

2020



Annual Report

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL FOR WORKFORCE
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OklaWorks@okcommerce.gov
www.oklahomaworks.gov

Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development,
Oklahoma Dept. of Commerce
900 N. Portland Ave., BT300
Oklahoma City, OK 73107

Page intentionally left blank.

About the Council

GOVERNANCE

The Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED) members are appointed by the Governor and are key leaders from across the state representing business, education, labor, community-based organizations, and government. The GCWED has a responsibility to advise the Governor on Oklahoma's workforce system. Members collaborate to build a shared vision, mission and goals around workforce strategies and opportunities for the state. The GCWED is mandated and funded by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and further defined in Oklahoma Statutes § 70.5003.10d. More information is at www.oklahomaworks.gov.

STRATEGIC PLAN

GCWED Strategic Plan sets the vision for Oklahoma's public workforce system, including strategies, goals and priorities. This includes the development and execution of the state's Workforce Innovation and

Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified Plan. The GCWED brings together leaders from business, government, education, and non-profit sectors to jointly develop ways to coordinate workforce with economic development. The GCWED works to develop creative solutions that expand and improve Oklahoma's workforce, providing better jobs for workers and a skilled workforce for business and industry.

GOALS

1. Increase the Labor Force Participation Rate.
2. Create new private sector jobs with annual wages of \$50,000 or more.
3. Be among the top ten states with the lowest unemployment rate.
4. Increase services for employers.

OBJECTIVES

1. Expand workforce to satisfy industry and economic development goals.
2. Upskill Oklahoma's workforce.
3. Offer workforce solutions to business.
4. Build workforce system capacity.

Introduction

Oklahoma's workforce needs have significantly changed since the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED) devised its Strategic and WIOA State Plans in 2019. We began 2020 with historically low unemployment rates, an increasing labor force participation rate, and persistent skill gaps in critical growth and demand occupations and industries.

This year has brought slumps in certain industry sectors integral to Oklahoma's economic growth, including energy, aerospace and manufacturing. The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically altered the landscape in unforeseen ways. Oklahoma now faces higher than usual unemployment, uncertainty among business about future hiring needs, and changes in skill and talent demands as industry adapts to automation and remote work.

Oklahoma's economic success depends on our ability to reduce educational, skills training and employment disparities for populations with barriers to employment, such as long-term unemployed, individuals with disabilities, basic skills deficient adults, veterans, and foster youth. Meeting

these challenges requires the public and private sectors working together.

Hearing the call from leaders across the state, the GCWED has put a renewed focus on services to business this year. A new committee of private sector members was formed under the GCWED to explore business engagement strategies. Using the Governor's discretionary funds, Oklahoma invested in local area infrastructure and capacity to connect with employers and offer vital business services like incumbent worker training, skills-based hiring strategies, and sector partnerships. Oklahoma has also doubled-down on apprenticeship program development and expansion, securing \$2 million in additional funds.

The GCWED recognizes the vital contributions to our state's workforce development system by local workforce board members, regional workforce planning entities and state agency partners. Their collaborative work includes a wide range of local, regional and statewide public and private sector efforts to find new and creative solutions to workforce shortages, develop career pathways, and prepare a skilled workforce.

STRATEGIC PLAN ACTIVITIES

PROGRESS ON OBJECTIVE 1: EXPANDING WORKFORCE TO SATISFY INDUSTRY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Definition: An expanded workforce will provide a larger pool of potential workers, increase the financial and economic opportunities of workers, and encourage greater business investment, economic development, and job creation.

This year, Oklahoma has made progress on several strategies to expand workforce to better align to industry and economic development goals, including:

Workforce Centers of Excellence: The GCWED approved the first nine Workforce Centers of Excellence. This initiative was developed as a part of Governor Stitt's Oklahoma Works Together plan and features a certified framework for local industry-based plans, aligned curriculum, and other resources. This will help to further align workforce efforts with economic development.

Pay for Performance Pilot: The GCWED has prioritized the

implementation of a pay-for-performance (P4P) pilot project in partnership with the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO). The pilot will follow CEO participants in Tulsa and pay for the achievement of certain workforce outcomes, including employment, earnings, and credential attainment. A feasibility study was completed and it was determined CEO is a good candidate for a P4P contract. This is one strategy the State is exploring to support individuals leaving incarceration and returning to the workforce.

Benefits Cliff Project:

The GCWED is partnering with the Federal Reserve Banks of Atlanta and Kansas City to analyze the Benefits Cliff to better understand the financial disincentives to career advancement caused by the loss of public assistance as wages rise.

A dashboard was created to visualize the impacts to eligibility for such programs as child care subsidy, Medicaid, and SNAP as parents progress along a career pathway to higher paying jobs. The dashboard has

two primary purposes: 1) to help job seekers make more informed decisions and plans related to short- and long-term roadblocks and gains to career advancement; and 2) to allow policymakers to better align supportive services across and within funding streams to reduce short-term disincentives to seeking training or a promotion. The goal of these efforts is to help more Oklahomans progress into higher-skilled, higher-wage jobs.

Promotion of the Oklahoma Works System and Brand:

Recognizing the public's lack of knowledge of the Oklahoma Works system and its services, a strategic communications plan was developed. As a result, Oklahoma Works saw increased hits to the website, increased social media impressions and follows, and more appearances on local television, radio, and newspapers.

PROGRESS ON OBJECTIVE 2: UPSKILL OKLAHOMA'S WORKFORCE

Definition: A well-trained workforce will reduce the incidence and effects of unemployment, increase the financial and economic opportunities of workers, and encourage greater business investment and job creation.

This year Oklahoma spent time building the infrastructure and capacity to create opportunities for job seekers to explore demand industries, train for

demand occupations, learn on-the-job, and search for jobs, including:

Ecosystems and Critical Occupations:

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce completed an analysis to identify top industries and occupations within each of the state's local workforce development areas. This information was used to inform the development of Oklahoma's strategic WIOA State Plan. Additionally, Oklahoma's Critical Occupations were revised to account for economic changes and alignment to Ecosystems were noted. Together, the prioritized Ecosystems and Critical Occupations form the target for which Oklahoma's workforce efforts are aimed.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs:

The State Work-Based Learning Program developed nine new apprenticeship programs. Of the nine, five were developed as a career lattice program which provides opportunities for apprentices to receive two or more U.S. Department of Labor recognized certificates as they progress through their career goals. The career lattice programs include a retail management lattice and a certified nurse assistant to licensed practical nurse in a health rehabilitation facility. Other apprenticeship programs registered this year include, an automotive technician, welder, civil drafting, and positions in manufacturing.

Internship Competency Standards:

The State Work-Based Learning Program developed competency standards for internships to assist employers in developing rigorous work-based learning opportunities for in-demand jobs. The standards serve as a framework for on-the-job learning and youth pre-apprenticeship program development. Competencies identified for occupations, include: Aerospace Certified Production Technician; AutoCAD Mechanical Drafter; Chemical Laboratory Technician; Computer Programmer; Data Science Lab Assistant; Finance/ Insurance Customer Service Representative; Cyber Security Support Technician; and Transportation/Logistics Operations Manager.

Career-Ready Schools Program of Excellence:

The Youth Programs Committee developed a framework for recognizing Career-Ready Schools. The certification offers a strategic, systemic response to employer concerns for “soft skills”, including ethics and character, promotes partnerships between businesses and schools, and promotes equitable access to students for a broad range of post-secondary options. The Career-Ready Schools Program of Excellence also aligns with other Oklahoma career readiness school-based initiatives like the Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP).

PROGRESS ON OBJECTIVE 3: OFFER WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS TO BUSINESS

Definition: Businesses that have access to a responsive, effective and solutions-focused public workforce systems will be better positioned to expand the availability of quality jobs and capital investments.

Oklahoma Works has spent this year refocusing efforts on the needs of employers, investing in the groundwork upon which future services can be built, and building strategic relationships for long-term partnerships. Efforts include:

Business Services:

Executed a strategic plan for Business Services to be more responsive to employers’ needs and integrated with state economic development priorities. This plan ensures statewide consistency in services available and supports the hiring of at least 1 full-time employee solely dedicated to business services in each of Oklahoma's seven local workforce areas. All newly hired staff have been trained and are now carrying out a menu of services that includes: rapid response activities, layoff aversion services, promotion of employer incentives, development of registered apprenticeship programs, sector partnership development, competency-based hiring assistance, job posting

and candidate screening, labor market data analysis, and employer focused events and outreach such as recruitment events and incumbent worker training. Business Services representatives will be required to coordinate with local partners, including economic development, education, and community-based organizations.

Skills-Based Hiring Initiative:

Oklahoma became the third state in the U.S. to launch a skills-based hiring initiative through a collaboration with the Markle Foundation, Skillful and OKHR. The four-part Skillful Talent Series helps businesses focus on transferrable skills and competencies instead of credentials as a way to attract better candidates, increase retention, and decrease time-to-fill jobs. This strategy allows the public workforce system to connect more non-traditional applicants to jobs, like Oklahomans who are long-term unemployed, individuals lacking work experience, and those looking to change careers.

Incumbent Worker Training Fund:

Established an Incumbent Worker Training Fund that is available to businesses looking to upskill or reskill their current workers. This is one strategy to avert layoffs and support the sustainability, competitiveness and growth of existing Oklahoma businesses by further developing their talent pool. Priority is given to

businesses in Opportunity Zones and rural counties; with less than 50 employees; when training is part of a layoff aversion strategy; and when training is aligned to in-demand occupations and leads to significant skill upgrades.

Sector Partnerships:

The GCWED funded Sector Partnerships to implement industry-driven workforce strategies. This year's grantees represented the health care and manufacturing industries. With the funds provided, the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance launched a statewide Career Pathways website showing the progression of skills, competencies, and education/training between key manufacturing occupations. The goal is to visualize the interconnected pathways of multiple occupations and to illustrate the necessary education/training and competencies required at each level. Conversely, the Rural Health Projects, Inc., focused on launching a virtual, Nursing Residency Program to help transition new nursing graduates from simulated practice into actual nursing practice with real patients. The goals of this project are improved talent recruitment for rural areas and increased retention and job satisfaction.

PROGRESS ON OBJECTIVE 4: BUILD WORKFORCE SYSTEM CAPACITY

Definition: A public workforce system able to respond to changing business needs and deliver innovative solutions will support the expansion of business investments and job creation.

This year, the GCWED worked to identify workforce system policies and procedures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the state's public workforce system, including:

Registered Apprenticeship:

Oklahoma was one of 14 states selected to receive \$1.5 million to expand opportunities for youth apprenticeship in high-demand, high-wage careers. The focus of the grant is to create apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for youth ages 16 to 24 in the manufacturing and construction industries in partnership with the Oklahoma Manufacturing Alliance and the Oklahoma State Building and Construction Trades Council. Additionally, Oklahoma was awarded \$450,000 to expand apprenticeship through innovation. The funds will support the development of new and expanding apprenticeship opportunities for all Oklahomans in businesses across the state.

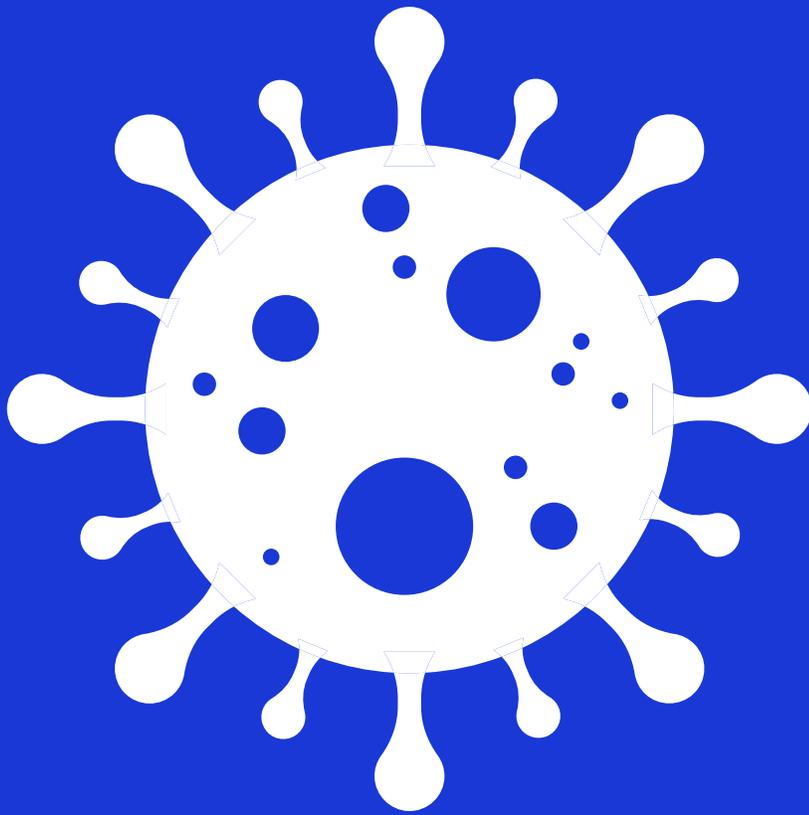
Data Sharing:

This year, MOUs were executed with the Oklahoma Department of Career

and Technology Education and the State Regents for Higher Education to allow for data sharing necessary to more easily include more postsecondary institutions on the Eligible Training Provider List, increase customer choice in programs available, and decrease the administrative burden on local technology centers, colleges and universities. This will allow more transparency related to the performance and outcomes associated with education and training programs, allowing students to make better informed decisions related to training options.

Employer Incentives for Work-Based Learning:

The State Work-Based Learning Program developed an incentives package for employers as a way to support the development and expansion of work-based learning opportunities within Oklahoma. This package includes access to such things as industry-developed competency standards, direct personal support and job description development, and linkages to tax and other state incentive programs.



STATISTICS

The Unemployment Rate soared to 13.7 percent at the height of the pandemic with more than 242,000 people without jobs. While most industries are slowly recovering, the state is still showing a loss of more than 83,000 jobs compared to one year ago.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching impacts on the state's economy and workforce. While Oklahoma fared better than some other states whose closures were more sweeping and longer-lasting, the implications of economic downturns in the aerospace, energy, hospitality, retail and restaurant industries left many temporarily or permanently jobless.

As part of Oklahoma's workforce response and recovery, the GCWED and Oklahoma Works have implemented several

job seeker and business support strategies, including:

National Dislocated Worker Grant:

Oklahoma received \$990,000 to support workforce strategies aimed at getting people back to work, whether that be through temporary, transitional employment or through re-skilling and up-skilling for in-demand careers. With these funds, Oklahoma:

- Placed laid-off workers in temporary transitional

employment helping to serve Oklahomans through local food banks, food prep, and food delivery to vulnerable populations.

- Invested in virtual training platforms designed to strategically upskill Oklahomans for employment in demand industries, including IT, advanced manufacturing, aerospace manufacturing, and logistics. These industries were targeted not only because they are growth industries, or are expected to return to demand quickly, but also due to the transferrable skills inherent to talent working in the industries hardest hit by COVID-19.

Virtual Job Fairs:

Oklahoma quickly purchased and launched a virtual job fair platform to connect job seekers to open positions. The virtual job fair platform is free to employers and has features, including: customizable websites and URLs; interactive interviews; chat functions; direct electronic job applications; and real-time data tracking.

Talent Exchange:

Launched a Talent Exchange in partnership with the Oklahoma Grocers Association, Oklahoma Retail Association, and Oklahoma Restaurant and Hospitality Associations to match out-of-work Oklahomans with industries that need employees to quickly fill current job openings for essential business activities.

Oklahoma Works American Job Centers:

When the Oklahoma Works American Job Center brick-and-mortar locations were forced to temporarily close, local workforce boards and partners worked quickly to stand up online enrollment processes and move to by-appointment services. When the Centers were able to re-open their doors, these same partners came together to jointly fund safety protocols necessary to ensure continuous operations, including: touchless temperature checks, health screenings, high-touch surface cleaning, weekly disinfecting, PPE and on-site security to assist with orderly service delivery. Mass Claimant Fairs were also held in multiple locations throughout the state to address issues with unemployment claims. The Claims Fairs utilized the same safety protocols as the Centers.

COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan:

The GCWED brought in a national consultant to develop a COVID-19 Response and Recovery strategic plan to identify a nimble response to economic disruptions. Much input was gathered and the resulting strategies recommended center on:

- Workforce System Structure.
- Workforce System Infrastructure and Capacity.
- Data Sharing, Infrastructure, and Limitations.
- Joint Communications and Branding.
- Customer-Centered Service Design and Delivery.



STATISTICS

During Program Year 2019, all local workforce development boards and the State of Oklahoma met performance targets for all WIOA programs.

WORKFORCE SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

Core to Oklahoma's workforce development system are the federally-funded Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs for individuals with barriers to employment, including Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Wagner-Peyser re-employment programs.

In order to more closely monitor program performance, ensure investments in outcomes, and inform continuous improvement efforts, Oklahoma Works

developed and published interactive data dashboards. These tools allow the GCWED and general public to review quarterly and annual summary data related to program outcomes.

New dashboards show local and state enrollment, services, and outcomes data by program, by quarter and year, and by populations with barriers to employment.

Learn more at <https://oklahomaworks.gov/performance-outcomes/>.

Council Members

NOVEMBER 2020

Michelle Choquette, Chair

Chief Human Resources Officer, Gateway First Bank

Chuck Gray, Vice-Chair

Vice President and COO, Frontier Electronic Systems, Inc.

Katie Altshuler, Government & Community Relations Manager, Marathon Oil Company

Stephanie Cameron, Community Relations Administrator, AAON

Jimmy Curry, President, AFL-CIO

Dan DeLozier, Rogers County Commissioner, District #1

Gayle Donica, Director, Human Resources, Noble Research Institute

Melinda Freundt, Executive Director, Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services

Geoffrey Hager, CEO, Big Elk Energy Systems

Scott Haworth, Site Director, Dell/EMC

Dee Hays, President & CEO, Excellence Engineering, LLC

Gregory Hodgen, President & CEO, Groendyke Transport Inc.

Teresa Huggins, CEO, Stigler Health & Wellness Center, Inc.

Sean Kouplen, Secretary of Commerce & Workforce Development

Phil Lakin, Tulsa City Councilor, District 8

James Leewright, Oklahoma State Senator

Marcie Mack, State Director, Oklahoma Department of Career & Technology Education

Chad Mariska, Chairman, President & CEO, APS FireCo

Tommy O'Donnell, Training Director, Plumbers & Pipefitters Training Center

Adam Pugh, Oklahoma State Senator

Ben Robinson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Riley Seals, Sr. Director of Distribution, Dollar General Corporation

Steven Shepelwich, Sr. Community Affairs Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City

Jodi Simmons, Chief Nursing Officer, Hillcrest Medical Center

David Stewart, Administrator, MidAmerica Industrial Park

Jason Thomas, Human Resources Manager, Boeing Company

Valerie Thompson, Director, Urban League of Greater Oklahoma City, Inc.

Pat Viklund, OKC Metro Area Director, Center for Employment Opportunities

Dewayne Wilcox, Business Manager/Financial Secretary, IBEW Local 1141

Marty Williams, Owner/Manager, Williams Farms

Shelley Zumwalt, Executive Director, Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

Council Members

EX-OFFICIO/DESIGNEES

Justin Brown, Secretary, Human Services and Early Childhood Initiatives

Scott Crow, Director, Oklahoma Department of Corrections

Shelly Ellis, Designee, Oklahoma Department of Education

Joy Hofmeister, State Superintendent, Oklahoma Department of Education

Dara Holmes, Designee, Oklahoma Health Care Authority

Tony Hutchison, Designee, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

Glen Johnson, Chancellor, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

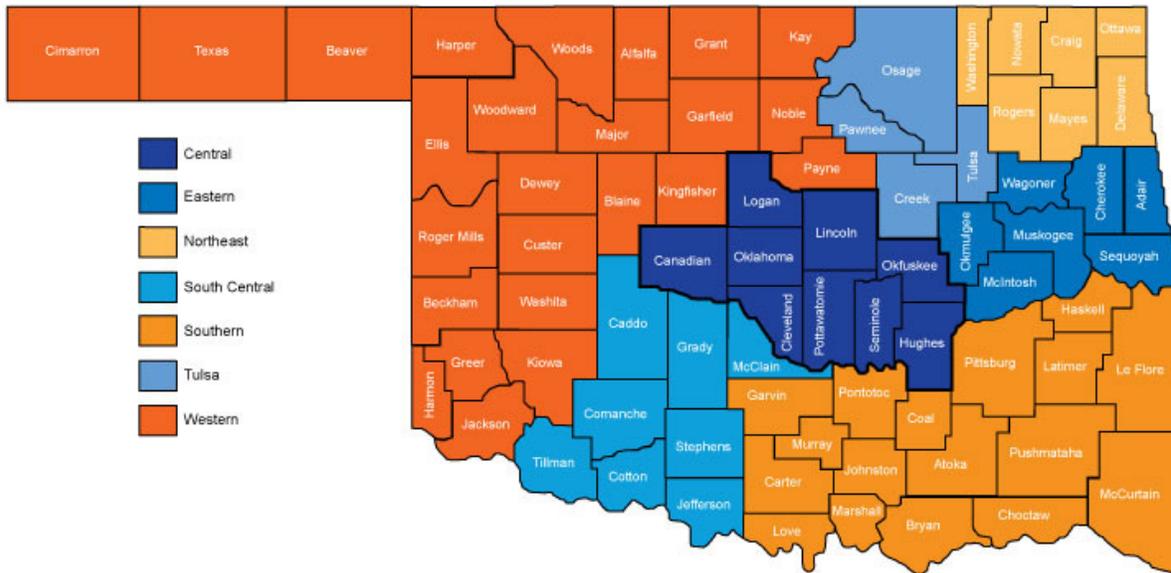
Kevin Corbett, Secretary, Health and Mental Health

Laura Pitman, Designee, Oklahoma Department of Corrections

Sean Wallace, Designee, Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Carrie Slatton-Hodges, Commissioner, Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse

Local Workforce Development Boards



Oklahoma has seven Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) that make up the state’s public workforce system. These boards:

- Link Oklahomans with workforce services and resources to develop the talent of the state’s workforce;
- Serve as connectors to local Oklahoma Works, American Job Centers that deliver services to workers and employers;
- Develop strategic plans and set funding priorities for their area;
- Facilitate partnerships between local businesses with similar training needs; and
- Provide analysis of labor market information to develop strategies that focus resources on particular high growth industry for their area.

LWDBs are business led and have a membership that is more than 50 percent private business. In addition, LWDBs have representation from local training providers,

elected officials and workforce program leaders. This ensures that current skill needs of local businesses are communicated to relevant training programs.

Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board

Ashley Sellers, Chief Executive Officer

Eastern Workforce Development Board

Jerri Stoutermire, Executive Director

Northeast Oklahoma Workforce Development Board

Michelle Bish, Executive Director

South Central Oklahoma Workforce Board

Trina Southard, Executive Director

Southern Workforce Board

Kerry Manning, Executive Director

Workforce Tulsa

Rachel Hutchings, Executive Director

Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board

Christi Porter, Executive Director

