#### UNION COUNTY

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

PROGRAM YEAR 2021

# ANNUAL REPORT







#### **TABLE OF CONTENT**

INTRODUCTION	1
STRATEGIC PLAN VISION	2
CORE VALUES	3
HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY RESOLUTIONS	4
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	21
PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE	22
NEGOTIATED PERFORMANCE GOALS	24
PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES	25
SERVICE THROUGH CHALLENGES	26
UCWDB PROGRAM YEAR 2021 BUDGET	ATTACHMENT A
MONTHLY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	ATTACHMENT E
FLITLIREWORKS PERFORMANCE DATA	ΔΤΤΔ CHMFNT (



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#### INTRODUCTION

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 grants the Union County Workforce Development Board oversight authority to design budgets, allocate funding, and develop a strategic workforce vision for the County of Union. The Union County Workforce Development Board partners with the Union County Board of County Commissioners to guide the public workforce system in serving job seekers and employers. One of the key reporting responsibilities of the Union County Workforce Development is the development and publication of an annual report, as required by the United States' Department of Labor, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission.

We are pleased to present the Union County Workforce Development Board Annual Report for Program Year 2021. As we reflect on the past year, we are inspired by the collective effort to overcome the many challenges and obstacles that were presented. This report highlights our commitment to fostering economic growth and expanding access to high-quality job training and employment services for all Union County residents.

In Program Year 2021, which runs from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022, the Union County Workforce Development Board secured significant non-competitive grants, totaling over \$6 million, from various programs such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act for Adults, Youth, and Dislocated Workers; Work First New Jersey Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (WFNJ-TANF) for Work Activities and Case Management; and General Assistance (GA) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for Work Activities and Case Management.

Throughout the year, we approved several important resolutions to fortify our workforce development initiatives. We designated the Union County Department of Human Services as the operator of the comprehensive American Job Center, providing a range of career services, supportive services, work-based training opportunities, and follow-up services to program participants.



We awarded contracts for the provision of Work First New Jersey Program services to Workforce Advantage and Union County College, both of which demonstrated their ability to address individual employment barriers and support clients in reaching their employment goals.

Further, we awarded a contract to the Plainfield Public Library for the provision of digital literacy instruction and industry-recognized certifications through the Workforce Learning Link program. We also awarded a contract to Union County Vocational Technical Schools for the provision of Simon Youth Academy Operator Services for WIOA Out-of-School Youth Services.

We extended our contract with the Union County Department of Human Services as the American Job Center Services Operator, ensuring the continued provision of comprehensive career services to Union County residents. We also approved modifications to the Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement of the American Job Center Partners, including clarifying the role of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired as a core partner in the workforce system.

Despite the challenges of the past year, the Union County Workforce Development Board remained committed to its mission of empowering individuals to enter or advance in the workforce and achieve economic stability. We look forward to continuing to serve our community in the coming year.

#### STRATEGIC PLAN VISION

The Union County Workforce Development Board envisions itself as a dynamic force for economic development and a vital asset for employment and training in the region. With a focus on fostering economic growth, the workforce system aims to facilitate strategic connections between businesses, the county, and the state, acting as a crucial bridge for collaboration and progress.

In pursuit of enhanced training and employment opportunities, the workforce system is dedicated to empowering residents to overcome challenges such as unemployment,



underemployment, and economic hardships. By providing comprehensive support, it aims to guide individuals along a path of successful professional growth, equipping them with the skills and resources needed to thrive in the workforce.

This dual vision serves as the guiding principle for the Union County Workforce System, setting the foundation for its strategic direction and creating a positive and inclusive environment that fosters economic prosperity and individual success.

#### **CORE VALUES**

The Union County Workforce Development Board is committed to aligning its workforce development strategy with the core values outlined in New Jersey's Unified Workforce Investment Plan. These values, as reflected in the Local 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, serve as the guiding principles for driving our workforce development activities. They are as follows:

- Career Pathways and Industry-Credential Attainment: We place a strong emphasis on supporting individuals in identifying and pursuing career pathways aligned with their interests and skills. By promoting industry-recognized credential attainment, we enhance their employability and readiness for success in the workforce.
- Integrated Service Delivery through One-Stop Centers: We strive to create seamless and comprehensive service delivery by expanding the integration of services within our One-Stop Centers. By bringing together various resources and support systems, we ensure that individuals have easy access to the tools and assistance they need to achieve their career goals.
- Utilization of Technology: We recognize the importance of technology in optimizing our operations and enhancing the customer experience. By leveraging technology in our processes, both internally and externally, we improve efficiency, accessibility, and the overall quality of our services.
- Increased Access to Services: We are dedicated to expanding access to our services, ensuring that all individuals in our community have equal opportunities to benefit from workforce development programs. We strive to remove barriers and provide



inclusive and equitable access for underrepresented populations, promoting greater economic mobility and social equality.

- Strong Employer Engagement: We actively engage with employers to understand their workforce needs and foster mutually beneficial partnerships. By collaborating closely with businesses, we can align our programs and services with industry demands, facilitating job placements and cultivating a skilled workforce that meets the needs of our local economy.
- Comprehensive Evaluation and Systematic Oversight: We go beyond national
  performance standards by implementing robust evaluation metrics and ensuring
  systematic oversight. By continuously monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of
  our programs, we can adapt and improve our strategies to better meet the evolving
  needs of our community.

These core values guide our decision-making and shape the direction of the Union County Workforce Development Board, enabling us to create meaningful impact and drive positive change in the lives of individuals and the overall economic landscape of our region.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY RESOLUTIONS**

Resolution No. 2021-22, passed by the Union County Workforce Development Board, provides workforce innovation resource guidance to the American Job Center Partners (AJCP) in Union County. The resolution aims to align with the vision of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and improve the delivery of employment, education, training, and support services. The resolution outlines several requirements and recommendations for the AJCP, including:

• Familiarizing employees paid from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant funding with relevant legislation and regulations.



- Ensuring employees involved in managing finances of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant funding are familiar with applicable administrative requirements.
- Familiarizing employees paid from Work First New Jersey grant funding with the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 and the Work First New Jersey State Plan.
- Familiarizing employees paid from Workforce Learning Link grant funding with the Workforce Learning Link Administrative Instructions.
- Following guidance provided by Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs) and Training Employment Notices (TENs) issued by the United States Department of Labor and the Employment and Training Administration.
- Following guidance provided by the New Jersey Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, as well as New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notices (NJWINs) issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor.
- Following procedures for placement on the Eligible Training Provider's List (ETPL) issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor, Center for Occupational Employment Information (COEI).
- Utilizing Labor Market Information (LMI) related to industry-sector strategies and indemand occupations in various industries.
- Considering the Union County Workforce Development Board Local Strategic Plan and corresponding local workforce sub-strategies.
- Adhering to policies and procedures approved by the Union County Workforce Development Board through Workforce Area Guidance Letters (WAGLs).
- Encouraging the use of WorkforceGPS, an online platform providing technical assistance webinars, resources, and toolkits for the public workforce system.



- Requiring organizations awarded Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding to endorse the Union County Workforce Development Board's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA).
- Seeking guidance from the Office of the Workforce Development Board when needed.

**Resolution No. 2021-23**, passed by the Union County Workforce Development Board, focuses on the adoption of Workforce Innovation Notices issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor as local workforce guidance policy. The resolution aligns with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation Act.

The resolution highlights the following key points:

- The State of New Jersey has submitted a Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, outlining a four-year strategy for the state's workforce development system.
- The Combined State Plan includes Strategic and Operational Planning Elements, which analyze the state's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities.
- The NJDOL provides policy guidance, procedures, and technical assistance to local workforce areas through the issuance of Workforce Innovation Notices to support the Strategic and Operational Planning Elements in the Combined State Plan.
- The Union County Workforce Development Board aims to set strategic goals and develop policy objectives that align with the vision of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Strategic and Operational Planning Elements in the Combined State Plan.



- The Union County Workforce Development Board adopts the Workforce Innovation Notices issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor as local workforce guidance policy.
- All sub-recipients and sub-sub-recipients of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity
  Act grant funding are held accountable for achieving the Strategic and Operational
  Planning Elements within the Combined State Plan.
- Workforce Innovation Notices issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor serve as guidance for all sub-recipients and sub-sub-recipients of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant funding.
- American Job Center Partners and other grant recipients are encouraged to seek guidance from the Office of the Workforce Development Board regarding the Strategic and Operational Planning Elements and the Workforce Innovation Notices addressed in the resolution.

The New Jersey Workforce Innovation Notices issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development include:

- 1-15: WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility Guidelines Initial MOU and Resource Sharing Guidance
- 2-15: One-Stop Delivery System WIOA Vision TEGL 4-15
- 3-15: WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Transfer Authority Re-issue
- 4-15: WIOA Youth Program Eligibility Guidelines
- 5-15: Personally Identifiable Information Policy Requirements
- 6-15: WIOA Participant Exit Policy (Revised)
- 7-15: Youth Assessment/Individual Service Strategy Requirements
- 8-15: TEGL 8-15 (Youth Programs)
- 9-15: WIOA Youth Program Design and Leveraging



- 10-15: USDOL Extension of WIA Training Provider Eligibility
- 11-15: Union Administrative Requirement Cost-Sharing Provisions
- 12-15: WIOA Work-Based Training Provisions
- 13-15: Initial Insurance of Final Rules Issue
- 1-16: Data Validation Policy
- 2-16: WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Eligibility Guidelines
- 3-16: ETA Free Helpline Awareness TEN 3.16
- 4-16: Initial Co-Enrollment Procedures
- 5-16: WIOA Final Rules Issuance Federal Register
- 6-16: Enrollment Homeless Veterans WIOA Program
- 7-16: Re-Employment and Eligibility Assessment Co-Enrollment Procedures
- 8-16: Incumbent Workers Training Under WIOA
- 9-16: Supportive Services and Needs Based Payments Under WIOA
- 10-16: Priority of Service Under WIOA
- 11-16: pdf NJ Unified One Stop Career Center Complaints Procedure Required One-Stop Partners
- 12-16: Re-employment and Eligibility Assessment Co-Enrollment Procedures
- 13-16: Revised Performance Accountability Guidelines
- 14-16: WIOA Youth Program Eligibility Guidance
- 15-16: One Stop Infrastructure Cost TEGL 17.16
- 16-16: WIOA Guidance Provision of Services in One Stop Career Centers TEGL 19.16
- 17-16: USDOL Guidance AJC Network TEGL 16.16
- 18-16: WIOA Youth Procurement Requirements
- 19-16: Replace NJWIN
- 20-16: Competitive Selection One-Stop Operators



- 21-16: USDOL Operations Guidance for AJCs TEGL 16.16
- 22-16: Opportunity Partnership Grant Program Eligibility Determination
- 23-16: WIOA Youth Work Experience
- 1-17: Supplemental Wage Information TEGL 21.16
- 2-17: WIOA Youth Guidance TEGL 21.16
- 3-17: DMV Military CDL Waivers
- 4-17: WDP Opportunity Partnership Grant Eligibility
- 5-17: WIOA Youth Program Element Technical Assistance Guide
- 6-17: Additional Guidance Related to Local MOU
- 7-17: Credential Attainment and Measurable Skills Gain Indicators
- 8-17: Initial Intake and Assessment Form
- 9-17: Eligible Training Provider List Procedures
- 10-17: Adding Attachments to Customer Records in AOSOS
- 11-17: Credential Attainment and Measurable Skills Gain Indicators of Performance
- 8-17 (P): Initial Intake and Assessment Form
- 9-17 A: Enrollment of Homeless Veterans Program Participants into a WIOA Program
- 7-16 V: Eligible Training Provider List Procedures for Competitively Procured Programs
- 10-17 (A): Adding Attachments to Customer Records in AOSOS
- 11-17 (M): Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System Memorandum
- N/A: WIOA Youth Follow-Up Services
- 19-1: Monitoring Policy and Procedures
- 19-3: Procedures for Reporting Fraud, Program Abuse or Criminal Misconduct
- 19-4: OSCC Testing and Intake Guidance
- 19-5: AJC MOU IFA



- 19-2: WIOA Eligibility and Self-Assessment
- 19-6: Opportunity Partnership Grant Procedures and Protocols
- 19-6.1: WIOA Eligibility and Self-Assessment Revised
- 19-7: WIOA Youth Individual Service Strategy
- 19-8: Individual Employment Plan Guidance
- 19-9: Recording Case Notes
- 19-12: Remote Processing of Tuition Waiver Requests

Resolution No. 2021-24, approved by the Union County Workforce Development Board, addresses the funding allocations and grants received for the Union County Workforce Development Area. The resolution highlights the sources of funding, including the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Work First New Jersey (WFNJ), General Assistance (GA), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Supplemental Workforce Development Benefits Program (Union County Workforce Development Board Program Year 2021 Budget is included in Attachment A).

#### Key points of the resolution include:

- The Union County Workforce Development Area Budget consists of funding from various programs, such as WIOA for Adults, Youth, and Dislocated Workers; WFNJ-TANF for Work Activities, Case Management, Work Verification, and the Career Advancement Voucher Program; GA and SNAP for Work Activities and Case Management through the Workforce Learning Link (WLL); and the SmartSTEPS Program.
- The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has issued a Notice of Award (NOA) to the Union County Workforce Development Area for Program Year 2021, specifying the grant amounts for different programs.
- The non-competitive grants awarded for Program Year 2021 are as follows: WIOA Adult \$1,162,641; WIOA Dislocated Worker \$1,331,273; WIOA Youth \$1,113,558;



WFNJ TANF for Work Activities and Case Management \$1,478,827; GA and SNAP for Work Activities and Case Management \$929,609; and Workforce Learning Link \$155,000.

Resolution No. 2021-26, approved by the Union County Workforce Development Board, designates the Union County Department of Human Services as the operator of the comprehensive American Job Center in Union County, New Jersey. The resolution outlines the services and provisions that the American Job Center Services Operator will offer to program participants, as well as the authorized budget and funding allocation for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs.

#### Key points of the resolution include:

- The Union County Department of Human Services is competitively selected to manage and operate the comprehensive American Job Center in Union County in accordance with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- The American Job Center Services Operator will provide program participants with comprehensive Career Services, including Basic Career Services, Individualized Career Services, and Follow-up Career Services.
- Supportive Services will be made available to program participants, such as linkages
  to community services, transportation assistance, childcare and dependent care
  assistance, housing assistance, needs-related payments, educational testing
  assistance, accommodations for individuals with disabilities, legal aid services,
  health care referrals, work attire and tools assistance, and payments for
  employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications.
- Work-Based training opportunities will be provided, including Pre-Apprenticeship, Apprenticeships, Work Experience, Internships, Transitional Jobs, On-The-Job Training, Customized Training, and Incumbent Worker Training.



- Individual Training Accounts will be available to program participants.
- Follow-up Services will be provided to Adult and Dislocated Worker program
  participants, including counseling, employment verification, assistance in securing
  better paying jobs, career planning and counseling, assistance in resolving workrelated problems, connecting individuals to support groups, providing information
  about additional educational or employment opportunities, and referrals to
  community resources.
- Youth program participants will receive the 14 Program Elements, Supportive Services, and Follow-up Services.
- The Union County Department of Human Services is authorized to utilize the allocated budget amount of \$1,200,000 for the provision of Career Services, Supportive Services, Work-Based training, Individual Training Accounts, Youth Program Elements, and Follow-up Career Services.
- The American Job Center Services Operator is authorized to encumber and liquidate the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program funding during the specified Program Year.

**Resolution No. 2021-28**, approved by the Union County Workforce Development Board, pertains to the awarding of contracts for the provision of Work First New Jersey Program services. The resolution outlines the competitive contracting process followed by the Union County Workforce Development Board and announces the selection of two contractors, Workforce Advantage and Union County College, for the provision of these services.

#### Key points of the resolution include:

• The Union County Workforce Development Board authorized the use of a competitive contracting process in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law to secure proposals for Work First New Jersey Program services.



- A Request for Proposals was issued by the Union County Workforce Development Board, and proposals were received and evaluated by an evaluation committee consisting of Union County Workforce Development Board staff.
- Based on the committee's evaluation and the advice of the Office of County Counsel, the committee recommended awarding contracts to Workforce Advantage and Union County College.
- Workforce Advantage, located at 49 Broad St., Elizabeth, NJ 07201, is awarded a
  contract for an amount not to exceed \$476,737.00 (\$323,216.00 TANF and
  \$153,521.00 GA/SNAP) for Program Year 2021, subject to funding availability and
  the Union County Board of County Commissioners' concurrence.
- Union County College, located at 1033 Springfield Ave., Cranford, NJ 07016, is awarded a contract for an amount not to exceed \$476,737.00 (\$323,216.00 TANF and \$153,521.00 GA/SNAP) for Program Year 2021, subject to funding availability and the Union County Board of County Commissioners' concurrence.
- Both contractors submitted comprehensive proposals addressing the needs of the Union County Workforce Development Board as outlined in the Work First New Jersey Programs Request for Proposal.
- The services provided by Workforce Advantage include job search assistance, community work experience programs, education related to employment, and job skills related to employment. Union County College offers education programs related to employment, including adult basic education, ESL, and GED preparation.
- Workforce Advantage has a history of providing Work First New Jersey services within the Union County area and demonstrates an understanding of the program's goals and objectives.
- Union County College has campuses in Plainfield, Cranford, and Elizabeth, and offers a range of educational and workforce development programs through its Center for Economic and Workforce Development.



• Both contractors have experience working with the Work First New Jersey client population and have demonstrated their ability to address individual employment barriers and support clients in reaching their employment goals and self-sufficiency.

**Resolution No. 2021-29**, approved by the Executive Committee of the Union County Workforce Development Board, pertains to the awarding of a contract for the Workforce Learning Link program. The resolution outlines the purpose of the program, the proposal submitted by the Plainfield Public Library in collaboration with Certiport, and the terms of the awarded contract.

#### Key points of the resolution include:

- The Workforce Learning Link program aims to provide short-term services to enhance basic skills and computer literacy, enabling customers to enter or retain employment, improve their employment level, pursue occupational training, or obtain a New Jersey State Issued High School Diploma.
- The Plainfield Public Library, in collaboration with Certiport, submitted a proposal to pilot a program using Workforce Learning Link funding. The program's focus is to offer basic-to-intermediate digital literacy instruction leading to industry-recognized credentials.
- The proposed program will provide evening training in Internet and Computing Core (IC3) Certification and Microsoft Office Certification programs to underemployed and incumbent workers in Plainfield and Elizabeth municipalities.
- The Union County Workforce Development Board awards a Workforce Learning Link contract to the Plainfield Public Library, located at 800 Park Avenue, Plainfield, New Jersey 07060, for the provision of IC3 Computing and Microsoft Office Certification.
- The contract has a maximum value of \$75,000 (Account No. G-02-21-365-368-434) for the period from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022.



This resolution signifies the awarding of a contract to the Plainfield Public Library for the provision of digital literacy instruction and industry-recognized certifications through the Workforce Learning Link program. The program aims to equip underemployed and incumbent workers in Plainfield and Elizabeth with essential computer skills to enhance their employability and promote self-sufficiency. The awarded contract supports the Union County Workforce Development Board's mission to provide short-term services that empower individuals to enter or advance in the workforce and achieve economic stability.

Resolution No. 2022-06, approved by the Union County Workforce Development Board, pertains to the awarding of a contract for the provision of Simon Youth Academy Operator Services for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Out-of-School Youth Services. The resolution outlines the process of competitive contracting, the proposal submitted by Union County Vocational Technical Schools, and the evaluation committee's recommendation for the contract award.

#### Key points of the resolution include:

- The Union County Workforce Development Board and the Union County Board of County Commissioners have approved the Local Strategic Plan, which governs the procurement process for selecting the Simon Youth Academy Operator and other services.
- The Local Public Contracts Law allows for the use of Competitive Contracting as an alternative to competitive bidding processes under certain circumstances.
- The Union County Workforce Development Board authorized the use of a competitive contracting process, as outlined in N.J.S.A. 40A:11-4.1, to secure proposals for WIOA Out-of-School Youth Services.
- After the initial Request for Proposals did not receive any responses, the Union County Workforce Development Board re-issued the Request for Proposals, and Union County Vocational Technical Schools submitted a proposal.



Based on the evaluation committee's report, the Union County Workforce
Development Board awards a contract to Union County Vocational Technical
Schools, located at 1776 Raritan Road, Scotch Plains, NJ 07076, for the provision of
Simon Youth Academy Operator Services for WIOA Out-of-School Youth Services.

Union County Vocational Technical Schools demonstrated its experience and capabilities in meeting the needs outlined in the Simon Youth Academy Operator—WIOA Out-of-School Youth Services Request for Proposal. The vocational technical school district has a long history of providing education and alternative programs. Union County Vocational Technical Schools has previously held the contract for Simon Youth Academy Operator services and has successfully graduated students through the program.

The proposal presented details of the Simon Youth Academy curriculum, including subject requirements and the utilization of online learning resources. Union County Vocational Technical Schools acknowledged the need for supportive services, such as childcare, transportation, and mental health support, but lacked specific information on engagement and retention strategies for individuals facing economic challenges. The proposal also highlighted partnerships with organizations like the American Job Center and local malls.

While the Evaluation Committee recognized Union County Vocational Technical Schools' knowledge of the diverse population and barriers in Union County, they desired more information on career pathways, employer engagement, daily operations, and internal monitoring and evaluation procedures. However, Union County Vocational Technical Schools' expertise in alternative education and commitment to providing career training and industry-specific skills make them a suitable candidate for the contract.

Resolution No. 2022-11, approved by the Union County Workforce Development Board, addressed the awarding of a contract to Union County College for the provision of Affiliated American Job Center Operator for Career Services to WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers Services. The resolution highlights the authority granted to the Union County Workforce Development Board under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the procurement process, and the evaluation committee's recommendation for contract award.



Key points of the resolution include:

- The Union County Workforce Development Board has the authority to design staffing and programming budgets, allocate funding, and develop a strategic workforce vision under the WIOA.
- The Union County Workforce Development Board and the Union County Board of County Commissioners have approved the Union County Workforce Development Board's Local Strategic Plan, which governs the procurement process for selecting the AJC Affiliate Career Services Operator.
- The Local Public Contracts Law allows for the use of Competitive Contracting as an alternative to competitive bidding processes under certain circumstances.
- The Union County Workforce Development Board authorized the use of a competitive contracting process to secure proposals for the provision of Affiliated AJC Operator for Career Services to WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers Services.
- Union County College submitted a comprehensive proposal addressing the needs outlined in the Request for Proposal issued by the Union County Workforce Development Board.
- The proposal was evaluated by a committee consisting of Union County Workforce Development Board staff, and based on their evaluation, the committee recommended awarding the contract to Union County College.
- The Union County Workforce Development Board Executive Committee has acted on behalf of the full board to ensure necessary work-based and occupational training for Union County residents.
- The resolution will be ratified by the full Union County Workforce Development Board body at a public meeting.



Union County College's proposal highlighted their experience in providing educational services to Union County residents and their commitment to workforce development. The college offers a wide range of degree and certificate programs, and through the Center for Economic and Workforce Development, they focus on literacy, basic skills, general education, diploma preparation, and workforce training programs. Union County College has previously served as an AJC Affiliate Operator and demonstrated an understanding of the WIOA goals and objectives.

The proposal outlined general services, career services, training services, follow-up services, and business services to be provided by Union County College. General services include assessments, case management, counseling, and access to online learning resources. Career services involve developing career pathways, job search strategies, mock interviews, and information on occupational training programs. Training services include soft skills training, occupational class size training, and on-the-job training. Follow-up services and business services to engage employers and match them with qualified workers are also part of Union County College's proposal.

While the Evaluation Committee recognized Union County College's experience and comprehensive proposal, they noted areas where additional information could have been provided. These include recruitment strategies for hard-to-service populations and more in-depth details on participant barriers and program challenges. However, Union County College's record of accomplishment and understanding of the grant requirements make them a suitable candidate for the contract.

Resolution No. 2022-14, adopted by the Union County Workforce Development Board, established the On-the-Job Training program as a high-priority work-based training opportunity for the American Job Center and Affiliate American Job Center Partners. The resolution incorporates the Workforce Area Guidance Letter No. 2022-01, along with the accompanying toolkit, and the New Jersey Department of Labor's Workforce Innovation Notice WD-PY21-3 as policy.

Key points of the resolution include:



- Adoption of Workforce Area Guidance Letter No. 2022-01: The Union County Workforce Development Board adopts the guidance letter, which provides information and guidelines for the implementation of the On-the-Job Training program. The guidance letter, along with the included toolkit, serves as a resource for the Union County Workforce Development Board and its partners.
- OJT as a high-priority work-based training opportunity: The Union County Workforce
  Development Board recognizes the value of On-the-Job Training in providing Union
  County residents with valuable occupational skills while simultaneously subsidizing
  employers' hiring costs. On-the-Job Training is prioritized as a work-based learning
  option within the American Job Center and Affiliate American Job Center network.
- Use of Work First New Jersey and WIOA funding: The Union County Workforce
  Development Board authorizes the Union County American Job Center to use
  available funding from Work First New Jersey and the Workforce Innovation and
  Opportunity Act to place Union County residents into On-the-Job Training
  opportunities, as well as other work-based learning options. This enables the Union
  County Workforce Development Board to support residents in gaining practical
  experience and developing their occupational skills.

**Resolution No. 2022-18**, adopted by the Union County Workforce Development Board, approved a one-year contract extension with the County of Union, Department of Human Services, as the American Job Center Services Operator. The extension period is from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, with a funding limit not exceeding \$2,000,000.

#### Key points of the resolution include:

• Contract extension with the County of Union: The Union County Workforce Development Board exercises its option to grant the County of Union, Department of Human Services, a one-year contract extension as the American Job Center Services Operator. This extension ensures the continued provision of comprehensive career services to Union County residents.



- Budget allocation: The Union County Workforce Development Board will provide a separate budget resolution specifying the account numbers to be used for funding the contract between the Union County Workforce Development Board and the County of Union, Department of Human Services. This ensures proper fiscal management and accountability.
- Compliance with contract terms and Union County Workforce Development Board policies: The Department of Human Services, as the American Job Center Services Operator, is required to comply with all terms and conditions stated in the contract, as well as adhere to the Union County Workforce Development Board's policies, procedures, guidance, and performance goals and objectives. This ensures consistent service delivery and alignment with the Union County Workforce Development Board's strategic vision.
- Provision of comprehensive career services: The Department of Human Services, as
  the American Job Center Services Operator, is responsible for delivering a wide
  range of comprehensive career services, including eligibility determination,
  outreach, intake, assessments, career planning, job placement assistance, training
  programs, job fairs, workshops, and follow-up services. These services aim to
  support individuals in their career development and job search.
- Compliance with federal regulations: The Department of Human Services, as the American Job Center Services Operator, is required to adhere to the 2 Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, which outlines uniform administrative requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements for federal awards. This ensures compliance with federal regulations in the management and use of funds.

Resolution No. 2022-23, adopted by the Union County Workforce Development Board, approved modifications to the Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement of the American Job Center Partners. These modifications are necessary to clarify the role of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired as a core partner in the workforce system, specifically providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and visually impaired.



Key points of the resolution include:

- Background and existing agreements: The Union County Workforce Development
  Board and the Union County Board of County Commissioners have previously
  adopted resolutions to enter an umbrella the Memorandum of Understanding and
  Infrastructure Funding Agreement with the AJC Partners, in accordance with federal
  regulations.
- Modification request: The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development has requested modifications to the Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement to accurately reflect the role of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired as a core partner in the workforce system. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with visual impairments, and these modifications aim to clarify and update their involvement in the agreements.
- Approval of modifications: The Union County Workforce Development Board approves the modifications to the Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement as outlined in the attached addendum. This ensures that the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired role as a core partner is accurately reflected in the agreements.

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT RATE**

The unemployment rate in Union County, New Jersey, showed a marked decrease over the period from July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022. The rate started at 7.7% in July 2021, reflecting the economic challenges in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it steadily declined throughout the year, indicating recovery and growth in the job market. The most substantial drop happened between March and April 2022, when the unemployment rate fell from 4.6% to 3.8%. By June 2022, the unemployment rate had further decreased to 3.7%, indicating a strong job market. The overall trend suggests positive economic development in Union County over the year. However, it's crucial to continue monitoring these rates and other economic indicators to understand the full scope of the economic



health of the region. **Attachment B** illustrates the monthly unemployment rate date for Program Year 2021 in Union County.

#### PRIMARY INDICATORS OF PERFORMANCE

Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA No. 10-16, Change 1- Operating Guidance for The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (August 23, 2017):

"Under section I 16(b)(2)(A) of WIOA, there are six primary indicators of performance:

#### 1. EMPLOYMENT RATE - 2ND QUARTER AFTER EXIT:

The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit);

#### 2. EMPLOYMENT RATE - 4TH QUARTER AFTER EXIT:

The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit);

#### 3. MEDIAN EARNINGS - 2ND QUARTER AFTER EXIT:

The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

#### 4. CREDENTIAL ATTAINMENT:

The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the



program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program;

#### 5. MEASURABLE SKILL GAINS:

The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.

#### 6. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS:

WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(i)(VI) requires the Departments to establish a primary indicator of performance for effectiveness in serving employers. The Departments are piloting three approaches designed to gauge three critical workforce needs of the business community.

- Approach 1-Retention with the same employer-addresses the programs' efforts to provide employers with skilled workers;
- Approach 2-Repeat Business Customers addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time; and
- Approach 3-Employer Penetration Rate- addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a State and local economy."



#### **NEGOTIATED PERFORMANCE GOALS**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires states to negotiate performance targets for core programs like Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services. As the Union County Workforce Development Board, we work closely with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development to establish fair and equitable goals for outcomes like employment rate, median earnings, credential attainment rate, and skill gains for our local area based on economic conditions, participant characteristics, and service delivery strategies. We utilize past performance data, local area benchmarks, and projections to inform negotiated targets that align with state and regional goals. The negotiated goals drive strategic planning and accountability to optimize services and outcomes for Union County job seekers and employers. We view the negotiation process as critical for continuous improvement and maximizing the impact of our WIOA investments. The following charts outlined the Program Year 2020 and Program Year 2021 negotiated performance goals for adults, dislocated workers, youth, and Wagner-Peyser.

Adults	PY 2020 Targets	PY 2021 Targets
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	73.2 %	74.2 %
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	77.1 %	78.1 %
Credential Attainment 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	59.5 %	60.5 %
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$6,204	\$6,315
Measurable Skills Gain	40.0 %	41.0 %

Dislocated Workers	PY 2020 Targets	PY 2021 Targets
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	69.3 %	70.3 %
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	74.4 %	74.4 %
Credential Attainment 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	67.1 %	68.1 %
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$8,225	\$8,376
Measurable Skills Gain	40.0 %	41.0 %

Youth	PY 2020 Targets	PY 2021 Targets
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	66.2 %	67.2 %
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	60.1 %	61.0 %
Credential Attainment 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	50.0 %	51.0 %
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$2,306	\$2,352
Measurable Skills Gain	42.7 %	42.7 %



Wagner-Peyser	PY 2020 Targets	PY 2021 Targets
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	53.1 %	53.1 %
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	53.2 %	53.2 %
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$6,412	\$6,522

#### **PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES**

The emergence of COVID-19 in early 2020 fundamentally altered service delivery for the Union County American Job Center. To protect public health as the virus spread rapidly in March 2020, we needed to abruptly suspend in-person services and make an immediate shift to virtual operations. This required quickly training staff in new technologies for remote services while managing pandemic-related layoffs and budget constraints. It also posed challenges for our customers in accessing services online, especially those with technological barriers. However, we leveraged community partnerships to provide services like virtual workshops. We also developed innovative solutions such as curbside and outdoor job assistance. As recovery progresses, we are focused on sustaining virtual options while reopening in-person services in a safe manner. Our agility and resilience during COVID-19 gave us important strategic lessons that will ultimately strengthen our services. And we continue to address the significant economic impacts of the pandemic on our community, improving access to jobs and career development. In the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the following charts demonstrate the actual performance achieved. Attachment C includes all the Futurewoks performance data for the program year.

Adults	PY 2020 Targets	Actual
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	74.2 %	50.0 %
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	78.1 %	47.83 %
Credential Attainment 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	60.5 %	64.29 %
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$6,315	\$7,614.53
Measurable Skills Gain	41.0 %	91.67 %

Dislocated Workers	PY 2021 Targets	Actual
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	70.3 %	34.69 %
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	74.4 %	35.78 %
Credential Attainment 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	68.1 %	68.75 %
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$8,376	\$7,260.80
Measurable Skills Gain	41.0 %	94.68 %



Youth	PY 2021 Targets	Actual
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	67.2 %	73.68 %
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	61.0 %	74.03 %
Credential Attainment 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	51.0 %	38.68 %
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$2,352	\$2,352
Measurable Skills Gain	42.7 %	100.00 %

Wagner-Peyser	PY 2021 Targets	Actual
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	53.1 %	40.07 %
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	53.2 %	40.61 %
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$6,522	\$7,498.84

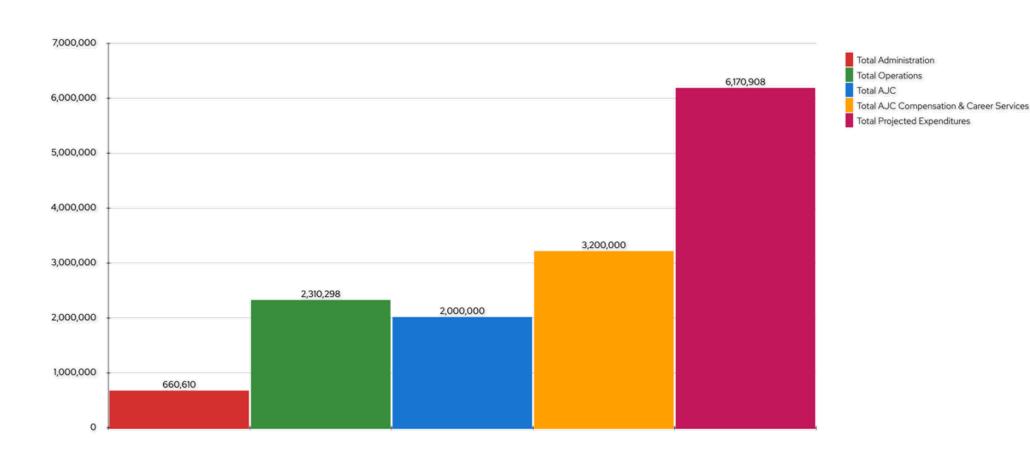
#### SERVICE THROUGH CHALLENGES

The Union County Workforce Development Board remains unwavering in its mission to empower individuals to enter or advance in the workforce and achieve economic stability, despite the unprecedented challenges of the past year. As we reflect on Program Year 2021, we are proud of our collective resilience and ability to adapt our strategies to continue serving our community. We successfully secured critical funding, pivoted services in response to COVID-19, and made meaningful progress towards performance goals. Most importantly, we provided essential support and opportunities enabling many to develop their skills and access jobs during an extremely difficult period. There is still significant work ahead as our economy recovers and evolves. But the lessons we learned this past year will make us stronger and better prepared to meet the needs of jobseekers, workers, and businesses. We look forward to building on our efforts and continuing to invest in the economic success of all Union County residents. With the ongoing support of our partners, we are confident in our ability to help chart a course towards expanded employment, greater prosperity, and widespread economic mobility for the communities we serve.

**ATTACHMENT A** 



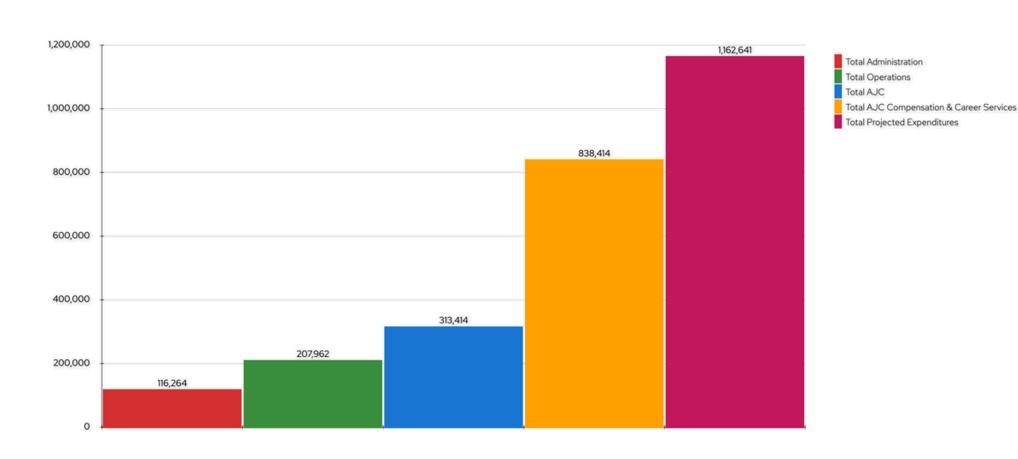
Total Program Year 2021 Budget Detail



**ATTACHMENT A** 



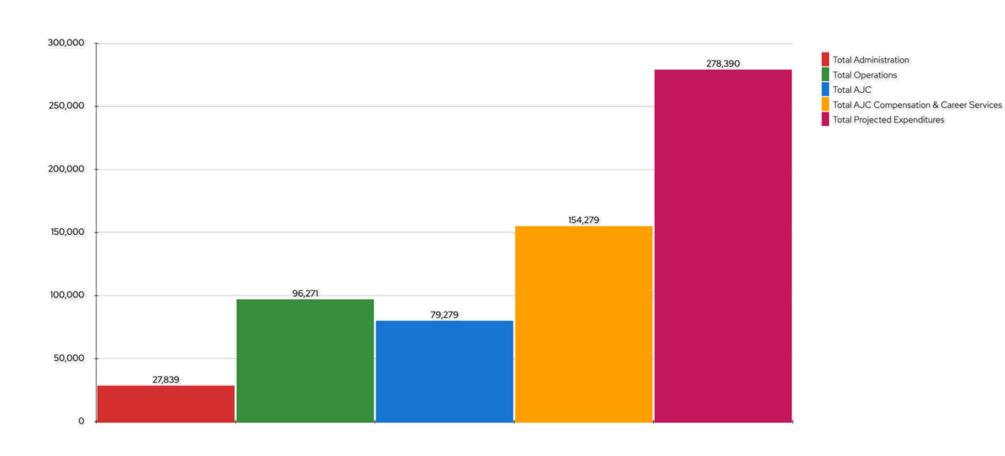
WIOA Adult Program Year 2021 Budget Detail



**ATTACHMENT A** 



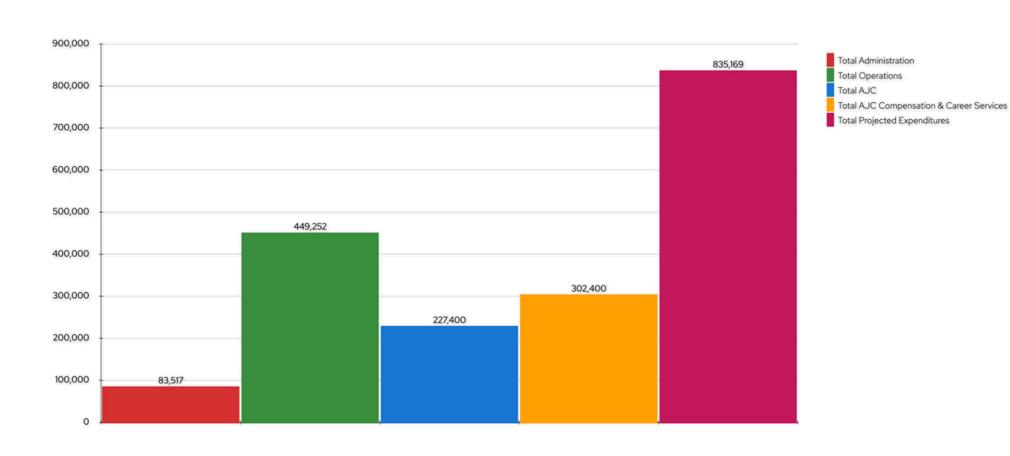
WIOA ISY Program Year 2021 Budget Detail



**ATTACHMENT A** 



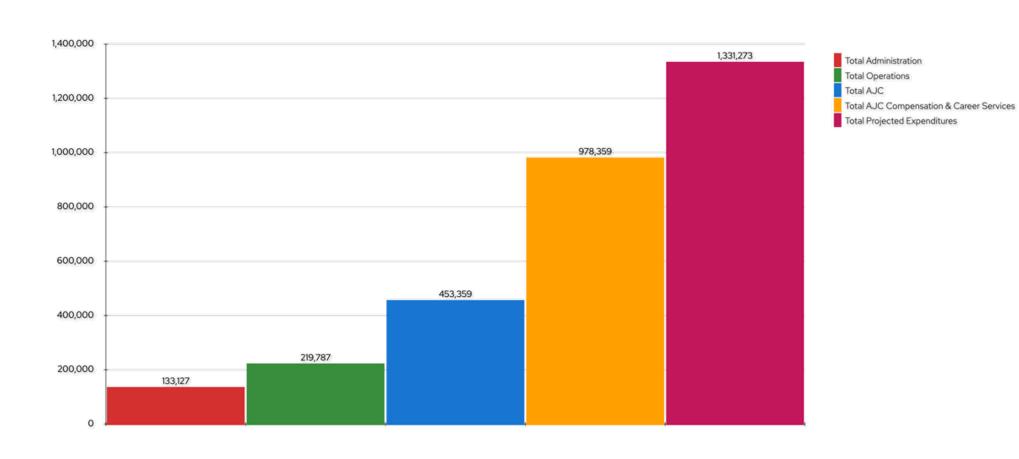
WIOA OSY Program Year 2021 Budget Detail



**ATTACHMENT A** 



WIOA Dislocated Worker Program Year 2021 Budget Detail

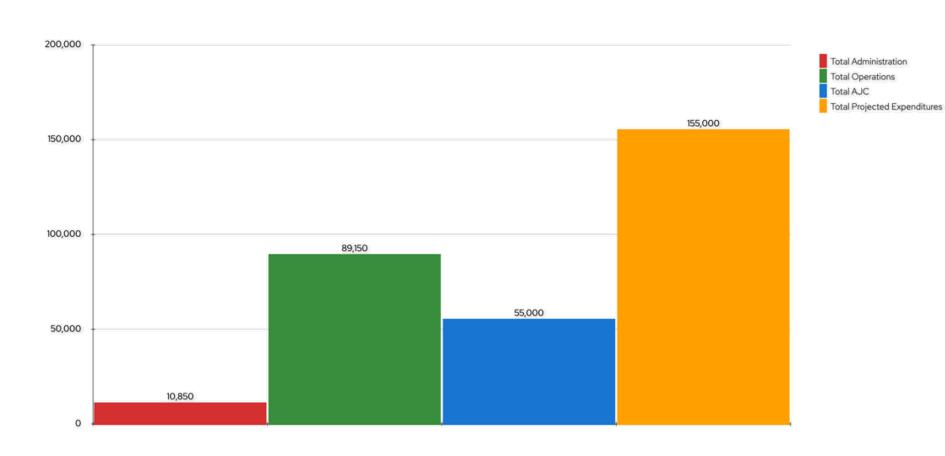


This chart represents the detailed budget for WIOA Dislocated Worker program under Administration, Operations, AJC, AJC Compensation & Comprehensive Career Services, and Projected Expenditures.

**ATTACHMENT A** 



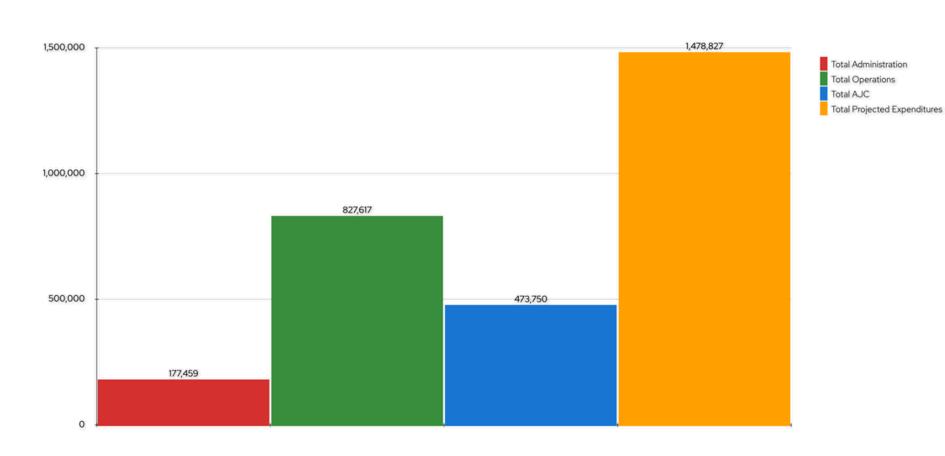
Workforce Learning Link Program Year 2021 Budget Detail



**ATTACHMENT A** 



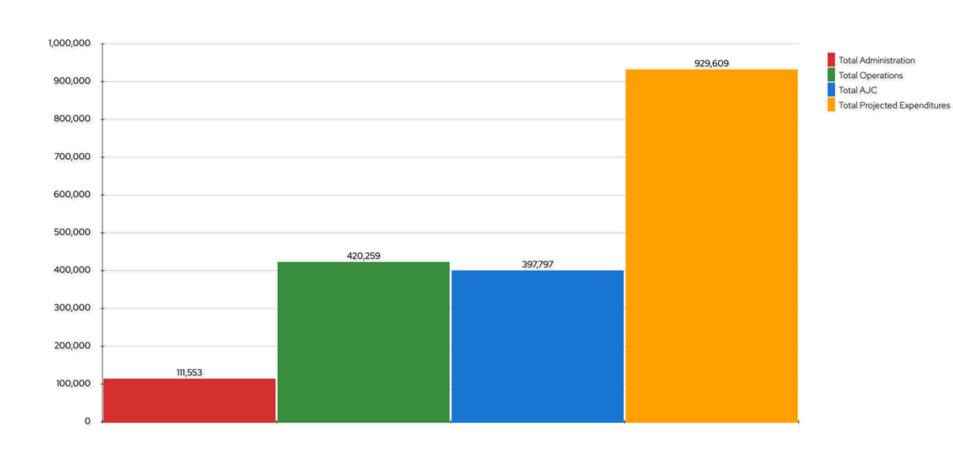
WFNJ TANF Program Year 2021 Budget Detail



**ATTACHMENT A** 

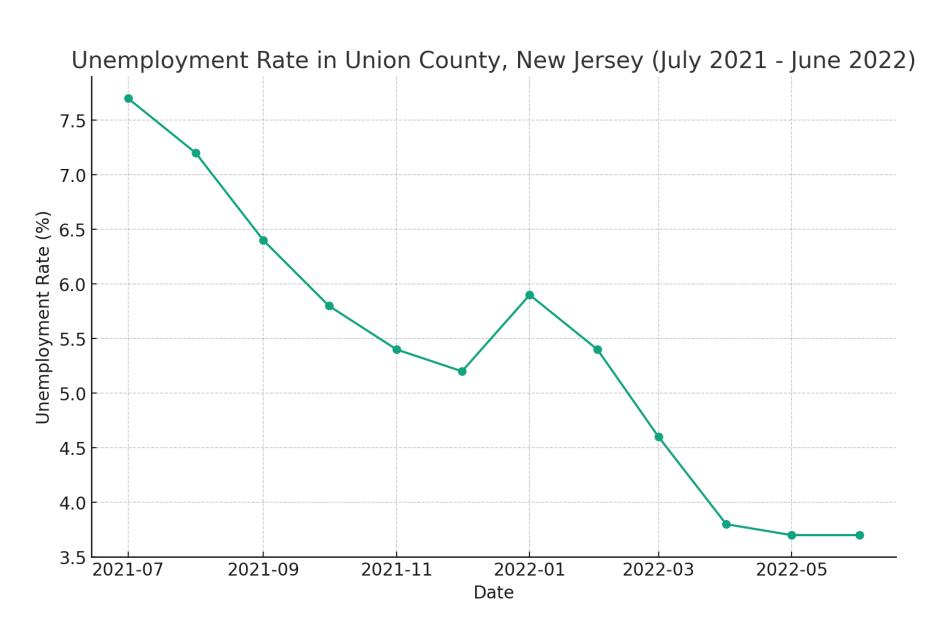


WFNJ GA/SNAP Program Year 2021 Budget Detail



ATTACHMENT B





ATTACHMENT C



