



**PROGRAM  
YEARS  
2024-2027**

**LOCAL PLAN  
PIKES PEAK  
REGION**

**EL PASO  
& TELLER  
COUNTIES**

## **Preface**

The Colorado Workforce Development Ecosystem is diversified and localized to economies throughout the state to provide services to both job seekers, and business/industry. Throughout the state of Colorado, these customers receive services based on their unique need, through a variety of programs. One consistent funding stream for all Federally recognized Workforce Development Areas (10) and Planning Regions (3) is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. Starting in Program Year (PY16) State, Regional, and Local Plans have been developed to act as a backbone document to show the impacts of the system, while also looking to ensure that each area is addressing local needs while being fiscally responsible.

As noted in the PY24-27 WIOA State plan, written by the Colorado Workforce Development Council, “Colorado has a well-coordinated workforce system” that is not only anchored at the state level by Governor Polis, but at local levels through elected officials to ensure that the workforce system can achieve the bold goals not only set forth by the administration, but also by the United States Department of Labor – Employment and Training Agency (USDOL-ETA).

Colorado’s workforce system has worked with other organizations to ensure that there is a focus on cross-agency collaboration and coordination. Additionally, Colorado has adopted a mindset that includes community-based organizations, education partners, libraries and other institutions as key stakeholders that contribute to the success of the Workforce Development Ecosystem.

Colorado and local workforce boards have embraced this work to enhance a focus on using evidence to inform workforce development strategies and to influence the design and execution of initiatives based on that work.

This work does not follow single program lines. The Colorado Workforce Ecosystem has close collaborations with partners at the State and Local levels to ensure customers have opportunity to find employment within any sector, and businesses have a pool of talent that ensures success.

Sector Partnerships have grown over the last 10 years to more than 50 statewide recognized groups covering many of the largest sectors. While informed at the local level, this model ensures that stakeholders including workforce, education, chambers, economic development, and others can identify and address pinch points in a timely manner.

On behalf of the Pikes Peak Workforce Center and Central Planning Region, we welcome all to the Colorado Workforce Ecosystem.

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## **Local Area Questions:**

**1. Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the local area, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the local area.**

In the Pikes Peak Workforce Region<sup>1</sup>, there is a clear upward trajectory in the labor force, evidenced by an increase of 35,847 individuals from January 2019 to December 2023. This indicates a growth of 10.2%. This illustrates the region's economic vitality and its ability to rebound and grow. The strategic decision to retain Space Command in Colorado further serves to bolster the local economy.

The Pikes Peak Region is experiencing significant growth across various sectors, particularly in government, healthcare, and technical services. For instance, government jobs are projected to rise by 5.2% from 99,465 in 2024 to 104,659 in 2028, reflecting the region's evolving economic landscape and diverse employment opportunities.

The local area benefits from a dynamic job market, with an average of 17,743 unique job postings monthly in 2023, offering an average wage of \$28.27 per hour. This demonstrates a healthy demand for labor and a competitive wage landscape. This data portrays the heightened economic activity in the region.

There has been a shift toward skill-based hiring due to structural shortages, with an emphasis on practical skills such as nursing and software development. Despite this trend, the data shows a persistent demand for higher education, with nearly 40% of job postings requiring a bachelor's degree or higher. This requirement is particularly prevalent in top-posted jobs within healthcare and technology sectors, indicating that while skills are crucial, post-secondary qualifications remain a significant employment criterion in the region.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, high childcare costs in the region, especially in sectors like food preparation where they can consume up to 59.1% of median earnings, present a significant challenge. This underscores the need for integrated supportive services to alleviate this burden and enhance workforce participation. This approach can help ensure that economic growth is inclusive and benefits all members of the community.

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center (PPWFC) has identified key strengths in its operations, including substantial community awareness of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed analysis provided by Patrick Holwell, Workforce Economist of Arapahoe/Douglas Works!, please see the appendix at the end of this document.

<sup>2</sup> This is shown in the appendix, figure 8, on page 53

Act (WIOA) funding and programs. The staff at PPWFC possess relevant expertise and experience, with a notable understanding of compliance and performance metrics. Effective collaboration is in place with mandatory partners and agencies, supported by a board composition that aligns with WIOA standards.

In the educational sector, the large number of school districts and the level of collaboration among them are identified as opportunities for improvement. Additionally, postsecondary education providers continue to work toward coordinating their efforts effectively.

These points indicate PPWFC's operational strengths in terms of community awareness, staff expertise, and collaborative governance. The need for focused improvements in services for in-school youth, educational relationships, and sector-wide collaboration is also recognized.

PPWFC's strengths are evidenced in its effective collaboration with businesses, community partners, and job seekers through diverse services that lead to employment. Emphasizing Job Quality is central to PPWFC's strategy, ensuring individuals find satisfactory employment while providing employers with suitable candidates. Additionally, PPWFC stands out for its Incumbent Worker Training (IWT). This program is a unique offering not found in other regions, and it is leveraged for better employee retention through targeted training and skill development.

PPWFC benefits from having specialized team members who bring depth of expertise to their roles, contributing to the organization's ability to respond effectively to the changing needs of both businesses and job seekers. This capability is enhanced through its productive military relations and diligent tracking of services. Through partnerships and intentional efforts, PPWFC is equipped to adapt its strategies to meet evolving demands.

However, PPWFC faces challenges in quantifying the impact of its no-cost services, often relying on anecdotal evidence to gauge Return on Investment (ROI). This situation underscores the need for more sophisticated qualitative metrics to accurately assess ROI. Furthermore, there is a recognized need for improvement in skills-based hiring practices and in the clearer identification of services provided by community partners.

PPWFC also sees an opportunity to better track the direct impact of its services on job seekers. Application rates for job postings can be difficult to quantify, as can corroborating staff efforts to the successful employment of individuals. This reveals a broader need to better showcase the effectiveness of workforce center services in aiding job placement.

**2. Describe the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth, individuals with barriers to employment, and New Americans), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in WIOA section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.**

Over the past few months, all local areas across the state of Colorado have engaged in strategic planning activities to align with the needs at the state, regional, and local levels. The workforce system, guided by local workforce development boards, prioritizes inclusivity by focusing on populations that historically face barriers to education and employment. This approach is integral to delivering seamless services. Throughout the last four years, there has been an ongoing effort to incorporate newly identified strategic populations into operational models. This inclusive strategy will continue to be a key focus as the plans for 2024-2027 are implemented.

The strategic vision and goals of the local board reflect a comprehensive approach to preparing an educated and skilled workforce that aligns with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) section 116(b)(2)(A)'s focus on performance accountability measures. The overarching aim is to ensure that all members of the community, including youth, individuals with barriers to employment, and New Americans, have access to opportunities that enable economic growth and self-sufficiency. The strategic vision encompasses several key areas:

- **Early Credential and Certification Attainment:** Expanding access to early credentialing and certification programs across a range of industries and skills, particularly in high-demand areas. This includes promoting certifications for nontraditional skills to ensure broader recognition of competencies in the workforce.
- **Partnerships for Education and Work-Based Learning:** Establishing and deepening partnerships with local businesses, educational institutions, and community organizations to promote dual enrollment, Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways, and work-based learning opportunities such as apprenticeships and internships. This strategy aims to create seamless pathways from education into the workforce, ensuring that learners are equipped with the skills demanded by the local economy.
- **Career Exploration and Workforce Preparation in Schools:** Integrating career exploration and workforce preparation activities into the curriculum at all levels of K-12 education, supported by trained Work-Based Learning (WBL) staff. This includes leveraging the resources and expertise of organizations like the Pikes Peak Business and Education Alliance (PPBEA)/PPWFC’s In-School Youth Program, to provide real-world industry insights and connections.

- **Support for Individuals with Barriers to Employment:** Tailoring programs and services to meet the needs of individuals facing barriers to employment, including New Americans, by providing targeted supportive services, language training, digital accessibility training, and specialized coaching. These efforts are designed to enhance inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring that all community members can participate fully in workforce development opportunities.
- **Postsecondary Access and Affordability:** Advocating for increased access to and affordability of postsecondary education, including trade programs and college. This encompasses financial literacy education, the promotion of income-sharing agreements, and the use of open educational resources to reduce costs.
- **Engagement with Employers and Community:** Actively engaging employers in the design and implementation of educational and training programs to ensure alignment with industry needs. This involves working with K-12 education to produce graduates who possess the skills that businesses need. This also involves fostering a community network to support job seekers through mentorship, networking opportunities, and access to career services.
- **Elevating Job Quality:** Elevating Job Quality in Colorado's shifting economy by endorsing roles that provide benefits like sustainable wages and opportunities for career progression. By following the Colorado Job Quality Framework, PPWFC will lead local employers in reviewing and clarifying job standards, a key factor in attracting workers and creating a diverse and inclusive work environment. With support from the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC), PPWFC will refine Job Quality and aid businesses in fostering long-term workforce development throughout the state.
- **Accountability and Continuous Improvement:** Adhering to WIOA's performance accountability measures by regularly assessing program outcomes and impact. This includes monitoring employment rates, earnings, credential attainment, and progress toward further education or training. The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) is committed to using this data to inform continuous improvement efforts, ensuring programs effectively support economic growth and self-sufficiency for participants.

Through these strategic initiatives, the LWDB aims to build a robust, inclusive workforce ecosystem that not only meets the current needs of the local economy but also anticipates future trends and demands. The focus on education, skill development, and strong partnerships reflects a comprehensive approach to workforce development that values all community members' contributions and potential.

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center consistently strives to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its employment services, skills training, and career development initiatives. Part of these efforts include streamlining access to essential job search tools and resources. For example, new shortcuts for useful website links, including those related to workshops and résumé development, have been added to the computers in the resource center. Through collaborative efforts, PPWFC staff facilitate work-based learning activities for practical skills development.

A central component of PPWFC's strategy is to accelerate student career development through organized and scalable career-connected learning. The PPWFC in-school youth team (PPBEA) is creating a unified organizational structure to improve alignment among the separate school districts. The in-school youth program increases students' awareness of in-demand and high-paying jobs within the community. This helps improve decision-making for young adults through contextual and informative learning experiences.

Recognizing the importance of youth engagement, PPWFC prioritizes forming partnerships with other agencies and institutions. These partnerships render reverse referrals, which occur when participants are directed to PPWFC programs, adding to program connectivity and participant support. Despite a recent decrease in reverse referrals, PPWFC acknowledges that staffing levels and a consistent presence at partner agencies are key opportunities for improvement. This underscores the need for outreach efforts and continual relationship development.

Engagement with the LWDB and employers is also a key focus, with concerted efforts directed toward helping PPWFC achieve its objectives. This involves identifying and working with more businesses that can contribute to these goals and ensuring that marketing efforts are targeted appropriately. The consideration of establishing satellite locations throughout the region is part of a broader strategy to increase PPWFC's active involvement in community and outreach activities.

Furthermore, PPWFC is committed to optimizing its outreach strategies and refining its marketing focus on in-demand occupations and specific target groups. Through discussions with partner agencies, PPWFC aims to improve the clarity and effectiveness of its service delivery within the one-stop system. Emphasizing increased cross-team collaboration, PPWFC is dedicated to leveraging collective expertise to improve outcomes.

Through these various initiatives and strategic actions, PPWFC demonstrates a comprehensive commitment to building a skilled workforce that meets the local economy's needs, emphasizing collaboration, accessibility, targeted outreach, and community engagement as essential elements of its approach.

**3. Describe the strategies and services that will be utilized to facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs. Specifically:**

**a. What outreach activities are planned to increase business engagement in your local area?**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center sustains partnerships with essential advisory groups, various local chambers of commerce, community boards, Economic Development Corporations (EDC), and Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) as part of its strategy to enhance business engagement.

PPWFC will leverage the advisory meetings of its in-school youth program (PPBEA) to boost the recruitment and engagement of business partners. The emphasis will be on fostering active participation, underscoring the contributions of small businesses, which are encouraged to participate.

Efforts to extend outreach, particularly in rural areas, involve collaboration with regional chambers of commerce. The strategy includes distributing fliers at networking events and delivering presentations to economic development groups and chambers to enhance visibility and engagement. Receiving referrals from community partners is deemed vital for building connections and fostering collaboration.

The outreach strategy also prioritizes engagement with educational institutions, such as public libraries (e.g., Pikes Peak Library District), adult education providers, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The use of social media platforms and LinkedIn is identified as an effective tool for the Business Relations Group (BRG) to enhance business engagement. Furthermore, involvement with professional and industry associations is seen as a key avenue for developing productive relationships, underscoring the importance of a comprehensive approach that combines direct outreach with digital engagement to support business and educational collaboration.

**b. How will the Business Services Team be utilized for this purpose?**

The Business Relations Group (BRG) implements various strategies to enhance employer engagement, particularly focusing on small businesses and sectors with high demand for skilled labor. Through individual meetings, the BRG focuses on consulting with businesses to connect them to the resources or core business services that meet their needs.

Pikes Peak Workforce Center's BRG organizes job fairs to connect businesses with job seekers in an environment conducive to discussion about companies and their open positions. Employers wishing to participate must list their positions on ConnectingColorado.com, a state job database compliant with EEOC standards. Priority for participation is given to new employers, those with multiple positions, and local businesses. The job fairs are scheduled based on local hiring trends, recognized industry

months, and community events, with industry-specific fairs throughout the year. Additionally, the "First Wednesday Job Fair" caters to immediate hiring needs across various industries.

Job Quality has been integrated into all job fairs, with employers polled at registration about the Job Quality aspects they offer, such as internal promotions, paid professional development, and health benefits. These features are highlighted to job seekers during the fairs using printed table tents.

Job fairs are tailored to specific audiences, such as apprenticeships or young adults, using targeted outreach to both employers and job seekers based on industry, job codes, and other relevant criteria. Digital marketing and printed fliers promote these events, with PPWFC offering experienced business specialists for each industry to enhance participation.

Beyond job fairs, Job Quality is emphasized in employer services, including job posting assistance and sector partnership meetings. Employers are encouraged to highlight or consider adding Job Quality aspects to become more competitive, with discussions often revealing no-cost improvements that can enhance their offerings to potential employees.

At PPWFC events, employers are encouraged to showcase their Career Pathways to attendees. It is essential for employers to be ready to discuss the specific career opportunities available within their organizations. To assist in this effort, they often bring their own digital or print marketing materials, such as fliers, websites, and videos, to give job seekers a clearer picture of their options. For those employers who do not have their own marketing materials, PPWFC provides generic, industry-specific fliers that can be customized with company-specific information. Additionally, as one of several support options, PPWFC can offer limited graphic design assistance, helping employers refine how they present their Career Pathways.

PPWFC offers tailored hiring events, providing comprehensive recruitment and selection services, including candidate sourcing, event management, and on-site assessments. Employers can also benefit from pre-employment assessments conducted by skilled staff to ensure candidates meet the required skill levels, thereby improving hiring decisions and employee retention.

For training and development, the on-the-job training (OJT) program assists WIOA participants by reimbursing employers. Those with 100 or more employees receive up to 50% reimbursement, while employers with 99 or fewer employees can get up to 75% of the OJT participant's wages reimbursed. This approach helps lower the expenses associated with training new hires who need additional skills, while growing the skill set of the participant. Incumbent Worker funds are available for upskilling current employees, which benefits both the employee's career progression and the company's competitiveness. The BRG also offers business education webinars, to support employers on workforce topics.

PPWFC also provides labor market data to assist businesses with making informed decisions based on local employment trends, salary data, and skills. These services are designed to optimize the local labor market's efficiency and support the growth of businesses and the economy.

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center actively participates in the Business Services Leadership Team (BSLT) workgroup, which aims to develop a statewide strategy to deliver seamless business services. This workgroup helps businesses use workforce center services to hire qualified employees and contributes to the state's economic competitiveness. Additionally, the PPWFC contributes to BSLT task forces that focus on collaborative initiatives, including Core Business Services, regional Work-Based Learning (WBL), and Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) support.

**c. How will the members (particularly business members) of the LWDB and Youth Council/committee support these efforts?**

The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) and the Youth Committee play a critical role in supporting the initiatives led by the Pikes Peak Business and Education Alliance (PPBEA)/PPWFC's In-School Youth Program. Their joint efforts place a strategic emphasis on career pathway development, fostering long-term career readiness, and skill development to meet the evolving needs of the workforce. This approach represents a mission to prepare individuals for future career opportunities by aligning educational outcomes with the requirements of today's job market.

LWDB members actively participate in Work-Based Learning (WBL) activities organized or endorsed by the PPWFC In-School Youth Program, illustrating their commitment to integrating practical education and training for youth. This participation directly aligns training with industry needs, improving the relevance and impact of these initiatives.

The extensive involvement of LWDB members in these activities signals a unified dedication to workforce development and education, bridging the gap between educational outcomes and employer expectations. This collaborative effort ensures youth are prepared with the essential skills and knowledge demanded by employers, promoting a skilled and adaptable workforce that supports the region's economic growth. Moreover, youth are provided with numerous opportunities to discover local career paths, enhancing their understanding of available options in their community. This also provides valuable networking opportunities, which can facilitate advancement in future career endeavors.

In addition, the K-12 Teacher Externship Program, led by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), is designed to connect education with the STEM industry, enhancing workforce development in these sectors. With the program in its initial phase and the first externships anticipated by June 2024, efforts are focused on establishing partnerships with STEM-based businesses and educators to create meaningful externship opportunities. PPWFC plans to promote this initiative, providing teachers with immersive

industry experiences to enrich their teaching and better prepare students for STEM careers.

The PPWFC In-School Youth Program benefits from the unwavering support of the Youth Committee, which enables impactful work toward career pathway development. In LWDB meetings, participants share their testimonies and shed light on their successful experiences with the programs. This cooperative approach among the LWDB, Youth Committee, and PPWFC In-School Youth Program highlights their shared commitment to achieving common workforce development goals.

**d. How will sector partnerships be utilized for this purpose?**

Sector partnerships are designed to bring together employers, including small businesses and those in high-demand sectors, with workforce development programs. The goal is to create a space where companies in similar fields can jointly address common issues, especially those related to workforce needs.

A key player in these partnerships is PPWFC's Sector Partnership Convenor (SPC), who facilitates collaboration and ensures these efforts are in sync with larger regional workforce strategies. The individual in this role consistently organizes and participates in sector partnership meetings and business networking events. One notable example includes Cybersecurity First Friday, which is an event that convenes multiple public and private sector organizations to discuss trends and best practices in cybersecurity. The Sector Partnership Convenor serves as a liaison between various stakeholders. This individual aligns the priorities of businesses and workforce development.

These collaborations are maintained through regular meetings, including monthly sessions between the SPC and the PPBEA/PPWFC's In-School Youth Program, and interactions with K-12 education sector partnerships. Such consistent communication allows for an ongoing dialogue about workforce needs, leading to more tailored and successful initiatives.

A central aspect of these meetings is to ensure the partnerships focus on employer needs, particularly around developing Career Pathways that serve both businesses and the workforce effectively. There are continuous efforts to grow the network by inviting new members who can add value or benefit from the partnerships.

The SPC also personally reaches out to local businesses to widen participation and ensure that the partnership accurately reflects the sector's needs. This effort is supported by leveraging networks, partners, and events to strengthen the community supporting workforce development.

In addition, as a full-time employee, the Sector Partnership Convenor has been hired as part of the Pikes Peak Workforce Center's Business Relations Group. This placement

provides the SPC with comprehensive insights into the services offered by the workforce center, enabling effective collaboration with other BRG staff.

By uniting industries with common interests, these partnerships enable business-driven solutions to specific challenges, ensuring that education and training programs match the actual requirements of the industry. This collaborative model allows businesses to have a say in shaping a skilled workforce that meets their needs.

#### **e. What are your objectives and goals for these activities?**

The Colorado Workforce Development System includes Business Services Teams in 10 local Workforce Development Areas, supported by 11 core business services that offer a structured approach to service delivery. Additionally, each area uses labor market information to align services and interactions with business, industry, and sectors effectively. Successful execution of these strategies depends on cooperation with partners, including Local Workforce Development Boards/Youth Committees, Sector Partners, and subject matter experts.

Based on the initiatives and strategic focus areas previously discussed, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center (PPWFC) and its staff will set realistic objectives and goals for their outreach activities aimed at enhancing workforce development and education in their region. These goals include:

- **Foster Sector Partnerships:** Strengthen and expand sector partnerships by engaging employers from in-demand industries and small businesses. These partnerships aim to address industry-specific challenges and develop collaborative solutions for workforce development.
- **Enhance Employer Engagement:** Increase active involvement from local businesses in workforce development programs. This includes collaborating with employers to improve participation in work-based learning (WBL) activities, ensuring that these programs are aligned with industry needs and contribute directly to preparing a skilled workforce.
- **Strengthen Community Collaboration:** Leverage relationships with educational institutions, local chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and other community partners. The LWDB has formed a Workforce Action Team (WAT) subcommittee comprised of local business, education, and community leaders. The purpose of this subcommittee is to identify and address questions and concerns between industry, education, and workforce development entities.

- **Promote Career Pathways:** Focus on promoting Career Pathways that meet the needs of both employers and job seekers. This includes potential tools like My Colorado Journey to educate businesses on the nature and importance of Career Pathways in their respective industries.
- **Improve Access to Workforce Services:** Expand outreach efforts to make workforce services more accessible, especially in rural areas. Utilizing digital platforms, social media, and targeted marketing strategies can help reach a broader audience and raise awareness of available resources and programs. In rural areas facing broadband challenges, the LWDB will emphasize the importance of building relationships and fostering referrals.
- **Engage with Educational Partners:** Strengthen connections with K-12 schools, adult education programs, and post-secondary institutions to align educational outcomes with workforce needs. This includes promoting Career and Technical Education (CTE), dual enrollment, and other initiatives that prepare students for in-demand careers.
- **Support Inclusive Workforce Development:** Ensure that outreach activities prioritize inclusivity, focusing on serving populations that face barriers to education and employment, including youth, individuals with disabilities, and New Americans.
- **Utilize Data-Driven Strategies:** Employ labor market information and feedback from sector partnerships to inform outreach activities and program development. This approach allows PPWFC to tailor its efforts to the evolving needs of the local economy and workforce.

By setting these objectives, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center and its staff can work toward building a more skilled, adaptable, and inclusive workforce that supports the economic vitality of their region.

**4. Discuss the implementation of initiatives designed to meet the needs of employers in the local area that support the local board’s strategy, including:**

Local Area Workforce Development Boards use tactics to ensure services that benefit both business and career-seeking customers are mutually beneficial and lead toward success. Models from across Colorado include provision of engagement in Work-Based Learning, Apprenticeships, Skills-Based Hiring, Leading and Participation in Sector Partnerships and Career Pathway Development. These relationships in many cases are not limited to only Local Board areas, but also regional areas to address labor sheds that naturally occur due to several factors within a geographical region.

**a. Work-Based Learning Programs: Explain how you will utilize and promote, incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, internships, or other activities for PY24 and PY25, and identify targets for work-based learning activities for your youth, adults/dislocated workers, and incumbent workers.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center will pursue a series of strategies for implementing and enhancing work-based learning programs. One strategy involves the BRG working closely with businesses to foster participation in WBL initiatives, ensuring that potential customers are aware of the opportunities these programs offer.

Marketing efforts will be reassessed and refined. A new focus will be placed on evaluating existing marketing strategies to better reach target populations, with the aim of increasing the reach and effectiveness of these programs.

A new emphasis will be placed on expanding apprenticeships beyond traditional trades and improving on-the-job training through additional partnerships. Simplifying bureaucratic processes and reducing paperwork will help make WBL programs more accessible to businesses and participants. PPWFC will continue to partner with state apprenticeship initiatives, funding, and resources including, but not limited to, becoming a sponsor or intermediary. The PPWFC will provide more training to internal staff to increase awareness of the availability and benefits of internships and other WBL activities.

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) programs will be promoted and used to provide existing employees with the training and skills development necessary to advance within their current roles or to adapt to new job requirements within the same company. These programs are typically funded or supported by workforce development initiatives to help businesses upgrade the skills of their workforce, thereby improving productivity, competitiveness, and innovation.

For businesses, IWT programs offer several benefits, including the ability to address skills gaps, improve operational efficiency, and retain valuable employees by investing in their professional development. This investment will lead to increased employee satisfaction and loyalty, reducing turnover costs and strengthening the company's market position. IWT is also connected to Job Quality that the business can promote. Additionally, LinkedIn Learning courses are offered to businesses at no cost to reskill, upskill or next-skill their existing workforce, which helps employers create quality jobs.

For employees, these programs provide an opportunity to acquire new skills, increase their job security, and enhance career progression opportunities within their current workplace. By participating in these training initiatives, employees will stay relevant in a rapidly changing job market, potentially leading to better job satisfaction and higher wages.

Incumbent Worker Training represents a mutually beneficial program for both employers and employees, fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation that supports both individual career growth and organizational success.

To enhance the success of work-based learning programs, PPWFC will adopt several collaborative strategies. One approach is the formation of cross-departmental teams. These teams, involving members from various departments, can monitor the effectiveness of WBL programs, ensuring a cohesive effort that aligns with PPWFC's broader objectives.

Another strategy involves hosting joint training sessions for staff across different departments. Such sessions will cultivate a mutual understanding of the WBL programs' goals, processes, and benefits. This shared knowledge base facilitates better communication and cooperation among staff, contributing to a more supportive environment for these programs.

Developing a unified communication strategy is also crucial. By employing a consistent message across all departments when engaging with employers, participants, and other stakeholders, the workforce center will more effectively communicate its commitment to and the advantages of WBL programs.

Implementing shared data collection and reporting systems will significantly improve collaboration. These systems enable departments to access and contribute valuable information related to WBL programs, enhancing the center's ability to monitor outcomes, track participant progress, and respond to employer feedback.

Furthermore, conducting regular interdepartmental meetings provides an opportunity for representatives from all areas of the workforce center to share insights on WBL initiatives. These discussions will highlight successes, address challenges, and foster a culture of continuous improvement and adaptation.

Finally, a coordinated effort in employer outreach and engagement is essential. By working together, departments can ensure a consistent approach to developing employer partnerships. This will help increase the diversity and availability of work-based learning opportunities for participants.

By implementing these strategies, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center aims to markedly improve WBL programs. First, businesses are expected to engage more actively with PPWFC, leading to higher participation in WBL initiatives. This engagement is anticipated to help close skills gaps. Second, participants will find better opportunities for career advancement, benefiting from a culture that supports ongoing learning and keeps pace with changes in the job market. Finally, through collaboration across different departments and adopting a unified approach, PPWFC is set to deliver work-based learning programs

more effectively. This will improve outcomes for both businesses and participants, contributing to the region's economic development and competitiveness.

**b. Apprenticeships: USDOL and CDLE are emphasizing the importance of apprenticeships. Please provide a detailed response which includes the steps you will take to increase apprenticeship opportunities for your customers during the next program year.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center (PPWFC) actively shares information about apprenticeship programs through its email marketing efforts, using platforms like Constant Contact. To optimize engagement and participation, the center has strategically rescheduled its Apprenticeship Job Fair to May. This adjustment ensures the event coincides with the start dates and enrollment periods of various apprenticeship programs, facilitating a more effective connection between prospective apprentices and opportunities.

Job fairs hosted by the Business Relations Group have served as an interactive platform where participants gain insights into local programs and their requirements, and where apprenticeship programs can showcase their offerings to a broad audience of interested individuals. Additionally, PPWFC provides a virtual workshop dedicated to apprenticeships, aiming to educate and guide individuals interested in pursuing these valuable Career Pathways.

PPWFC Navigators engage with customers interested in these programs, providing explanations on the nature and function of apprenticeships. The state apprenticeship agency furnishes PPWFC staff with details about available apprenticeship opportunities. When customers inquire about apprenticeships, Navigators supply them with fliers and other promotional materials. For customers uncertain about their industry of interest, Navigators detail the essence of apprenticeships.

There is a recognized need for PPWFC to develop a consistent communication channel with the State Apprenticeship office and the Office of the Future of Work. By promoting apprenticeship opportunities in discussions with businesses and higher education institutions, PPWFC is well-positioned to serve as an intermediary for apprenticeships to maximize impact.

PPWFC will continue to promote pre-apprenticeships as a component of the Title I Youth program, providing valuable work experience for youth aged 16-24 in line with WIOA's emphasis on work opportunities. These pre-apprenticeships, integral to work experience programs, align training with sectors and occupations in high demand, preparing participants for successful entry into Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs). The inclusion of both in-school and out-of-school youth in these programs, supported by WIOA

Youth Program funds, accentuates the commitment to accelerating Career Pathways for young individuals.

Furthermore, these programs facilitate a seamless transition into RAPs. Quality pre-apprenticeships, characterized by their design in collaboration with RAP sponsors and focus on hands-on training, are meant to serve diverse populations. This can help meet industry needs, ensuring participants are well-equipped for their future careers.

**c. Sector Partnerships Participation: Explain how you will utilize the relationships built by your Business Services Team to enhance or expand participation in Sector Partnerships and also expand business services efforts. Indicate PY24 and PY25 specific planned objectives and measurable outcomes.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center plans to use the established relationships of its Business Relations Group to increase involvement in Sector Partnerships and improve business services. PPWFC's strategy includes engaging more businesses through activities like monthly job fairs and specialized hiring events, aiming to widen industry involvement in these partnerships.

The main goal is to advance business engagement within sector partnerships while monitoring success through engagement rates. The BRG will work closely with these partnerships to perform labor market analyses, pinpoint workforce demands, and assess how well training programs are meeting these demands. Training program development and updates will be informed by insights from industry leaders within these sector partnerships.

The BRG also seeks to provide better technical assistance for sector partnerships, enhancing their visibility on the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) website to improve access to supportive services and broaden their impact.

A crucial component of this strategy is the role of the Sector Partnership Convenor, tasked with ensuring these collaborations are in sync with regional workforce strategies and effectively meet both industry and workforce needs.

Through the guidance of the Sector Partnership Convenor, the BRG aims to promote a more cohesive and effective approach to workforce development. This will contribute to the region's economic health by making sector partnerships more productive and aligned with broader goals of workforce development and industry growth.

**d. Sector Partnerships - Status and Objectives: In your local area or with partner local areas, what sector partnerships are you engaged in or do you plan to engage in during PY24 and PY23? Indicate the current status of your partnerships, (active, emerging, or exploring), plus PY24 and PY25 planned objectives and measurable outcomes. Note: For Sector Partnership Information, please visit: <https://www.colorado.gov/cwdc/sector-partnerships>**

**Active Sector Partnerships:** Pikes Peak Retail and Hospitality Sector Partnership, Southern Colorado Regional Healthcare Sector Partnership, and the Pikes Peak Creative Sector Partnership.

**Exploring:** Construction and Manufacturing.

To effectively work with sector partnerships, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center will focus on the following objectives and measurable outcomes:

- **Business Engagement Growth:** Target an annual increase in the number of businesses participating in sector partnerships, using engagement rates as a measure of success.
- **Labor Market Alignment:** Collaborate with sector partnerships for annual labor market analyses to identify workforce needs, measuring success by the implementation of responsive training programs.
- **Training Program Development:** Launch or revise training programs based on industry needs, with success measured through program launches and participant enrollment.
- **Technical Assistance Enhancement:** Ensure all sector partnerships are acknowledged on the CWDC website to facilitate access to technical assistance, aiming to broaden the scope and impact of assistance received each year as a measure of progress.
- **Partnership Effectiveness Evaluation:** Conduct evaluations to assess how well sector partnerships meet industry and workforce needs, using employment rates and employer satisfaction as key performance indicators.

By focusing on these objectives and measurable outcomes, the PPWFC can effectively contribute to the success of sector partnerships, thereby addressing workforce challenges and supporting the economic vitality of the region.

**e. Career Pathways: Explain how you will utilize information gathered through your Business Services Team to provide a baseline for consideration of new or enhanced Sector Partnerships, and how this information will be used to inform changes to or development of Career Pathways in your Local Area. Indicate specific PY24 and PY25 planned objectives and measurable outcomes.**

The Business Relations Group collects essential data on industry trends and workforce needs, which remains pivotal for assessing and initiating Sector Partnerships and for shaping Career Pathways. Specifically, the BRG objectives and measurable outcomes For PY 24 & PY 25 are:

- Increase engagement in the participation of existing sector partnerships by 15%.
- Outreach to key partners to continue coordinating and aligning efforts across industry, education, workforce, and economic development.
- Track projects and events that support impact of the sector partnership (for example, job fairs, presentations, and marketing campaigns).
- Capture success stories from members around sector initiatives.
- Integrate Job Quality into each Sector Partnership.
- Assess the impact of Career Pathways, Benefits, Wages, Schedules, & Work Environment in members' workforce development strategies.
- Support emerging sector partnerships to directly respond to industry-driven priorities.

#### **Sector Partnerships Assessment:**

- The BRG's industry insights are used to identify potential sectors for new or enhanced partnerships, focusing on areas with significant growth opportunities and workforce needs.

#### **Career Pathway Development:**

- Data on in-demand skills and emerging industry trends from the BRG inform the creation or revision of Career Pathways. These pathways aim to align education and training programs with current employer needs and workforce demands.

#### **Stakeholder Collaboration:**

- The BRG engages with a wide array of stakeholders, including businesses, educational institutions, workforce development experts, local chambers of commerce, and business advisory groups to gather input on Sector Partnerships and Career Pathways. The goal is to collaborate with advisory committees for these initiatives to ensure they are responsive and relevant.

This strategic use of BRG insights aims to enhance Sector Partnerships and Career Pathways, ensuring they effectively meet the needs of the local economy and workforce.

**f. Skills Based Hiring: Explain what services are offered to employers to implement skills-based hiring practices, which could include assistance with job postings, interview procedures, onboarding mechanisms, or referrals to outside training resources on this topic.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center has implemented a suite of services designed to assist employers in adopting skills-based hiring practices. These services aim to streamline the

recruitment and hiring process, focusing on the competencies and abilities of candidates rather than solely on their credentials. PPWFC offers:

- **Job Postings Assistance:** Support in developing job postings that highlight essential skills and competencies, offering workshops or individual consultations to help employers effectively communicate their needs.
- **Interview Procedures:** Resources and training on crafting interview questions and processes that assess a candidate's practical skills, including competency-based questions and skill assessment techniques. This includes no-cost assessments.
- **Onboarding Guidance:** Assist employers in creating effective onboarding programs that acquaint new hires with their roles through a skills-based approach, ensuring a smoother transition into the workforce.
- **Skills-Based Hiring Workshops:** PPWFC plans to host workshops aimed at educating employers about the advantages of skills-based hiring and providing them with the tools and knowledge to implement these practices within their organizations.
- **Skills-Based Hiring Toolkit:** Provide businesses with a comprehensive toolkit, which includes resources, templates, and best practices to guide employers through the transition to skills-based hiring.
- **Business Education:** Provide business education through various formats, including seminars, roundtables, workshops, and focus groups. These services are designed to provide businesses with expert insights, skill development opportunities, and a platform to provide input on industry-relevant topics.

Through these initiatives, PPWFC aims to foster a more inclusive and effective hiring process, encouraging employers to focus on the skills that are directly relevant to job success. This approach is expected to benefit both employers and job seekers by emphasizing the value of skills and competencies in the workplace.

Below is a list of external resources that may help employers better understand and implement skills-based hiring.

- Rework America: <https://www.jff.org/idea/rework-america-alliance/>
- Job Posting Generator: <https://skillitizer.eddesignlab.org/>
- Bias Interrupters: <https://biasinterrupters.org/orgtools/>
- Gender Decoder: <http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/>
- Job Quality Academy: <https://www.jff.org/job-quality-academy/>
- SkillsEngine: <https://builder.skillsengine.com/>

**5. Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, including how the local board will facilitate the development of Career Pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable);**

The Colorado Workforce Ecosystems foundation is based upon providing program participants access to services centered around employment, training, education, work-based learning, apprenticeships, and supportive services designed for success. WIOA Title I programs have a variety of eligibility criteria set around traditional barriers, governor set priority populations and local board priorities to ensure that individuals have abilities to be successful.

In its efforts to expand access to all participants, PPWFC:

- **Disability Program Navigator (DPN):** Employs a full-time DPN, a role established through collaboration with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and CDLE's Workforce Development Programs. This employee guides individuals with disabilities through available programs and services and helps them achieve meaningful employment.
- **Support for Career Pathways:** Advises on the development of Career Pathways in collaboration with industry and educational partners, focusing on high-demand areas and the skills and qualifications needed for career progression.
- **Co-enrollment in Programs:** Is expanding efforts to co-enroll individuals in multiple core programs, aiming to provide comprehensive services tailored to enhance their training and employment opportunities.
- **Expanding Supportive Services:** Promotes essential services such as career coaching, résumé assistance, and interview preparation, alongside practical support for transportation and childcare, to facilitate easier participation in training and employment.
- **Access to Credentialing Programs:** Focuses on facilitating access to recognized, stackable, and portable credentialing programs, advising on their relevance and quality to ensure they meet current industry demands.
- **Use of Technology:** Leverages technology to overcome geographical, digital access, and scheduling barriers, enhancing its online presence to make services more accessible to a broader audience.
- **PPWFC and Department of Human Services (DHS) Collaboration:** Offers its services for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) clients through an active partnership with DHS, made more effective by DHS's co-location with PPWFC. This collaboration is set to expand with the introduction of the Paving

Access to Careers and Employment (PACE) Program, aiming to provide integrated service delivery and seamless access to employment and training resources.

- **Information and Workshop Initiatives:** Jointly markets with DHS through tools such as television displays in waiting areas and computers with labor market information to educate clients on their options and local labor market trends. Workshops focusing on Career Pathways further equip individuals with an understanding of various career options and local job market demands, guiding them toward economic self-sufficiency in the Pikes Peak region.
- **Lightcast Data:** PPWFC will enhance its services by utilizing Lightcast data, which includes:
  - Wage Information: To inform individuals about the earning potential of various careers.
  - Job Listings: To align training programs with current job market needs and employer requirements.
  - Demand for Jobs and Skills: To focus training and preparation on jobs and skills with high demand in the Pikes Peak region.
  - Visual representations of the job ecosystem to show connections between different jobs. This will help job seekers understand potential career paths and advancement opportunities.
  - By employing Lightcast data, PPWFC will provide more targeted guidance to job seekers, helping them to pursue in-demand jobs and relevant training for career growth.

Through these targeted actions, PPWFC aims to enhance its workforce development services, supporting job seekers in overcoming employment barriers and aiding in regional economic development.

**6. Describe the strategy to work with adult education providers funded under Title II of WIOA and Vocational Rehabilitation to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in question 5.**

All boards across Colorado work with WIOA Title II providers to ensure seamless service delivery for adult education and vocational rehabilitation as needed. The Pikes Peak Workforce Center (PPWFC) has developed a memorandum of understanding with providers that qualify under this program and continue to collaborate, inform, and monitor progress to ensure the success of participants.

To align resources effectively with adult education providers under of Title II WIOA and Vocational Rehabilitation, the PPWFC will continue to prioritize the following strategic steps:

1. **Refine the Joint Service Delivery Plan:** Enhance, recreate, or expand the comprehensive collaboration plan with adult education providers and Vocational

Rehabilitation. This plan would outline how services can be integrated, specifying referral processes and the shared use of resources to ensure individuals receive cohesive support throughout their career development journey with a philosophy that no door is the wrong door.

2. **Continue Regular Collaboration Meetings:** The PPWFC One Stop Operator will continue to initiate consistent meetings between PPWFC, adult education providers, and Vocational Rehabilitation representatives to develop relationships and, more importantly, trust. These meetings will serve as a platform for coordinating services, sharing updates, and identifying collaborative opportunities to better serve the community's needs.
3. **Support Career Pathways:** Jointly identify, support, and enhance Career Pathways that cater to high-demand sectors within the region. These pathways would guide individuals through the necessary educational and vocational steps for career entry and advancement, leveraging the strengths of each program to provide clear and accessible routes to employment.
4. **Educate Staff:** Reestablish staff education on the services that are available through each provider, including PPWFC. The frontline staff are the ones that understand the reality of daily operations and should have a voice regarding how to better align services and resources.

These focused steps are designed to enhance the synergy between PPWFC, adult education, and Vocational Rehabilitation, ensuring that resources are optimally utilized to support individuals in their educational and career pursuits.

PPWFC plans to maintain job coaching sessions and enhance engagement with staff at partner agencies to strengthen partnerships and align resources, recognizing the value of these collaborations. Ongoing weekly meetings with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will persist, and the Disability Program Navigator will coordinate with counterparts across Colorado to avoid service duplication. Additionally, PPWFC aims to improve its effectiveness in connecting community resources, particularly focusing on deliberate and value-producing partnerships with Teller County organizations.

Maintaining a consistent presence is another important strategy to align resources. PPWFC will continue to have a staff member co-located at the Colorado Springs School District 11's Wasson High School which hosts the district's adult education and English as a Second Language (ESL) program. Additionally, PPWFC staff will continue to meet with the Pikes Peak Library District's adult education program and pursue various opportunities to collaborate.

## **7. Describe the strategies and services that will be utilized to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.**

During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center established a temporary location that allowed for mandatory social distancing for unemployed workers

to file for unemployment and have their various questions answered. PPWFC also expanded the number of staff members who answered the telephones to assist with unemployment and other work-related questions. Now, as the volume of calls has decreased to pre-pandemic levels, PPWFC still offers targeted services to those using the workforce and Unemployment Insurance (UI) systems, based on demand and necessity.

A strong relationship built on mutual trust and understanding is crucial to serve the residents in El Paso & Teller Counties with any type of UI programs. Therefore, PPWFC maintains a collaborative relationship with unemployment insurance representatives and CDLE Employment and Training Programs to identify and address any critical issues, ensuring an optimal experience for customers. Monthly meetings with UI staff and quarterly updates during the statewide workforce alignment meetings will continue to foster collaboration and effectiveness.

PPWFC has dedicated staff to serve Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA). The RESEA program establishes policies and guidelines to connect UI claimants with the Colorado Workforce Development System, which helps them return to work sooner. PPWFC will make staffing adjustments to enhance the delivery of the RESEA program. To provide more comprehensive support for clients' job search efforts within the RESEA program, PPWFC will introduce a new RESEA job coach position. Furthermore, an additional workforce technician will be allocated to handle the administrative tasks related to the RESEA program, ensuring efficient operation and better service for participants.

A few members of the Business Relations Group, along with other staff, have completed UI-related Rapid Response (RR) training for the business community who are facing a reduction in staff. Customized solutions are developed to meet the specific needs of each business, with a focus on ensuring that businesses are aware of the layoff aversion services available to them. Both in-person and virtual RR services are offered to accommodate different needs. Additionally, for job seekers, the program provides access to a Reverse Job Fair and a variety of workshops, including condensed versions for efficiency.

To further develop its relationship with UI, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center will focus on improving clarity and accessibility in communications and processes. PPWFC will continue to train its staff regarding UI processes and procedures so they can be equipped to answer questions from customers. Ensuring timely and direct updates from UI through effective communication channels, such as email, will keep both staff and clients well-informed of any changes or updates.

As showcased during the pandemic, a great relationship and understanding with Unemployment Insurance is critical to meet the needs of residents and businesses. PPWFC aims to foster a stronger partnership with UI, ensuring that clients receive the support they need with greater ease and understanding.

**8. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with economic development activities carried out in the planning region, and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services;**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center aims to coordinate workforce investment and economic development by engaging with local and civic chambers and economic development offices to establish a network with meaningful connections. To support small businesses, PPWFC plans to provide general business training that equips individuals with essential skills without necessitating formal credentials. When possible, PPWFC intends to collaborate with organizations possessing existing resources to promote its programs and services more effectively. This includes, among others:

- Small Business Development Center (SBDC): offers small business consulting services and training that maximizes the economic impact in the region and the economic potential of entrepreneurs.
- City and county economic development offices: through various grants and consultation, these offices offer services to attract, expand, and grow small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- SCORE: a non-profit resource partner with the Small Business Administration (SBA) that offers free mentoring services to small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Veterans Business Outreach Center (VBOC): a Small Business Administration (SBA) initiative designed to assist veteran entrepreneurs with workshops like Boots to Business.

In Teller County, the focus will be on business retention and expansion, considering the challenges with attracting new businesses to rural areas. Recognizing that not all concerns can be resolved directly, PPWFC emphasizes the need to connect, convene, and collaborate with various stakeholders. Addressing the skills gap through reskilling, upskilling, and next-skilling initiatives is identified as a priority to aid in business attraction and retention, aligning workforce development efforts with the economic needs of the region.

**9. Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in that system. Also describe how you will partner with the required WIOA partners to increase awareness of Career Pathways and the critical role that workforce development plays in ensuring that all Coloradans have access to educational and Career Pathways that result in meaningful employment.**

The local workforce development system encompasses a comprehensive array of programs designed to enhance job readiness, employment prospects, and career advancement for individuals within the community. These programs include, but are not limited to, Adult Education and Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation, Youth Employment Services, and Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) along with other mandatory WIOA partners, all aimed at providing targeted support across various demographics. Additionally, the system integrates services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), emphasizing collaboration among various stakeholders to optimize workforce outcomes.

A subcommittee of the Local Workforce Development Board is the Workforce Action Team (WAT). The Workforce Action Team was becoming a pivotal entity prior to the pandemic. Unfortunately, the pandemic put a hold on the great work the committee was doing in education, community awareness, and business engagement. The WAT relaunched in the fall of 2023 and is anticipated to assist the region by bringing together different workforce and talent organizations. This group will work to make progress on enhancing and developing talent pipelines. Initiatives include teacher's career exploration within in-demand industries and helping Coloradans aged 55+ return to work or reskill, upskill or next-skill to fill the skills gap. Additional efforts will be dedicated to the education of businesses and job seekers on quality jobs and the Good Jobs Principle, as well as skills-based hiring.

To partner effectively with the required WIOA partners and heighten awareness of Career Pathways, the following strategies will be implemented:

- **Joint Initiatives and Workshops:** Collaborating with WIOA partners to organize joint initiatives and workshops that showcase the breadth of Career Pathways available within the local area. These events will serve to educate participants about the critical role of workforce development in securing meaningful employment and the various educational and training resources available to them.
- **Cross-Program Referrals:** Establishing a robust system of cross-program referrals among WIOA partners to ensure that individuals are aware of and have access to the full range of services and programs that can support their career goals. This

approach will help streamline the process of connecting individuals with the specific resources they need to advance in their chosen Career Pathways.

- **Integrated Marketing and Communication Efforts:** Leveraging shared marketing and communication channels to promote Career Pathways and workforce development programs. This could include social media campaigns, newsletters, and community outreach events designed to reach a broad audience and raise awareness about the importance of workforce development.
- **Data Sharing and Collaborative Planning:** Sharing data and insights among WIOA partners to identify emerging workforce trends and align workforce development efforts with the needs of the local economy. This collaborative planning process will help ensure that Career Pathways and training programs are responsive to current and future job market demands.
- **Enhanced Employer Engagement:** Working closely with employers to understand their workforce needs and assist in developing Career Pathways that align with industry requirements. Employer input will be crucial in designing educational and training programs that equip individuals with the skills and credentials valued by the local job market.

By implementing these strategies, the partnership aims to increase awareness of Career Pathways and stress the importance of workforce development in enabling all Coloradans to access educational and career opportunities that lead to meaningful employment. This coordinated effort will contribute to a more skilled and adaptable workforce, meeting the evolving needs of the local economy.

In Teller County, a comprehensive suite of employment services is provided to assist clients in various aspects of job seeking and career advancement. This includes skills assessments, access to job postings and search engines, assistance with applications and résumés, and direct support for unemployment services such as filing claims, certifying weeks, fulfilling reporting requirements, and navigating other complex issues.

Further efforts are made to enhance workforce participation through the initialization and updating of workforce registrations, submitting referrals for upskilling and training programs aimed at potential career advancement. These services in Teller County are part of a broader initiative to complement Community of Caring's client services programs, which help clients find reliable income sources, achieve financial independence, and foster a positive life outlook.

Additionally, general customer service and technical support are offered in the local computer lab, where staff help with faxing, printing, email, web browsing, document creation, and digital storage, among other services. This support extends to facilitating access to various community and educational resources.

Productive partnerships have been established with local educational institutions, community services, and more than 40 community-based organizations that convene monthly at the Aspen Mine Center's Teller County Resource Group meetings. These meetings aim to discuss programs and explore opportunities for collaboration across a wide spectrum of services including adult education, family wraparound services, health, mental health, legal services, senior programs, veterans' services, and transportation.

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

**a. Identify the locations of the comprehensive physical one-stop centers (at least one) within your local area; also list the locations of your network of affiliate sites, both physical and electronically linked, such as libraries.**

1. Pikes Peak Workforce Center (Main Office) – 1675 Garden of the Gods Rd, Colorado Springs, CO 80907
2. Community Partnership Family Resource Center (Satellite Office) – 701 Gold Hill Place South, Woodland Park, CO 80863
3. Community of Caring's Aspen Mine Center West (Satellite Office) – 100 W Bennett Ave, PO Box 1587, Cripple Creek, CO 80813

**b. Identify your key strategies for integrating the core programs (WIOA Title I, II, III, and IV programs), as well as all required partner programs, within the local one-stop system of comprehensive and affiliate offices.**

PPWFC integrates core WIOA programs and partner programs within its one-stop system, focusing on seamless service delivery. PPWFC is the service provider for WIOA Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance. The strategy involves an integrated service model that efficiently connects clients to a variety of services, enhancing their access to support. Services from different programs are co-located in comprehensive and affiliate offices, making it easier for clients to receive the help they need in a single location.

In anticipation of a new state labor market exchange system in 2025, the use of existing and future shared technology platforms allows PPWFC and its partners to track client progress and streamline service coordination. This collaborative approach ensures services are responsive to the evolving needs of the local economy and labor market. PPWFC also prioritizes engagement with community and employers to align workforce development efforts with regional economic goals.

Continuous evaluation through feedback mechanisms helps PPWFC refine its integrated one-stop system, ensuring it remains effective in serving job seekers, workers, and employers. This straightforward approach aims to foster economic growth and support individual career advancement in the region.

**c. Describe the roles and resource contributions of each of the one-stop partners.**

Contributions of One-Stop Partners:

The following table summarizes information about the One-Stop Partners. Information including the name of the organization, primary target groups, and a summary of services are provided:

One-Stop Partner Name	Primary Target Groups	Summary of Services Provided
WIOA Adult Program Colorado Department of Labor and the PPWFC	Low-Income and Basic Skills Deficient Adults Age 18 and Over w/ Barriers to Employment or Training	Comprehensive Re-employment and Training Services
WIOA Dislocated Worker Program Colorado Department of Labor and the PPWFC	Laid-Off Individuals w/ Limited Re-employment Opportunities	Comprehensive Re-employment and Training Services
WIOA Youth Program Colorado Department of Labor and the PPWFC	Disconnected and Low-Income Youth Age 18-24 Years Old	Comprehensive Re-employment and Training Services
Job Corps Program GBX Consultants, Inc.	Disconnected and Low-Income Youth Age 18-24 Years Old Note: Job Corps has contracted with an outside organization to provide Job Corps outreach	Comprehensive Re-employment and Training Services
WIOA Title I Migrant Seasonal Farmworker program Colorado Department of Labor and the PPWFC	Unemployment and underemployed Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	Comprehensive Re-employment and Training Services
WIOA Title I Native American program	N/A	N/A
Adult Education and Literacy Colorado Springs School District 11 Pikes Peak Library District	Limited English Speakers Non-High School Completers Basic Skills Deficient	Adult Education, GED Training and English as a Second Language Instruction

Wagner-Peyser Act Program Colorado Department of Labor and the PPWFC	Job Seekers Legally Permitted to Work in the United States	Job Search Assistance and Universal Career Services
Vocational Rehabilitation Program Colorado Division of Rehabilitation	Adults and Youth That Have a Documentable Disability; Such Disability Causing Problems Obtaining or Retaining Employment	Comprehensive Re-employment and Training Services
Senior Community Services Employment Program - AARP	Unemployed Individuals 55 Years Old and Over with Low Family Income	Subsidized Employment and Work Experience with Public and Non-Profit Organizations
Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Program Pikes Peak State College	Pikes Peak State College Career and Technical Education Students	Financial Support to PPSC Career and Technical Education Programs
Trade Adjustment Act Program Colorado Department of Labor and the PPWFC	Workers Who Lost Employment due to Foreign Competition	Comprehensive Re-Employment and Training Services
Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program – Colorado Department of Labor and Employment	Veterans w/ Significant Barriers to Employment	Comprehensive Case Management and Career Services
Housing/Urban Development Employment Programs El Paso County Economic Development Department City of Colorado Springs	N/A – No Employment Program	Information about affordable housing, financial assistance, and resources that support local homeowners and developers
Unemployment Compensation Program – Colorado Department of Labor	Unemployment Compensation (UI) Applicants and Claimants	Unemployment Compensation Insurance
Second Chance Act Offender Reintegration Program N/A No Services Provided in the region	N/A	N/A
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families – El Paso and Teller County	Low-Income Temporary Assistance to Needy	El Paso County - TANF Diversion Employment Services Teller County -

Departments of Human Services	Families - Applicants or Recipients	WIOA Access for TANF Recipients
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**d. Describe how the local board 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; include your intended use of virtual job fairs, the upcoming virtual job shadowing capability, and other innovative strategies and initiatives to streamline and enhance services, as well as increase access.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center is considering various approaches to enhance the accessibility of its one-stop delivery system services, with a particular focus on leveraging technology for individuals in remote areas. An outline of initiatives includes:

- **In-Person Job Fairs:** PPWFC has successfully organized in-person job fairs, which have historically resulted in high turnout and effective matchmaking between job seekers and employers. Recognizing the value of these face-to-face interactions, PPWFC views virtual job fairs as an additional option rather than a replacement. The aim is to complement the tangible benefits of in-person events with virtual fairs, ensuring that those who cannot attend still have access to employment opportunities.
- **Virtual Job Shadowing:** The Pikes Peak Business and Education Alliance/PPWFC’s In-School Youth Program and PPWFC will explore virtual job shadowing. This program is designed to allow students to discover various careers through video call interviews, offering an alternative for students limited by transportation issues or scheduling conflicts, thus broadening their career exploration opportunities. Additionally, PPWFC will promote the statewide digital Job Shadowing platform to K-12 education institutes and job seekers.

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center will support the virtual job shadowing platform developed by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. This platform aims to provide comprehensive insights into various careers, enriched by an extensive array of video content. These videos are designed to offer viewers an inside look at the typical tasks and work environment of numerous professions, facilitating a deeper understanding of each role. By providing access to this detailed career information, PPWFC hopes to aid individuals in making informed decisions about their career paths, although the level of support provided will depend on practical implementation factors.

- **Digital Service Expansion:** To further improve service accessibility, PPWFC will expand its offerings through digital platforms. This will include online skills assessments, career counseling, and training program enrollment. In collaboration with the Colorado Workforce Development Council and other workforce regions,

PPWFC will explore Learner Employment Records (LERs) – a digital wallet with verified records of an individual’s skills through credentials from training, education, work, and other life experiences. LERs allow PPWFC to continue focusing on skills-based résumés, hiring, and educating the business community on hiring on skills and competencies.

- **Innovative Solutions Exploration:** PPWFC remains open to exploring additional innovative solutions to enhance service delivery and accessibility to include utilizing Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist with efficiencies and effectiveness of program delivery, outcomes, and administration. Potential avenues could involve developing mobile applications for more straightforward access to workforce services and utilizing a variety of social media platforms for community engagement and information dissemination.

Through these considerations, PPWFC aims to ensure that its comprehensive suite of services reaches a broader audience, especially those in less accessible areas. PPWFC acknowledges that not all areas in the Pikes Peak region have access to broadband. This can be due to services being unavailable in the area, or because the rough terrain prevents the necessary infrastructure to provide services. PPWFC is committed to supporting employment journeys by blending traditional in-person services with innovative technological solutions with the continued goal of meeting people where they are, not where we think they should be.

**e. Identify the types of assessments and assessment tools that will be utilized within the one-stop delivery system and how these assessments will be coordinated across participating programs to avoid duplication of effort and multiple assessments of customers being served by more than one partner program.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center employs a variety of assessment tools to support clients in exploring career interests, evaluating skills, and identifying suitable job roles. This list does not encompass all assessments that have been or are currently in use at PPWFC. Indigo Pathways is a key tool currently utilized for its effectiveness in career guidance and convenience as a 10-minute assessment. Additionally, Predictive Index is available to help determine ideal job fits and roles for individuals. Predictive Index is a “data-driven HR platform to hire top performers, develop effective managers, and retain people.” <https://www.predictiveindex.com/software/>

The software is a behavioral and cognitive assessment that helps with hiring, retaining, and developing talent. Behavioral and cognitive data are strong indicators in a successful placement for a participant or to assist a business in retaining and developing their workforce.

Navigators at PPWFC make use of SHL assessments to offer further assistance to clients, although it is acknowledged that IT-related assessments may not always be the most

suitable due to organizations often possessing their unique assessment tools. For assessing measurable skills gain, the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) remains in use.

PPWFC also aims to support employers by providing them with access to various assessment tools mentioned above and to ensure these tools are readily accessible. As a result of the partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), PPWFC can provide a checklist to employers to help prevent Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) violations in the use of these assessments.

Clients are also referred to the Pikes Peak Library District (PPLD) for access to an extensive array of coursework and assessments. Initial assessments are conducted to discover individuals' interests and potential Career Pathways, using resources such as Connecting Colorado applications (My Toolbox, GCF LearnFree), ONET, and NorthStar. Training providers often require participants to complete specific assessments.

Through this selection of assessment tools and resources, PPWFC is committed to providing both clients and employers with the necessary means to facilitate informed career development and hiring decisions while reducing assessment fatigue for participants.

**f. Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including your centers, one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center and its partners are dedicated to adhering to Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, ensuring that facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials are fully accessible to individuals with disabilities. This commitment is reflected in several strategies designed to ensure both physical and programmatic accessibility:

- **Facility Accessibility:** PPWFC performs regular and mandatory audits of its infrastructure to identify and rectify any barriers to accessibility, ensuring compliance with ADA standards for accessible design. This includes accessible entryways, hallways, and service areas for individuals with various disabilities. Additionally, PPWFC is co-located in an El Paso County building which adheres to strict ADA standards. PPWFC is also able to consult with the county's ADA Coordinator and other resources.
- **Programmatic Accessibility:** Programs and services at PPWFC continue to be designed inclusively, providing reasonable accommodations and modifications to

support full participation by individuals with disabilities. This includes offering materials in alternative formats like large print and braille, providing sign language interpreters, and utilizing assistive technology as needed.

- **Technology Accessibility:** PPWFC ensures its websites, online services, and digital tools are accessible, following the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. This ensures individuals with disabilities can access digital content and services effectively. Additionally, the State of Colorado passed HB21-1110 – a bill intended to advance the accessibility of government information technology for people with disabilities to engage with similar ease as those without disabilities in government employment, services, programs, and activities. This mandate is effective July 1, 2024.
- **Materials Accessibility:** All PPWFC informational materials, applications, and forms are available in accessible formats upon request, serving the needs of individuals with visual, hearing, cognitive, or other disabilities.
- **Staff Training:** Staff at PPWFC and partner organizations continue to undergo training focused on ADA compliance, disability awareness, and strategies for effectively supporting individuals with disabilities. Training topics include understanding the rights of individuals with disabilities, accommodation best practices, and the use of assistive technologies.

Through these measures, PPWFC aims to foster an inclusive environment where individuals with disabilities have equal access to all programs and services. Ongoing monitoring and feedback will guide continuous improvement efforts, highlighting PPWFC's proactive stance on accessibility and compliance.

**g. A description of how the local board 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, and workers and jobseekers;**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center is dedicated to ensuring the continuous improvement of service providers within its system to effectively meet the employment needs of local employers, employees, and job seekers. To achieve this, PPWFC will implement a series of measures aimed at enhancing service quality and relevance.

PPWFC will also foster partnerships with local industries and educational institutions. These collaborations will ensure that training programs are closely aligned with labor market demands and facilitate work-based learning opportunities. By maintaining an open dialogue with industry and education partners, PPWFC will ensure that its services are responsive to the evolving needs of the local economy.

PPWFC will continue to promote the Good Jobs Principles to eligible service providers through various webinars and workshops. Good jobs, also known as quality jobs, are essential for workers and families to achieve stability and financial security. The United States Department of Commerce and U.S. Department of Labor partnered to identify what constitutes a good job to include recruitment and hiring strategies, benefits, diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility, labor organizations, job security and working conditions, organizational culture, pay, and skills and career advancement. <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/goodjobs/Good-Jobs-Summit-Principles-Factsheet.pdf>

Educating the eligible training providers about the needs of businesses and job seekers will assist in bridging the gap between skill supply and demand. This is accomplished by sharing labor market information and characteristics of a quality job. These efforts will foster economic growth and ensure a more efficient and effective talent market.

Through these initiatives, PPWFC aims to maintain a dynamic and responsive workforce development system that effectively supports the region's employers, employees, and job seekers.

**h. Provide a description of how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with WIOA section 134(c)(3)(G), including, if contracts for the training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act mandates that training services for eligible adults and dislocated workers be provided through the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). The goal is to enable customers to make informed decisions when selecting training providers and develop a training plan to include fiscal responsibility.

Participants choose a training provider from the ETPL with guidance from a PPWFC Workforce Development Specialist. In partnership, the Workforce Development Specialist and participant develop training goals or an ITA. The ITA outlines the training plan, goals, metrics, outcomes, and financial responsibility with the goal of fulfilling in-demand jobs for the region. This system is crucial for ensuring informed customer choice and aligning training services with participants' employment plans and career goals, thereby leading to better outcomes in the labor market.

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center ensures that eligible customers can access the ETPL, encouraging them to select training services that align with their career goals, with a focus on in-demand industry sectors or occupations.

WIOA funding coordination includes integrating other funding sources, such as Federal Pell Grants, to ensure that WIOA funds are used effectively and as a supplement where other funding is insufficient. PPWFC monitors ITA expenditures and adherence to funding limits. ITAs can be used for work-based learning opportunities, such as On-the-Job Training, supportive services, and other training-related expenses. There are specific exceptions to using ITAs, allowing for flexibility in training service provision, especially when it involves partnerships with community-based organizations and higher education institutions to address local workforce needs.

**i. Outreach to Individuals with Barriers to Employment: Describe how you will engage your LWDB and Youth Council/committee to increase the awareness of the services offered to *returning veterans, out-of-school youth, individuals with disabilities, long-term unemployed, and other targeted groups*? What additional strategies will be utilized to reach out to these groups? What are your objectives and goals for this effort?**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center will engage its Workforce Development Board and Youth Committee to increase service awareness among returning veterans, out-of-school youth, individuals with disabilities, long-term unemployed, and other targeted groups. This effort will involve a collaborative community-based approach, tapping into the expertise and community connections of these groups to extend the reach of PPWFC's services.

- **Collaborative Meetings and Workshops:** Information sessions and workshops tailored to the specific needs and challenges of each target group will be organized. These sessions will leverage the networks of the LWDB and Youth Committee, ensuring that detailed and relevant information about PPWFC's services reaches the intended audiences effectively.
- **Tailored Outreach Strategies:** PPWFC will also enhance partnerships with community-based organizations that directly serve these targeted groups. By collaborating with these organizations, PPWFC can facilitate referrals, making it easier for individuals to access the services they need. Potential collaborations may include co-locating staff at different community-based organizations. This strategy acknowledges the critical role that community-based organizations play in supporting vulnerable populations.
- **Use of Technology and Social Media:** To specifically address the unique needs of each group, PPWFC will develop and leverage tailored communication materials to include social media. These materials will highlight how PPWFC's services can assist with their specific employment challenges. Veterans can benefit from the resources and collective experience of the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) staff. This will foster a supportive community that can guide participants and help them make the most of PPWFC's services.

- **Community Events and Job Fairs:** PPWFC will continue to host targeted population job fairs like our Connect with a Vet Job Fair or our Hiring Abilities Job Fair. These events attract talented people for businesses who understand the value that diverse candidates can bring to their organizations. Additionally, workshops or information sessions may be used to improve awareness and understanding.
- **Partnerships and Referral Networks:** New and existing partnerships with community-based organizations, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders will help expand our reach and enhance our ability to connect individuals with barriers to employment to the services they need.
- **Accessible Communications Materials:** Developing accessible communication materials will remain a priority for PPWFC. This includes brochures, fliers, and websites where information about available services is easily understood and accessible.

The Local Workforce Development Board and its committee members will continue to tap into their resources, opportunities, and networks to ensure greater access is available with the goal of supporting the economic self-sufficiency of businesses and job seekers. Through direct engagement, tailored resources, and strategic partnerships, PPWFC seeks to ensure that all community members can benefit from its comprehensive workforce development services.

**j. Describe your specific outreach strategies to eligible New Americans and your objectives for this effort. In addition, what strategies will you deploy to ensure your services and programs effectively serve eligible New Americans?**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center has outreach strategies in place to support New Americans. The following is a glimpse of those strategies:

Providing support and resources to New Americans, such as refugees and asylees, through a partnership with the local non-profit Lutheran Family Services of the Rocky Mountain Refugee and Asylee Programs. This program includes support for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients, and Special Immigrant Visa holders.

PPWFC employs a Workforce Development Specialist who serves New Americans as a committee member of the Community Resettlement Group Community Partners. PPWFC has been a member of Colorado Refugee Connect as a refugee and asylee-serving organization since September of 2018 (CORefugeeConnect.org).

PPWFC has close partnerships with District 11 Adult and Family Ed and Pikes Peak Library District, aligning with them as they assist New Americans through their English Language Learners programs. Through this partnership, they provide connections to our job seeker services, and we provide employment and funding support to their training programs.

PPWFC is an active member of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and offers support to New Americans and other populations through small business entrepreneurship as part of our WIOA Core Business Services.

PPWFC has a Job Coach who partners with Catholic Charities of Southern Colorado's board, a local non-profit organization that provides legal support, transitioning, and stability services to New Americans.

Lastly, the State of Colorado is fortunate to have The Office of New Americans (ONA). PPWFC will partner with ONA and their available toolkits and resources to ensure all Coloradans have equitable access to a quality job and community resources. This will provide an inclusive talent pipeline for businesses.

**11. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services;**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center has worked closely with local area school districts as well as higher education programs to develop relationships that are beneficial and instrumental to workforce center customers.

PPWFC is enhancing engagement with Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs by sharing information about the services it offers, monthly meetings, collaborating on grants, and meaningful data sharing. By attending the region's monthly CTE Directors meetings, PPWFC can share their resources and events along with pertinent in-demand occupations data. This includes new and emerging businesses, and an exploration of how to bring businesses into education.

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center's In-School Youth Program (PPBEA), the Youth Committee, and PPWFC coordinate efforts to prevent overlapping services, with the PPWFC In-School Youth Program specifically focused on reducing service duplication. With 19 school districts in the region, whenever service fragmentation is identified, it is promptly addressed, with the PPBEA advocating for greater alignment between industry and educational partners. PPWFC's philosophy is that K-12 education needs to produce a product that businesses want to buy.

The PPWFC In-School Youth Program aims to sustain and grow its educational partnerships, emphasizing the importance of collaboration in its mission. Workforce Development Board member immersion sessions are critical for educating board members and community partners about PPWFC's activities and goals. PPWFC is committed to cultivating relationships to enhance its reputation through positive referrals. It is essential for educators to understand business needs, including industry priorities and

the challenges they face. This understanding aids in aligning business relations and tailoring training to meet identified needs.

Additionally, PPWFC coordinates with local school districts for regional young adult (ages 16-24) job fairs. These job fairs are focused on specific businesses who will hire youth and are in proximity to the school districts. The intent is that the ideal location will help mitigate any transportation issues for youth job seekers.

Employing a capable and committed team is essential for achieving desired outcomes and demonstrating to businesses the effectiveness of skills-based hiring. By focusing on tangible results and considering Job Quality metrics, PPWFC aims to improve its performance indicators and support workforce development in the region.

**12. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area; in particular identify how the local area will expand services to dislocated workers utilizing all sources of formula and discretionary funds targeted to the dislocated worker population.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center provides a variety of job assistance and training services for adults and dislocated workers. These include assistance with job search activities, career coaching, skills assessments, work-based learning, and training in industries that are currently in high demand. Partnerships with mandatory WIOA partners, community-based organizations, and businesses help ensure that we are providing a hand-up to the job seekers while providing talent for the region's workforce.

PPWFC continues to expand its services for people who have lost their jobs using specific funds allocated for this group. The strategy includes strategically reaching out to those who need help. This means creating training programs tailored to their needs based on what jobs are available locally and offering support with transportation and childcare. These steps are designed to make it easier for individuals to find new jobs quickly.

Training will focus on real-world skills that local employers are prioritizing. PPWFC will work with schools, training centers, and businesses to make sure the training is relevant and leads to tangible job opportunities. PPWFC will also continue to evaluate how well these services are working for dislocated workers. This way, changes can be made to better meet our customers' needs and help them return to work.

Additionally, PPWFC will continue to utilize dislocated worker funds for Incumbent Worker Training. In the last four years, PPWFC has spent more than \$1 million to assist 90 local businesses to reskill, next-skill, or upskill their teams. 945 current employees received training. IWT is a layoff aversion strategy as well as a viable Job Quality strategy. PPWFC will continue to provide the business community with this valuable program.

**13. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities; in addition, indicate how services to out-of-school youth will be expanded and enhanced to incorporate additional work-based learning opportunities.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center offers a comprehensive range of youth workforce investment activities in the Pikes Peak region, including all 14 youth service elements as mandated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. These services are designed to support educational achievement, career exploration, and employment opportunities for young people, particularly those with disabilities and out-of-school youth.

PPWFC's youth programs emphasize career counseling, job training, apprenticeships, and internships, along with supportive services like mentoring and leadership. Successful models include partnerships with local businesses and educational institutions to provide hands-on work experience and sector-specific training.

A successful model has been PPWFC's GED Tutoring program. The out-of-school youth are attracted to this program because it is flexible, relational, and provides career coaching in an accommodating and supportive environment. This includes meeting youth participants outside of normal business hours to include early mornings, evenings, and weekends. The out-of-school youth may also be supporting themselves or their families. PPWFC will continue to expand and enhance the GED Tutoring program.

For youth with disabilities, PPWFC ensures accessible and tailored support, including workplace accommodations and specialized services, in collaboration with agencies focusing on disability services. Additionally, our Disability Program Navigator is a key contributor in providing career coaching and resource navigation to youth with disabilities.

Efforts to expand services for out-of-school youth are centered on increasing work-based learning opportunities, such as internships, pre-apprenticeships, and apprenticeships, to provide valuable real-world work experience. PPWFC will expand its outreach to engage more out-of-school youth, ensuring these opportunities meet the diverse needs and interests of the region's young people.

**14. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of WIOA section 107(d)(11) and section 232, the review of local applications submitted under title II.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center is committed to coordinating workforce investment activities under WIOA with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under Title II in the local area. This coordination will help create a seamless education and workforce development system that efficiently serves the community.

PPWFC will accomplish this by building on established partnerships with local adult education providers. These partnerships will focus on aligning curriculum and training programs to ensure that adult education and literacy activities complement and enhance workforce development strategies. The goal is to create clear pathways for individuals seeking to improve their literacy and employability skills, enabling them to access better employment opportunities and career advancement.

Furthermore, PPWFC will actively participate in the review of local applications submitted under Title II, as mandated by WIOA. This involvement ensures that adult education programs are closely integrated with local workforce investment strategies, meeting the specific needs of the region's employers and job seekers. PPWFC's role in this review process includes assessing how proposed programs align with current labor market trends, the potential for program participants to transition to further education or employment, and the overall contribution of proposed activities to the strategic objectives of the local workforce development system.

By implementing these strategies, PPWFC will strengthen the connection between workforce investment and adult education, ensuring that all individuals, especially those with limited literacy skills, have access to the education and training they need to succeed in the labor market.

**15. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center acknowledges limitations with the current public transportation options, which only cover specific areas of the city and operate at limited times. Despite bus passes being available for participants, challenges remain for those living in less accessible areas, particularly in unincorporated Teller County. Improving transportation access is critical for enabling PPWFC customers to easily visit its offices, attend training, work-based learning opportunities, and work.

To address these challenges, PPWFC is exploring new initiatives aimed at enhancing transportation within the region. In collaboration with the Aspen Mine Center, PPWFC engages with the Regional and Local Coordinating Council to explore and expand transportation opportunities in Teller County. This collaboration involves working with various partners, including Cripple Creek Transit, Teller Mobility, the Teller Senior Coalition, and Envida, to improve transportation services.

PPWFC's supportive services policies allow for purchases of bicycles and helmets to assist with transportation, along with gas cards and third-party transportation providers, if needed. PPWFC is also a key contributor to the region's 2050 Regional Transit Plan to ensure equal access to transportation is available to all. Establishing virtual job shadows, training, and work-based learning opportunities to facilitate digital learning is also crucial.

Teller County residents have access to alternative transportation options such as the Ramblin Express bus service, Teller Cab, and Medicab. Additionally, the City of Cripple Creek offers a local shuttle service, which is supplemented by several casino shuttles operating within the city. These efforts are part of PPWFC's commitment to enhancing access to its services by improving transportation options for the community.

**16. Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.**

In November 2023, U.S. Department of Labor released the final Wagner-Peyser rulemaking, which allowed the state of Colorado to maintain its demonstration state status. The demonstration state status allows for local delivery of Wagner-Peyser services, such as career services and business services at the local level. This enables PPWFC to move at the speed of business and effectively serve job seekers. The result is a true one-stop system that has created an impactful and effective workforce development infrastructure.

The philosophy of “no door is the wrong door” will continue to be the center of PPWFC's Wagner-Peyser delivery system. Constant evaluation, staff training, professional development, and partner education are a few of the key components PPWFC will continue to apply for ongoing improvement of the workforce delivery service.

PPWFC is committed to adhering to federal and state regulations in these efforts, ensuring a professional and confidential service delivery environment. We recognize the importance of flexibility and continuous improvement in our strategies to meet the evolving needs of the workforce in the Pikes Peak region.

**17. Identify the administrator/administrative entity responsible for the disbursement of Title I and III funds in the local area, as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor, and the fiscal agent if different.**

The Pikes Peak Region includes El Paso and Teller counties. El Paso County and Teller County have an Interagency Agreement which established a Consortium Executive Board consisting of two (2) El Paso County Commissioners and (1) Teller County Commissioner. This board of chief elected officials serves as the grant recipient for WIOA funds. El Paso County serves as the administrative entity and fiscal agent.

**18. A description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this title.**

The Pikes Peak region's WIOA One-Stop Operator was competitively procured with a contract in place. At a minimum, the One-Stop Operator coordinates the service delivery of required one-stop partners and service providers.

Clarke Becker, with Becker Workforce & Economic Development LLC, was hired to function as the One-Stop Operator in March 2023. Mr. Becker convenes with core partners and regularly attends the Pikes Peak LWDB meetings.

No additional subgrantee competitive procurements are anticipated for the PY24-25 program period. El Paso County procurement processes and rules will be followed should there be a need to competitively procure additional products or services.

**19. Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA section 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.**

Performance negotiations for WIOA programs happen at the state level by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment – Employment and Training Division (CDLE). Annually, the 10 Colorado workforce regions gather to discuss performance outcomes and negotiate the performance levels that are obtainable for their regions. This partnership allows Colorado workforce areas to work together by leveraging each region's strengths and supporting as needed. The leadership within each workforce region understands the importance of working together toward a common goal for businesses to have access to the skilled workforce they need. This means that every Coloradan can have the opportunity for meaningful employment, resulting in individual and statewide economic prosperity – the vision of the Colorado Workforce Development Council.

The negotiated performance metrics are:

- For adult and dislocated worker programs, as well as the Wagner-Peyser program, employment rates are measured in the second and fourth quarters after participants exit the program, reflecting the percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment during these periods. For the youth program, similar measures are applied but also include participants in education or training activities.
- Median earnings, another key performance indicator, represent the median income of participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exiting the program, excluding those not employed during this period.
- Credential attainment rate is a metric for Title I programs but not for the Wagner-Peyser program. It measures the percentage of participants who achieve a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma (or equivalent) within a year after exiting the program, with additional criteria for those attaining a secondary school diploma.
- Measurable Skill Gains, applicable to all Title I programs, track the progress of participants in achieving documented academic, technical, occupational, or other types of advancement toward a credential or employment within a program year.

Lastly, the Effectiveness in Serving Employers measure is under development, with the U.S. Department of Labor testing three different approaches to determine this metric.

**20. Provide a description of the actions the local board will take, if any, toward achieving the High Performing Board designation as outlined in the Colorado High Performing Local Workforce Development Board Rubric (PGL GRT-2019-01, Attachment 3).**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Development Board continually strives to achieve the High Performing Board designation. In 2023, the LWDB was able to obtain this status for the first time and will continue to prioritize this accomplishment.

According to PGL GRT-2019-01/GRT-2024-03, a high-performance workforce development board is:

1. Made up of diverse and knowledgeable community members.
2. They actively participate in board meetings and activities supporting the local workforce system.
3. Members serve as liaisons between the community and the local workforce center.
4. They accomplish goals and strategic priorities through data driven, business-led meetings.

Activities include a workforce development board orientation known as an “Immersion.” This orientation is used not only for workforce development board members, but also for community partners. The Immersion is a 2-hour workforce center introduction when the attendees experience what it is like to be laid off and learn about the workforce services that are available to them. It then expands to the company culture of PPWFC and brief interactive presentations from each PPWFC department. The board members and community partners leave with a better understanding of workforce center operations.

Supporting the regional workforce talent programs is another crucial element for a high-performing board. LWDB members can wear their own PPWFC name badges to community and statewide talent development events, meetings, and conferences. The board members are asked to list any community events they attended related to workforce or talent development. Some examples include the State of the City, UCCS Economic Forum, State of the Region, community job fairs, and others.

Additionally, attendance at local board meetings is recorded and monitored. The LWDB meets monthly except for January and July. Therefore, the established benchmark for board members is to reach 80% attendance at the meetings. Designing board meetings with actionable workforce materials is an important factor for attendance. PPWFC ensures that the LWDB members leave each meeting with information they would not have received elsewhere. This can include information about ADA advocacy, state demographer data, artificial intelligence in the workforce, and other valuable topics. This also impacts strategic planning by presenting data to promote data-driven decisions.

The necessity for the local workforce development board to continue functioning at the highest level of performance cannot be overstated. A high-performing board serves as the cornerstone of effective governance, driving strategic decision-making, fostering innovation, ensuring accountability, and safeguarding the interests of key stakeholders. By maintaining excellence in our operations, the LWDB and PPWFC will be able to navigate complex challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and steer the region’s public workforce system toward sustainable growth and success.

In an era characterized by rapid change and unprecedented uncertainty, the resilience and adaptability of a high-performing board are indispensable assets. Investing in ongoing development, diversity, and continuous improvement is essential to sustain the effectiveness and relevance of the workforce board in today's dynamic business and job seeker landscape. A commitment to excellence enables PPWFC to fulfill its vital role in guiding the region’s talent pipeline forward, so that employers have the skilled workforce they need and every Coloradan has access to a quality job and economic prosperity.

## **21. Use of evidence in decision making and program implementation**

**Colorado is focused on enhancing its use of evidence to inform workforce development strategies and to influence the design and execution of initiatives. By measuring progress and the results of implementation, the state overall and each local area will be able to collect data that can move our work along an evidence continuum. When we refer to an ‘evidence-based’ program or strategy, it is helpful to have a shared definition. Evidence of effectiveness exists on a spectrum, including:**

**a. Strong evidence: meaning at least two evaluation reports have demonstrated that an intervention or strategy has been tested nationally, regionally, at the state- level, or with different populations or locations in the same local area using a well-designed and well-implemented experimental design evaluation (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)) or a quasi-experimental design evaluation (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. See CLEAR.dol.gov for full definitions of strong or moderate study design. The overall pattern of evaluation findings must be consistently positive on one or more key workforce outcomes. The evaluations should be conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.**

**b. Moderate evidence: meaning at least one evaluation report has demonstrated that an intervention or strategy has been tested using a well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental design showing evidence of effectiveness on one or more key workforce outcomes. The evaluations should be conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.**

**c. Preliminary evidence: meaning at least one evaluation report has demonstrated that an intervention or strategy has been tested using a well-designed and well-implemented pre/post-assessment without a comparison group or a post-assessment comparison between intervention and comparison groups showing evidence of effectiveness on one or more key workforce outcomes. The evaluation may be conducted either internally or externally.**

**d. Pre-preliminary evidence: meaning there is program performance data for the intervention showing improvements for one or more key workforce outputs or outcomes.**

**For interventions at each tier of evidence, it is important to leverage administrative data analysis or increasingly rigorous evaluation to build new evidence, improve programs and participant outcomes, and progress to the next tier.**

**Please describe which level of evidence applies to the overall approach of your local area in implementing programs. If any specific programs have a higher use of evidence than your programs overall, please highlight those programs. Additionally, would your local area be interested in receiving technical assistance on the application of evidence-based practices to workforce development?**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center considers itself within the “C” level of evidence, as described above. Each program year, PPWFC collaborates with the Colorado WIDE team, which is comprised of data experts from the 10 local areas within the state. This group conducts a pre- and post-wage assessment of its WIOA Program completers and Staff Assisted participants. This assessment provides detailed information on the benefits of entering WIOA core programs, such as employment retention, wage trajectories, and the return on investment for the WIOA dollars spent on core programs.

PPWFC is interested in receiving technical assistance on the application of evidence-based practices to workforce development.

**22. Describe the process used by the local board, consistent with subsection (d), to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan.**

The Pikes Peak Workforce Center implemented strategic methods to solicit and integrate feedback for its 4-year plan, ensuring the strategy reflects the diverse needs of the community it serves.

PPWFC conducted multiple staff and board focus groups to gather qualitative feedback. We also designed and shared an online survey with other board members to gather additional insights. These approaches allowed PPWFC to tap into the wealth of knowledge and experience within its organization and board, ensuring that internal ideas and concepts were fully considered in the planning process.

To complement these internal insights, PPWFC also made use of online surveys and feedback forms accessible to the broader community. This enabled stakeholders unable to participate in direct discussions, including those in remote locations or with scheduling conflicts, to contribute their perspectives and suggestions.

Meetings with key stakeholders, including local employers, educational partners, and community organizations, were organized to explore specific aspects of the plan in greater detail. These interactions facilitated in-depth discussions on collaborative opportunities and strategies to enhance workforce development efforts.

After gathering extensive feedback, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center (PPWFC) carefully analyzed all suggestions and incorporated the most pertinent and effective

recommendations into the final plan. PPWFC is committed to clearly communicating how stakeholder input was used, emphasizing its dedication to an inclusive and transparent community engagement process.

By hosting staff focus groups, conducting an online survey for board members, and implementing other participatory methods, the Pikes Peak Workforce Center structured the development of its 4-year plan as a collaborative and well-informed process. This approach carefully aligned with the practical needs and goals of the Pikes Peak region's workforce and economy.

## APPENDIX

### Labor Market Analysis: Pikes Peak Workforce Center

#### 1. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions overall, as well as for each area included in this planning region, including:

- Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
- The employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations.

#### Economic Overview

Economy Overview, El Paso and Teller Counties							
Area	Population (2023)	Labor Force (Sep 2023)	Jobs (2023)	Cost of Living	GRP	Imports	Exports
Pikes Peak Region	772,670	381,745	396,440	107.5	\$47,853,856,941	\$54,699,248,742	\$62,774,886,113
Colorado	5,874,618	3,253,072	3,249,917	111.1	\$481,875,096,107	\$332,993,689,800	\$406,493,555,598
Percent	13.2%	11.7%	12.2%	96.8%	9.9%	16.4%	15.4%

Source: Lightcast

Figure 1

#### Historical Trends

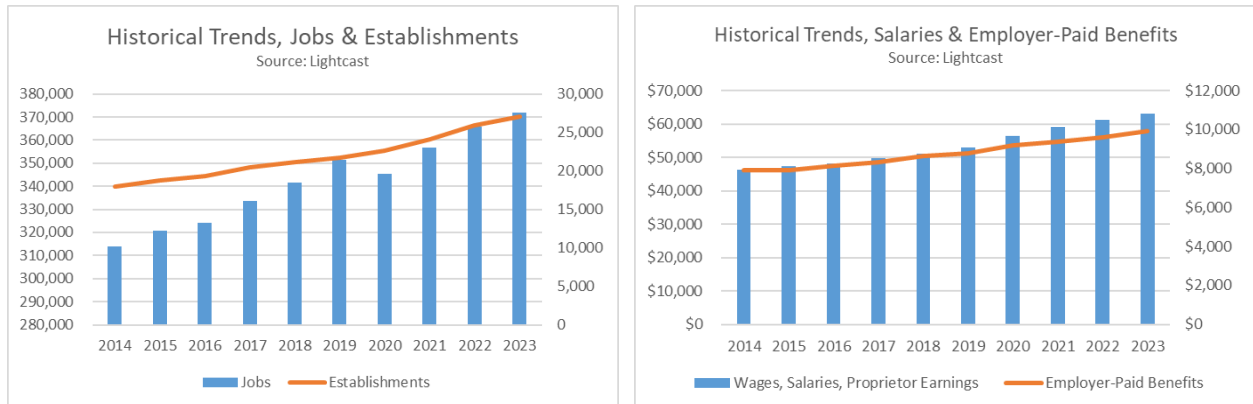


Figure 2

#### Projected Growth by Sector

Historical Trends, El Paso and Teller Counties											
Description	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Annual Growth Rate
Jobs	313,921	320,553	323,957	333,600	341,455	351,467	345,430	356,617	365,931	371,832	1.7%
Establishments	17,906	18,788	19,267	20,491	21,153	21,750	22,623	24,139	25,948	27,040	4.2%
Wages, Salaries, Proprietor Earnings	\$46,411	\$47,333	\$48,247	\$49,775	\$51,049	\$52,865	\$56,319	\$59,113	\$61,231	\$62,995	3.1%
Employer-Paid Benefits	\$7,908	\$7,929	\$8,161	\$8,315	\$8,652	\$8,790	\$9,183	\$9,396	\$9,600	\$9,907	2.3%

Source: Lightcast

Figure 3

Projected Growth by Sector, El Paso and Teller Counties							
NAICS	Description	2024 Jobs	2028 Jobs	Change	Percent Change	Payrolled Business Locations	Employment Concentration
90	Government	99,465	104,659	5,194	5.2%	301	1.73
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	41,547	45,256	3,709	8.9%	3,307	0.82
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	34,872	38,501	3,629	10.4%	5,818	1.35
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	25,970	28,336	2,366	9.1%	2,136	1.61
72	Accommodation and Food Services	36,169	38,062	1,893	5.2%	1,661	1.10
48	Transportation and Warehousing	10,402	12,066	1,664	16.0%	458	0.64
61	Educational Services	8,912	9,712	800	9.0%	513	0.97
44	Retail Trade	33,323	33,954	631	1.9%	2,072	0.92
23	Construction	18,900	19,331	430	2.3%	2,467	0.99
42	Wholesale Trade	6,785	7,084	299	4.4%	1,140	0.47
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	5,674	5,940	266	4.7%	1,913	0.96
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,957	6,219	262	4.4%	456	1.01
52	Finance and Insurance	13,899	14,157	259	1.9%	1,515	0.87
31	Manufacturing	12,289	12,519	229	1.9%	554	0.40
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,837	2,059	222	12.1%	320	0.30
99	Unclassified Industry	318	451	133	42.0%	121	0.37
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	569	542	(27)	-4.8%	27	0.42
22	Utilities	484	456	(28)	-5.9%	26	0.36
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	437	408	(29)	-6.6%	52	0.12
51	Information	5,026	4,626	(401)	-8.0%	542	0.68
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	17,176	16,738	(439)	-2.6%	1,646	0.76
Totals		380,011	401,077	21,065	5.5%	27,040	

Source: Lightcast

Figure 4

### Projected Growth by Occupation Family

Projected Growth by Occupation Family, El Paso and Teller Counties										
SOC	Description	2024 Jobs	2028 Jobs	Change	Percent Change	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	2023 Hires	2023 Separations	2023 Turnover Rate
53	Transportation and Material Moving	26,823	28,947	2,125	7.9%	\$15.88	\$17.32	29,416	28,358	109.3%
29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	22,031	23,928	1,897	8.6%	\$29.17	\$38.30	8,220	8,979	42.1%
31	Healthcare Support	16,451	18,330	1,879	11.4%	\$15.42	\$17.78	16,269	16,138	102.3%
35	Food Preparation and Serving Related	31,988	33,612	1,624	5.1%	\$13.80	\$14.77	50,086	48,831	156.1%
15	Computer and Mathematical	18,933	20,487	1,554	8.2%	\$37.67	\$50.61	7,263	6,835	37.2%
11	Management	17,704	19,158	1,454	8.2%	\$41.96	\$57.24	9,409	8,709	50.7%
25	Educational Instruction and Library	22,393	23,817	1,424	6.4%	\$17.79	\$23.47	12,379	14,390	65.7%
13	Business and Financial Operations	29,550	30,816	1,266	4.3%	\$27.34	\$36.18	15,509	16,515	56.8%
21	Community and Social Service	10,932	12,075	1,143	10.5%	\$19.45	\$24.55	6,600	6,680	63.4%
43	Office and Administrative Support	42,426	43,232	806	1.9%	\$16.85	\$20.03	32,821	36,607	87.2%
41	Sales and Related	31,219	32,003	784	2.5%	\$14.23	\$17.23	30,479	29,749	96.4%
49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	16,496	17,279	784	4.8%	\$20.61	\$24.87	9,924	9,847	60.7%
37	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	10,182	10,754	572	5.6%	\$14.58	\$16.56	11,634	11,512	115.6%
17	Architecture and Engineering	8,404	8,960	556	6.6%	\$34.38	\$42.36	3,099	3,145	38.4%
39	Personal Care and Service	8,549	9,059	510	6.0%	\$14.11	\$15.39	10,252	9,967	119.3%
47	Construction and Extraction	14,610	15,075	465	3.2%	\$20.33	\$24.69	11,047	10,977	76.2%
33	Protective Service	8,631	9,030	399	4.6%	\$15.97	\$24.16	7,141	8,214	96.8%
27	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	6,026	6,378	353	5.9%	\$20.88	\$28.34	3,855	3,829	64.9%
19	Life, Physical, and Social Science	2,714	2,931	217	8.0%	\$28.57	\$37.21	1,495	1,604	60.9%
51	Production	9,649	9,845	196	2.0%	\$15.95	\$19.90	6,831	6,512	68.3%
23	Legal	2,222	2,308	87	3.9%	\$25.06	\$37.68	872	916	41.8%
45	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	543	533	(10)	-1.9%	\$12.93	\$15.28	699	749	137.7%
Totals		358,476	378,559	20,083	5.6%			285,301	289,065	82.4%

Source: Lightcast

Figure 5

Occupations Projected to add the Most Jobs, El Paso and Teller Counties										
SOC	Description	2024 Jobs	2028 Jobs	Change	Percent Change	Pct. 25 Hourly Earnings	Median Hourly Earnings	2023 Hires	2023 Separations	2023 Turnover Rate
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	6,522	7,735	1,212	18.6%	\$14.79	\$15.29	6,414	5,616	92.1%
15-1252	Software Developers	5,946	6,603	656	11.0%	\$49.15	\$63.40	2,119	1,726	30.2%
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	8,847	9,465	618	7.0%	\$15.85	\$16.30	11,306	11,311	131.7%
29-1141	Registered Nurses	7,177	7,792	615	8.6%	\$31.99	\$38.89	2,369	2,926	42.2%
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	11,399	12,010	612	5.4%	\$13.74	\$14.14	20,043	19,879	178.9%
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	5,639	6,045	405	7.2%	\$36.44	\$55.53	3,298	3,028	55.2%
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2,903	3,303	399	13.8%	\$15.56	\$17.26	4,313	3,732	136.3%
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	3,666	4,009	344	9.4%	\$15.60	\$17.44	5,007	4,361	122.9%
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	4,217	4,512	295	7.0%	\$17.97	\$22.08	2,654	2,644	64.3%
25-1099	Postsecondary Teachers	3,057	3,317	260	8.5%	\$23.80	\$30.71	1,571	1,729	58.2%
21-2011	Clergy	1,746	1,998	252	14.4%	\$24.52	\$28.19	858	764	45.6%
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	9,268	9,516	248	2.7%	\$13.86	\$14.78	10,632	10,014	109.1%
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	4,002	4,227	224	5.6%	\$23.08	\$23.55	1,631	2,067	52.6%
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	2,158	2,374	217	10.0%	\$17.74	\$23.71	1,401	1,579	76.2%
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	2,901	3,100	199	6.9%	\$24.99	\$32.70	1,725	1,636	57.9%
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	2,856	3,050	195	6.8%	\$17.02	\$19.25	3,351	3,204	115.4%
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	3,938	4,132	194	4.9%	\$14.17	\$15.71	4,380	4,374	112.9%
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	5,013	5,199	186	3.7%	\$18.30	\$22.05	4,176	4,508	91.5%
21-2021	Directors, Religious Activities and Education	1,271	1,456	185	14.5%	\$18.20	\$28.69	726	655	53.7%
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	3,119	3,298	179	5.7%	\$13.81	\$14.21	2,305	2,763	90.4%

Source: Lightcast

Figure 6

### Takeaways (Lightcast)

- As of 2023 the region's population increased by 4.7% since 2018, growing by 34,766. Population is expected to increase by 4.2% between 2023 and 2028, adding 32,353.
- From 2018 to 2023, jobs increased by 8.8% in El Paso and Teller counties from 364,238 to 396,440. This change outpaced the national growth rate of 3.6% by 5.2%. As the number of jobs increased, the labor force participation rate increased from 63.8% to 65.7% between 2018 and 2023.
- Concerning educational attainment, 24.2% of the Pikes Peak regions' residents possess a bachelor's degree (3.1% above the national average), and 11.0% hold an Associate's Degree (2.0% above the national average).
- The top three industries in 2023 are Federal Government, Military, Restaurants and Other Eating Places, and Education and Hospitals (Local Government).
- Your area has 179,281 millennials (ages 25-39). The national average for an area this size is 155,638.
- Retirement risk is low in the El Paso and Teller area. The national average for an area this size is 229,384 people 55 or older, while there are 197,884 here.
- Racial diversity is low in your area. The national average for an area this size is 314,774 racially diverse people, while there are 247,716 here.
- The Pikes Peak region has 89,373 veterans. The national average for an area this size is 40,013.
- The region has 4.65 violent crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 2.41 per 1,000 people.
- The region has 25.24 property crimes per 1,000 people. The national rate is 12.12 per 1,000 people.

**2. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, as well as for each area included in this planning region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.**

In calendar 2023, employers in the Pikes Peak region posted an average of 17,743 unique jobs per month. The average posted wage through 2023 was \$28.27 per hour.

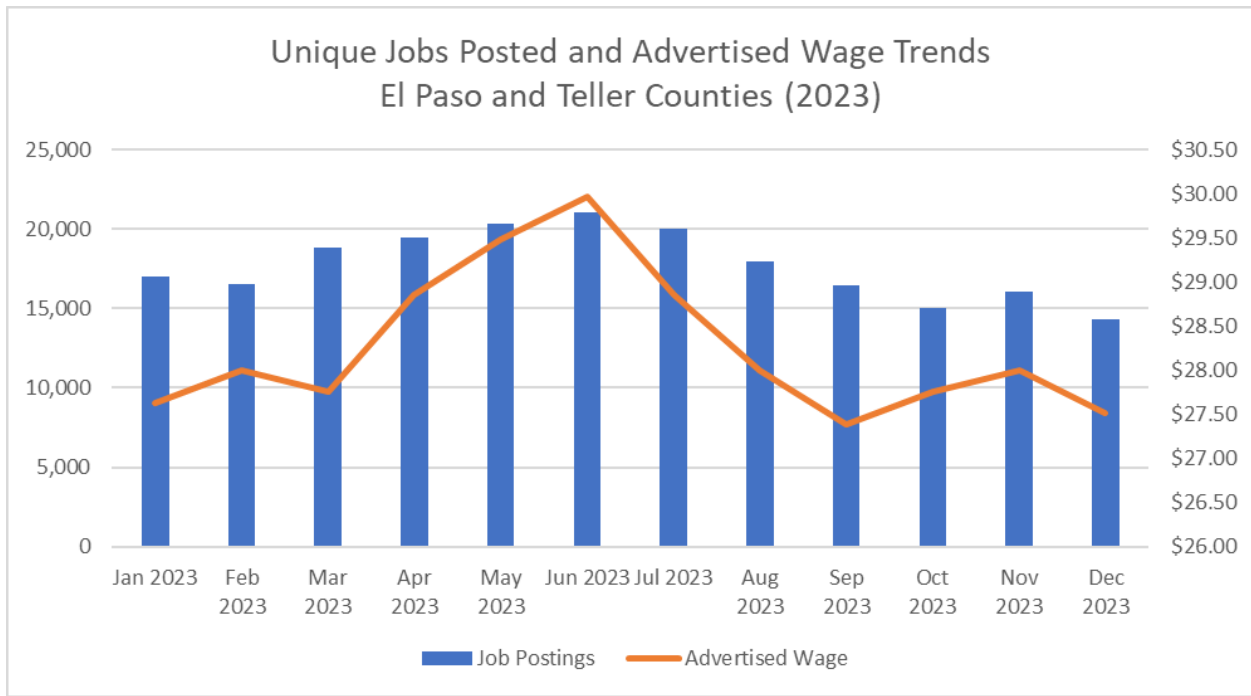


Figure 7

Education and Experience Breakdown, Pikes Peak Region		
Education Level	Unique Postings	% of Total
No Education Listed	60,460	45%
High school or GED	30,643	23%
Associate degree	10,669	8%
Bachelor's degree	40,141	30%
Master's degree	13,531	10%
Ph.D. or professional degree	4,544	3%
Minimum Experience	Unique Postings	% of Total
No Experience Listed	69,368	52%
0 - 1 Years	19,399	14%
2 - 3 Years	23,856	18%
4 - 6 Years	12,623	9%
7 - 9 Years	4,596	3%
10+ Years	4,607	3%

Source: Lightcast

Figure 8

This table shows the education and experience requirements of unique jobs posted in El Paso and Teller counties in calendar year 2023.

The structurally scarce labor market has encouraged skill-based rather than education-based hiring, as can be seen in the top portion of the table. However, nearly 40% of the jobs posted required a bachelor’s degree or higher.

### Top Jobs Posted

Top Posted Occupations, El Paso and Teller Counties			
Occupation (SOC)	Total Postings (Jan 2023 - Dec 2023)	Unique Postings (Jan 2023 - Dec 2023)	Median Posting Duration
Registered Nurses	52,295	9,646	30 days
Software Developers	11,568	3,822	28 days
Computer Occupations, All Other	11,112	3,295	29 days
Retail Salespersons	14,896	3,199	31 days
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	10,137	2,470	29 days
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	9,570	2,367	31 days
Customer Service Representatives	11,270	2,093	27 days
Fast Food and Counter Workers	11,025	1,967	28 days
Managers, All Other	6,249	1,927	28 days
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	10,331	1,815	31 days
Medical and Health Services Managers	8,654	1,746	29 days
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	6,029	1,733	29 days
Food Service Managers	8,155	1,435	30 days
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	5,480	1,386	27 days
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	4,132	1,335	28 days
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3,948	1,333	27 days
Information Security Analysts	4,164	1,319	25 days
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	5,161	1,281	29 days
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	4,901	1,263	28 days
General and Operations Managers	4,422	1,165	27 days

Source: Lightcast

Figure 9

## Job Postings: Skills Breakdown, Credentials in Demand

Top Specialized Skills Posted in El Paso and Teller Counties, 2023						
Skills	Postings	% of Total Postings	Profiles	% of Total Profiles	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Nursing	10,364	7.7%	3,026	0.9%	20.1%	Growing
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	6,509	4.8%	1,465	0.4%	14.8%	Growing
Project Management	6,402	4.8%	24,784	7.6%	19.8%	Growing
Life Support	6,354	4.7%	0	0.0%	12.7%	Growing
Auditing	5,076	3.8%	6,954	2.1%	21.8%	Rapidly Growing
Marketing	5,049	3.8%	22,107	6.8%	23.0%	Rapidly Growing
Merchandising	4,685	3.5%	5,049	1.5%	15.0%	Growing
Agile Methodology	4,663	3.5%	3,806	1.2%	19.8%	Growing
Direct Patient Care	4,589	3.4%	395	0.1%	16.6%	Growing
Care Coordination	4,471	3.3%	649	0.2%	15.6%	Growing
Systems Engineering	4,470	3.3%	8,118	2.5%	20.9%	Rapidly Growing
Restaurant Operation	4,143	3.1%	2,878	0.9%	28.0%	Rapidly Growing
Accounting	3,979	3.0%	8,329	2.6%	24.0%	Rapidly Growing
Computer Science	3,911	2.9%	865	0.3%	26.8%	Rapidly Growing
Patient/Family Education	3,613	2.7%	0	0.0%	9.8%	Growing
Health Assessment	3,568	2.7%	0	0.0%	14.7%	Growing
Nursing Process	3,421	2.5%	0	0.0%	24.2%	Rapidly Growing
Patient Transfer	3,339	2.5%	0	0.0%	10.5%	Growing
Selling Techniques	3,187	2.4%	4,948	1.5%	(1.2%)	Lagging
Warehousing	3,147	2.3%	3,482	1.1%	13.0%	Growing

Source: Lightcast

Figure 10

Top Common Skills Posted in El Paso and Teller Counties, 2023						
Skills	Postings	% of Total Postings	Profiles	% of Total Profiles	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Communication	37,826	28.1%	22,961	7.0%	3.6%	Lagging
Customer Service	28,315	21.1%	54,402	16.7%	5.2%	Stable
Management	25,528	19.0%	41,603	12.8%	5.3%	Stable
Operations	20,962	15.6%	34,048	10.4%	8.1%	Stable
Leadership	17,322	12.9%	40,914	12.5%	8.5%	Stable
Sales	15,654	11.6%	40,186	12.3%	7.8%	Stable
Planning	12,378	9.2%	12,694	3.9%	10.9%	Growing
Problem Solving	11,814	8.8%	6,992	2.1%	11.3%	Growing
Detail Oriented	11,201	8.3%	2,097	0.6%	7.1%	Stable
Writing	9,712	7.2%	7,250	2.2%	11.8%	Growing
Critical Thinking	9,463	7.0%	2,819	0.9%	23.4%	Rapidly Growing
Coordinating	9,444	7.0%	8,082	2.5%	14.7%	Growing
Lifting Ability	8,482	6.3%	121	0.0%	10.6%	Growing
Scheduling	7,869	5.9%	8,136	2.5%	16.4%	Growing
Interpersonal Communications	7,866	5.9%	2,160	0.7%	12.5%	Growing
Microsoft Office	7,860	5.8%	31,553	9.7%	18.5%	Growing
Troubleshooting (Problem Solving)	7,842	5.8%	11,066	3.4%	19.0%	Growing
Microsoft Excel	7,238	5.4%	23,110	7.1%	17.7%	Growing
Decisiveness	7,230	5.4%	162	0.0%	6.2%	Stable
Professionalism	6,745	5.0%	1,485	0.5%	15.1%	Growing

Source: Lightcast

Figure 11

Top Software Skills Posted in El Paso and Teller Counties, 2023						
Skills	Postings	% of Total Postings	Profiles	% of Total Profiles	Projected Skill Growth	Skill Growth Relative to Market
Microsoft Office	7,860	5.8%	31,553	9.7%	18.5%	Growing
Microsoft Excel	7,238	5.4%	23,110	7.1%	17.7%	Growing
Microsoft PowerPoint	4,167	3.1%	15,844	4.9%	26.1%	Rapidly Growing
Microsoft Outlook	3,918	2.9%	6,157	1.9%	25.0%	Rapidly Growing
Python (Programming Language)	2,757	2.1%	2,441	0.7%	24.5%	Rapidly Growing
Linux	2,684	2.0%	3,722	1.1%	8.9%	Stable
Microsoft Word	2,491	1.9%	18,349	5.6%	7.2%	Stable
Operating Systems	2,441	1.8%	2,626	0.8%	22.6%	Rapidly Growing
Java (Programming Language)	1,977	1.5%	3,186	1.0%	17.4%	Growing
C++ (Programming Language)	1,659	1.2%	2,693	0.8%	10.0%	Growing
SQL (Programming Language)	1,478	1.1%	4,533	1.4%	6.4%	Stable
Spreadsheets	1,359	1.0%	1,652	0.5%	22.2%	Rapidly Growing
SAP Applications	1,331	1.0%	1,302	0.4%	21.6%	Rapidly Growing
JIRA	1,278	1.0%	827	0.3%	24.1%	Rapidly Growing
Git (Version Control System)	1,114	0.8%	848	0.3%	11.4%	Growing
C (Programming Language)	1,039	0.8%	1,896	0.6%	10.1%	Growing
Amazon Web Services	1,039	0.8%	1,011	0.3%	24.0%	Rapidly Growing
Firewall	1,012	0.8%	1,339	0.4%	20.4%	Rapidly Growing
Kubernetes	994	0.7%	255	0.1%	22.0%	Rapidly Growing
Microsoft SharePoint	983	0.7%	2,903	0.9%	2.4%	Lagging

Source: Lightcast

Figure 12

Top Qualifications Posted in El Paso and Teller Counties, 2023	
Qualification	Postings with Qualification
Valid Driver's License	12,914
Registered Nurse (RN)	11,597
Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	9,621
Top Secret-Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI Clearance)	6,576
American Red Cross (ARC) Certification	6,445
CPR/AED For The Professional Rescuer	6,119
Security Clearance	5,998
Secret Clearance	5,549
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	3,359
Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) Certification	2,473
Top Secret Clearance	2,102
CompTIA Security+	1,935
IAT Level II Certification	1,929
First Aid Certification	1,524
Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	1,393
Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	1,313
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	1,212
Nurse Practitioner (APRN-CNP)	1,077
Certified Information Systems Security Professional	1,019
CDL Class A License	997

Source: Lightcast

Figure 13

Populations With Barriers by County in CCPR			
Population	Pikes Peak	El Paso	Teller
Population in households	734,173	709,521	24,652
Total households	287,411	276,371	11,040
Average size of household	2.6	2.6	2.2
Single parents with children under 18	16,634	16,448	186
Civilian veterans	87,824	84,573	3,251
Individuals with a disability	90,080	86,690	3,390
Age 18 - 64	50,351	48,835	1,516
Under 18	9,275	9,168	107
65 and Older	30,454	28,687	1,767
Low income households	32,709	31,345	1,364
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	10,775	10,439	336
Cash Public Assistance	6,819	6,649	170
SNAP	24,477	23,352	1,125
With Public Healthcare Coverage (Medicaid)	255,826	244,954	10,872
Households spending 35% or more of gross income on rent	40,425	39,496	929
Less than High School or GED	25,466	24,895	571
Completed 9th grade or less	8,953	8,879	74
No broadband subscription	18,616	17,569	1,047
Population over 5 who speak English less than 'very well'	22,570	22,411	159
New Americans (entered U.S. 2010 or later)	12,123	11,901	222
Individuals 21 and older with criminal records (estimate)*	43,796	42,186	1,610
Homeless individuals (estimate)^	1,147	1,108	39

Sources: U.S. Census American Community Survey Data Profiles. \*Number of individuals over 21 with criminal records estimated using information from Shannon, Sarah et al, Felon History and Change in U.S. Employment Rates, Social Science Research, Vol. 103, March 2022, 102649. ^Homeless estimates derived from Colorado State of Homelessness Report 2022, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless.

Figure 14

**3. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, as well as for each area included in this planning region, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment, New Americans (defined as Coloradans who arrived in the U.S. as immigrants or their children) and veterans.**

This data is vitally important for each local region: Workforce centers are uniquely positioned to increase labor force participation by helping these individuals surmount their barriers using braided funding strategies to provide supportive services, and offering them the ability to reskill, upskill, next-skill, so they can successfully engage in work.

This vital role played by workforce centers and their partners can make a critical difference in maintaining the competitiveness of Colorado employers in a global economy.

*Kitchen Table Concerns for Workers*

Wages have not kept up with inflation, so workers are finding they are spending more money for less product across the board. While the inflation rate has gone down, it is important to realize how to read this graph correctly. Prices in November 2023 were 3.1% higher than they were the previous November 2022. What this means is that if we go back to November 2020, we find that prices have actually gone up 17%.

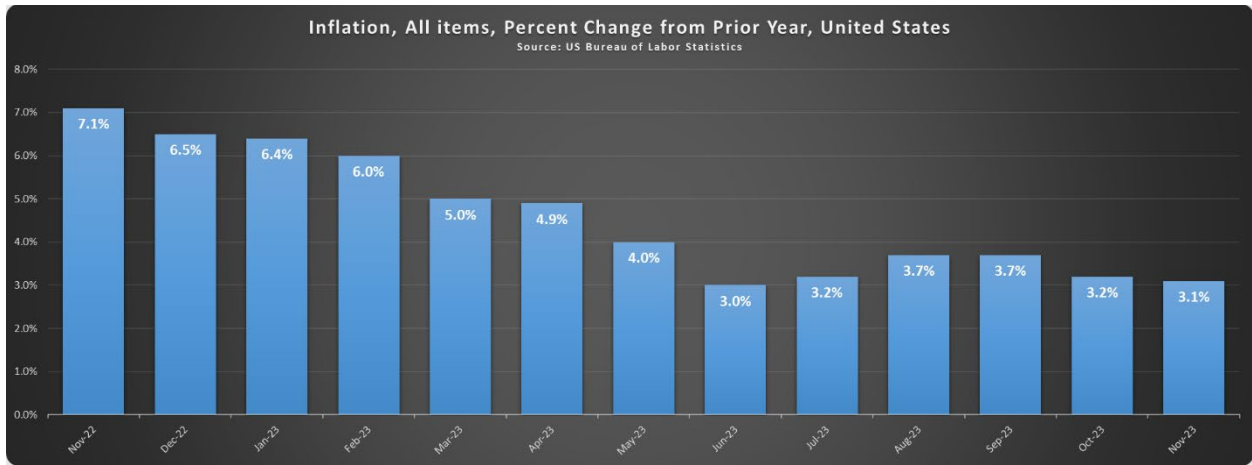


Figure 15

The high costs of insuring and repairing motor vehicles is also a concern, which is one reason hybrid and remote work schedules have become more popular since the pandemic.

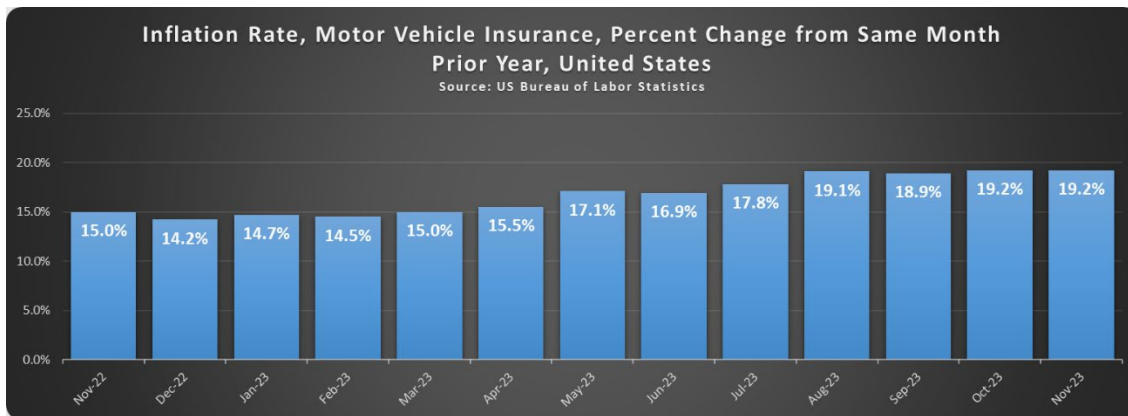


Figure 16

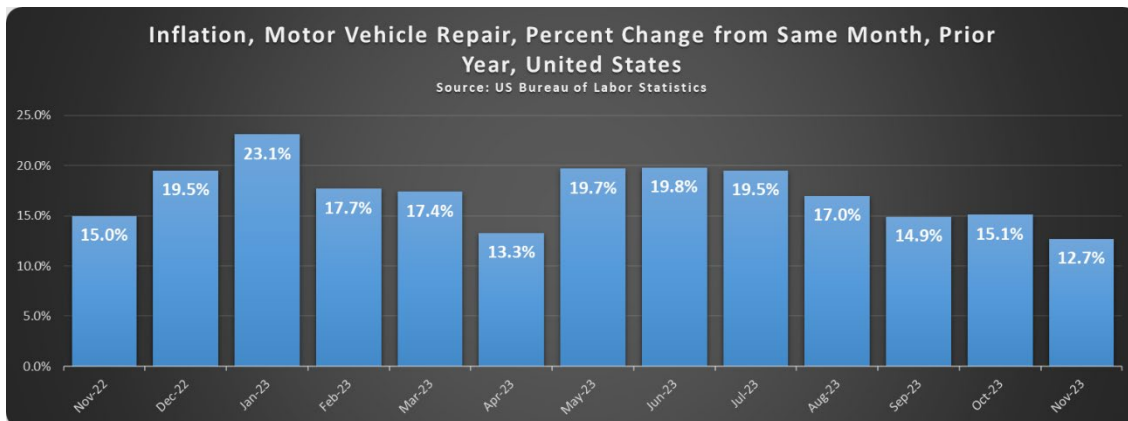


Figure 17

Rents also remain high. According to the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 40,425 (44.06%) of the renters in El Paso and Teller counties are paying 35% or more of their gross rent as a percentage of household income.

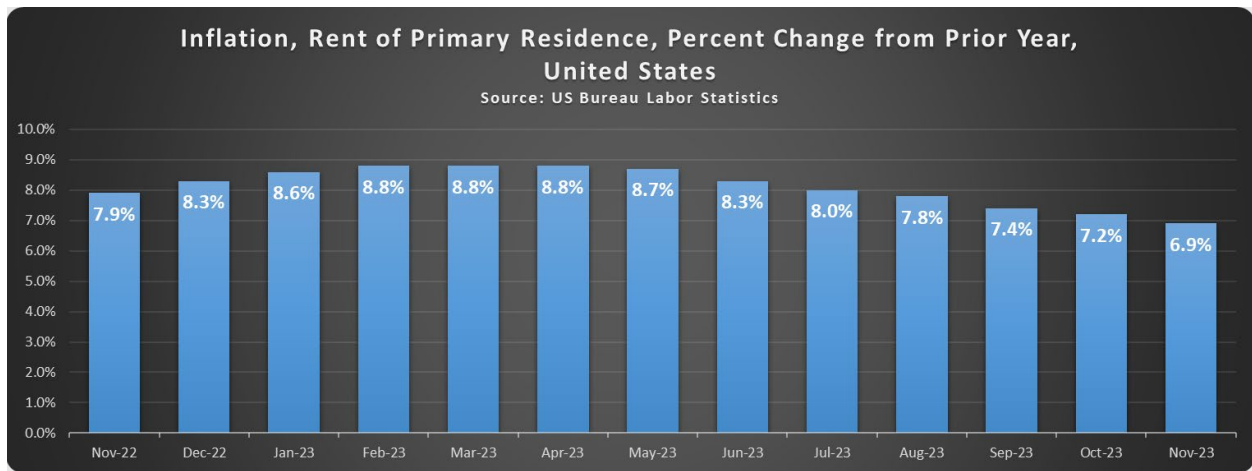


Figure 18

Childcare Costs as a Percent of Median Wage by Occupation Family, El Paso and Teller Counties							
SOC	Description	2023 Jobs	Median Annual Earnings	Annual Cost as Percent of Median Earnings			
				Infant, Childcare Center	Toddler, Childcare Center	Infant, Child Care Home	Toddler, Child Care Home
11	Management	17,173	\$119,053	15.2%	12.7%	9.9%	9.3%
13	Business and Financial Operations	29,053	\$75,260	24.1%	20.1%	15.7%	14.7%
15	Computer and Mathematical	18,362	\$105,261	17.2%	14.4%	11.2%	10.5%
17	Architecture and Engineering	8,181	\$88,110	20.6%	17.2%	13.4%	12.6%
19	Life, Physical, and Social Science	2,632	\$77,390	23.4%	19.5%	15.3%	14.3%
21	Community and Social Service	10,539	\$51,058	35.5%	29.6%	23.1%	21.7%
23	Legal	2,192	\$78,382	23.1%	19.3%	15.1%	14.2%
25	Educational Instruction and Library	21,911	\$48,815	37.2%	31.0%	24.2%	22.7%
27	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	5,905	\$58,938	30.8%	25.6%	20.1%	18.8%
29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	21,311	\$79,661	22.8%	19.0%	14.8%	13.9%
31	Healthcare Support	15,782	\$36,977	49.1%	40.9%	32.0%	30.0%
33	Protective Service	8,481	\$50,262	36.1%	30.1%	23.5%	22.1%
35	Food Preparation and Serving Related	31,275	\$30,718	59.1%	49.2%	38.5%	36.1%
37	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	9,962	\$34,447	52.7%	43.9%	34.3%	32.2%
39	Personal Care and Service	8,355	\$32,011	56.7%	47.2%	36.9%	34.7%
41	Sales and Related	30,863	\$35,838	50.6%	42.2%	33.0%	31.0%
43	Office and Administrative Support	41,968	\$41,658	43.6%	36.3%	28.4%	26.6%
45	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	544	\$31,778	57.1%	47.6%	37.2%	34.9%
47	Construction and Extraction	14,407	\$51,363	35.3%	29.4%	23.0%	21.6%
49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	16,213	\$51,724	35.1%	29.2%	22.8%	21.5%
51	Production	9,535	\$41,395	43.8%	36.5%	28.6%	26.8%
53	Transportation and Material Moving	25,952	\$36,025	50.4%	42.0%	32.8%	30.8%
Totals		350,596	\$54,977	33.0%	27.5%	21.5%	20.2%

Sources: Lightcast (Jobs & Earnings), Childcare Costs (Broderick Research & Consulting Childcare Market Rate Study Presented to Colorado Dept. Human Services, 2022)  
Average number days childcare needed based on data showing average number of paid time off and holiday days taken in the US (Forbes, 2018)

Figure 19

Figures from this table are from Lightcast and the 2022 Colorado Childcare Market Rate Study, which is required for each state every two years. For example, a housekeeper with an infant may be paying over half of their gross income for childcare.

If they are also paying 35% for rent, this leaves only 15% of their entire gross to pay for groceries, utilities, and everything else they need.

## Employment and Unemployment Data

The following information was taken from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Data. Note that the labor force in the Pikes Peak Workforce Region went up by 35,847 between January 2019 and December 2023, a double-digit increase of 10.2%. This reflects the entry into the labor force of a number of workers who lost jobs during the pandemic and were gradually reabsorbed over 2022, as well as the Administration's decision to keep Space Command in Colorado. The Pikes Peak Workforce Center has been steadily helping people with barriers to success in the labor market to surmount those barriers with supportive services while they reskill, upskill or next-skill.

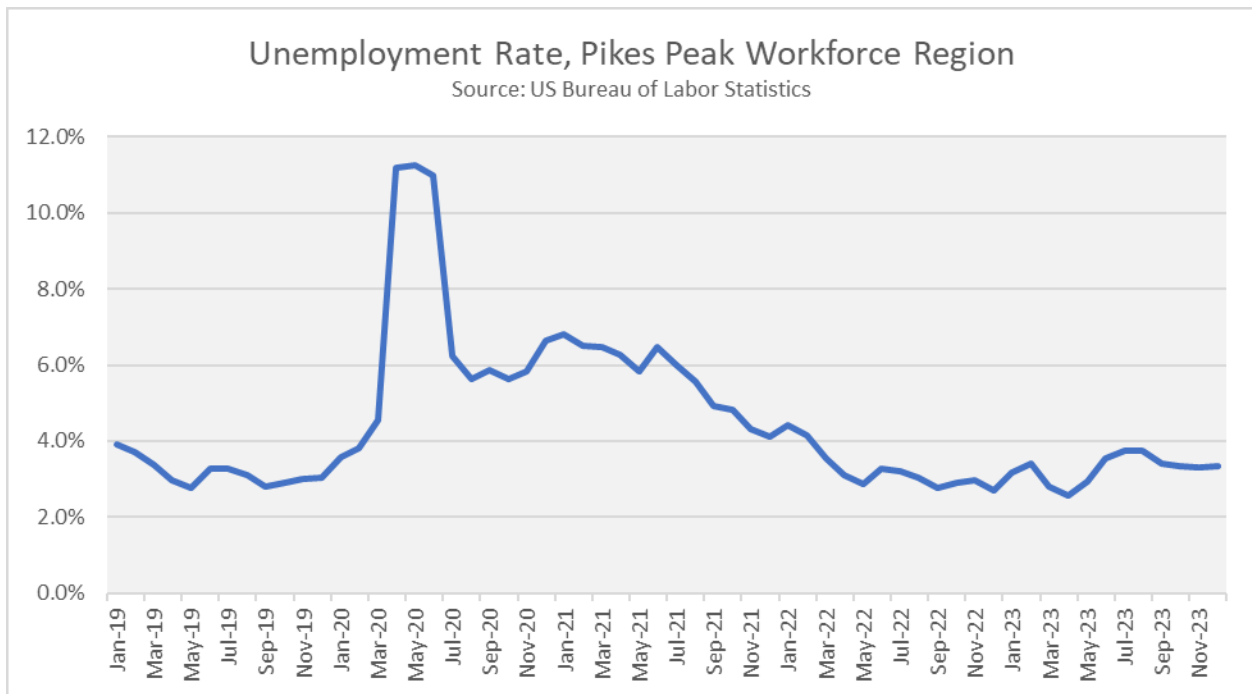


Figure 20

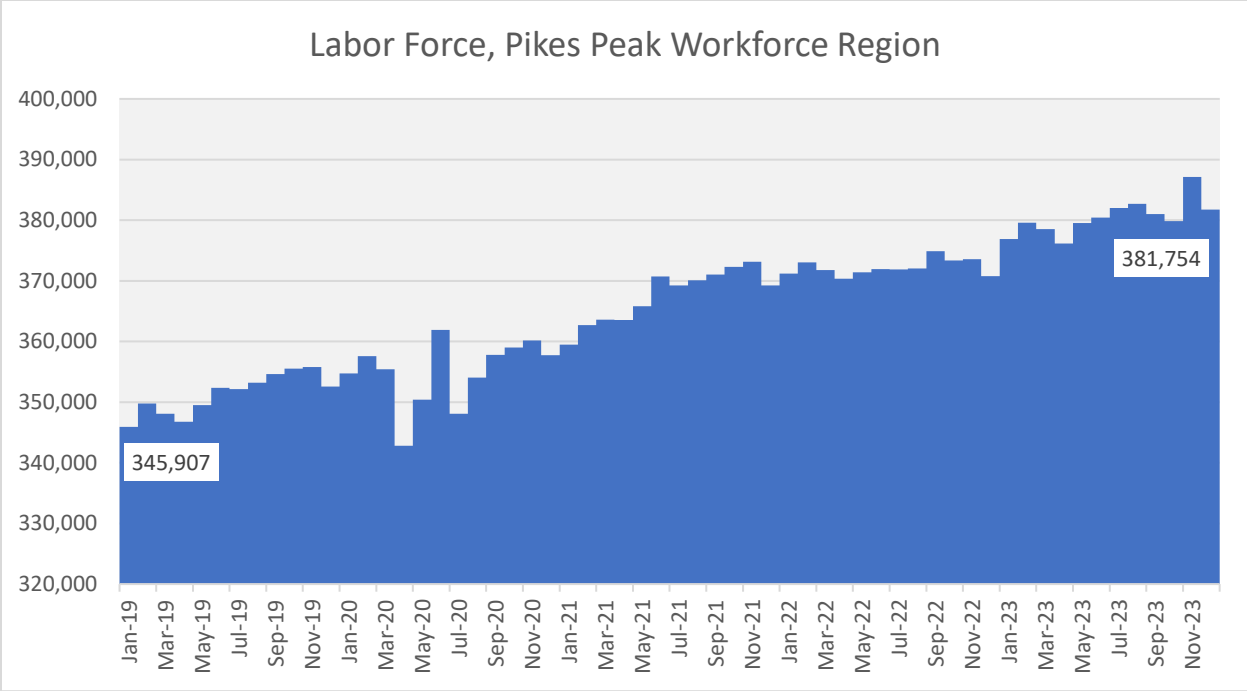


Figure 21