

**WIOA**

# Strategic Workforce Development Plan

for the Sacramento Area

PYs 2025-2028

DRAFT



Anita Maldonado  
(916) 263-3810 | [anita.maldonado@seta.net](mailto:anita.maldonado@seta.net)

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## **ATTACHMENTS -**

- **Attachment 1:** Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary
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# **SACRAMENTO STRATEGIC WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This document outlines the Sacramento Strategic Workforce Development Plan for 2025-2028. This four-year plan builds upon prior efforts and is jointly submitted by the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) and Sacramento's Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB), Sacramento Works, Inc. (SWI). SWI, a 27-member board composed of representatives from businesses (including small businesses), workforce and labor organizations, education and training institutions, and governmental, economic, and community development agencies, is tasked with providing policy guidance, planning, and oversight for local workforce development initiatives.

The plan details strategies to support youth and individuals facing barriers to employment by providing access to career pathways in critical industry sectors identified in the Sacramento region. Special emphasis is placed on serving vulnerable populations to ensure equitable access to programs and services. The overarching goal is to promote economic prosperity and income mobility by aligning local objectives with sector strategies that enhance Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) outcomes and support the goals of the California Workforce Development Board's (CWDB) Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan. The plan also considers the temporary and long-term impacts of COVID-19.

### **Strategic Areas of Focus:**

- Expanding the partner network
- Continuing sector partnerships and labor market/workforce analysis
- Expanding career pathway programs for youth and adults
- Aligning services and braiding resources
- Increasing employer-based training opportunities
- Conducting continuous system performance reviews

The SWI has developed this plan in alignment with the State Policy Framework, which includes three key policy objectives:

1. Fostering demand-driven skills attainment
2. Enabling upward mobility for all Californians
3. Aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services

This comprehensive approach ensures that Sacramento's workforce development strategies effectively address the needs of the community while supporting broader state and federal goals.

## WIOA CORE AND REQUIRED PARTNER COORDINATION

### Coordination of Services and Resources Identified in the AJCC and Partner MOUs

To realize the vision of the local plan, the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency/Sacramento Works (SETA/SWI) is committed to ensuring that Sacramento Works America's Job Centers of California (SWJC) serve as accessible gateways to employment, education, and training services. This is achieved through:

- Developing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs): Establishing strong partnerships and coordination with key entities, including the State Employment Development Department (EDD), Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), Los Rios Community College District (LRCC) Strategic Plan, Capital Adult Education Regional Consortium (CAERC) Comprehensive Regional Plan, County Department of Human Assistance (DHA), community-based organizations, and other agencies within the SWJC system.
- Aligning and integrating services: Offering a comprehensive menu of integrated services tailored to customer needs, focusing on employment, education, and training opportunities aligned with in-demand regional industry sectors and skill clusters.

#### Key Strategies:

1. Enhanced Access to Services:  
Providing a combination of on-site career and coaching services and support through SWJC and partner staff, as well as digital and virtual training options.
2. Leveraged Funding:  
Collaborating with core programs and partners to fund industry-recognized certificates, degrees, apprenticeships, and career pathways, alongside supportive services to ensure program completion.
3. Data Sharing:  
Sharing success metrics—such as certificates earned, job placements, and retention rates—with program partners to measure impact and improve outcomes.
4. Metrics and Benchmark Development:  
Establishing performance measures for services delivered by core programs and partners, especially where data system integration is needed.

#### Commitment to Inclusion and Equity:

Executed MOUs with core and required partners outline cooperative working relationships, emphasizing service delivery to underserved populations, including individuals receiving public assistance, those with limited English proficiency, immigrants, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, individuals with disabilities, older adults, veterans, and Native Americans.

Co-located partner staff across the SWJC system support outreach and ensure equitable access to employment, education, and training opportunities. Collaborative efforts include:

- Clearly defined goals and strategies.
- Leveraging shared resources and services.

- Frequent communication among partners.
- Coordinated professional development activities.

By fostering strong partnerships and strategic alignment, SETA/SWI ensures that core programs and partners remain actively engaged in delivering impactful and inclusive services across the SWJC system.

### **Local Board and AJCC Partner Co-enrollment Strategies**

The local workforce system brings extensive experience in braiding and leveraging resources and services across grants, core programs, and partner organizations to deliver career pathway opportunities effectively. By fostering collaboration and integrating services, the system addresses the needs of underserved populations while identifying opportunities for co-enrollment. Services are provided through SWJC staff, co-located partners, cross-trained staff, or real-time access to partner services, ensuring comprehensive support. Policies and procedures outlined in the local Customer Flow Directive guide the delivery of these services.

WIOA core program partners work closely with customers to develop tailored plans, establish common service strategies and goals, and define partner roles. Progress is tracked collaboratively, with ongoing communication to support the individual's journey toward self-sufficiency. Additionally, the need for supportive services is assessed and provided by one or more partners as necessary.

A multidisciplinary approach to job coaching and case management is central to co-enrollment, employing the Integrated Resource Team (IRT) model. This model facilitates joint planning, case coordination, and alignment of intake, assessment, and data collection practices. By leveraging the expertise and resources of all partners, the IRT ensures optimal delivery of wraparound services.

Through the IRT model, teams align services and resources to address client needs effectively. They establish communication methods, information-sharing tools, and "alert" measures to ensure timely interventions. Partner roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, along with success principles and indicators for client outcomes. When necessary, MOUs are developed and executed to formalize information-sharing practices.

### **One-stop Delivery System – Remote Access**

The SWJC system provides electronic access to services through web-based tools and career coaching workshops offered by Sacramento Works. These tools assist customers in identifying their skills, knowledge, and abilities, utilizing the self-sufficiency calculator to determine earning needs, researching the labor market for high-growth, high-demand, and high-wage jobs, and exploring regional training providers.

Virtual and remote access to SWJCs is critical in ensuring that employment and training opportunities are accessible to all populations, especially the most vulnerable. This includes access, through conference calls, webinars, Zoom, and WhatsApp, along with other digital access points. Additionally, access to technology devices ensures equitable access to programs and services. Specific web-based tools include:

- Assessments: QuickGuide, WorkKeys, and CalJOBS Work Interest Profiler.
- Labor Market and Training Provider Information: CareerGPS2.com and CAERC.org.
- Self-Sufficiency Calculator:
- Job Search and Placement Assistance: Resume Wizard and CalJOBS Virtual Recruiter.

Other virtual services include:

- Job Center Virtual Orientation, Intake, Assessment, and Enrollment.
- Earn & Learn Workshops.
- Resume Building.
- Resource and Job Fairs.

The SWJC also offers Metrix Learning, a self-paced online learning platform designed to provide self-directed or staff-assisted workforce skills development, such as job readiness, career planning, vocational training, and interview preparation. Customers can register virtually and gain remote access to over 6,000 training courses for six months. Course offerings include more than 100 in-demand certificate courses, such as Microsoft Office, QuickBooks, and CompTIA, along with several industry-recognized credential programs. Upon completing training, customers receive course certificates and digital badges. Metrix includes assessments to pre-screen skill levels and ensure appropriate entry into training programs and employment.

For customers enrolled in WIOA who face mobility or accessibility barriers, such as Individuals with Disabilities (IWDs), and who need vocational training to enhance their employability, SETA subcontracts with providers on its Local Training Provider List (LTPL) that offer distance learning opportunities.

### **Mobile Workforce Services Teams**

To further expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services, the SWJC system provides remote services through mobile workforce services teams. These teams are self-contained with all the technology necessary to deliver no-cost services to the community. Customers using mobile services receive initial coaching and assessment to determine the next steps for employment referrals, education resources, and training program referrals. Services provided include:

- Intake, Eligibility, and Registration
- Job Announcements and Employment Referrals
- Career Assessment, Coaching, and Career Planning
- Assistance with Resumes, Applications, and Interviewing Skills
- Referrals to On-the-Job Training, Apprenticeships, and other work-based learning (WBL) opportunities.

Customers are referred to the nearest SWJC for continued services not available at remote locations. Current mobile service locations include community college campuses, community-based organizations, affordable housing complexes, and community centers in high-poverty, low-income neighborhoods.

### **Strong Workforce Job Placement Services**

Additional remote access for customers includes The Strong Workforce Job Placement Services initiative, which is a partnership between the Los Rios Community College District and SETA. SETA has been awarded Strong Workforce Initiative funding by Los Rios to increase the number of CTE graduates that find employment in their field of study. SETA co-locates job developers at the four Los Rios Community College District campuses one to two days per week to recruit employers to hire graduating CTE students in jobs that align with their education and career goals.

Project activities include:

- Coordinating on-campus and off-campus interviews between employers and graduating students
- Recruiting employers to interview graduating students
- Developing partnerships with industry associations, chambers of commerce, staffing agencies aligned with CTE students' education and career goals, and other industry groups
- Conducting follow-up calls to referrals provided by chambers of commerce and industry associations
- Providing presentations at employer events
- Conducting outreach calls to employers listed in the Sacramento Business Journal and other employer publications
- Establishing lists of employers representing specific business or industry sectors
- Coordinating with CTE faculty to identify graduating students and the types of positions that align to their career and educational goals
- Working with Los Rios to identify the best platform for employers to recruit graduating students
- Identifying and coordinating innovative marketing materials, such as developing a graduate profile by CTE program and promote to industry groups/advisory committees
- Conducting follow-up on students placed in jobs
- Employer and participant tracking and reporting

### **Coordination of Workforce and Education Activities**

SETA/SWI remains committed to providing comprehensive employment and training opportunities for all populations, particularly those facing significant barriers to employment. Through a "no wrong door" approach at SWJCs and by fostering strong partnerships with organizations that serve special populations, SETA/SWI ensures universal access to services at all locations. Collaboration and resource integration enable the system to meet the diverse needs of all customers. Cross-system training with SJWC partners is essential, fostering mutual understanding of one another's missions, goals, and mandates. This builds and strengthens relationships resulting in effective and informed coordination and integration practices.

Services are delivered by SWJC staff, co-located partners, cross-trained personnel, or through real-time access to partner services. Established MOUs facilitate cooperative relationships with core program and other required partners, including organizations targeting special populations. Key partners



include the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD), Sacramento County Department of Human Assistance (DHA), California Human Development (CHD), the State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), PRIDE Industries, AARP, Vietnam Veterans of California, California Indian Manpower Consortium, Alta Regional, and Los Rios Community College District campuses.

SETA prioritizes services for individuals receiving public assistance, limited English proficient, immigrant, migrant and seasonal farm workers, IWDs, older individuals, veterans, and Native Americans. Co-located staff from partner organizations across the SWJC system assist with outreach and ensure all populations have access to employment, education, and training opportunities available within the SWJC system.

### **Compliance with WIOA Section 188 and Applicable Provisions of the ADA of 1990**

SETA's policies on Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures and Referral and Request for Services and Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities (IWDs), along with periodic training for system staff and partners on Disability Etiquette and Reasonable Accommodations, ensure compliance with federal and state regulations. These include Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These laws guarantee that qualified individuals receive the accommodations needed for equal access to employment, education, programs, and activities in the most integrated setting.

To maintain compliance with WIOA Section 188, all WIOA Title I-funded providers within the SWJC system undergo annual monitoring. The Rehabilitation Act and ADA further mandate that no qualified individual with a disability be denied access to, participation in, or benefits from any program or activity operated by SETA. These laws also extend to the private sector to ensure employment opportunities and full inclusion for individuals with disabilities in economic, social, and cultural main-streams and life.

Through initiatives like Ticket-to-Work (TTW) and discretionary or local grants, an increasing number of customers with disabilities are referred to SWJCs for services. SETA's Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) plays a pivotal role in guiding Job Center staff to assist these individuals, providing support for navigating work incentive programs, fostering partnerships, and collaborating with employers and service providers to enhance service capacity. The DRC also serves as an information resource on programs that assist customers with disabilities in obtaining and retaining employment.

SETA invests in ongoing training for SWJC system staff to enhance their awareness and effectiveness in serving customers with disabilities. The trainings, facilitated by SETA's Disability Services team, CART, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, and partners within Sacramento's disability services network, have improved access, strengthened employer relationships, and increased job placement opportunities for customers with disabilities.

To ensure continuous improvement in physical and program accessibility, SETA conducts regular evaluations of adaptive stations, assistive technologies, and system-wide resources. When new technologies or adaptive equipment are introduced to the SWJCs, the DRC coordinates training to ensure proper implementation and use. These efforts have significantly increased access for people with disabilities, enhanced physical and program accessibility, and expanded employment opportunities.

## STRATEGIC PARTNER COORDINATION

### **Coordination with County Health and Human Services Agencies and Other Partners Serving CalFresh Employment and Training Customers**

SETA integrates resources and coordinates workforce service delivery for CalFresh recipients in Sacramento County by aligning services through the SWJC system. These include Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I-IV programs, the County of Sacramento CalFresh E&T program, other DHA programs, community and state college partners, and regional Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). Several WIOA-funded subgrantees providing CalFresh E&T services are co-located at SWJCs and collaborate with SWJC partners. Additionally, SETA and DHA have established CalFresh E&T partnership plans that include targeted outreach, a structured referral process, and ongoing cross-training to build staff capacity to ensure the delivery of coordinated, high-quality services.

Common barriers faced by this population in obtaining employment include lack of a high school diploma or equivalent, limited work history, limited English proficiency, lack of transportation, and physical or mental disabilities.

CalFresh customers have access to a wide range of workforce development activities, strategic partnerships, and services tailored to their needs. Based on individual eligibility and an established Individual Employment Plan (IEP), available services include assessments, career exploration, labor market information, job search assistance, adult education and literacy, vocational training, and Work-based Learning opportunities, such as On-the-Job Training (OJT).

CalFresh recipients make up approximately 35 percent of the customers served within the SWJC system under both self-assisted and staff-directed services. The strengthened partnership with the County's CalFresh team has led to a continued increase in the number of CalFresh recipients accessing services within the SWJC system.

### **Coordination with Local Child Support Agencies and Other Partners Serving Non-custodial Parents**

In 2018, SETA and Sacramento County's Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) formalized a referral process by which the Sacramento County Superior Court Bureau of Family Support Judges (Commissioners) referred child support-involved parents to SETA staff to conduct an initial assessment and connect the client to an AJCC for ongoing services. Client participation is mandatory, and they can be held in contempt of court if they do not comply with the judge's order. Client participation is reported in CalJOBS and retrieved periodically by DCSS.

SETA staff currently attend the mandatory Court Session based on the needs of the Court, and since January 2023 have attended the sessions held every third Thursday of the month.

Child Support Program participants who are required to seek employment are referred to SETA/SWI by DCSS staff, and/or linked to employment resources, including SETA and CalJOBS. Links to SETA's website (SacramentoWorks.org) are posted on the DCSS Resources and Links webpage.

Family courts currently require enrollment with Sacramento Works on a case-by-case basis. DCSS provides SETA/Sacramento Works brochures in their lobby, along with a list of justice involved-friendly employees to participants. There are community resources available through local community-based organizations, education partners, and the workforce system. Strengthening the partnerships between all agencies serving non-custodial parents enhances service delivery, facilitating coordinated information sharing, follow-up, and monitoring of client progression.

Upon referral to a SWJC, financial needs assessments are conducted by job coaches for non-custodial parents to determine the appropriate level of support needed to ensure their success and to identify partner services or resources that may be needed to support that success. Regular check-ins to monitor progress are conducted by job coaches.

Barriers experienced by Local Child Support Agency (LCSA) program participants include professional and drivers' license revocations, inability to pay current or back child support, lack of visitation with their children, unemployment or underemployment, wage garnishment, program understanding, mental health or substance abuse issues, or disabilities. These barriers can be prohibitive for non-custodial parents to participate in education, training, and/or employment. In some circumstances, DCSS staff are able to decrease child support for participants who are attending/participating in workforce or education programs. Providing support to address these barriers can be an incentive to non-custodial parents to better facilitate a successful referral, and participation in the SWJC system.

LCSA program participants with disabilities may be receiving needs-based SSI or SSP benefits, in which case DCSS is prohibited from collecting child support. If the non-custodial parent is receiving SDI, the children may be eligible for derivative benefits, and the family may need assistance navigating this process. Existing resources that may be used to alleviate these barriers include education and outreach, GED and vocational training programs, SWJC services including workshops and job readiness training, and referrals (warm handoff) to other community resources and information. The partnership between SETA and DCSS expands access to workforce services in a coordinated manner, thereby, effectively assisting LCSA program participants in overcoming barriers to gainful employment.

SETA also focuses on the following support elements to effectively serve the LCSA population:

- Motivate and nurture the commitment to change
- Offer support and access to resources when needed as early as possible
- Identify opportunities to provide stipends so that participants have income while in training to ensure persistence, or identify "earn and learn" opportunities when immediate income is needed
- Provide non-punitive, problem-solving assistance
- Provide access to concrete supports such as interview and work clothes, housing and food
- Create a well-developed network of potential employers

- Coordinate employment and DCSS commitments to provide as little disruption to training and job responsibilities, as possible Job retention

Steps to ensure the comprehensive provision of services to non-custodial parents include referral/outreach, thorough needs assessment, case management, client tracking, and referral to resources or ancillary support services that may be needed to alleviate barriers to employment, and follow-up. Through the IRT approach, Job Coaches and partners, including DCSS, assist non-custodial parents in identifying short- to long-term goals, and creating an IEP. Services provided may include job search, resume preparation, application/interview workshops, skills/interest assessment testing, career research and exploration, vocational training, misdemeanor conviction expungement, reduction of felony conviction to misdemeanor, driver's license reinstatement, education, literacy programs, and more. Career pathway exploration helps clients identify opportunities and earning potential within specific career tracks.

Sacramento County's DCSS has been awarded the NextGen Holistic Employment and Parenting (HELP) Program by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), to be implemented in 2025, in which SETA/Sacramento Works will be a major partner.

**Coordination with CIE Blueprint Partners, and Other Partners Serving Individuals with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities**

Partners engaged with SETA in providing services to IWDs, particularly those with intellectual disabilities (ID) or developmental disabilities (DD), include, but are not limited to:

- California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
- Alta Regional Center
- California Department of Development Services (DDS)
- Adult Education (members and partners of Capital Adult Education and Regional Consortium-CAERC)
- Independent Living Centers
- Supported Employment service providers, including In-Alliance
- Goodwill
- PRIDE Industries
- Los Rios Community College District (Sacramento City College Disability Students Program Services Center, College2Career, and DOR's Workability Programs)
- Meristem

SETA seeks new and ongoing opportunities for cross-training in partnership and collaboration to facilitate cross-system professional development, specifically focusing on serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD).

SETA is a recognized partner in the Greater Sacramento Valley Local Partnership Agreement (GSV LPA), providing services to individuals with ID/DD in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) and related program strategies. These efforts focus on client-centered, coordinated service strategies.

The SETA Disability Employment Initiative (DEI), Disability Employment Accelerator (DEA), and recent Equity Target Population Fund (ETPF) grants have enabled SETA to build capacity by offering specialized training opportunities for staff, as well as reviewing physical and programmatic access. SETA's Disability Services team, led by the Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC), meets quarterly to discuss challenges, strategies, best practices, and receive specialized training. Key strategies include developing partnerships with local and regional service providers and creating IRTs to coordinate service delivery.

SETA collaborates with partners such as DOR, Alta Regional Center, Independent Living Centers, In-Alliance, Goodwill, PRIDE Industries, Los Rios Community College District, and Meristem to provide cross-training on eligibility, enrollment, available resources, concurrent services, and IRTs.

SETA periodically coordinates training with the Alta Regional Center on regional center eligibility, enrollment, and disability etiquette specific to working with individuals with ID/DD. The Disability Services team and DRC continue expanding their expertise through co-enrollment and collaboration with Alta Regional, In-Alliance, PRIDE, DOR, College2Career, and Meristem.

SETA works closely with DOR at all levels, with staff reaching out to DOR counselors to coordinate services. SETA Management and the DRC collaborate with DOR Regional Administrators and Site Managers to align policies and procedures. Through coordinated service delivery, both SETA and DOR staff have received cross-training on eligibility, enrollment, and service delivery. This partnership has facilitated services for individuals with ID/DDs, including job coaching and supported employment, and SETA and DOR continue to provide formal cross-training for AJCC staff and DOR counselors to expand the capacity of both teams.

Through IRTs, SETA creates opportunities for WBL, training, and wraparound services by leveraging resources from WIOA Title I, II, CalWORKs, and other partners. Disability Services team coaches integrate resource and service leveraging into participant plans to enhance accessibility to partner expertise. As an Employment Network contracted with the Social Security Administration (SSA) under its Ticket to Work (TTW) program since 2006, SETA generates annual revenue, which can be used to support WBL and vocational training opportunities, supportive services, and professional development for coaches working with IWDs.

The DOR District Administrator has facilitated collaboration by:

- Including SETA management and the DRC in DOR management meetings
- Facilitating ongoing communication with local branch managers
- Attending partner meetings with Los Rios Community College District-Disability Students Program Services (DSPS)
- Co-locating DOR staff at SWJCs for better integration and cross-training, coordination of services and support, and improved access for customers with disabilities
- Providing SETA staff access to DOR's Talent Acquisition Portal and training

Recognizing the importance of employer engagement for individuals with ID/DDs, SETA dedicates significant resources to facilitate the successful transition of IWDs into employment. Employer training focuses on dispelling myths about the perceived costs and risks of hiring IWDs, such as accommodation costs, Workers Compensation, and decreased performance. SETA's Job Coaches work with

employers to negotiate reasonable accommodations, task reassignments, and provide onsite job coaching to ensure successful integration into the workplace while reinforcing employer trainings.

SETA has established relationships with employers in high-demand sectors through the SWI Employer Outreach Committee, Employer Services Unit, and collaboration with local chambers of commerce and economic development partners. SETA continues to expand and engage new employers often through partner agencies.

Occupations of interest to SETA customers with disabilities include administrative, manufacturing, nursing, customer service, entry-level healthcare, human services, and public sector roles, including Limited Examination and Appointment Program (LEAP) and Schedule A positions designated by the State of California. As a result, focus has been placed on job development and employer outreach, particularly with public sector employers like the State of California, and the City and County of Sacramento, where job placements often begin with entry-level, administrative support roles.

SETA also participates on the Northern California Business Advisory Council (BAC). The BAC was developed in 2015 to promote partnership between local employers and employment/training programs to promote employment of people with disabilities. The BAC provides business partners with guidance and support and holds collaborative events to enable businesses to learn about resources, discuss workforce needs, and share expertise about the industry sectors they represent. SETA continues to work to strengthen the BAC to enhance its ability to engage and educate employers.

In addition to job placement, SETA prioritizes job retention strategies. Through innovative approaches, SETA provides and continues to explore alternative job retention strategies that are often unique in the workforce development field. Generally, job retention strategies include ongoing case management, conflict resolution, accommodation coordination, and additional supportive services. Employer buy-in at all business levels, especially from direct supervisors, is also a key element of successful retention.

As a former grant administrator of the State Workforce Board's Breaking Barriers in Employment for Adults with Autism Pilot Program, SETA continues to collaborate with Meristem, and other partners to increase long-term employment opportunities for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). This includes connecting employers with Meristem's Transformative Autism Program (TAP) and its online training and best practices manual to assist employers in building workplace capacity and taking affirmative action to hire, retain, and promote individuals with ID/DDs.

SETA continues to apply for targeted funding, such as WIOA discretionary grants, to provide additional services to IWDs, including On-the-Job Trainings (OJTs). Case management for individuals with ID/DDs is often intensive and requires flexibility in the determination of suitability and service provision. SWJC staff often serve as primary case managers and lead IRTs to ensure effective coordination of resources and services, including those that are leveraged.

### **Coordination with CBOs and Other Partners Serving English Language Learners**

Through various initiatives, such as the English Language Learner (ELL) Workforce Navigator pilot, SETA has expanded access points for ELLs within the workforce system. This was achieved by building and strengthening partnerships between WIOA Title I, II, and CAEP providers, refugee resettlement and employment providers, and community-based organizations. Access points were further expanded through collaboration with partners such as DHA, Head Start (which provides childcare and preschool services to low-income families), and the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), which offers safety net and family self-sufficiency services.

In addition to aligning program services, the ELL Navigator pilot helped identify best partnership practices in aligning policies, program reporting, and establishing common performance outcomes. Metrics were used to measure system and service changes and requisite funding alignment. System changes included improved coordination of intake, assessment, and referral processes among partners, alongside enhanced integration of job training, counseling, and support services. These changes created seamless pathways to postsecondary credentials and employment for ELLs. The career pathway model implemented allows ELLs to develop skills progressively through education and training programs, with multiple entry and exit points. At each level of skills development, there is a corresponding labor market payoff. The pathways available to ELLs weave together SWJCs, adult education, community colleges, CBOs, and employers. These pathways may begin with Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs, such as English language instruction, which also address basic skills deficiencies. ABE serves as a bridge, preparing low-skilled adults to succeed in postsecondary education, often by integrating adult education with occupational skills training in the same class, providing an occupational context for education. English language instruction helps ELLs increase proficiency to succeed in courses and programs that require a certain level of language skills.

For ELLs who require adult literacy services, SETA continues to identify and seek Integrated Education and Training (IET) opportunities to fast-track learning. Unlike traditional, sequential participation in adult literacy and vocational training, IETs combine Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) with vocational skills training to accelerate success. SETA continues to seek new IET adult education partners and assist in the expansion of IET offerings in the region.

ELL Navigators play a crucial role in guiding ELLs to success by coordinating the delivery of workforce services. They use the IRT model to expand career pathway opportunities by aligning partner services and resources to meet the specific needs of ELLs. IRTs consist of ELL Workforce Navigators, WIOA Title I and Title II staff, refugee resettlement and refugee employment service provider staff, DHA caseworkers, VESL instructors, and CBO staff, ensuring competent, coordinated wraparound services. ELL Navigators are also able to assume the lead case manager role, ensuring that ELLs achieve success at each step of their pathway.

SETA has increased multilingual outreach by sharing information about the language capacities of WIOA Title I, Title II, and CAEP partners. This outreach includes partnering with refugee resettlement and employment providers to reach underserved populations, such as Afghan refugees and SIV women, who often arrive in the U.S. with limited language and basic skills proficiency. By improving English language and basic skills proficiency, SETA empowers Afghan SIV and refugee women to pur-

sue education, employment, and better social adjustment. Current language capacities include Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, Pashto, Cantonese, French, Hmong, Lao, Mandarin, Mien, Portuguese, Punjabi, Spanish, Thai, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Russian, and American Sign Language (by appointment).

Although a small number of migrant seasonal farmworkers access SWJC services annually, SETA collaborates with California Human Development (CHD), a recipient of WIOA National Farmworker Jobs Program funds, to ensure these workers can access the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training program services. SETA has an MOU with CHD as a required partner within the local Workforce Development Area (WDA). CHD also hosts the SWJC in Galt, expanding opportunities to coordinate services for migrant and seasonal farmworker population.

SETA partners with organizations, such as Asian Resources Inc. (ARI), La Familia Counseling Center, and Lao Family Community Development, each of which hosts SWJCs that serve large ELL populations. ARI provides social services to low-income and immigrant communities in Sacramento, offering ESL and citizenship classes, tax preparation, translation/interpretation, and other services. La Familia and Lao Family offer multi-cultural counseling, outreach, VESL, subsidized employment, and support services to low-income adults in Sacramento County.

Since the mid-1980s, SETA has administered the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Administration for Children and Families (ACF)-Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) Refugee Support Services (RSS) grant, which assists newly arriving refugees, asylees, Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders, Cuban/Haitian entrants, and federally certified victims of trafficking in Sacramento County achieve economic self-sufficiency through employment, education, and training programs. The service delivery structure ensures effective integration of the SWJC system with refugee resettlement efforts, expanding resources and services to improve refugees' employability and competitiveness in the U.S. workforce.

Eligibility for refugee program services extends to refugees, asylees, Cuban and Haitian Entrants, victims of human trafficking, SIVs, and Afghan and Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees (HPs). Services are provided through adult education partners and local CBOs, such as ARI, Bach Viet Association, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Lao Family Community Development (LFCD), Twin Rivers Unified School District, and several other local school districts, and World Relief. These services are designed to help refugees achieve economic self-sufficiency and reduce dependency on public assistance through employment and acculturation services. RSS providers coordinate with SWJCs to access additional services and training, including WBL opportunities.

SETA also coordinates with five local refugee resettlement agencies, including IRC, the Sacramento Food Bank, World Relief, Opening Doors, Inc. (ODI), and LFCD, to provide referrals to RSS-funded providers and support the employment and educational needs of newly arriving refugees. SETA funds Solvera Consulting to convene and facilitate the Sacramento Regional Refugee Coalition meetings, where challenges faced by newly arriving populations are addressed by stakeholders within Sacramento's refugee resettlement network, including SETA.

The integration of refugee employment and support services in the SWJC system has created a comprehensive roadmap for refugees resettling in Sacramento County. Services begin with assistance from local resettlement agencies in finding housing and navigating public assistance supports and end with employment services offered by SETA's RSS providers. Intensive case management supports



refugees through education, training, job development, soft skills, and English language development, guiding them toward employment and career pathways.

SETA recognizes that CBOs are key to connecting with immigrant communities, as many ELLs do not directly access traditional workforce providers. SETA continues to strengthen current partnerships, including those within the refugee resettlement network, and expand outreach to organizations working with the ELL community, such as faith-based organizations to promote and increase service coordination. SETA continues to explore ways to streamline referrals through ELL Navigators, connecting clients to partner services and resources. CBOs serving ELL populations, including refugees, have co-located at Job Centers within the SWJC, expanding the reach and integration of services.

SETA remains committed to improving service delivery through cross-training of partner and SETA staff to enhance the level and quality of services received by ELLs, to increase access to education and workforce system services, and to improve outcomes for this population. Strategies and best practices learned from SETA's ELL Workforce Navigator pilot and the ORR-funded refugee program, such as coordinated, multi-disciplinary case management through an IRT at the early stages of an ELL's career pathway, have been scaled and applied in other programs within the SWJC system.

### **Coordination with Local Veterans Affairs and Other Partners Serving Veterans**

SETA/SWI has worked collaboratively with Off-Base Transition Training (OBTT) since January 2024. The OBTT is a pilot program for veterans currently serving in the National Guard and Reserve and their spouses to take control of their careers through workshops to help meet their employment goals. OBTT provides employment preparation, education, and opportunities that allow attendees to maximize their career potential.

OBTT offers the opportunity for individuals to move forward in their careers and on their own schedule. Workshops are offered in-person and/or virtual and are built to fit attendees' schedules. The workshops are offered at no cost based on individual service need. Workshops can be customized to meet individual employment goals and can be attended at an individual's own pace.

OBTT currently offers the following 10 workshops:

- Your Next Move
- Marketing Yourself and Other Job Search Tactics
- Understanding Resume Essentials
- Creating Your Resume-Writing Workshop
- Interview Skills
- Federal Hiring
- Linked-In Profiles
- Linked-In Job Search
- Employment Rights
- Salary Negotiations

SETA/Sacramento Works continues to work with EDD Veteran Services Navigators (VSN), Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs) and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists located at the Mark Sanders SWJC hosted by EDD.

SETA/Sacramento Works also adheres to Veterans' Priority of Service, which ensures that veterans receive priority services in job referrals and referrals to training, as well as other employment-related services. Veterans with disabilities receive the highest priority in all employment services.

### **Coordination with Local Strategic Planning Partners to Address Environmental Sustainability**

Coordination efforts in the Sacramento region focus on advancing environmental sustainability by collaborating with local government agencies, especially human and social service organizations, educational institutions (including adult education programs, the community college district, and state university), industry leaders, and community-based organizations serving the region's vulnerable populations. These efforts aim to align economic and environmental priorities through comprehensive planning initiatives. Key activities include developing training programs for green careers, supporting businesses in adopting sustainable practices, and addressing the growing demand for skilled workers in renewable energy and conservation sectors. By integrating sustainability into workforce development strategies, this approach seeks to foster long-term economic growth while enhancing environmental health and resilience across the Sacramento region.

From a regional perspective, advancing clean economy jobs is a key priority for the Capital Region's Planning Unit (Capital Region), a nine-county region that includes four local workforce development boards, including the SWI Board. This focus ensures that populations historically affected by climate change can benefit from the quality job opportunities emerging in this growing sector. The Capital Region is also partnering with the California Jobs First (CJF) initiative to prioritize workforce development in key industries that promote equity, job quality, and environmental sustainability.

Additionally, the Capital Region has supported Valley Vision in hosting two Climate, Justice, and Jobs Summits. These events aim to raise career awareness and improve access to clean-energy jobs, particularly for communities most affected by climate change. The summits amplify community voices by bringing together industry leaders, training providers, and support organizations. A central feature of these events is a panel of representatives from underserved populations, providing valuable insight to guide the creation of accessible, equitable pathways to high-quality, sustainable careers.

## **WIOA TITLE I COORDINATION**

### **Professional Development – Digital Fluency, Distance Learning, and Cultural Competency**

Since 1997, SETA has led the Capital Area Regional Training (CART) Team, a regional team of workforce board and partner staff that coordinates capacity building and training for the region. The team includes knowledgeable staff who are subject matter experts in areas like CalJOBS, business services, working with specific hard-to-serve populations, and other areas of specialized training. This is supplemented by regularly engaging training vendors with additional areas of expertise. The CART Team has continued to provide capacity building activities and has prioritized its efforts on those activities that can be delivered in a virtual learning environment including best practices in providing remote services to customers.

SETA makes efforts to convene professional development training for frontline staff via conference calls, webinars, Zoom, Webex, and other e-forums. In addition, Metrix Learning, previously mentioned, is utilized by all partners within the SWJC for professional development of all team members, especially frontline staff.

The SWJC cross system collaboration and training amongst partners is critical to ensuring that the services provided to the most vulnerable populations are delivered in a well-informed, sensitive manner. Key to this is soliciting and receiving training from CBOs that are connected to the neighborhoods and communities in which the vulnerable populations reside, such as with CBOs within the refugee resettlement network like the International Rescue Committee-Sacramento, CBOs and other organizations within the disability community like Resources for Independent Living and the Alta Regional Center, as well as others attuned to serving re-entry populations, and veterans. Training is offered as a continuum either through group or one-on-one opportunities, with most development occurring as a result of individual, integrated, client case work.

Through the Northstar Digital Literacy platform, the SWJC system delivers access to a digital literacy assessment tool. This tool allows coaches to evaluate job seekers' digital literacy levels and connect them to appropriate digital skills-building activities and programs. Beyond assessing basic digital literacy, the platform offers learning resources that support adult learners through classroom curriculum that can be accessed remotely. This provides self-directed instruction and practice for individuals, enhancing their digital literacy and employability.

As an Equal Opportunity employer, SETA established a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Committee in 2019, dedicated to cultivating a workplace that promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging for both staff and clients. The committee, comprised of staff from diverse backgrounds, secures training opportunities that provide concrete strategies for engaging in respectful and positive interactions in the workplace while working to reduce discrimination and prejudice based on factors such as gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, age, religion, or physical and mental ability. In addition to training, the committee promotes DEIB education and awareness through monthly newsletters, covering topics such as disability inclusion and celebrating National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM).

### **Coordination of Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities**

Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion activities are coordinated as follows:

#### **Rapid Response**

SETA and the Employment Development Department (EDD) along with our partners created a Rapid Response Team, which connects dislocated workers to services that assist in the transition to new employment as quickly as possible. Employees are provided a direct link to local re-employment and training networks, and employers are linked to business services that can avert or minimize the impact of an impending layoff.

SETA's Rapid Response assistance is based on the following principles: (1) Timeliness (2) Convenience (3) Customer Choice (4) Consistency and Accurate Information (5) Leveraging Resources (6) Seamless

Services Delivery (7) Active Promotion (8) Layoff Aversion (9) Measure of Success (10) Partnerships and (11) Innovation.

To ensure that dislocated workers and their families are able to overcome the devastation caused by job loss and the loss of income, direct access is provided to an Unemployment Insurance (UI) Representative. To ensure that dislocated workers can effectively use the SETA/Sacramento Works Job Centers (SWJC) and access local employment and retraining services, extensive information is shared about the SWJC system, including services available through EDD's Workforce Services Branch.

While these elements are the foundation for any effective Rapid Response Orientation, each orientation is unique and geared to the needs of the employer and dislocated workers. Over the years, SETA has incorporated services to meet both the changing and challenging economic conditions such as Pacific Gas and Electric Company's (PG&E) California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) and Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) along with SMUD's Energy Assistance Program Rate (EAPR) to assist with utility bills; the California Low Cost Auto Insurance (CLCA), a program to assist with automobile insurance; the Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) and the Covered California to address medical coverage. Recently incorporated are workshops provided by the California State Personnel Board on "How to Get a State Job" and a workshop provided by EDD, "Preparing for Your Next Job" along with other key services to assist dislocated workers with specific job search, including resume writing and interview skills geared to laid-off workers along with assessment tools assisting them in identifying their talents, interests, and values.

SETA's Rapid Response Team is comprised of SETA/Sacramento Works Inc. (SWI) Workforce Professionals along with representatives from the Employment Development Department's Workforce Services and Unemployment Insurance Branches. The Team provides virtual and on-site orientation(s) consistent with state requirements coupled with information describing the services and benefits available to employees affected by layoffs. Additional services and staff support are available based on employer/employee need.

SETA/SWI is a member of the Northern California Rapid Response Roundtable (NCRRR). The Roundtable, established in 2008, is comprised of the Regional Workforce Boards in Northern California, EDD Workforce Services, County Economic Development Departments, and regional Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs). The Roundtable consists of Rapid Response Coordinators, planners, and practitioners who work locally on behalf of the many Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), to deliver timely rapid response services to employers and dislocated workers.

The purpose of the Roundtable is to maintain consistent quality of services at a time of limited funding opportunities.

### **Rapid Response Services Available to Dislocated Workers**

- Information about regional services to assist them in finding new jobs
- Information about training opportunities and providers
- Professional help with their job search
- Distributing information to dislocated workers on job prospects and occupational demand
- Access to American Job Center of California (AJCC) services and career coaches
- Access to various online job search, job matching, and training systems

- Job Clubs and Job Search Assistance
- Counseling
- Information on unemployment insurance, housing programs, and medical insurance
- Other services to address employee and family needs

### **Benefits to the Employer**

- Access to layoff aversion services
- Better employee morale and productivity during transition
- Confidentiality concerning business decisions
- Coordination with outplacement services that may be provided
- No red tape to handle
- On-site assistance
- Services provided at no cost

### **Layoff Aversion and Rapid Response**

SETA helps to avert layoffs through early intervention by referring troubled companies to local city and county economic development departments, and business associations for assistance and by providing skills upgrade training to employees through classroom, online or on-the-job training to prepare them for other jobs within the employer's business. One unique strategy is "Talent Connect": a closed, virtual, or on-site, industry specific recruitment event. "Talent Connect" is designed to get workers rapidly re-employed, ensure they are not under-employed, and will not face a future layoff.

SETA's network of employers participates in our "Talent Connect" events with the understanding they will be interacting with a highly skilled, "soon to be" dislocated workforce who are seeking positions or classifications with the same or similar skill sets, offer same or similar salaries, and are full-time, permanent positions.

SETA's goal for layoff aversion is to help companies make changes so that layoffs are reduced or completely averted. SETA is notified of impending layoffs through WARN notices from the California Job Opportunities Board (CalJOBS) WARN Notification system and local elected officials that are required recipients of the notices, from local media television, radio, business journals and the internet, and from employers who are seeking assistance. To attain this goal, SETA/SWI participates in meeting with a network which includes the Economic Development Offices of the City and County of Sacramento along with other cities economic development entities such as Rancho Cordova, Folsom and Elk Grove who share information about the business climate including closure, layoffs, or potential layoffs.

### **Local Area Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities and Priority of Service**

The SWJC system serves as a single access point for individuals seeking employment in Sacramento County. Its services are customer-driven, easily accessible, and tailored to meet the workforce needs of the region. The system prioritizes comprehensive, customer-focused, and performance-based solutions.

The SWJC system unites business, education, community, and public agencies to address the needs of employers and job seekers through a broad range of workforce development activities and strategic partnerships. Job seekers accessing the system benefit from universal access to tools and services, including assessments, career coaching, labor market information, job search assistance, education and skills training. Training options include customized and on-the-job training, entrepreneurial training, apprenticeship opportunities, and vocational training through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Job Center staff also provide specialized services to populations with significant barriers to employment, such as dislocated workers, veterans, parolees, immigrants, refugees, high-risk youth, low-income individuals, people experiencing homelessness, and persons with disabilities. Over 90 percent of customers served within the SWJC system have at least one significant barrier to employment.

To address the needs of today's employers and under- or unemployed workers, SETA/SWI has developed a system that emphasizes academic and vocational skills development, attainment of industry-recognized credentials and degrees, and promotion of career pathways in high-demand, middle-skill occupations. The SWJC system aligns with the California Workforce Development Board's (CWDB) Unified State Strategic Workforce Development Plan, which emphasizes regional alignment through sector strategies, career pathways, and collaborative regional partnerships. This alignment promotes local access to regional pipelines that provide supportive services, integrate resources, and braid funding.

Through the SWJCs, customers have access to a variety of tools and services, including assessments, career coaching, labor market information, job search assistance, adult education and literacy, and vocational skills training through the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) or on-the-job training (OJT) opportunities. Co-located partners enhance service delivery and outreach efforts to support special populations. All Job Centers comply with ADA requirements and provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with special needs.

SWJC system staff and partners actively recruit and assist low-skilled job seekers and at-risk populations by providing the training necessary to enter career pathways in high-demand or high-growth industry sectors and clusters in the region. Training for system customers aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- Attainment of basic skills and competencies required to successfully enter and complete post-secondary education, apprenticeship, or career technical education programs in approved industry sectors or clusters.
- Acquisition of industry-recognized credentials or degrees leading to employment quality jobs in high-demand industry sectors or clusters.

As a top priority in the Local Board's Action Plan for 2023-24, the SWI board adopted the following definition for quality jobs in January 2023:

- *A high-quality job is one that 1) includes a sustainable economically competitive compensation package, 2) offers a safe, thriving, and inclusive environment, and 3) gives employees from diverse backgrounds a path of opportunity and growth.*

This definition recognizes that a quality job is dependent on both the employer's criteria as well as the specific knowledge, abilities, and skills of job seekers.

In collaboration with the three other workforce development boards in the Capital Region, SWI has partnered with Valley Vision under the region's *CJF/We Prosper Together* strategic initiative. This partnership focuses on generating quality jobs, creating clear and supported career pathways, and fostering an equitable, sustainable economy across the Capital Region.

As part of the CJF/We Prosper Together efforts, the Capital Region has established the following definitions for job quality:

- **Quality Jobs:** *Positions that pay an annualized wage enabling financial self-sufficiency and stability for working families, without reliance on safety net programs, while allowing for savings. These jobs include employer-provided health insurance and are durable or lead to another quality job within the next decade.*
- **Promising Jobs:** *Positions that may not yet provide self-sufficiency wages or benefits but offer workers a pathway to a quality job within 10 years.*

Together, quality and promising jobs constitute the Capital Region's *pool of opportunity jobs*, offering residents the potential to achieve financial self-sufficiency. Additionally, wage thresholds have been established for each subregion to measure the percentage of participants achieving self-sufficiency across the Capital Region.

The local board has adopted a priority of service policy aligned with state policy guidance. This policy prioritizes services for veterans, eligible spouses of veterans, recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority is established during eligibility determination for WIOA Title I Adult registrants, with documentation collected to verify eligibility. Those meeting the priority criteria receive preferential placement into education and training opportunities, as appropriate, and are assured priority access to supportive services. These policies guide SWJC staff in providing equitable access to education, training, and employment opportunities, ensuring support for the most vulnerable and underserved communities.

### **Regional Equity and Recovery Partnerships -**

The Initiative of the California Workforce Development Board includes:

SETA in partnership with the Los Rios Colleges jointly delivers career pathway programs in digital literacy, information technology, and business/professional skills. The project leverages the colleges' BUSTEC Pathways to Public Sector Careers project, a partnership between the 4 community colleges, SETA, the Capital Adult Education Regional Consortium (CAERC), Valley Vision, and the Institute for Local Government. Short-term career and technical education coursework is available online and in-person at agreed upon sites that are accessible to the community. These programs represent on-ramps to credit pathways that lead to industry-valued credentials such as Business Information Worker, Office Technology, Business Management, Business Administration, and more.

### **High Road Training Partnerships –**

The SETA Public Pathways Partnership connects underserved populations in Sacramento with career, education, training, and skills in high-road, high-demand career pathways. The goal is to enroll 300 residents in training programs in the Public Sector/Business, Healthcare, Biotechnology, and other in-demand pathways. The partnership provides a regionally centralized approach that connects target populations with job training, certifications, enrollment into postsecondary education, and employment. Navigators conduct outreach throughout the region to engage individuals from target populations and connect them to SETA and its partner agencies. Individuals from the targeted neighborhoods who are enrolled in training are provided with case management, supportive services, placed into internships, on-the-job training, and employment.

### **Description of Youth Workforce Activities**

The intent of the SWI WIOA Youth Program is to “Provide high quality services that prepare youth and young adults, with one or more barriers to employment, for postsecondary education and employment with career/promotional opportunities.”

The Sacramento Works for Youth WIOA program focuses on the following:

Significantly increased services to out-of-school youth 16-24

- High school dropout recovery
- Achievement of recognized postsecondary credentials
- Career pathways and work-based learning tied to a systematic approach that offers youth a comprehensive set of service strategies
- Closer linkages to local labor markets
- Required connection between WIOA-funded youth programs and the America’s Job Center of California (AJCC) system providing information on the full array of appropriate services that are available to youth.

The Sacramento Works for Youth Committee’s Youth Voice program, in alignment with WIOA Youth program goals and provides youth with the platform and training to engage in Workforce Development activities. This initiative focuses on fostering leadership, creating opportunities for personal and professional growth, and allowing young voices to influence workforce-related policies, decisions and activities in the community.

The Sacramento Works Youth Committee (Youth Committee) is responsible for the planning and oversight of WIOA Youth Services. The mission of the Youth Committee is to prepare youth for continued education in post-secondary, apprenticeship, or occupational skills training leading to recognized credentials in high-demand industry occupations.

The goals of the Youth Committee include:

- Coordinate strategic planning process for youth employment program
- Develop the process of selecting youth providers and make funding recommendations to the full board
- Conduct oversight and evaluation of youth providers
- Coordinate with youth education and workforce development initiatives in the region
- Ensure job centers are youth friendly
- Ensure that youth program providers are providing 21<sup>st</sup> century skill development to attain



and retain employment

- Develop a continuum of activities to engage more youth in the workforce system
- Identify Digital Literacy and Skills partners that can provide expanded services to youth enrolled in programs.

The principles that guide the work of the Youth Committee and the Youth program include:

- Focus on the identified critical occupational clusters for training and employment.
- Focus on 21<sup>st</sup> Century work readiness skills to attain and retain employment and academic achievement.
- Promote academic achievement and lifelong learning.
- Promote career pathway opportunities.
- Promote demand industry sector partnerships; and
- Promote services to high-risk youth.

The Sacramento Works Youth Service Providers serve youth residing in challenged neighborhoods. These service providers are responsible for providing access to services to youth in their target geographic areas and through the SWJCs located in their target areas. Youth WIOA service providers are required to be located on-site at an SWJC on a frequent basis to provide access to the WIOA youth program for youth seeking services through the SWJC system.

### **Special Youth Initiatives:**

#### **STEPS – Summer Training and Employment Program for Students -**

Funded through the Department of Rehabilitation, SETA has operated the STEPS program since 2018, beginning with serving 50 students with disabilities (SWDs). The STEPS program provides 20 hours of 21<sup>st</sup> Century World of Work job readiness training followed by placement in 170-hours of paid work experience. In addition, job readiness training offered through IMAGO is a student-centered soft skills program that provides real world content that involves personal skills such as adaptability, problem solving, and collaboration. It's the foundation to help our students be their best and ultimately thrive in life and their careers, along with paid work experience. While in the program youth are provided with service-learning topics either by choice or selected categories based on employer evaluations. Additionally, support services and resources are provided to address barriers such as, but not limited to, transportation, housing and other needs to ensure successful participation in the program.

SETA partners with the Sacramento County Office of Education and the High School Districts' Special Education Departments and Workability Coordinators at local high schools within Sacramento County. Additionally, SETA works with the four local community colleges' Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) offices to connect SWDs to the STEPS program.

#### **Gap Inc. – This Way ONward -**

Launched in 2007, the Gap Inc., This Way ONward program is a paid life skills and internship program that helps low-income youth land a first job at Old Navy stores.

In January 2019, SETA was selected as the Community Partner for the Gap Inc.'s, This Way ONward program in Sacramento. SETA received grant funding to operate the program for three years to recruit, train and support 36 interns to be placed in a 10-week paid internship program with Old Navy stores. After completion of the internship, over 65% of the interns are hired in permanent jobs.

### **Career Paths to Success Program**

The Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) partners with SETA to implement the talent pipeline for the School-Based Mental Health and Wellness (SBMHW) Career Pipeline program. SETA is committed to supporting SCOE's workforce development efforts in building a talent pipeline for career pathways in SBMHW, while providing career and training development opportunities for underserved communities.

On February 17, 2023, SCOE subcontracted with SETA to serve as the Employment Connection partner as well as a recruitment partner for participants who are enrolled as interns in the Career Pipeline School-Based Mental Health and Wellness Path. SETA is leveraging opportunities through special youth program initiatives and the SWJC System.

The Workforce Development staff support the Career Pipeline with:

- Career Placement and referral services for Career Pipeline interns.
- Job readiness services to high-school students participating in the Career Paths to Success summer program. Services include career assessments, counseling, and employment referral and placement services, working with students at each of the seven schools participating in the summer program to provide job readiness services to high school students, including career assessments, job counseling/coaching, and employment referral and placement services.

### **SMUD High School Internship Program -**

Starting in 2015, SETA has been awarded yearly contracts to coordinate SMUD's High School Internship Program. Each year 25 students are selected from area high schools to participate in a six-week internship at SMUD. Interns work in a wide variety of departments including Human Resources, Security Operations, Substation Maintenance, Communications, Marketing and Community Relations and IT Operations.

In 2020, with the onset of COVID-19, the SMUD High School Internship Program pivoted from a live in-person service delivery model to a live virtual service model. In the summer of 2024, the program served and employed 14 full-time students. The work environment consisted of remote work and in-person networking opportunities and a culminating field trip. SETA will be preparing to recruit 25 students to be placed in internships in June 2025.

### **Responsible Entity for the Disbursal of Grant Funds and the Competitive Process Used to Award Contracts**

SETA serves as the designated local grant recipient and fiscal agent, responsible for the disbursement of funds.

SETA adheres to Procurement Policies and Procedures adopted by the SETA Governing Board to award contracts for services and activities carried out under this plan. These policies are designed to

ensure that all procurements are conducted in a manner that fosters full and open competition in compliance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

The procurement process begins with the publication of Public Notices to inform the public about the release of Requests for Proposals (RFPs). Offeror's Conferences are conducted to provide potential respondents with opportunities to ask questions and seek clarifications. Evaluation teams are assembled to review and score proposals based on criteria specified in the RFPs. Recommendations for approval are prepared by these teams and presented to the respective boards for review and final approval.

SETA awards contracts to organizations that demonstrate the capability to perform successfully. Key considerations in awarding contracts include the contractor's ability to serve customers with significant barriers to employment, integrity, compliance with public policy, past performance, financial stability, and availability of technical resources.

Procurement records are maintained for a minimum of three years following the date of final payment. These records comprehensively document the procurement process and include, but are not limited to:

1. The rationale for the chosen method of procurement.
2. Solicitation documents.
3. The basis for awards.
4. Selection of contract type.
5. Contractor selections or rejections.
6. The basis for determining contract price.

This approach ensures transparency, accountability, and the effective management of public funds.

**Description of How the Local Board Fulfills Duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider**

As indicated above, SETA/SWI conducts a competitive procurement to select SWJC and Career Services providers. A comprehensive list of providers is available at <https://sacramentoworks.org/job-centers/>. Additionally, the local board competitively procures the limited role of the One-Stop Operator, designating SETA to fulfill this role, subject to approval by the State Workforce Development Board.

## Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

The development of comprehensive plans entails building broad and inclusive partnerships with regional and local entities in a variety of sectors. This includes engaging with employers, labor organizations, and community-based organizations as well as WIOA core, required, and strategic program partners. These partnerships will ensure the inclusion of person-centered approaches to addressing multifaceted barriers to employment by utilizing input from the communities themselves.

Stakeholders participating in the planning processes should include but are not limited to, employers, labor organizations, education partners, human services and housing partners as well as community-based organizations that provide services to target populations such as: justice-involved, English language learners, refugees, immigrants, youth, older adults, veterans, people with disabilities, and any other entities supporting historically unserved or underserved communities.

Using the template below, Regional Planning Units and Local Workforce Development Boards should provide a detailed description of how meaningful stakeholder involvement and community engagement was achieved when developing the Regional and Local Plan Updates. This summary should be included as an attachment to both the Regional and Local Plan Updates.

| Mode of Outreach  | Target of Outreach  | Summary of Attendance | Comments |
|---|---|-----------------------|----------|
| Email blasts, announcements at relevant local and regional stakeholder and community meetings, and posting on SETA's website. | <b>See Summary of Stakeholder and Community Engagement below.</b> |                       |          |
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|   |   |                       |          |
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## Summary of Stakeholder and Community Engagement -

### Outreach Efforts

The Capital Region Workforce Boards facilitated two Public Input Meetings to solicit input from local workforce development stakeholders (education, labor, business, economic development and community-based organizations) on the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local and Regional Plans. Attendees were informed that the plans to be developed would respond to current and foreseen challenges faced by the local workforce system, provide a framework for continued regional cooperation and investment, encourage continuous improvement of integrated services to clients, and respond to policy direction in workforce legislation.

The Public Input Meetings were facilitated via joint hybrid meetings (zoom and in-person options) and were held on the dates and times as follows:

- Wednesday, December 4, 2024 (5:00 p.m., PST)
- Wednesday, December 11, 2024 (4:30 p.m., PST)

Public Notices were posted in local and regional publications, including publication on Local Board's websites. In addition, email notifications were widely disseminated to local area stakeholders, including the required list as mandated by the state's policy guidance, and other representatives from the business and organized labor communities, the K-12 system, the community college system, adult education, private postsecondary institutions, and community-based organizations. Special care was taken to ensure that organizations representing historically disadvantaged populations, such as County Human Services Departments, the California Human Development, Department of Rehabilitation, PRIDE Industries, the local American Association of Retired Persons, Vietnam Veterans of California, the California Indian Manpower Consortium, Alta Regional, NorCal Center on Deafness, to name a few, received notifications. Partners were also invited to submit written comments regarding the Public Input Meeting questions.

### Public Input Meetings

The meetings included a presentation on economic landscapes, an overview of the workforce development system, current state and regional plans, goals and priorities, and offered questions designed to solicit input from the attendees on how to improve services to job seeker and business communities.

Attendees included stakeholders and partners from education, labor, business, economic development and community-based organizations, including those focused on serving low-income and other vulnerable populations. The overarching input indicated a need for increased and ongoing communication among service partners and improved alignment of services to meet the needs of all customers. Recurring issues expressed by attendees included transportation, the

need for wrap-around supports, mitigating lengthy/cumbersome processes and paperwork to access services, and increasing access to job readiness and career pathway programs for vulnerable populations.

**Specific, detailed areas of input included:**

***Engagement and Outreach for Job Seekers***

- Prioritizing proactive, in-person interactions over passive approaches like booths or presentations.
- Genuine, heartfelt conversations with job seekers to build trust and awareness of opportunities.
- Emphasized the effectiveness of physical outreach through flyers posted in high-traffic, low-income areas such as grocery stores.
- Conducting digital campaigns and physical outreach, including Google ads, social media, and flyers in high-traffic areas, to connect with diverse job-seeking audiences.
- Organizing events in community hubs like churches, parks, or local centers to address transportation challenges for job seekers.
- Providing small incentives, e.g., food vouchers, to encourage participation in workforce services.
- Attendance at outreach events to assess attendees' needs and connect them to relevant programs, services, and supports.

***Strengthening Employer Relationships***

- Build trust-based partnerships with employers to better understand their workforce needs and to facilitate placements.
- Use sector-specific orientations, trade group involvement, and employer education on trauma-informed, culturally competent practices with sessions tailored to industries like healthcare, construction, and manufacturing.
- Encourage case managers to act as liaisons between employers and employees to address workplace challenges.
- Address the challenge of maintaining continuity when employer contacts leave, requiring the cultivation of new relationships.

***Employer Education and Awareness***

- Conduct trauma-informed training on hiring practices and culturally competent communication to educate them on workforce diversity needs since employers often struggle when working with employees from underrepresented or diverse backgrounds.
- Offer programs providing employer training on navigating challenges with new generations entering the workforce.

***Enhancing Service Delivery***

- Implement real-time connections ("warm hand-offs") for immediate access to resources.
- Highlight word-of-mouth referrals as an effective method for increasing program visibility.

- Address challenges of fragmented service systems, where job seekers must repeatedly enter their information across various platforms.
- Align programs to integrate education, skills training, and job readiness effectively for improved user experiences.
- Address the need to balance efforts between preparing job seekers for employment and educating employers to adapt to modern workforce needs.
- Creating a centralized resource directory that can be shared with workforce services stakeholders and partners, including colleges and community-based organizations.
- Strengthen partnerships between community colleges, the workforce board, and local community groups.

#### ***Addressing Housing and Homelessness***

- Strengthen collaborations with housing providers to tailor programs for transitioning individuals.
- Highlight housing as foundational to job stability and employment readiness, noting that lack of housing complicates other essential processes like opening a bank account.

#### ***Youth and Community Support***

- Provide collaboration with youth, LGBTQ+ centers, drop-in locations, and programs, such as “Street Leaders” from Waking the Village.
- Highlight the importance of tailored outreach to unhoused youth and underrepresented populations.
- Focus on challenges faced by youth entering the workforce for the first time, including the need for on-the-job training and better alignment of expectations between employers and young employees.

#### ***Economic Mobility and Poverty Alleviation***

- Differentiate between individual and community-level strategies, focusing on systemic solutions like homeownership and local micro-enterprises, and a self-sustaining economy.
- Emphasize key areas such as affordable housing, transportation, childcare, and mental health services as vital components to lift individuals and communities out of poverty.
- Advocate for engaging community members in assessing their assets and opportunities for local development.

#### ***Technology Integration***

- Develop user-friendly, mobile-accessible platforms to reduce barriers for all demographics.

#### ***Literacy and Education***

- Focus on integrated education and training (IET) programs that combine basic education with job-specific skills training.
- Promote dual-instructor models that teach language and technical skills simultaneously to accelerate successes.

- Address the need for digital literacy training to ensure all job seekers, especially underrepresented populations, can effectively navigate and engage in an increasingly digital world.

***Mental Health and Confidence Building***

- Address the mental health crisis, especially among younger generations and its impact on workforce participation.
- Create programs to boost self-esteem, improve self-image, address mental health challenges, and cultivate confidence to help job seekers overcome systemic barriers.

***Justice-Involved Reentry Programs***

- Address the unique barriers faced by formerly incarcerated individuals, including employer hesitation and systemic funding limitations.
- Increase advocacy and collaboration with city and regional partners to better serve justice-involved populations.

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## Sacramento Local Board Record of Comments

Section 108 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires the Local Boards to publish their local plan for public comment. This document includes all comments that have been received by the Sacramento Local Board that disagree with its local plan, and reflects how the Sacramento Local Board considered that input and its impact on the narrative in its local plan.

**Please provide these comments in the following format:**

| Local Plan Section | Comment/Response      |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Section:           | Comment:              |
|                    | Local Board Response: |
| Section:           | Comment:              |
|                    | Local Board Response: |
| Section:           | Comment:              |
|                    | Local Board Response: |
| Section:           | Comment:              |
|                    | Local Board Response: |

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**PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION DESIGNEE AND PLAN UPDATE SIGNATURES**

This local plan represents the Sacramento Works, Inc. Workforce Development Board’s efforts to maximize and coordinate resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

This local plan is submitted for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029, in accordance with the provisions of the WIOA.

**Local Workforce Development Board Chair**

**Chief Local Elected Official**

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa N. Clawson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Rich Desmond

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Sacramento Works, Inc.

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Chair, SETA Governing Board

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Title

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Title

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Date

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