



**State Workforce Development Board Meeting
Tuesday, December 14, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.**

Physical Access (option for members only)
S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce
C. Lem Harper Building
631 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29201

Virtual Access

Join on your computer or mobile app
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Or call in (audio only)
+1 803-400-6195
Phone Conference ID: 883 921 65#

AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Opening Remarks Mr. Thomas Freeland, SWDB Chair
- II. Approval of Minutes from September 30, 2021*Mr. Freeland
- III. Approval of Waiver Policy* Mr. Scott Ferguson, Workforce Information Mgr.
- IV. DEW Director’s Report Mr. Dan Ellzey, Executive Director
- V. SC Council on CompetitivenessMs. Susie Shannon, President & CEO
- VI. PY’20 Performance SummaryMr. Zach Nickerson, Dir. of Workforce Services
- VII. Other Business/Adjourn.....Mr. Freeland

*Denotes voting item

Governor’s State Workforce Development Board
September 30, 2021 State Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Thomas Freeland	Mr. Gregory Clark
Mr. Dan Ellzey	Mr. Gregory Tinnell
Col. Craig Currey	Mr. H. Perry Shuping
Dr. Tim Hardee	Ms. Valerie Richardson
Dr. Mike Mikota	Mr. Warren Snead
Dr. Windsor Sherrill	Mr. John Uprichard
Mr. Archie Maddox	Mr. Michael Sexton
Mr. Charles Brave, Jr.	Ms. Felicia Johnson
Mr. Jay Holloway	Mr. John Durst
Mr. Mike King	Mr. Ross Turner

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Mr. Pat Michaels
Mr. Cliff Bourke
Mr. Joe Daning
Dr. Joe Patton

Welcome and Opening RemarksChair, Mr. Thomas Freeland

Chairman Thomas Freeland called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. A quorum was present with members participating both in-person and virtually.

Approval of Minutes from June 23, 2021*Mr. Freeland

Mr. Mike Mikota made a motion to approve the June 23, 2021 meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Craig Currey, and unanimously approved by the State Workforce Development Board.

South Carolina’s Employment Situation Mr. Dan Ellzey

Mr. Dan Ellzey, Executive Director, SC Department of Employment and Workforce, delivered a presentation on the status of Unemployment Insurance claims, South Carolina employment levels, reemployment initiatives, and UI system enhancements. His presentation covered the following points:

- Initial Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims are currently below pre-pandemic levels. Since March 2020, DEW has processed 927,688 initial claims and paid out \$6.5B in unemployment insurance. South Carolina has eliminated Federal benefits as of June 26, 2021. The UI Trust Fund remains solvent with a balance of \$1.2B.
- As of August 2021, 2,302,743 individuals are employed, which is an increase of 3,402 compared to February 2020. South Carolina’s unemployment rate of 4.2% is up 1.4% percentage points compared to February 2020, but is lower than the national rate of 5.2%.
- The number of jobs posted in September is 104,000, which is about 40,000 compared to pre-pandemic levels.
- The agency has implemented several reemployment initiatives, including weekly work search, weekly job match, enhanced referrals, virtual job fairs, recall taskforce, and individual employer plans.
- Multiple UI system enhancements are in progress to improve the overall constituent experience. System upgrades will be implemented on November 1, 2021. In conjunction with UI enhancements, DEW is enhancing the mobile application and refreshing the website.
- Partnerships with Adult Education and the Technical College System continue to promote GED attainment and short-term training. The agency has also partnered with the Lt.

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Governor’s Office to promote soft skills and youth employment. A Youth Public Service Announcement will launch in October.

- Building a cybersecurity workforce has become a critical issue in South Carolina, as demonstrated by Governor McMaster’s effort to develop a statewide cybersecurity strategic plan. Several efforts are underway to support the development of a cybersecurity workforce: WIOA sponsored IT training, CompTIA A+ and Security+ training provided free to employers, technical assistance to defense manufacturing companies through the SC Cyber Assistance Program, and short-term UI approved training. There are currently more than 1,600 open cyber-related jobs. All projections show that job openings in this field will increase rapidly over the next few years. Incumbent worker training is an important strategy for growing the cyber-workforce to fill openings.
- The strength of South Carolina’s economy has led to decreased WIOA funding. DEW has eliminated travel, downsized WIOA management positions, and utilized discretionary grants in response to reduced funding. Local areas are encouraged to evaluate cost-sharing models, the utilization of technology for service delivery, and discretionary grants to offset reduced funding.
- Looking forward, rural development, piloting business engagement strategies, and incumbent worker training will all be areas of focus.

Rural Development Activity.....Mr. Daniel Young

Mr. Daniel Young, Director of Grants and Incentives and Executive Director of the Coordinating Council for Economic Development, SC Department of Commerce, presented on Commerce’s efforts to support rural economic and community development. He explained that Commerce’s approach to rural development is to prepare communities for when opportunities come to the area. Preparation includes investments in infrastructure and “downtown” or community development through programs such as Locate SC and the Community Development Block Grant. In 2020, Commerce announced more than \$700M in new investments and 2,600 new jobs in Tier 3 and 4 counties. Commerce expects this year’s activity to exceed 2020, with 2,500 new jobs announced and \$1B in capital investments. The Gallo and Generac projects in Chester and Edgefield counties are significant projects for 2021. Gallo expects to hire 500 workers and invest \$450M in the economy. The ReadySC Generac project has received 10,000 applications for less than 1,000 jobs, with most of the applications coming from the surrounding counties. In addition to infrastructure investment, workforce preparation through training and soft skills is necessary to ensure that rural areas are ready when projects come.

LWDA Promising Practice.....Ms. Johnnie-Lynn Crosby

Ms. Johnnie-Lynn Crosby, Regional Business Solutions Director, SC Works Greater Upstate, presented on sector partnership efforts in the Greater Upstate. The Greater/Link Upstate Region established a Manufacturing Sector Partnership in 2019 as a strategy for aligning partners to engage businesses in the manufacturing sector. The partnership spans a 14 county region, including WorkLink, Upper Savannah, Greenville, and Upstate Local Workforce Areas. The partnership has three priorities: build a talent pipeline through improved career awareness, address middle skills and technical skills gaps, and state policy and regulatory change. A key outcome of the partnership is the creation of a skills matrix for Entry-Level Maintenance Technician positions. The model allows the workforce, education, and economic development system to engage more deeply with

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business and industry partners. Because of the region’s success, the region is evaluating the launch of an Information Technology partnership. Mr. Warren Snead offered an example of strategic partnership with the Upstate LWDA, explaining how the local area, Spartanburg Technical College, and DEW responded to a temporary layoff at Cooper Standard in July 2021.

Recognition of Board Members.....Mr. Freeland

Chairman Freeland recognized the contributions of Mr. Ed Sturken, Dr. Tim Hardee, and Dr. Mike Mikota, and their service to the state as longstanding members of the State Workforce Development Board.

Other Business/Adjourn.....Mr. Freeland

Chairman Freeland reminded members of the Workforce Symposium on October 19, 2021, in Greenville, S.C. The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

DRAFT

STATE INSTRUCTION NUMBER XX-XX

To: Local Workforce Area Signatory Officials
Local Workforce Area Board Chairs
Local Workforce Area Administrators

Subject: Requesting a Waiver of State Specific Requirements

Issuance Date: December XX, 2021

Effective Date: December XX, 2021

Purpose: To provide guidance on requesting Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) waivers of state specific requirements.

Background: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is designed to help job seekers secure the employment, education, training, and support services necessary to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. WIOA, and its implementing regulations, establish federal requirements for WIOA programs, and allows states to set additional requirements as needed to reach state goals for WIOA programs. LWDAs are encouraged to develop promising and innovative practices or initiatives to achieve these goals; however, state specific requirements may limit a LWDA's ability to implement a new practice or initiative. In such a situation, the Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) may consider a waiver of a state specific requirement. In addition to exploring available flexibilities to facilitate the achievement of LWDA goals, waivers of state specific requirements are a tool DEW may use for reducing barriers to WIOA implementation of innovative programming options.

Policy: In an effort to spur promising and/or innovative practices by local areas, LWDAs may submit a request for a waiver of a state specific requirement that may be a barrier to implementation. Once a LWDA has set local goals and identified barriers to implementing state requirements, including corresponding state policy that may impede achievement of those goals, LWDAs are encouraged to reach out to DEW Workforce Support to discuss plans for a waiver request. This allows the LWDA to share its goals and ideas for innovation with DEW, and provides the opportunity to explore any existing flexibilities and waiver options.

Innovative practices or initiatives may be identified by the following criteria:

- Lead entity is a Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) or LWDB's service provider.
- Initiative is, or will be, implemented in partnership with other education, workforce, economic development, social service, or non-profit entities.
- Initiative focuses on creating talent pipelines in high-growth, high-demand industries.
- Initiative targets priority populations and/or underserved communities.
- Initiative met or exceeded target outcomes or is on track to do so.
- LWDB is willing to assist other LWDBs or entities to implement the promising practice.

Requests for a waiver must be in writing and must include the following elements, as applicable:

- Detailed description of the nature of the project/initiative to be developed
- State specific requirement that the LWDA would like waived
- Actions the LWDA has undertaken to remove local laws and/or policy barriers, if any
- LWDB strategic goals relevant to the project/initiative to be developed
- Projected programmatic outcomes resulting from implementation of the waiver
- Alignment with state policy priorities, such as supporting employer engagement, connecting education and training strategies, supporting work-based learning, or improving job and career results
- Individuals, groups, or populations affected by the waiver
- LWDA plans for monitoring waiver implementation, including collection of waiver outcome information

The waiver request must include the completed "LWDA Waiver of State Requirement(s) Request Cover Sheet," with appropriate attachments. LWDA's may submit waiver requests as part of their Local Plan or as a separate request; ultimately an approved waiver constitutes a modification of the Local Plan regardless of how it is submitted. The waiver request must include documentation demonstrating that the LWDB and Chief Elected Official(s) (CEO) are aware of the waiver request and the project/initiative. LWDA's must submit requests for waivers of state specific requirements to WorkforceSupport@dew.sc.gov.

NOTE: A LWDA must meet all state specific requirements even though a waiver request has been submitted until the LWDA has received an approval letter, outlining the waiver terms. Depending on the nature of the waiver request and the needs of the initiative, a waiver request may be approved retroactively.

LWDA waiver requests will be reviewed within 90 days of receipt of submission of the waiver request. Waiver review will be expedited when possible. Upon approval of a waiver request, DEW will send an approval letter identifying the effective date and the duration of the waiver.

NOTE: Waiver requests submitted in the fourth quarter for the current program year **will not** be approved.

While an approved waiver is ongoing, LWDA's should regularly assess whether the waiver is successfully achieving LWDA goals. LWDA's must report specifically on waiver impact and outcomes. DEW will consider outcome information as part of the criteria for granting renewal of a waiver, if requested.

Authority for Waiver Approval

Waivers approved by DEW are only granted for state specific requirements issued in State Instructions. Waiver approval cannot be granted for any requirements governed by federal or state laws and regulations, including federal performance measures. Furthermore, DEW will obtain approval authority from the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB), annually, before approving any waiver requests submitted within each program year. The appropriate SWDB subcommittee will be updated upon approval or denial of a LWDA waiver request.

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

Inquiries: Questions may be directed to PolnPro@dew.sc.gov.

Kevin Cummings, Assistant Executive Director
Technical Services, Policies, and Reporting

Attachment: LWDA Waiver of State Specific Requirement(s) Request Cover Sheet

LWDA Waiver of State Requirement(s) Request Cover Sheet

Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA)	Date Submitted
Requirement(s) to be waived	
Relevant State Instruction(s)	Requested Waiver Period

Brief description of the LWDA's Initiative, including how the state requirement is inhibiting the initiative:

Program Elements Checklist

Attached	N/A	Program Element
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Detailed description of the LWDA's initiative to be developed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	State specific requirement(s) that the LWDA would like waived
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LWDA's actions taken to remove barriers to the initiative
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Relevant LWDB strategic goals
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alignment with state policy priorities
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individuals, groups, or populations affected by the waiver
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Description of how the LWDA intends to monitor waiver implementation

*If any element is not relevant to the LWDA's initiative, the check box for "Not Applicable" should be selected.

Additional Requirements Checklist

- If approved, Local Plan will be modified in accordance with State Instruction 15-16, Change 2.
- Documentation of CEO and LWDB awareness of the LWDA's proposed initiative is attached.

Please submit this form, with attachments and documentation, to WorkforceSupport@dew.sc.gov upon completion.

Executive Summary
2nd Quarter SWDB Committee Activity
October – December 2021

Board Development (Governance) Committee

- The Board Development Committee (formerly Board Governance Committee) reviewed and updated its name and charter to align its functions with the overall mission of the SWDB
 - Key functions of the committee include:
 - Equip SWDB members with resources and tools to be leaders and drivers of workforce development
 - Provide opportunities for SWDB members to be engaged with workforce efforts and support SWDB initiatives
 - Develop and monitor board-related policies
 - Gather and present promising practices for board development and management
 - Facilitate recognition of board members.
- For PY'21, the committee will:
 - Research and compile promising practices for board member engagement and overall management of the board
 - Provide ethics and diversity, equity, and inclusion training to board members
- The committee continues to track the distribution of SWDB Ambassador Tools and attendance:
 - Staff have distributed name badges and business cards (if requested) to all board members, and virtual meeting backgrounds are available for download in the SWDB portal
 - Meeting attendance continues to be strong, with an average attendance rate of 87% for second quarter committee meetings

Collaboration and Partnership Committee

- The Collaboration and Partnership Committee is tracking work-based learning (WBL) investments and utilization rates across programs
 - The committee received a report on recent investments in WBL totaling more than \$27M and viewed a prototype of the WIOA Productivity Dashboard. The Dashboard will provide a mechanism to track increases in WBL as funding is deployed to serve individuals through on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and other work experiences.
- Mr. Andre Anderson, Workforce Administrator, Lower Savannah Council of Governments, shared an overview of WBL efforts in the Lower Savannah area
 - On-the-job Training Program
 - Lower Savannah has a robust OJT program that fulfills 75 OJT contracts each year with a 77% success rate
 - Partnership with Aiken Technical College and Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS)
 - Lower Savannah is partnering with Aiken Technical College and SRNS to place individuals into apprenticeships with WIOA funding. Seventeen participants were placed last year with the goal of increasing placements to 25 this year.
 - Augusta Economic Development H-1B
 - Lower Savannah is a part of efforts to place veterans and veteran spouses from Aiken, Allendale, and Barnwell counties, in cyber security apprenticeships. The first of 7 planned cohorts has already started the program.
 - The Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) Apprenticeship Expansion Team

- In 2020, the CSRA established a goal of creating 300 new registered apprenticeship opportunities in Allendale Bamberg, Barnwell, and Aiken counties. The taskforce achieved 66% of the goal by creating 199 new opportunities.
- WIOA State Plan Update
 - Strategic planning across partners is a key function of the Collaboration and Partnership Committee. The committee received an update on the WIOA State Plan modification, which the partners will submit to the US Department of Labor in April 2022.

SC Works Management Committee

- The SC Works Management Committee oversaw the review and revision of SC Works Certification Standards, which evaluate centers and the workforce system for overall effectiveness, including customer satisfaction, physical and programmatic accessibility, and continuous improvement
 - Partners and local areas had the opportunity to provide feedback on the standards during public comment. Three entities commented: Upper Savannah LWDA, Upstate LWDA, and SC Vocational Rehabilitation.
 - A review of the comments resulted in minor clarifications such a defining a term or phrase or limiting the application of a standard to specific programs. In some cases, it was appropriate to remove standards to avoid duplication or because the standard no longer aligns with current operations.
 - DEW will release the revised standards by the end of January 2022, and local areas will have until June 30, 2022, to complete the certification process.
- The committee also reviewed Program Year 2020 WIOA performance
 - Two areas did not meet state fiscal performance measures at the end of PY'20, compared to 7 areas in PY'19
 - Three local areas did not meet the negotiated program measures for PY'20, compared to all areas meeting the negotiated performance measures in PY'19
 - The 5 areas that did not meet fiscal or program performance measures have submitted a written explanation summarizing the barriers that prevented them from achieving performance

Committee on Workforce Innovation

- The Innovation Committee is tasked with using data to understand and plan for workforce trends
 - In PY '21, the committee will:
 - distribute relevant publications, and
 - make available Labor Market Information (LMI) training
 - Board members received the September issue of the Trends publication earlier this month. The Trends publication is created by DEW's Division of Labor Market Information and includes relevant data and statistics. Board members can expect to receive this publication monthly.
- The SC Rural Innovation Network presented to the committee on the Digital Economy Ecosystem projects in Williamsburg, Barnwell, and Orangeburg counties
 - A digital economy ecosystem is a mix of technical education, job training, and community planning to bring digital jobs, local entrepreneurship, and remote work opportunities to rural communities
 - Barnwell and Williamsburg are making progress toward implementing several strategies outlined in the project roadmap
 - Orangeburg is in the discovery phase of its project, and Newberry and Greenwood are being evaluated as future project sites

Executive Committee

- Workforce Symposium Summary
 - The SWDB and DEW sponsored the SC State Chamber of Commerce Workforce Symposium. More than 180 individuals registered for the October 19 symposium, representing business and industry, education, workforce, and economic development entities.
 - Feedback from participants was positive
 - About 60% of survey respondents indicated this was their first time attending the symposium
 - Survey respondents liked the session topics, speakers, and flow of the event
 - 80% of respondents said they would recommend the event to a friend or colleague
- Allocation of Funding
 - The Executive Committee approved \$4,620,000 for the development of a rural economic and workforce analysis and grants to the 12 local workforce areas.
 - Rural Economic and Workforce Analysis - \$120,000
 - The evaluation will include:
 - A profile of South Carolinians who became unemployed as a result of COVID-19, including demographic, geographic, industry, occupation, and wage level information and those who remained unemployed for an extended period of time,
 - Examine what types of jobs the long-term unemployed are currently qualified to fill, and
 - Identify the types of jobs they may qualify for with additional training.
 - LWDA Resiliency Funding - \$4,500,000
 - DEW will allocate funding to LWDA's in discretionary grants for the purpose of employment and training activities to include services to youth, IWT, on-the-job training, and supportive services; operational costs associated with safety such as PPE and security; staffing and technology to serve businesses and job seekers in rural areas.
- Waiver of State-Specific Requirements
 - The Executive Committee approved a policy for recommendation to the full board that will allow local areas to request a waiver of state-specific requirements, such as state-specific fiscal measures, when the implementation of a promising practice would prevent the area from meeting or complying with the requirement.

Upcoming Meetings

3rd Quarter (January 1 – March 31, 2022)		
February 15, 2022	11:00 a.m.	Board Governance
February 16, 2022	2:00 p.m.	Collaboration & Partnership
February 23, 2022	11:00 a.m.	SC Works Management
February 24, 2022	11:00 a.m.	Workforce Innovation
Tuesday, March 15	11:00 a.m.	Executive
Tuesday, March 29	11:00 a.m.	State Workforce Development Board