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**To:** DEW Area Directors  
DEW Regional Managers  
Local Area Administrators  
SC Works Operators

**From:** Nina Staggers, AED – Workforce Development

**Subject:** **Supply Gap Analysis and Priority Occupations Tools**

**Date:** October 14, 2025

To achieve the objective of preparing jobseekers to find thriving careers in essential industries, the Coordinating Council of Workforce Development (CCWD) has developed the Priority Occupations Tools from the Supply Gap Analysis.

This memo provides Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) with strategies for effectively utilizing the Priority Occupations Tools in their workforce efforts. The Priority Occupations Tools are made up of the *Priority Occupations List* and the *Priority Occupations Dashboard*, explained below. Please see the attachment *How to Use the Priority Occupations Tools* for instructions.

### **Supply Gap Analysis**

DEW's Labor Market Information (LMI) division has developed the Postsecondary Supply Gap Analysis (PSGA), which determines the extent to which postgraduate programs in South Carolina can meet the growing need for credentialed workers across industries. The supply gap is defined as the difference between the number of graduates who are qualified for a given occupation and new annual demand within the occupation.

For more information, the *First Edition Postsecondary Supply Gap Overview* is linked in the Resource section. Please note that the Supply Gap Analysis is updated annually, which then updates the Priority Occupations Tools. For the most updated version of the analysis, see the "Supply Gap Analysis" tab under the CCWD Publications on the LMI site:

<https://lmi.sc.gov/Publications/CCWD-Publications>

### **Priority Occupations List**

The *Priority Occupations List*, developed from the PSGA and labor market data, informs citizens and policymakers alike about the most critical occupations to South Carolina's current and future workforce needs. These priority occupations highlight where the current and/or future needs outweigh the supply of available workers.

The *Priority Occupations List* is attached to this memo as an excel sheet.

### **Priority Occupations Dashboard**

The *Priority Occupation Dashboard*, created from the *Priority Occupation List*, is an interactive tool for individuals to discover exciting opportunities and career paths. While it can help LWDAs determine education pathways for individuals, they should not ignore other occupations that are not on the list if it is known that they are needed.

The Priority Occupations Dashboard can be found on the Find Your Future website, linked here: <https://findyourfuture.sc.gov/priority-occupation-dashboard-official>.

### **LWDA Strategies**

LWDAs can use the Priority Occupations Tools to achieve any number of local workforce development goals. Below is a non-exhaustive list of ideas and opportunities, broken down by spheres of focus, for LWDAs to either implement or gain inspiration from in using the Priority Occupations Tools.

#### Governance:

1. Address high-priority occupation needs through targeted WIOA funding utilization
2. Reassess the representation and strategies of Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to include essential partners by:
  - a. Selecting new members based on industry prevalence
  - b. Establishing and fostering crucial talent pipelines through working groups
  - c. Updating local plans to emphasize the talent required for priority occupations
3. Streamline grant research efficiency, the integration and coordination of funding sources, and the practice of regionalism
4. Collaborate with other state agencies to leverage each agency's expertise
5. Train new staff in the SC Works centers across the state
6. Evaluate waivers needed to support new, innovative strategies that facilitate career progression into priority occupations

#### Industry/Training Providers:

1. Expand sector partnerships and enhance collaboration with industry leaders

- a. Promote constant network communication and coordination to improve services
  - b. Invest early and more intentionally to build career pathways
2. Add/Adjust local performance requirements for training programs to ensure they meet industry demands
3. Revise local Eligible Training Provider lists (ETPLs) to ensure the quantity and quality of the programs
4. Prioritize employer-driven pathways for critical, hard-to-fill occupations with high-wages that can be immediately filled upon completion of a training program
  - a. Identify job-driven pathways like incumbent worker training (IWT), on-the-job training (OJT), and customized training, as detailed in TEGL 19-16
  - b. Coordinate training models across businesses, educational institutions, joint labor-management partnerships, and workforce agencies

Individual:

1. Provide defined, concrete opportunities for individuals to take tangible steps towards upward mobility and long-term economic independence.
  - a. Create talent pathways for, and connect individuals to, high-wage careers
  - b. Promote reemployment and career mobility through multiple avenues, such as:
    - i. Work-based learning
    - ii. Short-term credentials
    - iii. Stackable training opportunities
    - iv. Pathways that recognize prior experience and demonstrated ability
2. Align education with workforce demands to prepare jobseekers for jobs of the future
  - a. Encourage digital literacy and artificial intelligence (AI) training
  - b. Develop soft skills that are essential to employment, such as communication, problem solving, professionalism, teamwork, and time management
3. Measure metrics like job placement, job retention, earnings growth, cost-effectiveness, and talent pipeline progress
4. Create career immersion activities that allow career exploration, focused on interest, aptitude, aspiration, and education, in preparation to transition to the workforce
  - a. Awareness activities: job shadowing, career expos, and industry tours
  - b. Exploration activities: employability skills training, simulated workplaces, and cooperative education
  - c. Career preparation activities: internships, externships, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships
5. Build self-sufficiency tools and reemployment pathways that recognize prior experience, reduce barriers to entry, and connect individuals to training and desired career pathways

### Attachments

- Priority Occupations List
- How to Use the Priority Occupations Tools

### Resources

- CCWD Unified State Plan:  
<https://dew.sc.gov/sites/dew/files/Documents/ccwd-usp-report-v2-compressed.pdf>
- First Edition Postsecondary Supply Gap Overview:  
<https://findyourfuture.sc.gov/sites/dewwop/files/Documents/1st%20Edition%20Postsecondary%20Supply%20Gap%20Analysis%20Report%20Overview.pdf>
- First Edition Postsecondary Supply Gap Full Report:  
<https://lmi.sc.gov/docs/Publications/CCWDPublications/SGA/1st-Edition-Postsecondary-Supply-Gap-Analysis-Report1.pdf>

Questions may be directed to [WorkforcePolicy@dew.sc.gov](mailto:WorkforcePolicy@dew.sc.gov).