

**Tacoma-Pierce County – WDA 6**  
**Program Year (PY) 2009 Local Operations Plan Modification**  
**In Response to American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009**  
**For the Period of July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010**

**Questions for WIA/Wagner-Peyser Act Local Operations Plan Modifications**

In order to modify PY 2009 WIA/Wagner-Peyser Local Operations Plans, WDCs are to respond to the following questions using TEGL 14-08 as written guidance in providing answers. The questions below ask WDCs to describe their revised local operations plans to meet the challenges of the economic downturn and new activities planned related to Recovery Act implementation. The answers to the questions should address how the local area plans to connect and integrate recovery activities to address both short-term and long-term workforce investment strategies.

**1. How will the local area ensure that both the Recovery Act and regular formula funds are expended timely and concurrently to substantially increase the number of individuals receiving services?**

As Congress and President Obama expect a large scale summer youth program this summer, all ARRA youth funds have been allocated to provide employment to 1,200 Pierce County youth. This will expend the majority, if not all of the ARRA youth funds while providing work readiness skills to our local youth. Five youth partners who are Vadis, Tacoma Community House, Goodwill, Centro Latino, and WorkForce Central will operate the summer youth program.

Investments from ARRA and Formula Adult and Dislocated Worker funds have been made to increase staffing at the WorkSource Career Development Center and the Lakewood Affiliate site by nine to provide core and intensive services to an increased number of job seekers. In addition, Wagner Peyser/ARRA will add five staff to the front end core services. This increase in staffing will allow us to better respond to a 50% increase, or an anticipated 120,000 job seekers in core services and 200 job seekers in intensive/training.

To date, approximately \$600,000 in group training contracts have been issued to the five local community and technical colleges to provide demand training prior to July 1, 2009. Invoices for these programs will be paid within the next couple of months. An additional \$1.2 million has been earmarked to purchase additional group training once local review has occurred to ensure proposed training programs are in demand. In addition to group training, Individual Training Accounts and supportive services will continue to be issued to eligible adults and dislocated workers.

**2. How will the local area increase access to education and training opportunities for adults and dislocated workers needing new skills?**

With the economy that has low/slow growth currently, we need to look at least one to two year forward, learning from past recessions in terms of industries and careers most positioned to rebound quickly. Local training strategies are shifting to longer term training rather than three to

six months training to allow for skills development that will be in demand again. With ARRA funds, we will be able to support the increased training timeframe with will require an increase in funding for each Individual Training Account and assist more job seekers with supportive services to ensure training retention and completion. With the purchase of group training from the community and technical colleges, access will e maintained for demand training in addition to an increase number of Individual Training Accounts made available. Outreach to low income adults, dislocated workers and veterans will continue throughout the WorkSource system. DSHS, the military, and Employment Security are sound partners in Pierce County. As a result, they assist us greatly in getting the word out to these priority populations about WorkSource services and helping job seekers link to and access the full array of services.

**3. Has the local area reviewed existing eligible training providers' and their capacity to meet the current and near-term projected needs for additional training enrollments in demand courses?**

As shared above, approximately \$600,000 in group training contracts have been issued to local community and technical colleges. These deliberations and negotiations had been in effect since April with the Vice Presidents of Instruction at all of the local colleges. We have additional training proposals from all five colleges that are under review and anticipate issuing additional contracts within the next several months. Locally, we are preparing to convene a business led Green partnership to define and identify demand training and career opportunities regionally. Investments will be made to support these emerging programs.

**4. Describe the local plan for increasing access to reemployment services for UI claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their benefits?**

As shared above, increased staffing in the front end will be deployed to assist the increased number of unemployed individuals with reemployment services. The additional staff will allow us to better manage and provide services to customers more readily and quickly. WorkSource staff access the reemployment services screen in SKIES for UI claimants participating in the presentation of benefits workshops to identify services they have and have not received, how long they have left on UI, and develop a customized action plan with the customers, giving priority to those who are nearing the end of their UI benefits.

Staff will work more closely with customers than ever before with the operational model change to case manage all customers. This increased support will result in more services accessed by the customers, which will result in reemployment. In addition, the Pierce County Business Team will regularly review the job seeker inventory of skills and align business outreach efforts to increase the number of opened positions that best match these skills.

**5. Describe local strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers, including UI claimants have universal access to the minimum required universal core services?**

WorkSource Pierce, which includes one career development center and nine affiliate sites strategically placed throughout Pierce County has offered and continues to offer universal core services to all residents. No changes have been made to this access to all residents and businesses. With the increase in service demand, we will look to expand capacity of at least two affiliate sites.

**6. Describe how ARRA funds will enhance local integrated service delivery strategies in the following functional areas: front-end, skills/employment, and business-services.**

ARRA funds provide us with an opportunity to increase front end staffing to better provide services to our customers. With more staffing resources, we will be able to not only work with more customers who utilize the resource room, but to provide more workshops and add additional workshops to assist job seekers to identify their transferrable skills and prepare for a successful job search. In addition, ARRA funds provide us with an opportunity to make available an increased level of funding for and number of Individual Training Accounts for demand training, and allow us to contract for group training with community and technical colleges for demand and emerging training that the colleges cannot support because of budgetary constraints.

ARRA youth funds are very welcomed locally as it will offer 1,200 youth with summer jobs while learning job readiness skills.

**7. Describe local efforts to target training to regional economies, including high growth and emerging industry sectors and awarding ITAs for careers in energy efficiency, renewable energy, “green” collar jobs, and health care as discussed in the Recovery Act?**

At this time we do not have the necessary data to support “green” training. A business led Green Partnership will be convened in June to define and identify what these “green” jobs are and will be for our region. In regards to healthcare, the Pierce County Healthcare Partnership identifies demand occupations. Group training contracts have already been issued for Nursing Assistant Certified, Informatics, and LPN to RN bridge programs. We will make additional investments in healthcare and most likely in construction where many “green” jobs will be identified by the local businesses and partners.

**8. States are to ensure that supportive services and needs-related payments described in WIA section 134(e)(2) and (3) are available to support the employment and training needs of priority populations. Will the local area offer supportive services and needs-related payments (NRPs) to eligible adults and dislocated workers?**

Pierce County is not planning on issuing needs related payments. This decision was made because locally we want to maximize investments into direct training. Supportive services will continue to be provided.

**9. How the local area will deliver summer youth components including employment opportunities that include work experience?** Describe the anticipated program design for the summer youth program including the time period involved.

- 1,200 Pierce County youth who are eligible for WIA will be employed in a variety of jobs within the public, non-profit and some private sectors. Youth will work from 120 to 200 hours between July and September 30<sup>th</sup>, learning work readiness skills. Each youth will be assessed and matched to a job that fits closest to his/her career choice. Five youth partners will operate the program. Outreach continues in school districts, Boys and Girls Club, Fort Lewis, community Centers, churches, etc. Jobsite development

continues at county and city offices, non profit sites, and private businesses. Each youth will work part-time and attend pre-employment, career exploration, budget workshops. For those youth who are in school and who work at least 180 hours this summer, they will earn half of an elective credit.

- **To what extent does the local area plan to complement youth work experience with classroom-based learning?**

The summer program design does not include an academic learning component.

**10. Describe how the local area will oversee youth activities and summer employment, and train staff in implementing the various aspects of summer employment, including appropriate wage and hour provisions, child labor laws, and work site supervision and safety?**

Temporary summer staff have been hired on and trained. Currently staff are recruiting youth and jobsites. In June, orientation with youth will be conducted and job referrals will commence. Information that includes child labor laws, supervisory requirements will be provided to site supervisors. Summer staff will have a specific number of youth to oversee throughout the summer so that we can ensure learning occurs, appropriate level of supervision is provided, and that jobsites and youth adhere to all federal, state and local laws.

**11. Does the local area plan to ensure that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training including the youth most in need of assistance?**

Yes, we have always provided access to eligible low income youth with barriers to WIA youth services. The five youth operators have strong relationships with school districts, DSHS, Casey Family Programs, Department of Corrections, DVR and many more. As a result, WIA youth services are well known by these agencies that work with the very barriered youth. These operators also provide leverage to WIA funds to assist both WIA eligible and non WIA eligible youth. We are very fortunate to have such experienced and well known youth operators in Pierce County.