

P.O. Box 995  
1550 Gadsden Street  
Columbia, SC 29202  
dew.sc.gov



Henry McMaster  
Governor

William H. Floyd, III  
Executive Director

---

## STATE INSTRUCTION NUMBER 25-16

**To:** Local Workforce Area Signatory Officials  
Local Workforce Area Board Chairs  
Local Workforce Area Administrators  
DEW Area Directors  
DEW Regional Managers

**Subject:** **Integrated Business Services Team**

**Issuance Date:** June 18, 2026

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2026

**Purpose:** To provide guidance on the requirements for the Integrated Business Services Team (IBST) within each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA).

### **References:**

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Public Law 113-128, §§ 107(d); 116; 121(b)(1); 134
- 20 CFR §§ 678.430-440; 20 CFR § 679.370; 20 CFR § 680.140
- Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs) 19-16; 10-16, Change 1; 07-22; 04-23; 21-22; 10-23; 05-25
- State Instruction Letters (SILs) 22-01; 24-01, Change 1; 24-02, Change 1; 24-03; 25-05, 25-08
- Combined Center Operations and Business Engagement (COBE) Plan Memorandum

**Background:** The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) to lead efforts to engage with a diverse range of employers and with entities in the region. This involves the promotion of business representation on the LWDB; the development of effective connections with employers in the region to support employer utilization of the local workforce development system, and to support local workforce investment activities; the assurance that those activities meet the needs of employers and support regional economic growth by enhancing communication, coordination, and collaboration among employers, economic development entities, and service providers; and the development and

implementation of proven or promising strategies for meeting the employment and skill needs of workers and employers, that provide the skilled workforce needed by employers in the region, and that expand employment and career advancement opportunities for workforce development system participants in in-demand industry sectors or occupations.

**Policy:** Each LWDB must create an IBST, responsible for establishing and developing relationships and networks with large and small employers, employer associations, or other such organizations within the LWDA. The IBST assists businesses in developing the long-term strength of their workforce by considering the specific needs of the business, as expressed by the employer.

### **IBST Structure and Function**

The IBST is a coordinated, cross-partner, and collaborative effort to develop, maintain, and grow business relationships through the SC Works system. Establishing a unified approach helps reduce redundant outreach and engagement to businesses, improves productivity, and drives IBST members to engage with new businesses. The IBSTs must include the following WIOA partners:

1. WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth
2. WIOA Title II Adult Education
3. WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services
4. WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation
5. WIOA Title IV Commission for the Blind
6. South Carolina Department of Social Services

LWDBs may include additional partners in the IBST who play a significant role in workforce investment activities within the LWDA. LWDBs may set appropriate expectations for partners on the IBST within local policy. Partners may include more than one person on the IBST and/or place the same individual on IBSTs in multiple LWDAs. Each partner will designate the staff member(s) to be their IBST representative.

The responsibilities of the IBST include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Conduct joint employer outreach in the LWDA to provide the business services outlined in this policy or to provide a referral to services
- Assist businesses in becoming eligible for employer services in SC Works Online Services (SCWOS), such as labor exchange and recruiting functionalities, through the Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW)
- Develop sector-based employer strategies
- Act as a liaison between businesses not currently in the SC Works system and industry partners to create a network
- Ensure compliance with all Federal, state, and local policies and guidance surrounding services to business, including the LWDA COBE Plan
- Maintain stakeholder engagement in the development of the LWDA COBE Plan

- Provide information to businesses not yet in the SC Works system and updated information to businesses already in the SC Works system
- Review of IBST activities and performance, with the implementation of improvement strategies as needed

*IBST Meetings.* To carry out the responsibilities listed above, **the IBST must meet at least quarterly** within each program year. This meeting must include discussion of the following:

- Each IBST partner's method to engage with businesses, employers, employer associations, or other such organizations
- Services provided to businesses by each partner, as well as IBST strategies, so that all IBST members are well equipped to refer businesses to the appropriate partner and explain the services
- Any company locating to the area, leaving the area, expanding or contracting within the area, and the occupations/industries expected to expand or decline in the near future
- Coordination of layoff aversion and Rapid Response activities in the LWDA
- Creation and completion of IBST Action Items that are achievable, effective, and intentional for the next meeting. These items include, but are not limited to:
  - Research of local employers not currently a part of the SC Works system as well as activities that employers in the SC Works system would be interested in
  - Engagement with local employers who are not in the SC Works system
  - Communication by each IBST partner of their engagement with employers in the previous quarter
  - Alignment of IBST activities with LWDB strategic plans and priorities
- Any further ideas that would assist in the goal of providing business services in the LWDA

*IBST Coordinator.* The IBST must vote annually on a WIOA core partner to serve as the IBST Coordinator based on which program is available and interested. The partner then designates a staff member to step into the role; this may be the same individual designated to represent the partner on the IBST. LWDBs may set accountability expectations for the IBST Coordinator within local policy. The IBST Coordinator must ensure employer engagement is system-wide and coordinated and cannot operate independently of the other required partners.

The responsibilities of the IBST Coordinator include:

- Scheduling and facilitating the IBST meetings
- Publishing the schedule for upcoming year's IBST meetings so that all business services programs may attend and remain informed on business activities in the LWDA
- Ensuring the meetings include a discussion of the obligation set out in this policy
- Keeping meeting minutes that overview the discussion and track the IBST Action Items
- Coordinating outreach to employers by the IBST and organizing joint employer visits

**NOTE:** The IBST Coordinator does not have the authority to supervise another partner's staff, control another partner's program funds, or require participation in activities outside another partner's program rules.

The IBST may also have multiple coordinators, a coordinator and an assistant coordinator, or any other structure they deem beneficial to ensure accountability. The IBST is encouraged to exhaust all partners in the IBST before returning to any partner to serve as the coordinator.

*Single Point of Contact.* This does not refer to a single point of contact for business services in the local area; it refers to a single point of contact as it pertains to the IBST. Strategic, coordinated outreach to businesses should be led by the IBST partner that has the best relationship with the employer. The single point of contact succeeds through collaboration, not through any direct control over any other partner. This partner is responsible for the management of specific client relationships and customer satisfaction by simplifying, building awareness, and seamlessly bringing partners to the table as needed to meet each client's needs. The remaining members of the IBST may offer support and assistance where needed or desired, with communication expectations outlined in local policy.

### **IBST Business Services**

The services provided to business are given based on the expressed needs of the business. The IBST must create a portfolio of solutions with action plans and accountability to businesses; then the IBST single point of contact uses the full services of the IBST to develop flexible, customized solutions, and organize its delivery to each business.

At a minimum the following services must be provided:

- Access to labor market information
- Recruitment, screening, and referral of qualified applicants
- Access to economic development information and resources
- Posting job vacancies
- Offering customized job training options
- Connecting firms to SC Works information
- Technical assistance on assessment, recruitment, and human resource strategies
- Advocating for employers in key economic sectors
- Assistance with major layoffs and plant closures

### **Fee-for-Service**

No fee may be charged for the career services that must be made available to local employers, specifically labor exchange activities and labor market information described in 20 CFR §§ 678.430(a)(4)(ii) and (a)(6). A fee-for-service may not be charged for recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including referrals to specialized business services.

Additionally, a fee may not be charged for the provision of workforce and labor market information.

**NOTE:** General job fairs, open to all employers in the region, fall within labor exchange services and therefore are not included within the list of services for which a fee may be charged. SC Works services are to remain a no-cost option for employers regardless of the type of service requested; the SC Works logo/brand cannot be used to provide or promote fee-for-service activities.

Although WIOA allows the customized employer-related services described in 20 CFR §§ 678.435(b) and (c) to be provided on a fee-for-service basis, there is no requirement that a fee must be charged to employers. Services provided under 20 CFR § 678.435(c) may be provided through effective business intermediaries working in conjunction with the LWDB, either on a fee-for-service basis or through leveraging of economic development, philanthropic, and other public and private resources in a manner determined by the LWDB. When a LWDB provides business services on a fee-for-service basis, they must examine the services to be provided compared with the assets and resources available within the SC Works centers in their LWDA and through the SC Works partners to determine an appropriate cost structure for services, if any.

Any fees earned for customized employer-related services are considered program income and must be expended in accordance with the appropriate partner program's authorizing statute, implementing regulations, and Federal cost principles in the Uniform Guidance.

### **Effectiveness in Serving Employers**

Effectiveness in Serving Employer's (ESE) can be evaluated via several methods. The Department of Labor (DOL) has identified the required reporting measure as a participant-based measure: Employed with the Same Employer in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter after Exit. To effectively evaluate and measure employer service delivery and outcome, DEW continues to utilize the measures reported during DOL's ESE pilot phase. See SIL 25-08, *Employer Verification and Management*, for more information on ESE performance requirements.

### **Equal Opportunity**

WIOA § 188 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, for beneficiaries, applicants, and participants only, on the basis of citizenship status or participation in a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. See the most updated SILs on equal opportunity (EO) requirements for more information.

**Action:** Please ensure that all appropriate staff receive and understand this policy.

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

State Instruction 25-16  
Integrated Business Services Team  
June 18, 2026  
Page 6 of 6

*Nina Stagers*

---

Nina Stagers, Assistant Executive Director  
Workforce Development Division