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Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Plan

Wisconsin WDA #2 Program Years 2024-2027 Modification 1

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Julie Cayo
President and CEO
Employ Milwaukee, Inc.
1322 N. 8th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53205
414-270-1700

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Section I: Local Analysis

Employ Milwaukee (EMI), Workforce Development Area #2 (WDA 2), has been identified as a planning region with Workforce Development Areas 1 and 3; therefore, Section I Questions 1.-3. have been removed from the Local Plan submission per the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) guidance since it duplicates the questions in the Regional Plan.

Section II: Local Strategies

4. Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the local area. Include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services. Evaluate the capacity of the available services within the local area to address the education and skill needs of the workforce (as identified in Section I, Question 3 of the Regional or Local Plan), including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the local area (as identified in Section I, Question 2 of the Regional or Local Plan).

EMI is the state-certified Workforce Development Board (WDB) serving Milwaukee County, also referred to as WDA 2. EMI's mission is to build a strong workforce development system by planning, coordinating, convening, collaborating and monitoring workforce initiatives with businesses, partners and community stakeholders at the local, regional and state level to ensure a skilled and productive workforce for the 21st Century.

EMI convenes and collaborates with partners to lead efforts in WDA 2 to align workforce development services and investment with education and training programs to supply skilled and educated workers to employers. The WDA 2 labor supply is represented by organizations and agencies serving on the Coordinating Council who engage with job seekers and students to connect clients to the workforce system and to promote career pathway and training programs and recruitment/hiring events. The WDA 2 labor demand is represented by employers and associations serving on Industry Advisory Boards who define occupational skills, credential and certification requirements, and request customized training and candidate recruitment services from EMI's business services staff.

The WDA 2 workforce system extends across county lines and WDA boundaries to connect Milwaukee County's workforce to regional employers and education/training partners. Milwaukee County employers are also connected to regional labor supply through the adjacent local workforce development boards and systems within the Milwaukee 7 region.

EMI has a robust workforce development system supported by a diverse set of service providers, programs and services, and partnerships and collaborations. EMI routinely measures customer satisfaction and looks for areas of continuous improvement to ensure services are being delivered effectively and efficiently.

WDA 2 is home to numerous post-secondary training providers who offer a range of program types, costs, lengths, and job placement programs. There are youth programs, literacy programs designed for those with very low basic skills, bridge programs for those who need to upgrade basic skills, short- and long-term training programs, technical and associate degree providers, two- and four-year colleges and universities, and graduate programs.

Workforce development activities include:

Community Engagement and Outreach: EMI's Community Engagement Team has established satellite locations across Milwaukee County to more effectively provide workforce services to job seekers and businesses through a place-based approach, especially in high poverty, high unemployment areas and focused on target populations needing assistance.

Career Services: All required WIOA elements for basic and individualized career services are provided through the various partners of the workforce system in WDA 2, with the majority provided by core partners within the American Job Center (AJC) system. Basic and individualized career services include a wide range of service types including those specific to adults, dislocated workers, and youth. Examples include assessments, job search assistance, career counseling, referrals to other programs and services, provision of labor market information, individual employment planning, career planning, financial literacy, mentoring, and more. EMI provides digital literacy learning. WIOA-eligible clients seeking individualized career assistance are assigned to a Career Planner who serves as a case manager and career coach. These services are delivered through a human-centered perspective, with an understanding of regional employer demand, and focus on industry-specific skill needs, career pathway exploration, upskilling, and job matching.

All Career Planners, regardless of funding stream, work one-on-one with clients, beginning with the delivery and interpretation of a comprehensive/objective assessment, development of an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) and/or Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The Career Planner follows the client's experience, beginning with their engagement with the AJC and followed by other workforce services that are administered and documented in either a group or one-on-one session. Interactions continue with the client until successful job placement occurs, at which point the Career Planner provides follow-up services for a duration of time to assist the client with job retention needs.

Training and Work-Based Learning Services: For clients needing skills development beyond the resources available at American Job Centers, Career Planners recommend occupational skills training and/or work-based learning. Training is provided through certificate or degree-based programs that include career pathways and stackable credentials when possible. Training types include virtual learning, short-term training boot camps, customized industry-recognized cohorts, and traditional post-secondary programs funded through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Training services are offered by multiple providers and partners within the local workforce system. Eligibility and program requirements are unique to each funding source. Partners work together to coordinate service delivery to effectively maximize resources. Examples of work-based learning include On-the-Job Training, Registered Apprenticeship, Youth Apprenticeship, YouthBuild, transitional jobs, and various types of paid work experience opportunities.

Business Services Team: EMI's Business Services Team (BST) coordinates business services and solutions with workforce system partners to provide a comprehensive and streamlined approach that reduces duplication and maximizes resources to employers. EMI's BST meets regularly to collaborate to ensure that employers receive the best services available. Current services include, but are not limited to:

- **Recruitment and Placement:** EMI BST offers a full range of services to assist businesses and employers with their hiring needs. Services include, but are not limited to, pre-screening, recruitment and hiring assistance, conducting/hosting hiring events, job postings on Job Center of Wisconsin, tax incentives, labor market information, job accommodations, and more.
- **Training:** EMI's BST offers several training programs and incentives to help local businesses and employers stay competitive in today's economy. Services include, but are not limited to, On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, transitional jobs, Registered Apprenticeships, Youth Apprenticeship, internships, work experiences, and more.
- **Talent Retention:** EMI's BST provides educational opportunities for employers on retention issues to keep businesses informed. Services include, but are not limited to, Incumbent Worker Training, human resource strategies, employee coaching, and more.
- **Business Recruitment and Expansion:** The growth and expansion of area businesses contributes to the economic well-being of the region. EMI's BST connects businesses and employers to expansion resources including tax credits, grants, capital finance, and more.
- **Mass Layoffs and Business Closings:** When a business closes or experiences a mass layoff, a special process referred to as Rapid Response is used to quickly assess the reemployment needs of affected workers and to get information to those workers. Services include, but are not limited to, information sessions, planning sessions, onsite services for affected employees, and more.

Placement and Follow Up: Sustainable, long-term placement in high quality jobs is the goal for all EMI programs. Once clients are placed into unsubsidized employment and have a planned exit to employment, EMI and AJC staff maintain routine contact to ensure they are receiving necessary job retention assistance or services. Career Services staff document and ensure that clients successfully meet their planned outcome goals and successful outcomes on the WIOA performance measures. Career Planners, when appropriate, also provide services necessary to help prevent job loss and support job retention.

WDA 2 has the capacity to provide such services and address the needs of individuals with barriers and employers through its robust partnerships, which include but are not limited to, WIOA Required Partners including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Service, Unemployment Insurance, and Adult Education, Milwaukee Reentry Network, Wisconsin Veterans Chamber of Commerce, satellite locations in community- and faith-based organizations across the county, industry associations, other employer groups, etc.

Key strengths of EMI's workforce system include:

Youth Employment: EMI has a long-standing partnership with the City of Milwaukee to provide the Earn & Learn summer youth employment program, which has given up to 2,500 youth each year job readiness training, enrichment activities, and paid work experience at community work sites and with public and private employers. EMI has obtained federal discretionary funding to support initiatives that include paid work experience for a wide variety of youth who are enrolled in high school, are disconnected from school and work, and have been involved in the criminal justice system at some level.

Registered Apprenticeship: EMI has embraced apprenticeship as a job-driven training strategy and as such, has obtained discretionary federal funding to advance the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship in WDA 2, particularly for women and minorities who are underrepresented in this area. EMI partners with the DWD Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards (BAS) on grant programs and initiatives and participates in Youth Apprenticeship consortia throughout WDA 2.

Labor Market Demand Intelligence: EMI's BST convenes Industry Advisory Boards (IABs) in high demand industry sectors. IABs provide timely labor market information (developed through input of its employer partners) and create an inventory of available positions so the skills of job seekers can be matched to employers' needs. This business-led model optimizes best practices in workforce training and advances a "demand and supply" model that identifies and connects employers' real-time hiring needs with effective systems and partners to screen, train, and match workers for those positions.

Digital Literacy Lab: EMI provides digital literacy training in four (4) modules to ensure job seekers have the digital skills to acquire, maintain, and advance in good jobs.

Reentry Services: As documented in the Regional Plan analysis, WDA 2 has a significant number of individuals who are incarcerated or have been previously involved in the criminal justice system. EMI responds to this critical need by providing pre- and post-release services in local and state correctional facilities using a variety of employment and training service strategies. EMI has staff with criminal justice expertise, uses assessments that reflect the correlation between job readiness and risk of recidivism to customize reentry service delivery, and continuously pursues additional funding to support reentry programs and initiatives. EMI's CEO coordinates with local, state, and national departments and organizations involved in criminal justice initiatives to stay apprised of evidence-based best practices and communicate local successes and challenges.

Challenges for EMI's workforce system includes:

Eligible Training Program List (ETPL) Management: Performance outcomes for training providers are not listed on the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) managed ETPL making it difficult for consumers to assess the quality of training and likelihood of job placement after training. Training providers can update the costs, descriptions, and performance outcomes listed on the ETPL making it an unstable source of information.

Lack of Common Intake/Data Systems and Competing Outcome Measurements: The variety of service providers, programs, services, and funding streams in WDA 2 have unique sets of eligibility requirements and outcome measurements which can be difficult to coordinate and can create confusion for clients. Many of the programs and services in WDA 2 have their own set of reporting requirements. Most funders have a unique data entry system and intake paperwork. The lack of having a common intake and data system across the workforce system creates an additional burden for the client, partners, and workforce development staff.

Regional Public Transportation Limited: The seven-county Southeastern Wisconsin region has many job opportunities; however, its public transportation system has a limited reach outside of Milwaukee County

(last mile or no service), limited times available (3rd shift/weekends), inadequate funding, and little alignment with other regional systems. This precludes many of the region's businesses and job seekers from being able to connect. EMI leadership continually seeks ways to overcome this challenge by collaborating with local and regional planning agencies, transportation initiatives such as FlexRide (shared ride system), and other partners.

5. Describe the local WDB's strategic vision and goals to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. Include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment. Identify specific goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on the primary indicators of performance described in WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A).

EMI's vision is to develop workforce solutions that promote regional economic growth and employment opportunity for all job seekers by convening leaders from business and industry, economic and workforce development, education and training as well as community partners and policy makers. EMI's goals are to connect job seekers to employment opportunities, to provide education and training options in high-growth, high-demand sectors, and to provide a skilled and sustainable workforce to attract, retain and grow diverse businesses in the seven-county Southeastern Wisconsin region.

The above vision, mission, and goals support EMI meeting or exceeding all of its WIOA performance accountability measures. A Board of Directors Strategic Guidance process conducted in February of 2019 produced five (5) core values to serve as a guiding force for the work EMI does with clients, partners, and employers:

- People-centered
- Rooted in equity & opportunity
- Networked with intentional partnerships
- Regionally responsive
- Growth and system-oriented

These strategic goals help prepare individuals with barriers to employment for the workforce by ensuring a customer-focused approach where all individuals have equitable access to opportunity, resources for barrier remediation through a wide variety of intentional partnerships within the Milwaukee County public workforce system, employment and training programs connected to jobs that are growing regionally, and a desire to develop funding to serve more and varied individuals with barriers to employment, with EMI's system partners, over the next four years.

6. Describe the local area's strategy to ensure that the entities carrying out WIOA core programs and the required one-stop partners align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in question 5 of this section.

The One-Stop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) fulfills the WIOA requirements to document and reach agreement among State and other required parties for negotiating cost sharing, service access,

service delivery and other matters required and essential to the establishment of the local one-stop delivery system. The MOU describes the commitment of the parties to provide integrated workforce services at Comprehensive and Affiliate American Job Centers.

AJC partners work together to engage in integrated service delivery strategies to better serve job seekers and employers. Routine meetings and convenings assist with resource and information sharing, cooperative efforts with employers, and common staff training, among other collaborative benefits. EMI's designated OSO is responsible for facilitating integration efforts and convening all required partners in the AJC system.

7. Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that:

a. Identifies the programs that are included in that system; and

b. Describes how the local WDB will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and engage with the WIOA core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 USC 2301 et. seq.), to support service alignment.

EMI's designated Regional One-Stop Operator (OSO) is responsible for facilitating integration efforts and convening all required partners in the one-stop system. Primary activities include:

- Required Partners: Front-line supervisors or managers from each core and partner program meet quarterly to discuss individual program updates, areas of common need, and strategies to align and/or integrate service delivery.
- WDA 2 BST: Business services representatives from all core and partner programs convene at least monthly to discuss business needs, employer services, and opportunities to align and/or integrate service delivery.
- All-Staff Meetings: Meetings for all staff who are part of core and partner programs are convened quarterly to provide and/or receive workforce system updates, participate in shared training, and more.
- All-Career Planner Meetings: Career planners from core and partner programs are convened at least annually to participate in program updates, shared learning, and discuss co-enrollment and areas for alignment.
- Other: Lunch-n-Learn events and topical educational and training events are held on an as-needed basis for front line and supervisory staff of core and partner programs to enhance service delivery.

All required partners services are in WDA 2 and provide services on site at American Job Center locations through service referrals and/or through information provided by trained staff:

- Title I
- Title II

- Title III
- Title IV
- Title V
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education
- Community Services Block Grant
- FSET
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants
- Native American
- TANF
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Unemployment Compensation
- Department of Housing and Urban Development employment and training programs
- Job Corps
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker
- Reentry Employment Opportunities
- YouthBuild

8. Describe how the local WDB will work with the entities carrying out WIOA core programs to:

a. Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

b. Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and

c. Improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

EMI works with DWD, Milwaukee County school districts and high schools, Wisconsin Technical College System and other state and local partners to implement recognized post-secondary credentials across programs that are endorsed by employers and align to career pathways. This also includes work-based learning opportunities with employers such as on-the-job training programs (OJT), customized training, internships, transitional jobs, pre-apprenticeship, occupational skills training, Youth Apprenticeship, and Registered Apprenticeships. Including DVR in these conversations and requesting their input, responds to

better delivery of services under WIOA Title IV. EMI continues to utilize the Eligible Trainer Provider List (ETPL) of vetted providers. They developed rigorous criteria for selection that meets the requirements set forth in the WIOA State Plan for skill attainment, certification or degrees; career pathways and stackable credentials; and labor market information by sector and demographics. Furthermore, their assessment includes a review of provider placement history as well as a comparison of vendor programs and outcomes.

EMI does what is imperative in career planning – trained staff on the benefits of providing nontraditional occupations information to clients. With fields for which individuals from one gender comprise less than 25% of the overall count, EMI staff members strive to provide equitable and unrestricted information to all clients. In collaboration with adult education providers and aligned with career pathways, this process includes but is not limited to referral activities that are not based on stereotypes of what is considered traditional women’s and men’s work. Those clients who utilize their interests and skills often find intrinsic gains or high-wage opportunities that can provide a way out of poverty for many. Grant opportunities such as U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) YouthBuild, DOL Building Pathways to Infrastructure, DOL Nursing Diversity, DOL Critical Sector Job Quality and BankWork\$ promote nontraditional pathways to occupations.

EMI maintains a minimum standard of annual staff training on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Civil Rights Compliance (CRC) requirements which includes ADA accessibility and meeting the training and workplace needs of clients with disabilities. The organization’s Equal Opportunity Officer conducts onsite monitoring and reviews documents for content, effectiveness and timely delivery. EMI also offers these professional development opportunities to its network of education partners.

EMI provides oversight of the AJCs in Milwaukee County and recognizes the need for clients to have seamless access to these services. EMI has installed technology-based kiosks at all AJCs and is refining a referral process between core programs so clients can more readily access core programming and the resources of the AJC system.

9. Describe the strategies and services the local area will use to facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs. Include strategies and services aimed at small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Specifically address:

a. Strategies to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.

EMI’s Business Services Team (BST) has strong partnerships with businesses in high growth, high demand sectors through staffing and support of Industry Advisory Boards (IABs) in Manufacturing, Construction, Healthcare, IT, Financial Services, Hospitality/Retail; and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics. EMI’s IABs spread the word to other members of the business community regarding programs, grants, resources and additional opportunities available through EMI and its partners. Employer engagement by the BST attracts more partners and ultimately help to expand overall services to businesses in the WDA and region.

The Hospitality/Retail IAB has developed significantly and is accelerating service delivery through a recently awarded DOL Critical Sectors Job Quality grant that will provide a variety of employer engagement and job seeker/incumbent worker training services through the brand Serve MKE.

The BankWork\$ program in the Financial Services sector and the Fresh Coast Tech Up accelerated skills training for IT Service Technicians in the IT sector also support employer engagement and talent development to meet real time hiring needs. These programs have relied upon sector partnerships to promote short-term credentialed trainings and have resulted in strengthening and growing EMI's relationships and reputation in the respective sectors. Additionally, EMI serves as the fiscal agent for the Center for Healthcare Careers of Southeast Wisconsin (CHCSEW) and assists in the collaboration of CHCSEW partners in the healthcare sector.

In addition, BST staff attend and participate in several area Chambers of Commerce whereby EMI has invested in memberships, including the South Suburban Chamber of Commerce, Wauwatosa Chamber of Commerce, City of Milwaukee Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), the Wisconsin LGBTQ Chamber, and the Milwaukee Metropolitan Chamber (MMAC). IAB and Chamber meetings and events provide staff with opportunities to outreach to employers and offer the full menu of BST service offerings. These include, but are not limited to, candidate recruitment, onsite hiring events, job fairs, On-The-Job and Incumbent Worker Training, Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship programs, Labor Market Information, customized training, layoff strategies and support, etc. This also gives staff the opportunity to connect businesses to other workforce system partners, economic development entities, education partners (K-12, technical and other higher education), and training partners.

Outreach to businesses is conducted through:

- Focused targeting and outreach to businesses by BST staff to improve promotion of products, particularly On-The-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training.
- Continuous strengthening and refining of the collaborative process of multiple partners working with the same business through Job Center of Wisconsin (JCW) Business.
- Convening a Job Developer Cooperative (JDC) monthly where front-line Job Developer staff meet and share information about job openings, hiring opportunities, training, and business intelligence. BST staff from participating organizations are informed of our respective organizations' employer engagement efforts and ensure that workforce needs from businesses are being shared with organizations' program clients, so they are fully informed of employment and training opportunities. BST staff participating in the JDC include, Job Service, DVR, OVS, MAXIMUS, America Works and all other organizations that have a contract/agreement with EMI that includes job placement, and Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC).
- Leveraging and expanding employer relationships through industry specific associations, either existing or new (e.g., WI Tool, Die & Machining Assoc., WI Motor Carriers Assoc., WI Restaurant Assoc., WI Bankers Assoc., etc.).

The overall goal of these activities is to ensure that the business community has access to talented and qualified job seekers, as well as business solutions, and resources to help them thrive and expand. Increased connections, provided by EMI, between businesses, education and vocational providers, adult basic education providers, economic development entities and other public workforce system partners can provide a measure of progress to meet the overall short- and long-term goals.

EMI's BST team will continue to drive employer engagement, serve as the staff and support of the IABs, and will actively participate in all the above-mentioned outreach activities. EMI BST will use employer champions as a critical engagement strategy. BST will continue to share the needs of employers and types of training/certifications that are preferred/required for their respective industries with its programs department to ensure participants have the best chance possible for their open positions.

EMI's Board members, as well as IAB members, will support the outreach activities through their existing networks and continue to connect the BST with other businesses and associations. Board and IAB members will further lend their expertise and industry knowledge to strengthen and focus the work of the BST team.

b. Coordination of workforce development programs and economic development.

See question 10.

c. Strategies to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

Many individuals visiting the AJC system are those who are receiving or seeking to receive Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits, need assistance understanding eligibility and requirements, and attend Re-Employment Services (RES) sessions. DWD Job Service staff assist individuals in workshops, the resource room and/or one-on-one meetings. DWD Job Service staff and EMI's Rapid Response staff collaborate to present Onsite Information Sessions which include information about the dislocated worker program, JCW, health insurance programs, Veteran's benefits, and Unemployment Insurance (UI), onsite hiring events, and other activities/resources to businesses experiencing a layoff, reduction of workforce, or closure. This partnership helps individuals problem-solve immediate issues, before referring someone directly to UI or other resources, and assists those wishing to explore further job training or a career change.

EMI plays a key role in strengthening the linkage between the one-stop delivery system, UI and dislocated worker programs, by ensuring WIOA providers are actively engaged and participating in the delivery of services to individuals that are seeking unemployment insurance assistance. In addition, service providers are identifying individuals who are receiving Title III services via ASSET and noting that they have applied for UI benefits and may be interested in other career planning services.

In addition, EMI's Rapid Response Coordinator serves as a convener of local partners (i.e. including UI staff as requested) on a weekly, monthly, or as-needed basis to meet the needs of employers and their

employees. This connection is vital during a time when resources, benefits, and requirements for benefits are changing rapidly.

d. Implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers.

Work-based learning has shown to be an effective way for clients to learn new skills, quickly acclimate to a new employer's processes and procedures, and improve retention outcomes. EMI utilizes incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, internships, Registered Apprenticeship, Youth Apprenticeship, and work experiences. EMI works with workforce system partners to promote these opportunities to job seekers and employers. Promotion occurs through various methods including in-person meetings, group presentations, newsletters, fliers, websites, and more.

EMI and its service providers set specific goals and funding objectives related to work-based learning. EMI, in partnership with its service providers, strategically plans to spend no less than 35% of adult and dislocated worker program funds on training which includes work-based learning, and no less than 20% of youth funds on work experience activities.

EMI is evaluating WIOA transitional jobs guidelines to develop a local service strategy, Board-approved policy, and funding resources.

10. Provide an examination of how the local WDB will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area. Include strategies to promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

EMI has a strong relationship with local economic development entities to advance the common goal of long-term economic prosperity for businesses and job seekers in Milwaukee County, as well as the seven-county Southeastern Wisconsin region. These entities include the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp. (WEDC), Milwaukee 7, Milwaukee Metropolitan Association of Commerce (MMAC), Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), City of Milwaukee Department of Community Development, Business Improvement Districts, Chambers of Commerce, and economic development staff in suburban municipalities. BST staff serve on boards, committees, and provide updates on public workforce system resources, as well as seek opportunities to collaborate on rapid response activities, growing local businesses, retaining small businesses, and recruiting new, expanding, or relocating firms into the region.

EMI's BST engage in the following activities to ensure a strong linkage between workforce and economic development:

- Engaging in sector strategies
- Conducting regional planning
- Gathering and communicating local and regional labor market trends

- Learning about business practices and employer expectations
- Finding out about industry events and conditions
- Tapping data on building permits, expansions, unused facilities and utilities
- Staying up to date on new business recruitment efforts and relocating companies
- Understanding the business establishment tax and incentive environment
- Communicating how EMI can assist with vacancy postings, job fairs, referrals, applicant screening and job description writing
- Engaging in city and suburban community development planning

Small businesses are the backbone of Milwaukee County's economy. EMI supports youth and adults in gaining the entrepreneurial skills through skills and education training, career awareness and counseling, and services providing labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors. Career planners are encouraged to refer clients to a wide variety of resources, including but not limited to, the Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, U.S. Small Business Administration, Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Council (WWBIC), WEDC, Veterans Chamber of Commerce, Milwaukee Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), City of Milwaukee Office of Small Business, and other organizations. EMI partners and collaborates with city-wide initiatives and neighborhood community-based organizations that provide entrepreneurial resources to individuals and support microenterprise services.

11. Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area, in particular:

a. Describe how the local WDB will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers.

EMI ensures continuous improvement by setting goals and expectations with the OSO, staff, management, and service providers:

- Shared vision and strategy across all programs and services
- WIOA Common Measures
- Performance Management Dashboards
- Implementation of Quality Assurance Procedures and Reports
- Utilization of DWD Case Management Data & Reporting Tools

Service provider standards and goals are written into contract scopes of work. The OSO, American Job Center management staff, and EMI executive staff routinely discuss strengths and opportunities for

improvement. Regular meetings with service provider management review all contract and performance terms noting necessary corrective actions. EMI, partners, and provider staff offer joint trainings and meetings.

EMI monitors all WIOA Title I-B programs during the program year and provides feedback to the provider on strengths and weaknesses. EMI meets with service providers regularly to discuss program performance, technical assistance needs, and program updates. Additionally, the EMI participates in comprehensive annual State monitoring including fiscal, data validation, equal opportunity, and program compliance. EMI and State monitorings include the analysis of client files and corresponding ASSET entries. Any issues needing correction are addressed through a corrective action process which often includes WDB-provided training.

In order to ensure informed consumer choice in the selection of a training program, EMI will ensure WIOA's 13 required elements for career services are maximized. Career services support customers making informed decisions about their career choices and to understanding the resources needed and available to assist them with pursuing their goals. All core programs participate in career services as much as possible through co-location at job centers.

EMI will use consumer outcome data and consumer surveys to ensure quality service delivery throughout the American Job Centers. Continuous improvement activities will provide an ongoing cycle of identifying, planning, executing, and reviewing improvements to service delivery. Information gathered from consumer data outcomes, consumer satisfaction surveys, and staff brainstorming will be used to identify inefficiencies, points of consumer dissatisfaction, unmet performance measures, and staffing challenges.

The OSO will share data collected from customer surveys and AJC Sign In systems with the EMI Board of Directors and American Job Center System partners. An annual review process will identify successes, implementation barriers, and unsuccessful strategies. The lessons learned through the review process will inform the identification process of the next cycle. Employer engagement and satisfaction is tracked for large scale events or efforts and through a workforce survey.

b. Describe how the local WDB will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.

WDA 2 partners use www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com as an effective tool used for shared job search and data management of both required Wagner-Peyser and WIOA staff. American Job Center staff utilize www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com for intake and some case management for all clients, jobseekers and businesses. Self-registration and referral through www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com is available from anywhere in the WDA 2 where there is internet access and the extensive resources available through the DOL website, city and county websites, technical college websites, State of Wisconsin websites, etc.

WIOA paperwork can be emailed and filled out by individuals remotely. Career planners can email and/or text individuals for appointments and resources. EMI has video conferencing capacity for case management or for conducting workshops for job seekers. All WIOA partners maintain a web presence and teleconferencing is used whenever appropriate to provide services. EMI hosts podcasts to provide

information on innovation and programming to employers and stakeholders near and far. EMI continues to analyze and pursue opportunities to utilize technology to provide and/or enhance services.

Ongoing partnership with the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County Federated library systems provides web linkages, materials, workshops, and reciprocal training. The American Job Center system has a network of community partners with complementary services who are given technical assistance on navigating www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com are provided information on American Job Center resources that can be displayed in their locations.

EMI's Community Engagement Team has established satellite sites across Milwaukee County to provide workforce services more effectively to job seekers and businesses through a place-based approach, especially in high poverty, high unemployment areas and focused on target populations needing assistance. Community Engagement staff refer job seekers to American Job Centers for Wagner-Peyser and WIOA services.

Relationship building and outreach remain a top method of communicating services beyond the American Job Center physical and virtual locations. EMI's Community Relations staff canvas neighborhoods and events to connect Milwaukee County job seekers and workers to employment and training opportunities. Activities are carried out using a people-centered strategy, with team members equipped with public workforce system information (technology-based, physical locations, network partner and skill development), mobile devices, and strategic collateral materials. Team members develop partners, onboard and refer individuals to partner services and skill development programs, and provide employer referrals.

c. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will ensure the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities as required by WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et.seq.). Include a description of how one-stop center staff will be trained to address the needs of individuals with disabilities.

EMI conducts an annual Section 188 review of the comprehensive and affiliate one-stops. The annual review examines physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, materials, and technology. Technology is often the area where the most changes occur and require the most attention. When needed, American Job Center system partners consult with the DVR to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities.

EMI, in partnership with the OSO, conducts annual reviews of facilities, programs, technology, and materials for compliance. Additionally, training is provided on an as-needed basis to ensure staff are aware of all resources available to clients and to ensure compliance. Ongoing training is also provided during interagency All Staff meetings. At minimum, the one-stop partner staff are expected to:

- Recognize the importance of making people with disabilities feel welcome and a basic awareness of how to meet the needs of clients with disabilities.

- Know how to assist people with disabilities during emergency evacuations, including the evacuation of persons with mobility impairments.
- Know how to procure and use various equipment and materials for assisting people with disabilities, including the one-stops' telecommunications devices for the deaf (TT/TTY/TDD), accessible workstations, accessible materials, etc.
- Understand the list of the American Job Center's auxiliary aids and services for communication, assistive technology devices, and material in accessible formats is provided in writing for those who request it.
- Includes a presentation of clients' rights to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity, including the right to file a complaint, during orientation sessions.
- Ensure that communication with clients and potential clients with disabilities is as effective as communication with other clients.

American Job Center partners do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, or for beneficiaries, applicants, and clients only, citizenship status, or because of an individual's participation in a program or activity that receives financial assistance under WIOA. All protected classes are protected.

d. Attach or link to a copy of the most recent One-Stop Delivery System Memorandum(a) of Understanding (MOU) describing the roles and resource contributions of each of the one-stop partners.

See attached.

12. Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

Activities and services available in the local area for adults and dislocated workers include:

- Apprenticeships
- Assessments
- Basic skill instruction
- Career exploration and readiness
- Case management services
- Childcare and transportation assistance
- Disability related services and programs
- Economic support programs
- English as a second language instruction
- Financial literacy services

- Follow-up and retention services
- GED and HSED
- Internships
- Job search assistance
- Job skills training
- Labor market information
- Occupational skills training
- On-the-job training
- Rapid response and re-employment services
- Referrals
- Support services
- Training (classroom, work-based learning)
- Workshops
- Work experience, both paid and unpaid

EMI's strategy to maximize services to dislocated workers includes early intervention and comprehensive pre-lay off assistance, when allowed through partnership of a willing employer, to quickly identify and service individuals who may need job placement, training, and/or supportive service assistance. EMI has formed collaborative partnerships with regional WDBs and economic development agencies to identify and design appropriate interventions including but not limited to, workshops, onsite registrations, orientations and intakes for WIOA and TAA, and hiring events at which dislocated workers are connected with companies hiring for similar positions. Funding for this strategy and services will be provided utilizing formula and discretionary funds.

Additional services to adult and dislocated workers include providing candidate resumes directly to EMI's employer partners, on site hiring events for both populations, and opportunities for short-term, credentialed training in high demand, high growth sectors. Further collaboration exists between the FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET) program, Wisconsin Works (W2) Program, Energy Assistance, Veterans Services, DVR, and other community-based organizations to maximize opportunities for program clients.

EMI has a strong capacity to provide a wide range of adult and dislocated worker services due to the proximity of a large number of partners and service providers in Milwaukee County, which has the largest population of any county in the state. EMI continues to refine its American Job Center system service and

investments through strategic planning that includes assessment of the economy, review of unemployment rates and labor market participation, review of mass layoff information, analysis of demographic data, employer input, and American Job Center system service providers and partners. EMI continuously identifies opportunities to coordinate and leverage resources to support target populations, which include adult and dislocated workers.

One of EMI's strengths is the ability to co-enroll adult and dislocated worker participants in discretionary grants that it pursues and receives funding for, which include but are not limited to, philanthropic funding that supports paid training and retention services, U.S. Dept. of Labor H-1B mid- and high-skill occupational skill training, Registered Apprenticeship, and reentry services for youth and adults. Co-enrollment strategies maximize and leverage resource sharing across WIOA programs, which strengthen customer service and support the public workforce system overall by scaling delivery across target populations and throughout the region.

13. Describe how the local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

Rapid Response activities respond to permanent closures, mass layoffs, or natural or other disasters which result in mass job loss. The purpose of Rapid Response is to promote economic recovery and vitality by developing an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, and responding to layoffs and dislocations. Rapid Response also includes preventing or minimizing the impacts of layoffs and dislocations on workers, businesses, and communities. Rapid Response activities and strategies deliver services to enable dislocated workers to transition to new employment as quickly as possible.

DWD-DET's designated local Rapid Response teams carry out Rapid Response activities in WDA 2. DWD-DET's Bureau of Workforce Training oversees the rapid response activities undertaken by EMI's Rapid Response Team. EMI receives funding from DWD-DET through annual Rapid Response grants to support the provision of these services.

In partnership with state staff, EMI's Rapid Response team delivers services when one or more of the following occur:

1. Announcement or notification of a permanent closure, regardless of the number of workers affected;
2. Announcement or notification of a mass layoff (commonly called a WARN Notice) as defined by state or local emergency management policies;
3. A mass job dislocation resulting from a natural or other disaster; or
4. The filing of a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition.⁶

To better serve workers and businesses within their communities, EMI's Rapid Response team delivers Rapid Response services to as many workers and companies as possible, even if the dislocation does not meet, at a minimum, one of the four circumstances listed above. To further meet the needs of communities, the determination and definition of a disaster is at the discretion of EMI.

Rapid Response activities include, but are not limited to, reaching out to businesses that have been identified as meeting one of the above criteria, hosting informational sessions at business and/or other locations for dislocated workers to learn about Unemployment Insurance, Job Center of Wisconsin, WIOA dislocated worker services, etc. EMI also conducts outreach to dislocated workers via social media, especially when a business declines to host a Rapid Response event or release contact information for affected workers.

14. Describe and assess the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. Identify successful models of such activities.

There is a wide range of workforce development activities and services available for youth workers across the WDA 2 public workforce system. EMI's Youth Committee discusses key youth barriers to employment, which has allowed EMI to evaluate the activities and services available for youth workers across Milwaukee County based on their strengths or weaknesses in addressing the barriers. EMI's WIOA Program Manager and Non-WIOA Program Manager work with youth service delivery agencies to convey this information and ensure service delivery is aligned with the assessment.

Compared to many other WDBs in Wisconsin, EMI has traditionally used most of its youth funding to service Out of School youth due to the high demand for these services within Milwaukee County, and EMI's strong partnerships with government, community-, and faith-based youth serving organizations. In order to continue to expand Out of School youth delivery, EMI will continue to conduct outreach to the youth population via social media, convene and work with youth serving organizations, and pursue discretionary grant funding, such as YouthBuild and other U.S. Department of Labor grants, to expand service through sector strategies in construction and other high demand industries.

Activities and services are provided by public workforce and local government agencies, private nonprofit workforce agencies, and community-based organizations. There is a strong history of providing high-quality, results-oriented services to youth. Activities are designed to be accessible to all clients including those with disabilities, have been involved in the criminal justice system, experienced trauma, or have other barriers to employment. Successful models of youth activities include EMI's Earn & Learn summer youth employment program which is a 7-week paid work experience that includes leadership development, career readiness, and other enrichment activities once a week. As with all of its youth programs, EMI works closely with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to identify Earn & Learn youth that may be eligible for DVR funding and services, whether in a pre-enrollment or enrollment stage. EMI's YouthBuild program is a discretionary grant award from DOL that provides construction occupational skills training, contextualized HSED, paid work experience, hands on learning, and leadership development/community service learning for up to 70 youth every two years. EMI's Brighter Futures in school youth program provides funding to deliver career readiness, paid work experience, mentoring, leadership development, and social emotional learning to high school youth.

EMI utilizes several successful models for youth workforce activities. EMI partners with the City of Milwaukee to provide a summer youth employment program. EMI has received DOL YouthBuild grants

for over a decade to provide occupational skill training, paid work experience, GED/HSED, mentoring, leadership development, and community service learning projects. EMI has received multiple youth reentry grants which provide employment and training services while assisting youth with diversion and expungement activities. EMI's WIOA ISY and Brighter Futures programs provide industry-focused career exploration and enrichment activities to Milwaukee County high school students. EMI participates on and collaborates with local Youth Apprenticeship consortia.

Local partner agencies provide nutritional assistance, economic assistance, and family support services. Milwaukee County literacy service providers can give basic skills education for significantly barriered youth. There are parenting support services in Milwaukee County for young parents and homeless shelters specifically for youth. For youth with disabilities, the DVR staff provides assessment, training, job placement, job coaching, and vocational counseling services. EMI's youth service provider staff partners plan to work more cohesively with DVR staff to capture those youth with the desire to receive additional workforce services via co-enrollment in youth programming. State, county, and local government entities and nonprofit organizations provide trauma informed care for individuals and training for service provider staff.

EMI has a strong history of providing work experience opportunities for youth program clients though paid and unpaid work experience, internships, Youth Apprenticeship and on-the-job training. With the pending retirements and skills shortages, businesses are increasingly providing more opportunities for work-based learning opportunities.

EMI is conducting research into innovative youth service models including comprehensive achievement academies and project-based learning in high demand industries.

15. Describe how the local WDB will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

EMI actively promotes increased coordination of activities and services, as outlined in WIOA Title II, with its secondary and post-secondary education partners. Examples of coordination include plans that identify, create, and develop career pathway opportunities within the local area by integrating efforts into EMI's sector-based strategies. Information developed through Wisconsin Career Pathways, used as a staff resource, is available at <https://pathwayplanit.com> and offers exploration in Science, Technology, Engineering; Health Science; Architecture and Construction; Human Services as well as an Interest Profile Assessment and Career Cluster Interest Survey.

Other tactics include strengthening linkages between the American Job Center System (America Works) and a variety of services to individuals with at-risk clients, including cross referrals and Benefits Planners; educating the network of providers and employers on workplace needs and barriers to employment, and cross-program coordination for WIOA clients.

EMI worked with DWD, Wisconsin Technical College System and other state and local partners to implement recognized post-secondary credentials across programs that are endorsed by employers and

align to career pathways. This also included work-based learning opportunities with employers such as on-the-job training programs (OJT), customized training, internships, pre-apprenticeship, and Registered Apprenticeships. Including DVR in these conversations and requesting their input, responds to better delivery of services under WIOA Title IV.

In addition, EMI formed the Coordinating Council that serves as the place where partners strategize how the workforce system can serve employers more effectively through the AJCs. Members of the group include Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and MATC. Again, the team shares education and workforce issues that support the framework of collaborating efforts, addressing business issues and avoiding duplication of services.

16. Describe how the local WDB will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

Supportive services, including transportation, can play a critical role in the success of a client. EMI, in partnership with its service providers and many other AJC partners, ensures clients are informed on all available supportive services available through its board-approved Supportive Services policies. EMI ensures WIOA Title I policies support clients' needs and budgets including adequate funding for the provision of supportive services. AJC partners inform clients of support services they may be eligible to receive as well as make referrals to other programs and services for co-enrollment to maximize benefits.

Career planners maintain up-to-date knowledge of transportation options as this can be a key component in helping a client obtain and retain employment. Career planners assist clients with navigating the public transportation system including assistance with researching modes, schedules, costs, and reserving rides. Transportation resources include bus passes, gas cards, taxi tickets, ride-sharing gift cards, and others as allowable by each individual program. EMI continuously reviews and adds transportation options to provide the most appropriate supportive services to clients, such as the recent addition of private transportation such as Uber, Lyft, FlexRide, etc.

17. Describe plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 USC 49 et. seq.) services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.

The primary universal access services are the "core" services delivered through the American Job Center staff under the Wagner-Peyser and WIOA programs. EMI will coordinate closely with the Job Service Director and Staff for WDA 2 to ensure services are not duplicated while individuals arriving at American Job Centers receive the services they need. Examples of coordinating services include directing inquiries to Job Service staff and resource rooms, giving joint presentations to community partners, such as the library system, to ensure the roles and responsibilities of each agency are understood, and conducting joint activities including workshops and hiring events.

Maximum coordination of services, improved service delivery, and eliminating duplication of services for clients is done primarily through EMI's Coordinating Council. The Coordinating Council is a 40-plus member association of organizations that provide workforce development, related services and funding.

Its mission is to collaborate to improve employer access to skilled workers by communicating employer needs identified by EMI's Industry Advisory Boards, remediating system wide barriers, exchanging best practices, and collaborating on funding opportunities.

Members of the Coordinating Council include:

- City of Milwaukee Community Development Block Grant Office
- Housing Authority of City of Milwaukee (HACM)
- Social Development Commission (SDC)
- Job Corp
- Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC)
- United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS)
- Goodwill Industries of S.E. Wisconsin
- YWCA of Greater Milwaukee
- M-7 (Regional Alliance)
- Center for Veteran Issues (CVI)
- Hmong American Friendship Association (HAFA)
- Milwaukee Area Workforce Funding Alliance (MAWFA)
- MAXIMUS
- Ross Innovative Employment Solutions
- America Works
- ResCare
- State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- State Division of Children and Families (DCF)
- State Department of Workforce Development (DWD)
- Milwaukee County Office of Child Support
- Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership/Big Step (WRTP/BIGSTEP)
- African- American Chamber of Commerce

- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

EMI proposes to coordinate RES sessions with Title I Information Sessions in order to provide a more streamlined service for job seekers. EMI uses data collected from technology-based kiosks at AJC locations to identify and contact individuals utilizing resource rooms.

18. Describe how the local WDB will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. Include a description of how the local WDB will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II, consistent with WIOA secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232.

EMI has developed many successful relationships with area adult education providers offering Title II services. EMI leads this network of partners in the enhancement of services as aligned with the provision of WIOA. Collaboratively, they strive to combine resources and examine labor market data and industry research to determine skills needed in the workforce. Moreover, they develop strategies that address basic skill deficiencies which are significant in the Milwaukee area and constrain labor market development.

MATC's President serves as a member on the EMI Board of Directors and its subcommittees (Personnel/Finance; Program; Governance/Compliance). A representative from Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) holds a member seat as well. The input of education partners provides a broad view of their mission and an understanding of their challenges. Their participation also leads the way for EMI staff to have access to education administrators within those institutions for the purpose of planning, program/client management, grant collaboration, and continuous improvement strategies. As reflective of WIOA Title II requirements, these second-tier relationships foster a better alignment of services and connection of clients to work-related training and education. Subsequent opportunities for adult education collaboration include EMI's Regional One Stop Operators' creation of the WIOA Partners Group that includes education partners from MATC.

MATC provides Adult Basic Education and English Language Learning (ELL) Programs in WDA 2. These services, open to the public, are readily available to eligible WIOA program clients. EMI also maintains a service provider list inclusive of programs authorized by Title II of WIOA at WDA 2 Job Centers. All providers must demonstrate innovative, student-centered and outcome-focused services as well as offer individualized and classroom instruction in a variety of subject areas; and/or offer instruction that meets the needs of English Language Learners (ELL). They must also use academic, career, and personal assessment of students as part of academic and career counseling. These services are inter-connected through the AJCs and program service providers. EMI utilizes these relationships to further link adult learners through bridge programs into career pathways that offer jobs or post-secondary credentials.

19. Attach, or link to copies of, executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements between the local WDB and DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other

individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

N/A

20. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the chief elected official (i.e. fiscal agent). Attach or link to the Fiscal Agent Agreement, or similar agreement, if applicable.

Administrative Entity and Fiscal Agent: Employ Milwaukee, Inc.

21. Describe the competitive process used to award the subgrants and contracts in the local area for the WIOA Title I activities.

EMI has documented its procurement procedures in its board-approved Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual, which is designed to meet the mandates of Federal laws and standards identified in 2 CFR parts 200.317 through 200.326. EMI's procurement policies are followed during the competitive process used to award subgrants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under WIOA Title I.

22. Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA section 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local WDB for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.

Table 14: WDA 2 WIOA Performance Indicators		
WIOA Program	Performance Measure	PY22/23 Negotiated Level
Adult	Q2 Unsubsidized Employment	69%/69%
Adult	Q4 Unsubsidized Employment	70%/70%
Adult	Median Earnings	\$4,900/\$4,900
Adult	Credential Attainment Rate	68%/70%
Adult	Measurable Skills Gain	41%/41%
Dislocated Worker	Q2 Unsubsidized Employment	68%/68%
Dislocated Worker	Q4 Unsubsidized Employment	76%/76%
Dislocated Worker	Median Earnings	\$8,500/\$8,500
Dislocated Worker	Credential Attainment Rate	55%/55%
Dislocated Worker	Measurable Skills Gain	37%/37%
Youth	Q2 Unsubsidized Employment	72%/72%
Youth	Q4 Unsubsidized Employment	70%/70%
Youth	Credential Attainment Rate	49%/49%
Youth	Measurable Skills Gain	40%/45%
Youth	Median Earnings	\$2,900/\$3,000

23. Describe the actions the local WDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing WDB, consistent with the factors developed by the State WDB including but not limited to:

- **Local WDB Roles:**

- o Identify the role of the Local WDB and Youth Council/Committee in supporting Business Services, Sector Partnerships, Career Pathways, and Work-Based Learning.

o What actions will be taken to ensure that these areas are a priority for the local area?

o What actions and commitments will be made of the local WDB or Youth Council/Committee members (in particular those representing business) to support these initiatives?

EMI's Board of Directors and committees, along with its collaborative regional partnerships, support its efforts to become and remain a high-performing WDB. The following activities will be a prime focus in PY2024 through PY2027:

- **Data-Driven Planning and Performance Management:** EMI will continue to enhance its workforce service delivery outcomes by using business intelligence obtained through the Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) and ASSET systems to develop efficient, effective service delivery plans and improve performance management and monitoring. EMI's goal is for programs to be consistently outcome-driven with established benchmarks, developed through data and program analysis, that can be shared with staff and system partners who provide services within the core programs. These efforts will include the analysis of local area and regional economic conditions to be proactive in the provision of sector and career pathway services.
- **High-Performing Business Engagement Strategies:** EMI will support business services, sector partnerships, career pathways and work-based learning by continuing to develop and maintain a high-performing BST. Activities will include convening, brokering and leveraging support among stakeholders, including local businesses, for workforce development activities conducted in WDA 2.
- **Planning and Coordination Functions:** Both community partners and employers have actively asked EMI to be a convening leader in advancing solutions that address systemic racial employment disparities and challenges of Milwaukee County's residents through conversation, partnership, advocacy, and investment. EMI will seek to strategically and incrementally assert a more intentional community presence, with a goal of establishing credibility as a thought leader and practitioner on matters consistent with the agency's mission.
- **Board and Committee Engagement:** Board of Director and Youth Committee meetings will include specific topics to solicit discussion and advance strategies that support business services, Sector Partnerships, Career Pathways, and Work-Based Learning. Board and Youth Committee members will be asked to support and provide work-based learning opportunities including the Earn & Learn summer youth employment and Registered Apprenticeship, serve on IABs to provide information on current job and skill needs, and collaborate with their network to communicate the benefits of the public workforce development system.
- **Innovative, Evidence-Based Best Practices:** EMI's CEO and staff are engaged with national, state, regional, and local associations, collaboratives, and initiatives in a variety of focus areas including reentry and youth opportunities. EMI will evaluate evidence-based service delivery models and program designs and implement those that advance the agency's mission, values, and goals, as well as the economic self-sufficiency of individuals and economic growth of employers.

- **Local WDB Participation:**

- o **Describe how the local WDB will make businesses in the local area aware of opportunities to participate on the local WDB to ensure representation of industry sectors with the greatest labor force demand.**

- o **Describe how the local WDB will maintain a minimum of at least 51% of businesses as active members and participants on the local WDB.**

EMI seeks to maintain a balanced membership that is representative of the interests of Milwaukee County and submits an updated Board roster to DWD for certification every two years. Board vacancies are communicated to DWD in between certification periods and new member information is provided when the seat is filled.

EMI's By-Laws establish that Board members are appointed to three-year terms. Those terms are staggered to ensure continuity of operations and leadership. Annually, EMI staff formally notifies the CEO and Board Chair of upcoming terms and works with the CEO to ensure re-appointments or new appointments are made in a timely manner. In the event a Board member chooses to resign from the Board, a formal letter of resignation is requested and the vacancy is communicated to the CEO, along with appropriate information relative to the seat and whether it is a private sector or mandated partner position. EMI utilizes labor market information and considers local industry demands to support the appropriate mix of industries on the board. EMI complies with WIOA requirements by routinely tracking board membership to ensure private sector business representation is always at or above 51%.

EMI's board nomination form is posted on its website and distributed at Board, partner, and employer meetings. Board opportunities are marketed to individual employers, Industry Advisory Boards, industry associations, local and regional economic development agencies, Business Improvement Districts, Chambers of Commerce, and other business organizations. Most vacancies are filled quickly due to EMI BST's close working relationship with the business community.

24. Describe how training services outlined in WIOA section 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts.

Occupational skills training under WIOA Title I-B is provided through individual training accounts following EMI's Individual Training Account (ITA) policy. ITAs may only cover training programs for an in-demand occupation or sector, as substantiated by labor market information provided by the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development's Office of Economic Advisors and associated website located on <https://www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com/wisconomy>. Other locally approved training programs (e.g., GED/HSED provided in combination with another service) that meet EMI's criteria can also be provided through individual training accounts.

Identify whether contracts for training services, as described at 20 CFR 680.320, will be used, and, if so:

- a. **Describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts;**

EMI may consider utilizing contracts for other types of training services should the WDB determine there is an insufficient number of training providers, there is a program of demonstrated effectiveness, or it would be most appropriate and cost efficient to contract with an individual provider for the training of multiple individuals. In each of these instances, EMI will follow the requirements outlined in WIOA 680.320.

b. Describe the process the local WDB uses to determine that there are an insufficient number of eligible training providers in the local area to accomplish the purpose of a system of ITAs (see 20 CFR 680.320(a)(2)), including the process for allowing a 30-day public comment period for interested providers; and

EMI reviews the number of providers on the State-managed ETPL each year to determine sufficiency. As of January 1, 2024, there were 27 pages of Milwaukee training providers on the State-managed ETPL; therefore, no intervention is currently necessary to cultivate interested providers for WDA 2.

c. Describe the process the local WDB will use to select the providers under a contract for services as required by 20 CFR 680.320(c).

If it was necessary to solicit and select training providers for WDA 2, EMI would follow its procurement policy which aligns with federal Uniform Guidance.

Describe how the local WDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

WIOA requires that the local WDB ensures informed consumer choice in the selection of training programs through the WDA's American Job Centers (AJCs). The area's One-Stop Operator ensures that the state's ETPL is available in all area AJCs. WIOA participants must select, in consultation with a Career Planner, an Eligible Training Program from the Wisconsin ETPL. Such consultation must include a discussion of program quality and performance information on the ETPL. WIOA requires that priority consideration be given to programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local WDA.

EMI ensures clients have relevant information to make an informed choice for employment and training. EMI and its providers utilize credible sources to provide labor market information, employment projections, and information on the performance of training providers. DWD's www.wisconomy.com Long-Term Occupation Projections List for WDA 2 is utilized to provide individuals access to a wide breadth of training choices for local in-demand occupations.

25. Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

WDA 2 partners use www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com as an effective tool used for shared job search and data management of both required Wagner-Peyser and WIOA staff. American Job Center staff utilize www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com for intake and some case management for all clients, jobseekers and

businesses. Self-registration and referral through www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com is available from anywhere in the WDA 2 where there is internet access and the extensive resources available through the DOL website, city and county websites, technical college websites, State of Wisconsin websites, etc. EMI oversees the AJC system and utilizes digital kiosks to conduct customer counts to better coordinate, collaborate, and cost share with its one stop partners.

WIOA paperwork can be emailed and filled out by individuals remotely. Career planners can email and/or text individuals for appointments and resources. EMI has video conferencing capacity for case management or for conducting workshops for job seekers. All WIOA partners maintain a web presence and Microsoft Teams and other teleconferencing services are used whenever appropriate to provide services. EMI hosts podcasts to provide information on innovation and programming to employers and stakeholders near and far. EMI continues to analyze and pursue opportunities to utilize technology to provide and/or enhance services.

Ongoing partnership with the City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County Federated library systems provides web linkages, materials, workshops, and reciprocal training. The American Job Center system has a network of community partners with complementary services who are given technical assistance on navigating www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com are provided information on American Job Center resources that can be displayed in their locations.

26. Describe the direction given by the Governor and the local WDB to the one-stop operator(s) to ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

EMI follows the DWD Priority of Service policy in Chapter 8 of DWD's WIOA Title I-A & I-B Policy & Procedure Manual which includes priority for adult career and training services to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. "Priority of service" means the right to take precedence over a person with lower priority in obtaining employment and training services. The person with priority receives access to a service earlier in time than a person with lower priority or – if the resource is limited – receives access to the service instead of the person with lower priority. Priority is not part of the eligibility determination; rather, it is meant to emphasize access to individualized career and training services for these higher-need populations.

Priority of service is assessed at the time of eligibility determination, and participants are informed if they are to receive priority. If, during participation, the career planner learns of changes in an individual's status that allows them to receive a higher priority of service, the individual is given increased priority. For example, if someone who was not low-income at program entry becomes low income during participation, the individual starts receiving increased priority as soon as the career planner becomes aware of the change. Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority for all WIOA Title I programs. For the Adult Program only, priority for individualized career services and training services are also given to participants who are designated low-income, including public assistance recipients, and/or basic skills deficient for the Adult Program, including English Language Learners (ELL).

27. Describe the strategies, services, and activities employed within the local area to provide business services that meet the workforce investment needs of area employers. Include, if applicable:

a. Customized screening and referral of qualified participants in training services to employers.

b. Customized employment-related services to employers, employer associations, or other such organization on a fee-for-service basis that are in addition to labor exchange services available to employers under the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service.

EMI's Business Services Team (BST) has strong partnerships with businesses in high growth, high demand sectors through staffing and support of Industry Advisory Boards (IABs) in Manufacturing, Construction, Healthcare, IT, Financial Services, Hospitality/Retail; and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics. EMI's IABs spread the word to other members of the business community regarding programs, grants, resources and additional opportunities available through EMI and its partners. Employer engagement by the BST attracts more partners and ultimately help to expand overall services to businesses in the WDA and region.

EMI works collaboratively with its service and training partners and the Coordinating Council members to continually connect with job seekers and individuals to share training program and employment opportunities. Through EMI's Community Engagement staff, EMI's reach into communities has expanded by connecting with individuals and employers who were not previously engaged in the workforce system. Once connected to the Job Center of Wisconsin and local programming, job seekers can be recruited and pre-screened for referral to training programs and employer hiring events.

Job ready candidates are informed of and invited to hiring events where employers and staffing agencies interview candidates who possess required skills or work experience. Job seekers pursuing their first job or next employment opportunity are recruited for events where employers are seeking dependable, team-oriented and trainable individuals who are committed to acquiring work experience or new skill sets.

28. Describe any limitations the local WDB imposes on individual training accounts, such as limitations of the dollar amounts and/or duration. Describe any exceptions to such limitations that may be provided for individual cases. Provide assurance that any such limitations do not undermine WIOA's requirement that training services are provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an eligible training provider (ETP). Attach an updated Form DETW-18813-E for the local WDB.

ITAs may only cover training programs for EMI's seven (7) in-demand sectors (identified by ONET codes), as substantiated by labor market information on www.wisconomy.com. When EMI reaches its 35% training expenditure goal, it reserves the right to fund only Eligible Training Programs that include a WIOA credential. ITAs for completion of a Baccalaureate (Bachelor's) Degree will be considered only when the participant can provide documentation from the training provider that the degree can be completed in four semesters or less. ITAs may not be used to pay for costs associated with Post-Graduate Degrees.

One individual training voucher may not exceed 6 months of training. Multiple vouchers for the same course of study may not exceed 4 consecutive semesters. Individuals receiving a training voucher may not receive another for a different course of study until 48 months after the first training program has been completed.

Dollar limitations detailed below are measured in seven-year increments, regardless of an individual's exit from and subsequent reentry into a WIOA Program. WIOA participants in WDA 2 may not receive training services that exceed \$6,000 in costs. There are limited exceptions, outlined below, which allow the maximum cost to exceed this amount up to a total of \$7,500. The WDA 2 training cap is based on a seven-year look back period. The voucher shall document training costs covered by the ITA (tuition) and by Supportive Services (books, fees and other educational materials and supplies).

ITA training voucher amount limits will be approved based on the length of the training. The "Training Tiers" will be based on the hours listed on the ETPL list for the specified training. The length of training (in hours) must be listed on the ETPL list for training to be considered.

Tier Level	Length of Training (Hours)	Amount of Training Voucher to be Approved
Tier 1	Less than 40 hours	\$700.00
Tier 2	41 – 99 hours	\$2,500.00
Tier 3	100 – 160 hours	\$5,000.00
Tier 4	More than 160 hours	\$6,000.00

No more than 5% of total annual program year WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, and/or WIOA Youth training funds may be used to serve participants living outside of Workforce Development Area #2 (Milwaukee County) without approval from the CEO.

An exception to EMI's requirement that a training program be for an in-demand occupation or sector will be considered when provided with a justification statement accompanying the voucher packet. An exception to EMI's duration limitation per individual will be considered when provided with a justification statement accompanying the voucher packet.

An exception to EMI's \$6,000 training cap per individual will be considered when provided with a justification statement accompanying the voucher packet. In such cases where an exception to the \$7,500 maximum is approved, a participant's training costs may not exceed \$7,500 in total.

To establish reasonableness of cost and length of training:

- The participant must compare 3 similar training vendors who provide same training being requested.
- A reasonable cost and length of training would be training providers with a training cost and/or a training length within 10% of one another.
- Employ Milwaukee staff reserves the right to research industry standards to ensure length of training, competencies, and cost are reasonable and support an individual's ability to obtain unsubsidized employment at a living wage.

EMI's limitations do not undermine WIOA's requirement that training services are provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an eligible training provider because exceptions are included and customers have a wide variety of selections on the Wisconsin ETPL in all of EMI's seven (7) high growth, high demand industries.

29. Identify whether the local area will apply, for its WIOA Title I Youth program participants, the optional definition of "basic skills deficient" at 20 CFR 681.290(a)(2): "A youth is 'basic skills deficient' if he or she are [sic] unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society." If yes, include the local WDBs policy for determining whether the criterion is satisfied.

EMI will not apply the optional definition of "basic skills deficient".

30. Identify whether the local WDB will apply, for its WIOA title I Youth program participants, the eligibility criterion "requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment." If yes, provide the local area's definitions of the criterion for:

a. In-school Youth (see 20 CFR 681.310); and

b. Out of School Youth (see 20 CFR 681.300).

As detailed in EMI's board-approved Policy 18-02, EMI defines a youth or young adult "who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure or hold employment" as an individual with at least one of the following characteristics. These characteristics may be substantiated by a client's self-attestation.

- Has experienced or witnessed a recent traumatic event, including domestic violence or abuse, or resides in an abusive environment.
- Has ever been dismissed or had a non-voluntary separation from employment.

Additionally, an applicant to the WIOA In-School Youth (ISY) Program can meet this definition if the below characteristic applies. This characteristic must be substantiated by a school record, which may include a documented statement from a school official.

- Has previously dropped out, been suspended or been expelled from school. The youth must have returned to school.

31. Describe the design framework for youth programs in the local area, and how the 14 program elements required in 20 CFR 681.460 are to be made available within that framework.

Compared to many other WDBs in Wisconsin, EMI has traditionally used most of its youth funding to service Out of School youth due to the high demand for these services within Milwaukee County, and EMI's strong partnerships with government, community-, and faith-based youth serving organizations. In

order to continue to expand Out of School youth delivery, EMI will continue to conduct outreach to the youth population via social media, convene and work with youth serving organizations, and pursue discretionary grant funding, such as YouthBuild and other U.S. Department of Labor grants, to expand service through sector strategies in construction and other high demand industries.

Local partner agencies provide nutritional assistance, economic assistance, and family support services. Milwaukee County literacy service providers can give basic skills education for significantly barriered youth. There are parenting support services in Milwaukee County for young parents and homeless shelters specifically for youth. For youth with disabilities, the DVR staff provide assessment, training, job placement, job coaching, and vocational counseling services. EMI's youth service provider staff partners plan to work more cohesively with DVR staff to capture those youth with the desire to received additional workforce services via co-enrollment in youth programming. State, county, and local government entities and nonprofit organizations provide trauma informed care for individuals and training for service provider staff.

Activities and services are provided by public workforce and local government agencies, private nonprofit workforce agencies, and community-based organizations. There is a strong history of providing high-quality, results-oriented services to youth. Activities are designed to be accessible to all clients including those with disabilities, have been involved in the criminal justice system, experienced trauma, or have other barriers to employment.

Activities and services available in the local area for youth include the 14 WIOA program elements:

- Adult mentoring
- Alternative secondary school services or high school dropout recovery services
- Career awareness, counseling, and exploration (e.g., labor market information, assessments)
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation and training
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Financial literacy services
- Follow-up services
- Leadership development opportunities
- Occupational skills training
- Post-secondary preparation and transition activities
- Support services

- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and dropout prevention and recovery services
- Work experience, both paid and unpaid (e.g., pre-apprenticeship programs, internships, on-the-job training)

Section III: Administrative Requirements

34. Briefly describe the activities and steps taken to develop this Local Plan. Identify any stakeholders that were consulted in the development of the plan, including chief elected officials, economic development agencies, representatives of training and/or education, organizations serving youth, organizations serving individuals with barriers to employment, representatives of businesses in demand industries/sectors, and others.

Input into the development of the local plan happened through various channels including:

- EMI strategic planning and discussions at WDB meetings.
- Individual meetings and/or communication with local workforce system partners and Industry Advisory Boards.
- An online survey was distributed to WIOA, community, and business/labor partners for input prior to the Draft plan being posted for public comment.
- EMI staff presented the plan to board members at the February/March 2024 Program and Executive Committee meetings and provided the digital versions through links to the website. This enabled the local plan to be shared with business members, labor organizations, and education entities and allowed for their respective organizations to review and make comments.
- Comments could be made via email or in writing with specific instructions included in the public notice.
- No comments were received from the public during the 30-day comment period. Internal staff provided comments on data and proofing errors. Errors were updated prior to the final plan being approved by the Board of Directors and Intergovernmental Cooperation Council

35. Briefly describe the process used by the local WDB in this local area to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comments by representatives of businesses and representatives of labor organizations, and other public input into the development of the plan prior to its submission. Identify the start and end dates of the public comment period (not to exceed 30 days). Include an accounting of any comments that express disagreement with the plan.

Consistent with section 108(c), EMI posted the local plan for public comment for thirty (30) days via the following methods:

- A public notice in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel which covers Milwaukee County and the city of Milwaukee.

- A notice and the plan on EMI's website.
- Hard copies of the plan were available in each AJC in WDA 2.

36. Include any attachments referenced throughout the Local Plan, if applicable (e.g., cooperative service agreements, memoranda of understanding, local policies, etc.)

EMI's Cooperative agreements and bylaws are posted on its website in the following location:
<https://www.employmilwaukee.org/Employ-Milwaukee/Governance/Intergovernmental-Cooperation-Council.htm>

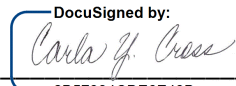
EMI's local policies are posted on its website in the following location:
<https://www.employmilwaukee.org/AgencyPoliciesandAdminMemos.htm>

Section IV: Attestations and Signatures

I hereby attest that this WIOA Local Plan was:

- Developed in partnership with the local WDB and appropriate chief elected officials;
- Put out for public comment for at least 30 days prior to submission to DWD for approval, and if comments were received that express disagreement with the Plan they are included with this submission; and
- Properly approved at the local level in accordance with the applicable local governance documents (e.g., bylaws, WDB-CEO Agreement, Consortium Agreement, or similar).

Workforce Development Area #2

<u>Mayor Cavalier Johnson</u>	Signed by:  89EE773F88D14C1...	<u>6/11/2026</u>
Printed name of chief elected official	Signature of chief elected official	Date
<u>Carla Cross</u>	DocuSigned by:  2B57334CDE6E43B...	<u>6/10/2026</u>
Printed name of local WDB chairperson	Signature of local WDB chairperson	Date
<u>Julie Cayo</u>	DocuSigned by:  D81051325E794B4...	<u>6/9/2026</u>
Printed name of local WDB Director	Signature of local WDB Director	Date