board will implement the Virtual Career Pathway tool locally both for customers who can be wholly served by the Virtual Tool and those who will need to request personalized assistance.*

- i. How will the Virtual Tool be used once total public access is restored?*

The Career Center will synchronize jobseeker registration with the MDCS Virtual Pathway process on JobQuest. All jobseekers are required to register for new

membership via JobQuest. Since attendance at the Career Center Seminar (CCS) is mandatory for membership, jobseekers will arrange their CCS appointments through

JobQuest. RESEA customers will initiate the Pathway to Reemployment. Following their participation in the CCS, RESEA customers will commence their Career Action Plan (CAP) and schedule Workshops/Webinars, complete a comprehensive JobQuest profile, and upload necessary documents for RESEA evaluations. Their progress and activities will be recorded on their dashboard. All jobseekers will have access to resume-building tools within JobQuest and will be able to upload their resumes. Staff will highlight the advanced job search features and the real-time job feed available on JobQuest. Jobseekers interested in training will be directed to JobQuest to explore approved training programs. They also can connect with a Career Coach and will be assessed to determine the appropriate referral to an Employment Counselor or Recruiter. Partner "shared customers" will likewise adhere to the Virtual Pathway process.

ii. How will staff be assigned/deployed?

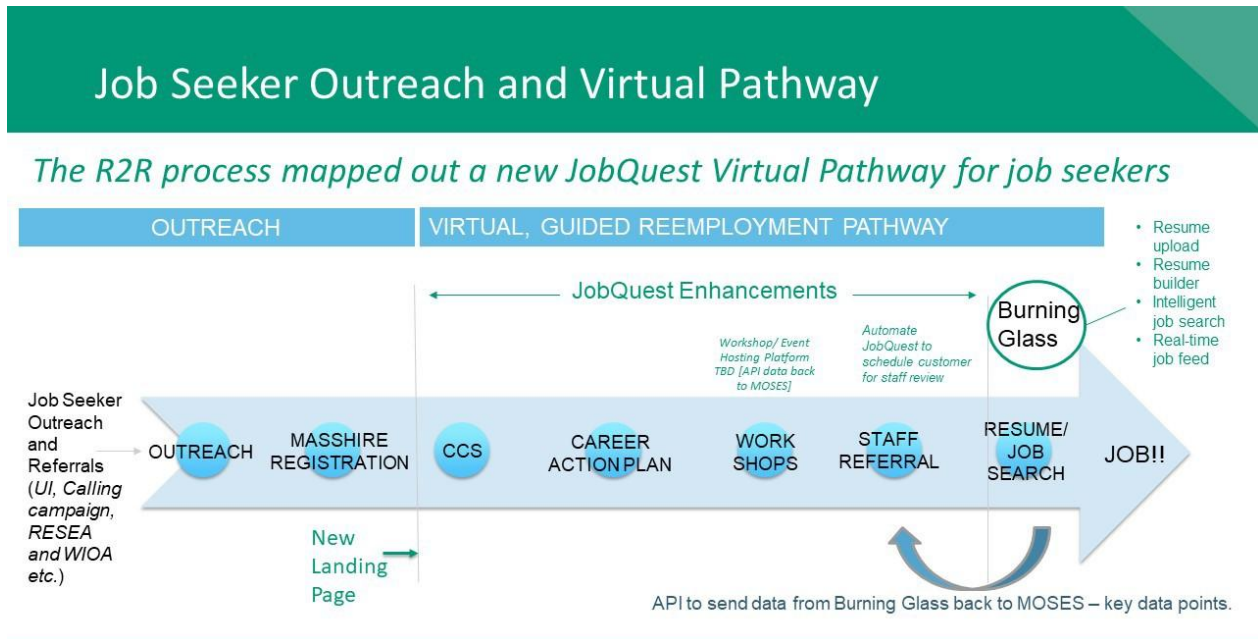
Virtual Pathway is self-directed. All staff will be familiar with guiding jobseekers through their Pathway to Reemployment. Career Center staff are fully integrated and will continue to facilitate CCS's and RESEA program requirements. Employment Counselors and Recruiters will review the benefits of utilizing the Virtual Pathway to gain employment.

iii. How will MassHire Board and Career Center leadership ensure that all staff are crossed-trained to be part of the process and ensure seamless customer service?

All MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center staff will be trained on the Virtual Career Pathway process. Should the state offer training, staff will attend. Training on the process will be provided during regularly scheduled staff training that occurs on the third Wednesday of each month and includes partner staff. Refreshers will be provided should changes in the process occur and as needed. Training in the process will be included in all new hire orientations.

Please see the Virtual Career Pathway process, mapped out below:

Job Seeker Outreach & Virtual Pathway



(22) Please describe the local policy and process that ensures priority for adult career and training services is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E), § 680.600 and 100 DCS 18.101.1 (Attachment C).

- Veterans and eligible spouses
- Recipients of public assistance
- Other low-income individuals
- Individuals who are basic skills deficient

The Local Board may establish a process that also gives priority to other individuals eligible to receive such services outside the groups given priority under WIOA, provided that it is consistent with the priority of service for Veterans. Please note the local policy and process must be consistent with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and § 680.600.

POS for Veterans: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/priority-of-service-for-veterans>

State Plan: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/workforce-innovation-and-opportunity-act-wioa-massachusetts-combined-state-plan/download>

MMVWB broadly applies the Policy set forth by the State for priority of service. More specifically, the region looks to prioritize veterans, low-income individuals, and people with disabilities.

ATTACHMENT B

WIOA Local Four-Year Plan

Signatories Fiscal

Years 2026-2029

Merrimack Valley Workforce Board

This Local Four-Year Plan shall be fully executed as of the date of signatures below, and effective through June 30, 2029. The Plan may be amended or modified if agreed to by all parties.

Signature indicates acceptance of the Local Four-Year Plan.

Typed Name: **Brian A DePeña**

Chief Elected Official/CEO

Date

Typed Name: **Juan Yopez**

MHMOVWB Chair

Date

Typed Name: **Frank Bonet**

MHMOVWB Executive Director

Date

Typed Name: **Eric Nelson**

MDCS Operations Manager

Date

ATTACHMENT C – WIOA Partners Memorandum of Understanding

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board and WIOA Partners
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

I. PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlines an accord developed and executed between the MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board (MMVWB), with the agreement of its Chief Elected Official, City of Lawrence Mayor Brian A. DePeña, and the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center (MMVCC) Partners, who are described below in Section II, relating to the operation of the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center delivery of service in the Merrimack Valley workforce area.

This MOU defines the roles and responsibilities of the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center (MMVCC) and its Partners in striving to produce the best possible MMVCC outcomes for shared customers, be they youth, adults, dislocated workers, other job seekers or businesses.

Partners who have signed this MOU agree with its contents and provisions as consistent with their respective programs, services, and activities, as well as with their authorizing statutes and regulations. Partners also recognize that MOU implementation will require efforts towards continuous improvement that may be affected by economic cycles, unemployment rates, and funding availability.

II. MASSHIRE CAREER CENTER REQUIRED PARTNERS

In accordance with WIOA Section 121(c), this Local Memorandum of Understanding has been developed and executed with agreement of the Chief Elected Official of the MassHire Merrimack Valley Area, the MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) MHCC Required Partners as defined by WIOA in WIOA Regulations 20 CFR Part 678.400 as mandatory Partners in the MassHire Career Centers and include:

MMVCC mandatory Partners include:

1. **The Adult Program** (Title I), as part of the MassHire Department of Career Services (MDCS), Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD);
2. **The Dislocated Worker Program** (Title I), as part of MDCS/EOLWD;
3. **The Youth Program** (Title I), as part of MDCS/EOLWD;
4. **The Wagner-Peyser Act Program** (Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended by Title III), as part of MDCS, EOLWD;
5. **The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program** (Title II), as part of Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Executive Office of Education (EOE);
 - I. Lawrence Adult Learning Center
 - II. Northern Essex Community College/CAE

- III. Methuen Adult Learning Center
- IV. Haverhill Community Action Inc
- V. Notre Dame Education Center – Lawrence
- VI. International Institute of Greater Lawrence

- 6. **The Vocational Rehabilitation Program** (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by Title IV), as part of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB), Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS);
- 7. **Federal-state unemployment compensation program**, as part of the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA), EOLWD;
- 8. **Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Programs** (Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.)), as part of DCS, EOLWD;
- 9. **Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program** (Programs authorized under 38, U.S.C. 4100 et. seq.) as part of DCS, EOLWD;
- 10. **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program** (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) as part of Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), EOHHS;
- 11. **Employment and Training Programs under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**, (Programs authorized under section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C.2015(d)(4)), as part of DTA, EOHHS;
- 12. **Senior Community Service Employment Program** (Programs authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.).
- 13. **Ex-Offender Program** (Sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007).
- 14. **Non-required Partner:** Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, a Community Based Organization (CBO).

III. DURATION OF MOU

WIOA Section 121(c) (g) requires that the MOU shall be reviewed not less than once every 3-year period to ensure appropriate funding and delivery of services, also including effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility. WIOA Regulations Subpart C 20 CFR Part 678.500 further requires MOU renewal following the 3-year review if substantial changes have occurred.

This agreement shall commence on July 1, 2024, and shall terminate on June 30, 2027, unless otherwise terminated by agreement of all parties or superseded.

IV. ASSURANCES

The MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board and the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center Required Partners and non-required Partners agree to conduct the following activities at the local level:

- 1. Enter into a local MOU with the MassHire Workforce Board relating to operation of the

MassHire Career Center delivery system.

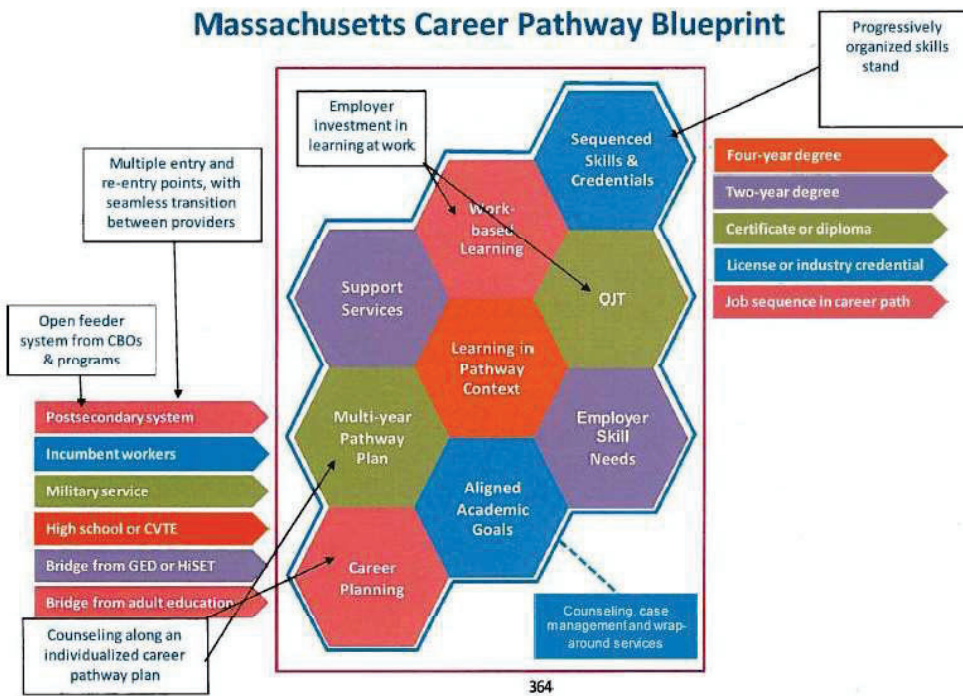
2. Participate in the operation of the MassHire Career Center delivery system consistent with the terms of this MOU, the requirements of WIOA, and the requirements of Federal laws authorizing the programs and activities.
3. Agree to serve Shared Customers and define how multiple providers, services and resources should support youth, job seekers, and businesses.
4. Utilize the MassHire Career Center Customer Flow and incorporate partner agency points of referral whether in-person or virtual to ensure accessibility and availability of programs and services for shared customers.
5. Ensure the effective use of modern tools and technology that enable shared customers to access needed services to complete program participation and achieve training and employment goals.
6. Develop a process for partner communication, referrals, enrollment, and sharing outcome information on shared customers to staff. Develop a process to review data on shared customers.
7. Use a portion of the funds available for programs and activities to maintain the MassHire Career Center delivery system, including infrastructure and shared costs of MassHire Career Centers, through methods agreed upon by the Local Board, Chief Elected Official, and Partners. If no consensus on methods is reached, the Governor, after consultation with the Chief Elected Official, Local Board, and State Board shall determine the portion of funds to be provided (WIOA sec. 121(a) (h) (1) (C)).
8. Provide representation on the Local Workforce Boards to the extent possible and/or participate in Local Board ad hoc activities/events or on standing committees.
9. Convene locally as an MOU Team at least quarterly and agree to the roles and responsibilities each Partner will have in the development of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive integrated service delivery strategy that meets the needs of customers and businesses.
10. The MOU will be reviewed, and if substantial changes have occurred, renewed, not less than once every 3-year period to ensure appropriate funding and delivery of services. The MOU must be updated to reflect any change in the MHCC Partner infrastructure cost contributions.

(Information on roles and responsibilities, continuum of services for priority population, criteria used to identify shared customers, how information is captured, as well as intake, assessment and referral process are outlined below.)

V. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

1. MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center (MMVCC) Partners here define shared customers as ones either actively job or employee seeking and receiving either simultaneous or sequential services amongst one or more career center partners and the MMVCC. Shared customers must also be recorded in a shared database, normally MOSES or its feeder data sources that may include Job Quest and Workforce Connect.

Merrimack Valley's career pathway model for the priority populations described at V.2 below here follows:



WIOA customer service priorities have precedence. When all else is equal, if a priority population shared customer, who is recognized as such, asks for individualized, non-training career center services at the same time as a non-priority population member, the priority population shared customer will receive individualized services first. Priority population-shared customers will also benefit by needing to complete fewer intake forms when shared databases are in-place, and from requiring fewer but better coordinated contacts amongst partners. Priority populations will also have priority for partner or MMVWB supported training as indicated in bilateral agreements approved by the MMVWB, or by being the focus of successful, joint partner proposals and fund development. Due to walk-in customer identification issues, basic career center services may continue as currently.

The MMVWB strives to ensure that WIOA funds are effectively used to increase employment, job retention, and economic prosperity. Because the need is great and funding is not, it is understood that MMVWB limits the occurrence of individual WIOA Title I paid education or skills training to no more than one program every five years, the clock starting at the end of a program. A customer's assessed education, skills and desire to work also have bearing on MMVWB policies for WIOA Title I training. Regional services will be provided in accordance with regional WIOA WDB policies.

MMVWB WIOA Title I training has learning for employment and job retention as its primary positive outcome. All training enrollees must be able to learn taught material within the timelines MMVWB develops with contracted training vendors. Supplementary, non-WIOA funds may, however, be available to certain individuals previously enrolled in WIOA Title I training and/or education programs or whose desire to work and stay at a job are more questionable. The MMVWB will continue to set policy and prioritize WIOA Title I training fund allocations amongst customers with barriers as needed to maximize effective use of increasingly limited resources.

2. At a minimum, Merrimack Valley priority populations include unemployment insurance claimants; low-income adults including TANF and SNAP recipients; homeless people; Adult Education

participants (Title II); individuals with disabilities (Vocational Rehabilitation Title IV); Veterans; older workers; re-entry populations including those served by programs funded through the Second Chance Act; and, youth, including youth with barriers to employment. All individuals to be served as shared customers will have demonstrated clear interest in finding, keeping, and aspiring to jobs that correspond to their individual educational and skill levels.

Specialized partner services will be supplemented with career center case management or supportive services as warranted and necessary without duplication amongst the specialized partner service providers and MMVCC. To minimize repetitive form completion, we will work to create and use a secure, non-redundant shared database to which information can be added and tracked as needed by partners. We currently expect MOSES, JobQuest and Workforce Connect to fulfill this requirement. The Career Center MOSES database will have 'buttons' developed to indicate partner customer sharing.

The Merrimack Valley contains an increasing number of working poor, other low-income people, disabled people, and others, all of whom have barriers to employment. Job skills training to selected individuals will normally be paid for using WIOA Title I or MRC funds. In recognition that there may be insufficient WIOA Title I funds to job train many of them, employment-related academic remediation will normally be conducted by WIOA Title II contractors. WIOA Title II students recommended for Title I training may be enrolled in that training if both the MMVWB, Career Center Director and Training vendor agree.

Other, non-WIOA Title I funds will be sought by MMVWB and MMVCC Partners, often in collaboration with each other. Special populations will normally receive primary services from entities whose mission it is to provide those specialized services. Reinforcing career center services will be provided as possible and necessary for employment and job retention. Services to under-employed or unemployed people will focus on helping them find work and stay in jobs. Services will be designed to match the needs of hiring employers.

Balancing the mix of partner services to under-employed or unemployed people will require ongoing discussions and adjustments based on economic conditions, unemployment rates, and workforce development funding. There is little doubt that partners must work together to deal with actual and future funding cuts. Although no level of joint planning and coordinated service delivery can compensate for significantly reduced funding, they can help us better deal with related issues and better serve our shared customers.

3. The continuum of services available for each of our priority populations is based on a customer-focused design or career pathway model as indicated below. MMVCC partners will take part in the following:

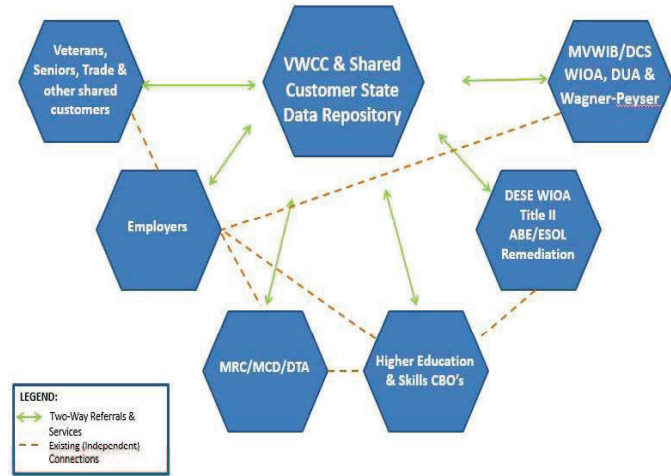
- no less than once every four years, select a career center operator to lead the continuum of services,
- develop a shared vision and culture for the MMVCCs that acknowledges the key role each individual and all partners play in its success; the vision will also acknowledge that we are continuously balancing different customer interests, including different job seeker and employer interests. Partners will have an ongoing dialogue on how to best to balance *What is best for unemployed or underemployed individuals and what is best for employer customers*,
- balance and rebalance unemployed, underemployed and employer interests in ways that maximize both individual and corporate responsibility, workforce development; and economic growth,

- strive to improve and attain a seamless delivery system with complimentary activities (i.e. workshop presentation, case management assessment, data entry, etc.) that maximize use of the most talented partner and career center staff members in non-duplicative ways – staff integration is fostered but individual professional expertise and strengths amongst partners' individual staff members are highlighted and shared,
- work with ABE and ESOL partners to refine customer referrals between WIOA Title II and WIOA Title I systems with complimentary funding opportunities sought to support individual career pathway initiatives and area employers,
- consult with, and form a central leadership team among whom there may be Department of Transitional Assistance, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, and Commission for the Blind staff, and other organization's staff who may be interested, to help continuously improve the provision of career center services to shared customers,
- strengthen MMVCC services to veterans and people with disabilities by balancing compliance with Federal priority guidelines with the well-planned use of staff time in service to unemployed or underemployed individuals and employee-seeking employers,
- coordinate with the MMVWB Board and other career center partners to attract additional resources to the region, including federal, state, and privately funded demonstration grants;
- periodically review MOSES data with partners to help continuously improve effective service delivery to unemployed and underemployed customers. The Career Center MOSES database will have 'buttons' developed to indicate partner customer sharing.
- Along with center staff, ascertain the need for any space design changes to continuously improve the quality and efficient delivery of services to career center and partner customers;
- Share respective partner data to analyze their correlation with MMVCC data. Similar, shared data reviews will be offered when they provide information that may improve career center services. Subject to applicable legal constraints, including but not necessarily limited to those contained in G. L. 151A and 20 C.F.R. Pt. 603, the parties of this MOU agree to seek increased data sharing with a view to improving the quality of service-delivery to both jobseekers and business-customers. The Party whose data is requested to be shared shall be the judge, in its sole discretion, of the legal constraints governing whether and how its data may be shared. The parties of this MOU also understand that a shared data system is being designed at the state level to fully support the development and implementation of a state-level data system, subject to the foregoing limitations. Partners will at least minimally track shared customers via emails until the Commonwealth has a serviceable and automatic interface within different State data platforms.

The next page shows a figure outlining customer flow across MOU partners for each priority population. As stated above, the description presupposes that we define Shared Customers as ones ***actively employee-seeking or job seeking and receiving simultaneous or sequential job readiness services amongst one or more career center partners and the career center***. Not all partner customers may be 'Shared' ones.

In the figure to the right, the green lines to the center indicate two-way referrals and services between Partners and MMVCC. The dotted lines indicate existing connections between partners and others that may result in non-shared customers independently connected to employers, higher education or CBOs.

We should remember that current guidance states that there is no penalty in double-counting shared customers. We should strive to do so whenever services are offered by partners and our career centers.



Partners will inform each other of standard operating procedures developed by their line staff in their interactions with each other. CIES, NDWG, services to Disabled people and other joint partner services will be reviewed with lessons-learned articulated verbally and in writing.

a. The following numbers estimate how many shared or unshared clients will be served by partners. Some customers may be double-counted and served by more than one partner in more than one category. Some numbers listed assume shared customer service delivery in line with the definition outlined above.

Partner Funding Source/ Service Recipient Category	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
WIOA Title I 'Adult' Individualized Services	300	300	300
WIOA Title I 'Dislocated Worker' Individualized Services	600	600	600
WIOA Title I 'Youth'	100	100	100
Wagner Peyser	10,500	11,300	11,700
Adult Education and Family Literacy Title II	700	700	700
Vocational Rehabilitation/MA Rehabilitation Commission (*approx. 20 shared)	1600*	1600*	1600*
MA Commission for the Blind – EOHHS	5	10	15
Department of Unemployment Assistance	10,000	10,000	10,000
MA Veterans Grant Programs	100	150	200
Department of Transitional Assistance – Temporary Assistance	500	500	500
Department of Transitional Assistance – SNAP	1000	1000	1000
Senior Community Service Employment – Title V Older Am Act	65	66	66
Higher Education	5000	5000	5000
CBO – Greater Lawrence Community Action Council	1000	1000	1000

b. The below lists 1] the types of supports and services leading to employment that are available for each priority shared customer; and 2] which MOU partners will primarily provide supports and

services.

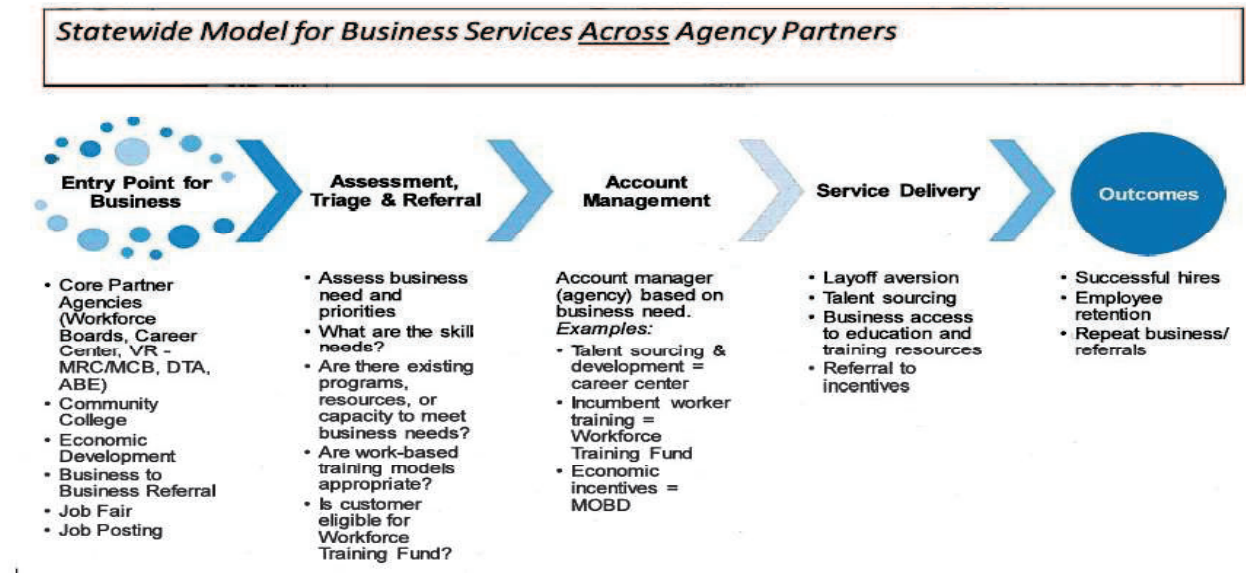
Activities Leading to Employment	Primary Service Provider
Unemployment Insurance Payment	DUA
Recruitment	MMVCC, and partners
Intake	MMVCC, and partners
Assessment	MMVCC, and partners
Orientation	MMVCC, and partners
Case Management	MMVCC, and some partners
DOL funded Supportive Services	MMVCC and some partners
Remedial Education	Title II partners & CBOs
Job Exploration, Employment Readiness and Job Placement Services	MMVCC, SCSEP
Skills Training	MMVWB with Skills Training Vendors
Title I OJT, apprenticeships,	MMVCC, employers and some partners
Title II Educational Remediation	DESE ACLS Title II contractors
Vocational Rehabilitation	MRC
Worksite aids to the visually impaired	MCB
Temporary subsistence benefits	DTA
Temporary food subsistence benefits	DTA SNAP
Veterans Job Assistance	MMVCC, and partners
TAA Assistance	MMVCC, and partners
Child Care	DTA, GLCAC, CAI, MMVCC
Transportation	GLCAC, DTA, ABE, MMVCC
Internships	NECC, MMVCC, SCSEP
Subsidized Youth Summer Employment	MMVWB
Young Adult Year-Round Subsidized Employment	MMVWB/MMVCC
Health Insurance outreach, orientation, and enrollment	GLCAC, MMVCC
Cross Cultural Orientation	DESE ACLS WIOA Title II contractors
Service and Assistance Navigation	DTA, ACLS WIOA Title II contractors
U.S. Civics Education	ACLS WIOA Title II contractors
Basic Career Pathways orientation	MMVCC, DTA, ACLS WIOA Title II contractors
Higher Education Degrees or Credentials	Colleges

c. Methods for referring individuals or business customers between the partners for appropriate services and activities.

Methods	Responsible Party(ies)
Phone coordination - with data base entries recording the coordination	MMVCC and Partners
Email exchanges or notifications - with data base entries recording the coordination	MMVCC and Partners
Signed, hand-carried sheets indicating the person carrying the sheet as a shared customer	MMVCC and Partners

Either walk-in or scheduled appointments will be used as situations warrant.

4. A description of the continuum of services available for businesses in the workforce area based on a customer-centered design or career pathway model, and a map for the business customer flow across MOU partners in the Merrimack Valley area, follow:



MMVWB/MMVCC and MOU signatories will endeavor to do the following:

- partner with local employers to create solutions to their workforce training needs, while creating training and retraining opportunities for the region's unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers;
- generate an increased number of employer-paid training grants with partners and employers;
- partner with employer-based unions as desired and appropriate.

5. Partners will work to ensure the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center system maintains a welcoming environment where individuals from all backgrounds feel respected, supported, and valued to fully engage in services. Principles of fair treatment, access, and opportunity for all will be upheld. Barriers that prevent full use of services will be identified and eliminated.

6. Apart from one MMVCC IT staff and about two hundred computers, NECC has 2,400 computers connected to a separate network that is overseen by the NECC IT Department with 10 full-time staff. The NECC IT Department is responsible for maintaining network connectivity and internet access for the Career Center. MMVCC IT staff is responsible for maintaining its own computers, including installing and upgrading software, ensuring the integrity of computer security, repairing computers and data lines as

needed, maintaining network phones, and tracking the life- cycles of all hardware for scheduled replacement

NECC's Center for Accessibility Resources & Services ensures that the college complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Center for Accessibility Resources & Services works with students facing a variety of physical and learning challenges to ensure that they have access to the services they need to maximize their academic experience at the college. The college is also the Regional Center for Gallaudet University, which has led advancements for the deaf and hard-of-hearing for over 150 years.

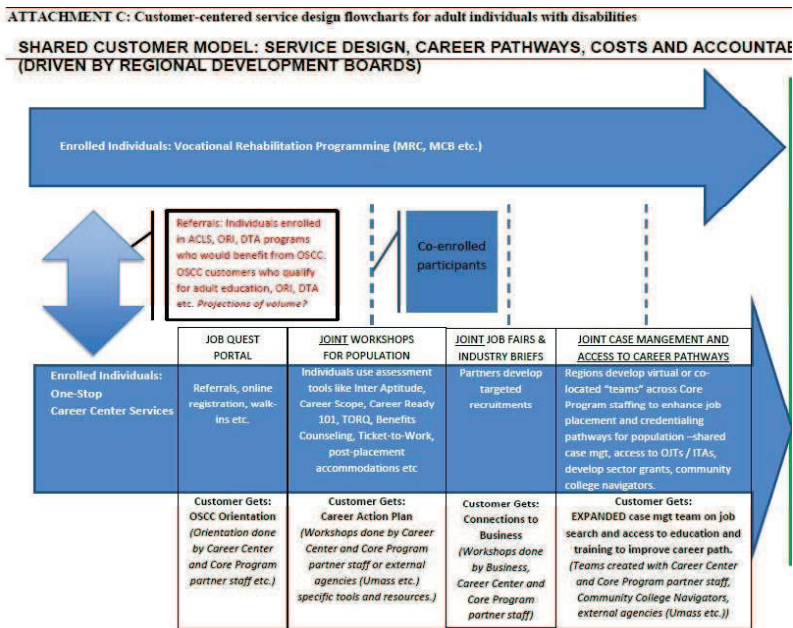
As stated by a 12/2/16 EOLWD release “Vocational Rehabilitation, Workforce Boards, One-Stop Career Centers, adult education, community colleges and other partners work together to support long-term progress for individuals along a skills and employment pathway. Several key practices are consistent:

Referral and Co-enrollment Practices for Performance

- 1. Consumer visits the Career Center and discloses to the worker that they have a disability. The consumer is offered MMVCC orientation and assistance with Job Quest Portal. Consumer is asked if he/she is enrolled with VR. If the answer is no, then they should be asked if they would like to be referred to VR.
- 2. Consumer visits VR agency and develops a Career Action Plan (CAP). After training services are completed, consumer works with VR Counselor and MMVCC counselor on job search and related services.

...the VR agency and the Career Centers would both receive credit for the services provided when the employment goal is achieved. Establishing a good referral process between VR and Career Centers is vital to a successful collaboration with the Career Center and the VR agencies.

The below chart, again from a 12/2/16 EOLWD issuance illustrates how individuals with disabilities will be shared customers with either career centers or MRC or MCB being points of entry for services to individuals with disabilities.



BILITY

Employment will be the primary positive outcome

But

An academic or technical credential is also a positive outcome

Case by case refinements of the above will be tracked. Listening to partners and customers is the key to improving and maintaining a professional and welcoming environment. NECC will establish feedback loops, at several steps in the customer engagement process, to enable customers and partners to comment on the facility and the services being delivered. The feedback loop may take the form of a suggestion box, periodic surveys, secret shoppers, a Twitter account, or all of the above. Similarly, MMVCC partners and staff will be encouraged to comment on processes and facilities and suggest improvements.

Comments and suggestions from the customers and the staff will be handled by the MMVWB and MMVCC Director for appropriate action.

6. MMVCC hours of operation will be from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

In addition to the Lawrence location, Northern Essex Community College will operate a satellite center in Haverhill through a Haverhill based community partner. The downtown Haverhill satellite location will open 2 days a week: Tuesday and Friday offering drop-in services. This location will offer greater access for job seekers and local employers. In December 2024, the college and career center will evaluate the number of customers utilizing the Haverhill center to determine if it should continue to operate, or if the needs of the Merrimack Valley are better addressed in other municipalities in addition to the main location in Lawrence. If the Haverhill location does not show a measurable amount of use, the college reserves the right to suspend the operations in Haverhill.

The Lawrence Center is closer to residents of Lawrence, Methuen, Andover, and North Andover; while the satellite would offer greater convenience to residents from Haverhill, Merrimack, Boxford, Georgetown, and Groveland. To ensure that the communities in the north/east sector (i.e. Amesbury, Newburyport, Newbury, West Newbury, Rowley, and Salisbury) have access to services, the college will work with local libraries, not-for-profit organizations, and town and city offices to coordinate service delivery. The college proposes to explore the use of technology and virtual services as an additional way to provide services in the northeast area of the region.

Please note that the above will be influenced by funding negotiations, actual funding, and state-level approval when individual partner staffing is involved.

7. Career Center partners will work together to articulate a continuum or integrated flow of services to create pipelines of skilled workers for the Merrimack Valley region priority industries which are manufacturing, healthcare and social assistance, and professional services. Measures for evaluating the effectiveness of the pipelines will be established and tracked.

8. MMVCC Operator Northern Essex Community College is committed to staff development and training. As one of the college's strategic initiatives for the coming years, the Dean of Academic Innovation and Professional Development has created a comprehensive catalogue of career development and training options, including courses, certificates, and programs offered by NECC, as well as options offered by external providers.

Cross training will occur at all-staff meetings that include Career Center and partner staff. Cross-training will occur at both career center and partner sites.

The MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center will adopt the staff development process used by the

college, which starts with an initial benchmark profile of each staff person. The college requires all staff to take a Strengths/Quest analysis. As the name implies, the analysis presents a profile that emphasizes the individual's strengths. Examples of identified strengths include: Discipline, Analytical, Context, Relative, and Achiever. The Strengths/Quest profile gathers facts about the individual's education, credentials, work experience, specific skills, interests, and personal, career, and education goals. The next step involves a plan, with a timeline, to identify the professional development opportunities the individual would like to access. MMVCC staff will be eligible for a range of professional development options, and, in some cases, may be eligible for college tuition waiver programs for staff and their families. MV MMVCC partners will be invited to participate in some of the above activities as financially reasonable and possible.

9. Partners will collaborate to develop and implement an overall marketing plan for career center system services. The marketing plan will express system vision and goals and will outline partner implementation responsibilities to be undertaken that will lead to the achievement of system goals. Progress on implementing the marketing plan will be reviewed at each quarterly meeting of the local partners. The marketing plan will be updated annually.

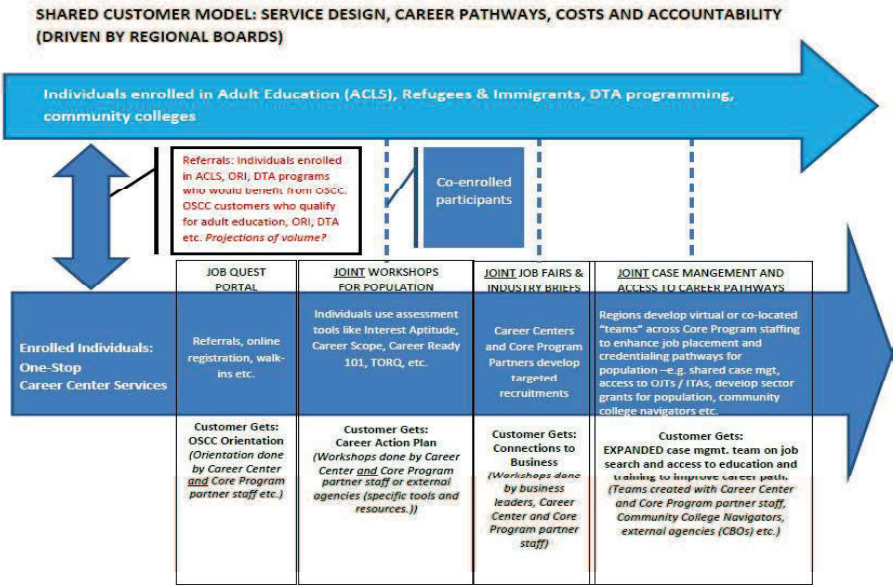
10. Partners will participate in annual MassHire Awards Nomination Process to recognize exceptional innovations in workforce service delivery in support of the MassHire Mission and Vision. Nominations will reflect the work of career center and partner staff that serve shared customers as well as nominations that reflect the work that indirectly impact shared customers. Categories for nominations include; Collaboration, Ingenuity, Reliability, Respect & Living MassHire.

11. We assure Federal and State authorities that Merrimack Valley MMVCC Partners will participate in the FY 2025 competitive selection process for the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center Operator/ Service Provider in the Merrimack Valley Workforce Area.

12. The parties of this MOU agree that, at the state level, Partners will work together to develop the formula for distribution of shared and infrastructure funding based upon local data for each of the 16 workforce areas. Inter-Agency Service Agreements have been executed with MassHire Department of Career Services, who is the State Workforce Agency (SWA), and each required WIOA State Partner to utilize the current integrated budget format to show in-kind and shared costs, including infrastructure costs as a method to record joint costs.

MMVCC and DTA concluded bilateral negotiations for their local relationship and other partners are encouraged to do so when so guided by their parent Secretariat. They are also encouraged to share contract details with other area career center partners via bi-lateral contracts to be included as addendums to this MOU. Merrimack Valley funding agreements satisfy the requirements of WIOA section 121(h) for purposes of funding the one-stop system in PY 2017 and 18.

The following chart, from a 12/2/16 EOLWD release, illustrates the broad outlines of State or Regional Career Center/Partner process agreements.



DUA will provide information under this agreement to another party to this agreement only:

- upon the determination by the DUA Director that the information lawfully may be provided in accordance with applicable law, including, but not limited to, G. L. c. 151A, § 14P and § 46, and 20 C.F.R. Pt. 603;
- following approval by DUA of an Application for Unemployment Insurance and/or Wage Reporting Data (there is a current form in the attachments to this agreement which DUA reserves the right to modify in its sole discretion); and
- following execution by DUA and an approved applicant of a Data Sharing and Cost Reimbursement Agreement (currently in the forms attached for confidential data and for non-confidential data, which DUA reserves the right to modify in its sole discretion).

DUA will not be bound by any provision of this agreement that does not expressly mention DUA by name.

13. The parties of this MOU agree to negotiate with WIOA Required Partners locally when state level infrastructure agreements are not in place.
14. This MOU is effective from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027 unless otherwise terminated by agreement of all parties or superseded by Federal or State action. If individuals who sign this MOU resign or otherwise leave their position, its guidelines will be observed by the entities they represented unless terminated by agreement of all parties or otherwise superseded.
15. WIOA Sections 12I(c) (g) requires that this MOU be reviewed not less than once every 3-year period to ensure appropriate funding and delivery of services, effectiveness, physical and programmatic accessibility. WIOA Regulations Subpart C 20 CFR Part 678.500 further requires MOU renewal following the 3-year review if substantial changes have occurred or an extension if changes

are just minor. The Merrimack Valley Career Center Partners agree to these requirements.

16. The MOU will contain the assurances outlined in Section IV of this policy guidance.

17. The following provisions are agreed to by all parties insofar as they are consistent with partner services and activities, authorizing statutes, and regulations:

- a. When two or more customers simultaneously request services, shared customers will receive priority for individualized services over non-shared customers. Service priority implies that individualized service wait times will be shortened for shared customers.
- b. Partners will sponsor shared customer and staff internships at each other's work sites when such internships enhance customer services and result in more benefits than costs.
- c. Partners will share staff who have outstanding public presentation, explanatory, motivational, or organizational abilities for short-term customer service events or for staff development when such sharing does not disrupt services at individual partner worksites. Whenever possible, people best at some activity may be used by partners regardless of funding source.
- d. Insofar as shared customers can be better served as a result of staff development workshops, partners will offer their staff quarterly or biannual staff development workshops explaining who constitutes their primary shared customers and how those customers are served.
- e. Since WIOA does not require a sequence of services and staff are being familiarized with various types of jobs, intake, assessment, data entry and other preliminary work done at one partner site may be used by career center and partner staff to plan or provide other services.
- f. Compliance with all applicable Federal regulations is always to be sought while also creatively managing staff and staff time to cost-effectively serve all shared customers.

18. The MOU includes all requirements as set-forth in the WIOA MOU Joint Partner Policy Communication 01.2024, dated April 18, 2024.

19. The Merrimack Valley MOU reflects an agreement of the MOU Partners to jointly review the WIOA mandated performance metrics for the region or metrics negotiated as part of any shared and infrastructure contract costs between the MMVWB and the mandated MMVCC Partners, including incentives and penalties.

The MOU is fully executed when it contains the signatures of the MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board, MMVCC Required Partners, and the Chief Elected Official (CEO) and states the duration for which the MOU is in effect.

As stated above, the MOU must be updated not less than once every 3 years to reflect any changes in the signatory official of the Board, MMVCC Partners, and Chief Elected Official (CEO) or changes to infrastructure cost contributions.

VI. COMPETITIVE SELECTION OF MASSHIRE CAREER CENTERS

The WIOA Required Partners agree to participate in the selection process of MassHire Operators as required by

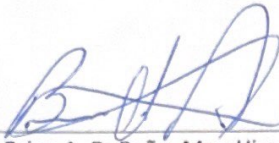
WIOA, at least once every 4 years.

VII. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The MassHire Merrimack Valley Workforce Board in agreement with the MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center Required Partners, agree to jointly review the WIOA mandated performance metrics for the workforce areas or metrics as negotiated as part of any shared and infrastructure contract costs between the MMVWB and the mandated MassHire Merrimack Valley Career Center partners, including incentives and penalties.

VIII. SIGNATORIES

By signing this agreement, all parties agree to the provisions contained herein are subject to all applicable, Federal, State, and local laws, regulations and/or guidelines relating to nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, displacement, privacy rights of participants, and maintenance of data and other confidential information relating to One-Stop Career Center customers. By signatures affixed below, the parties specify their agreement:



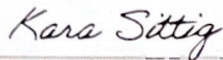
Brian A. DePeña, MassHire Merrimack Valley WB
Chief Elected Official



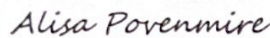
Frank Bonet, MassHire Merrimack Valley WB
Executive Director



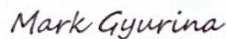
Eric Nelson, MDSC/MMVCC Operations Manager



Kara Sittig, NE Regional Director MA
Commission for the Blind



Alisa Povenmire, Executive Director
Notre Dame Education Center



Mark Gyurina, Operation Able of Greater Boston

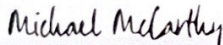


James White, Lawrence Adult Learning Center



Susan Prior, Methuen Adult Learning Center

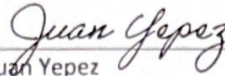
DocuSigned by:



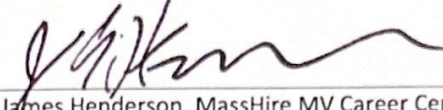
Michael McCarthy, NECC CAE



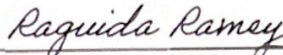
Ralph Carrero, Lawrence Prospera



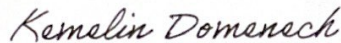
Juan Yopez
MassHire Merrimack Valley WB Chair



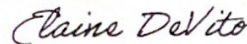
James Henderson, MassHire MV Career Center
Executive Director



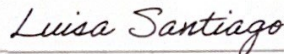
Raghida Ramey, DUA Area Director



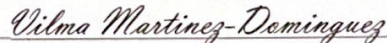
Kemelin Domenech, NE Regional Director
Mass Rehab Commission



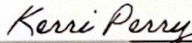
Elaine DeVito, Lawrence Transitional Assistance
Office



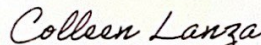
Luisa Santiago, International Institute - Lawrence



Vilma Martinez-Dominguez, Greater Lawrence
Community Action Council



Kerri Perry, Community Action, Inc.



Colleen Lanza, Shriver Job Corps