



PY 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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A Service of the Union County Board of County Commissioners

Program Year 2025
(July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026)

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INTRODUCTION

The Union County Workforce Development Board (UCWDB) presents its Program Year 2025 Annual Report, covering July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. The report follows the WIOA Annual Report Checklist issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) in August 2026, presenting the Board's overview, service delivery, and performance and funding metrics in the order the Checklist prescribes.

Program Year 2025 tested the local workforce system. Unemployment in Union County climbed to 6.2% in September 2025, a federal stop order froze adult education funds, WorkFirst New Jersey awards arrived late with new placement and retention mandates, and Certified Nursing Assistant training was temporarily lost from the Eligible Training Provider List. The Board responded by restructuring its \$7,155,579 budget to put roughly 40% into training, securing nearly \$3 million in new State grants for summer youth employment and digital skills, adopting a modern policy and fiscal framework, and certifying its American Job Center.

The year closed with measurable results. NJDOL's official PY25 outcomes place the Board at 90% or better of its negotiated goal on 14 of 15 Title I indicators and at or above goal on 10; median earnings and credential attainment exceeded goals in all three programs, and exiter cohorts grew three- to six-fold over PY24. On August 26, 2026 the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) certified the Board for July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2028.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD OVERVIEW

Leadership and Structure

Workforce development in Union County runs through three bodies working together. The Union County Board of County Commissioners, as Chief Elected Official, appoints the Board, receives the funds and bears the liability. The County administration provides the Board's staff and fiscal agent. The Union County Workforce Development Board, a business-majority board of 30 members appointed under WIOA Section 107, sets the direction of the local workforce system and holds it to account. Board staff sit within the Department of Economic Development.

Leadership

Name	Position
Commissioner Lourdes M. Leon	Commissioner Liaison, Union County Board of County Commissioners
Edward T. Oatman	County Manager, County of Union
Amy C. Wagner	Deputy County Manager and Director, Department of Economic Development
Dr. Bibi Taylor	Director, Union County Department of Finance — Fiscal Agent
Stan Robinson, Jr.	Chairman, Union County Workforce Development Board
Erich Peter	Vice Chairman, Union County Workforce Development Board
Antonio C. Rivera, MSW	Director, Union County Workforce Development Board

Service Delivery System

The Board competitively procures the One-Stop Operator, the provider of career services for adults and dislocated workers, and the provider of youth services, and holds each to account for a different role: the Operator for coordination, and the providers for outcomes.

Role	Point of Contact
One-Stop Operator	Debbie-Ann Anderson, Director, Union County Department of Human Services
Provider of Career Services — Adults and Dislocated Workers	Robert Croom, MPA, Director, Union County American Job Center - Elizabeth: 342 Westminster Avenue, Elizabeth, NJ 07208 - Plainfield: 200 West Second Street, Plainfield, NJ 07060
Provider of Career Services — Youth	Julienne Cherry, President and Chief Executive Officer, United Way of Greater Union County - Rahway (main office): 219 Central Avenue, Rahway, NJ 07065 - Youth One-Stop, Plainfield: 200 West Second Street, Plainfield, NJ 07060

Source: UCWDB New Board Member Handbook, Leadership and Membership and Who to Call; UCWDB public meeting announcements.

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
PROGRAM YEAR 2025

Board Membership

The Board's 2026 membership, appointed by the Union County Board of County Commissioners, is listed below. Members serve staggered terms, and eleven alternates are designated for partner-agency members.

Member	Organization (Title)	Board Role
Stan Robinson, Jr.	SHR Marketing (Owner)	Chairman
Erich Peter	Union County Economic Development Corporation (Director, Training)	Vice Chairman
Richard Capac	Crowne Management (Director)	Secretary
Debbie-Ann Anderson	Union County Department of Human Services (Director)	Member
Caroline Aubrey	The Aubrey Group (Partner)	Member
Paul Belardo	Eastern Atlantic States Carpenters (Council Representative)	Member
Matthew A. Beyerstedt	The Mills at Jersey Gardens (General Manager)	Member
James R. Brady	Block Advisors (President/CEO)	Member
Curry Bucu	RWJBarnabas Health (Director of Human Resources)	Member
Juanito Chiluisa	NJ Department of Labor, Employment Service (Manager)	Member
Craig Coughlin, Jr.	Kean University (Director, Government Affairs and Community Partnerships)	Member
Melynda A. Disla	The Gateway Family YMCA (CEO)	Member
Gloria Durham	QMG Construction (CEO/Owner Operator)	Member
Bernadette Griswold	Community Access Unlimited (Executive Director)	Member
Danielle Johnson	JCT Solutions (Marketing and Social Media Specialist)	Member
Kate Kerpchar	BFI (President and CEO)	Member
Valarie Kerrigan	NJ Department of Labor (Manager)	Member
Antonietta LaVecchia	The UPS Store of Summit (former Manager)	Member
Hilary McCarron	Port Authority of NY & NJ (Manager, Port Policy and Planning)	Member
Timothy McConway	UA Local 475 (Business Agent)	Member
Dr. Margaret McMenamin	UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ (President)	Member
Daryl Palmieri	NJ Department of Education (Superintendent)	Member
Alan Rutan	Rutan Mechanical / NJ HVAC (President)	Member
Gwendolyn Ryan	Union County Vocational-Technical Schools (Superintendent)	Member
Teresa Soto-Vega	Proceed Inc. (Executive Director)	Member
Dr. Kamran Tasharofi	Union County Healthcare Associates (President/Owner)	Member
Morgan Thompson	Prevention Links (CEO)	Member
Joseph Venezia	Colliers Engineering & Design (Geographic Discipline Leader)	Member
Courtney Villani	Villani Bus Company (President)	Member
Roshan White	Plumbers Local 24 (Business Agent)	Member

Source: UCWDB Board Members 2026 roster, updated August 3, 2026.

Governance Roles and Responsibilities

The Strategic Plan 2022–2026 defines the relationship between the governance bodies and the operating entities of the Union County workforce system:

- **Union County Board of County Commissioners (Chief Elected Officials):** appoints Board members, serves as local grant recipient, designates the fiscal agent, approves the MOU with the Board, the Workforce Development Area budget, the multi-year plan and its modifications, and the designation or certification of the American Job Centers and Operator, awards grants and contracts, and oversees the one-stop system jointly with the Board.
- **Union County Workforce Development Board:** sets governance structure, policies and budget; develops the strategic plan; recommends grants and contracts; coordinates workforce activities with economic development; designates or certifies the AJC Operator with the consensus of the Chief Elected Officials; establishes performance standards and procurement standards; reviews performance at least quarterly; conducts risk assessments; and monitors all service contracts.
- **Executive Committee:** acts on behalf of the Board between meetings, oversees development of the Workforce Development Area budget, leads development of the bylaws and the MOU with the Chief Elected Officials, reviews budget and performance reports, and prepares the Annual Report.
- **Fiscal Agent:** under the direction of the Board of County Commissioners, the Union County Department of Finance disburses grant funds for local workforce investment activities.

One-Stop Operator. The Union County Department of Human Services, led by Director Debbie-Ann Anderson, is the competitively selected One-Stop Operator. It coordinates services across all partners in the American Job Center; it does not deliver them. As the department that also supervises the Division of Social Services, it links WIOA services directly with WorkFirst New Jersey (TANF, GA and SNAP). The New Jersey Combined State Plan envisions the One-Stop Operator as "the entity who promotes an integrated, customer-focused delivery system that maximizes each partner's strength and reduces redundancies," with the roles to provide an integrated delivery system, ensure the hardest-to-serve populations are prioritized, and coordinate service delivery among partners, among physical and electronic sites, and across the local area. The Operator's responsibilities include maintaining a common intake system among core partners; managing hours of operation, technology resources and daily operations in coordination with the fiscal agent; managing partner responsibilities under the MOU and services to individuals and businesses; providing basic services such as orientations, labor market information and resource rooms; submitting annual staffing plans and operational budgets; meeting EEO, complaint and accessibility requirements; implementing Board policies; and reporting to the Board on operations, performance accountability and continuous improvement. Day-to-day, the Operator's work is led by Assistant Director Melissa Lespinasse and Special Projects Coordinator Jeffrey Jackson of the Department of Human Services, who convene the AJC Operator's Committee of core and community partners; the Committee met eight times during PY25.

Provider of Career Services — Adults and Dislocated Workers. The Union County American Job Center, directed by Robert Croom, MPA, delivers the three categories of career services defined in WIOA Section 134(c)(2) — basic career services, individualized career services, and follow-up services — to adults, dislocated workers and WFNJ participants, and determines, after assessment and career planning, when a participant needs training services. It ensures that training is delivered through providers on the New Jersey Eligible Training Provider List, using Individual Training Accounts or training contracts, consistent with informed customer choice and in-demand occupations. The Department of Human Services holds this role and the Operator role under two separate agreements led by different officials, and, as federal law requires where one organization performs more than one function, a written agreement with the Board and the Chief Elected Official describes how the functions are kept apart.

Provider of Career Services — Youth. United Way of Greater Union County, led by President and Chief Executive Officer Julianne Cherry, delivers WIOA youth services to in-school and out-of-school youth under

a separately procured agreement, and Union County Vocational-Technical Schools provides affiliate out-of-school youth services through the Simon Youth Academy.

Source: UCWDB Strategic Plan 2022–2026, Section II (One-Stop Career Center Operations) and Section III (Local Workforce Development Board Structure and Functions), quoting the New Jersey Combined State Plan.

The Executive Committee acts for the Board between meetings, and the ad hoc AI Strategy Subcommittee, created by the Board, advises the Board on artificial intelligence and the workforce. The four standing committees — American Job Center Partners, Adult Education and Literacy, Disabilities, and Youth — are under review as part of the governance restructuring led by Chairman Robinson.

New Board Member Handbook

The governance work of PY25 — the revised MOU with the Board of County Commissioners, the Board Governance and Conflict of Interest policies in the new Policies and Procedures Manual, and the SETC recertification — is brought together in a new edition of the New Board Member Handbook, the first full rewrite since the 2014 member handbook of the former Union County Workforce Investment Board. Staff completed it in September 2026 for members joining in Program Year 2026, together with a new-member orientation presentation.

The 37-page handbook is organized in six parts: Welcome, Your Role, How the Board Is Built, The Board and the County, What Applies to You Personally, and The Work Itself. It turns the Board's fourteen statutory functions into five member responsibilities — set the direction, understand the labor market, build and connect the system, choose who delivers, and watch the money and the results — and devotes equal attention to what members are not responsible for, such as directing staff, intervening in individual cases or acting for the Board alone. It also covers a new member's first ninety days, the Open Public Meetings Act and conflict-of-interest disclosure, and questions to ask when budget and performance reports are presented. By design, it carries only the principles that do not change from year to year and directs members to the Board's website for the current roster, committees, meeting schedule, budgets and policies, so that it does not go out of date.

Five governing documents are attached: the Board's bylaws, the 2026 MOU with the Board of County Commissioners, the Board Governance Policy, the Conflict of Interest Policy, and an organizational chart showing supervisory channels and the firewalls between the Board, the County and service providers.

Source: UCWDB New Board Member Handbook, Program Year 2026 (September 2026), with Attachments A–E; UCWIB Member Handbook (2014).

Mission and Core Values

Mission. The Union County Workforce Development Board leads the county's public workforce system under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and WorkFirst New Jersey. The Board connects residents — adults, dislocated workers, youth ages 16 to 24, and recipients of TANF, General Assistance and SNAP, with priority for those facing barriers to employment — to training and careers, and connects employers to the skilled talent they need.

The Board's core values, carried forward from the Strategic Plan 2022–2026 and aligned with the New Jersey Combined State Plan, guide how it operates, makes decisions, and engages with stakeholders:

- **Career Pathways and Credentials:** training tied to industry-recognized credentials in healthcare, transportation and logistics, and manufacturing.
- **Integrated Service Delivery:** co-enrollment across WIOA, WorkFirst New Jersey and adult education through a single AJC system operated by the County Department of Human Services.
- **Accountability:** decisions guided by performance data, monitoring, and a formally adopted policy and fiscal framework.

- **Access:** services where residents are — the Elizabeth and Plainfield AJCs, public libraries, and community sites in the county's communities of opportunity.
- **Employer and Labor Partnership:** work-based learning, on-the-job training and apprenticeship designed with employers and the building trades.

Vision

A Union County where every resident has a real pathway to a family-sustaining career, and every employer can find the skilled workforce it needs to grow.

In PY25 the Board advanced this vision through two planning documents: its Two-Year Local Plan Modification for Program Years 2024–2027, and the 2026 update of the Northern New Jersey Regional Plan in which Union County participates. Both are described below.

Alignment with the State Vision

The Board's Strategic Plan 2022–2026, and the Two-Year Plan Modification that updates it, are anchored in the vision of the New Jersey Combined State Plan: "to reestablish New Jersey as an economic and innovation leader, as a place where diverse talent, companies, and ideas flourish, where real pathways exist to the middle class, where all residents can prosper, and where environmental stewardship, fiscal prudence, and high labor standards are promoted and encouraged ... to unlock long-term, resilient economic growth, we must create a New Jersey economy that is both stronger and fairer." The Union County Board of County Commissioners and the UCWDB share that perspective and direct WIOA resources toward it.

The local plan adopts the State's primary workforce goals and the three strategies of the State Jobs and Economic Development Council — expand access to opportunity, train individuals for in-demand jobs, and match talent to jobs — and aligns the Board's priority sectors with the State's growth industries. The plan's vision for the Union County American Job Centers, drawn from USDOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter 4-15, is a comprehensive, accessible, high-quality system that increases access to employment, education, training and support services, particularly for individuals with barriers to employment, and gives employers access to skilled workers.

Two-Year Local Plan Modification

WIOA Section 108 requires each local board to review its four-year plan at the midpoint and modify it to reflect changes in labor market and economic conditions and other factors affecting implementation. On August 19, 2025, the SETC directed every local board to submit a Two-Year Plan Modification addressing five components: current labor market conditions, stakeholder engagement, performance outcomes, integration of new policies and initiatives, and alignment with State goals. The Board's modification, dated December 2025, was released for a 30-day public comment period under WIOA Section 108(d), adopted on January 28, 2026, and submitted to the SETC and NJDOL. It updates the Strategic Plan 2022–2026 without replacing its vision, mission or priority sectors.

1. Labor Market Conditions

The modification's labor market assessment, built on NJDOL LAUS, QCEW and 2022–2032 projections, the American Community Survey and job-posting data, describes a county with a labor force of about 302,500 and a participation rate of 70.0%, above the State's 66.9%, but with unemployment that had risen to 6.0%. The economy is defined by churn rather than simple growth or decline: the county's largest employer was cutting administrative positions while hiring aggressively for advanced manufacturing. Healthcare and social assistance leads employment with more than 35,000 jobs, followed by retail, administrative services, professional and technical services, and transportation and logistics (about 15,000 each). The fastest-growing occupations through 2032 are nurse practitioners (+53.8%), medical and health services managers

(+29.3%), home health aides (+21.9%) and software developers (+19.3%). Employers report persistent gaps in digital literacy, foundational math and English, healthcare credentials and technical certifications, and about 14% of residents lack a high school diploma.

Response: the Board shifted from general career pathways to a Rapid Response and Reskilling framework that moves displaced administrative and professional workers into high-demand technical roles, and it set five strategic recommendations: strengthen healthcare career pathways, including bridge programs and a youth pipeline; address foundational skills gaps through integrated education and training with Title II partners and digital literacy bootcamps; expand on-the-job and incumbent worker training; expand services for priority populations, including youth work experience and coordination with DVRS and CBVI; and improve data quality and follow-up.

2. Stakeholder Engagement

The Board gathers stakeholder input through its four standing committees — Youth, Disabilities, Adult Education and Literacy, and AJC Partners — together with focus groups of WorkFirst New Jersey partners, disability advocates, adult education providers and youth participants, surveys of participants and employers, and negotiation of the MOU and Infrastructure Funding Agreement with more than 30 partners. The review found strong alignment with the State's engagement framework and documented cases where partner input shaped Board decisions, such as the development of integrated education and training with UCNJ, Workforce Advantage and the Plainfield Public Library, and a youth-driven shift toward mental health support and non-traditional work experience.

Response: the modification calls for a formal employer advisory structure so that industry partners validate training curricula, a regular stakeholder review of performance data, a formal transition services partnership, and stronger engagement of labor representatives and community-based organizations.

3. Performance Outcomes

A review of Program Years 2022–2024 found consistent strength in median earnings and measurable skill gains for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants and sustained Wagner-Peyser performance, alongside two problems: Youth outcomes that fell sharply in PY2023, especially credential attainment, and Adult employment rates that slipped below goal in PY2024 (62.96% in the 2nd quarter and 56.34% in the 4th), pointing to job retention.

Response: four performance priorities — Youth program remediation, employment retention across all Title I programs with a focus on the 4th quarter, data quality and documentation ahead of the State's case-management modernization, and maintaining earnings and skill-gain results. The resolution adopting the modification requires quarterly implementation reports to the Board and its committees, with corrective action triggered at 90% of any performance target. PY25 results show progress on both problems: Youth credential attainment reached 77.3% against a 53.7% goal, and Adult 2nd-quarter employment rose to 64.3%.

4. Integration of New Policies and Initiatives

The modification integrates 32 NJDOL policies and guidance documents issued since the Strategic Plan's adoption, moving the local system from voluntary coordination to mandatory integration. Its five implementation priorities are:

- **Service integration and co-enrollment (immediate):** mandatory RESEA and Title I co-enrollment under WD-PY24-8, co-enrollment targets for RESEA, WFNJ and Title II, shared service plans, and intake staff training by the second quarter of PY25.
- **Functional alignment (PY25 Q1–Q2):** reorganizing the One-Stop into functional teams under WD-PY23-3 — Welcome and Intake, Assessment, Career Planning, Skills Development and Transition

Success — with staff assigned across funding streams, a cross-training calendar, and an updated MOU and IFA.

- **Policy framework (PY25 Q2):** updated eligibility policies reflecting the expanded self-attestation in WD-PY24-11, a revised ITA policy under WD-PY25-6.1, supportive services and follow-up policies, and the 47-plus local policies required by WD-PY25-8.
- **Performance accountability (ongoing):** sanctions awareness under WD-PY24-1, performance improvement plan triggers, stronger documentation of measurable skill gains — now assessed for sanctions for the first time — and quarterly performance review by the Board and its committees.
- **Fiscal compliance (PY25 Q1):** budget modification procedures under WD-PY24-10.1, equipment and inventory policies, records retention under 2 CFR 200.334, and profit and fixed-fee rules for subrecipients under WD-PY25-1.

Most of these commitments were carried out within PY25: the Board adopted 15 Title I policies in January 2026 and placed its Policies and Procedures Manual into interim effect in April 2026, and the AJC advanced functional teams, universal intake and co-enrollment across WIOA, WorkFirst New Jersey and adult education.

5. Alignment with State Goals

The modification keeps the local plan anchored in the Governor's vision for a stronger and fairer New Jersey and the State's primary workforce goals, adopts the Jobs and Economic Opportunity Council strategies, and aligns five priority sectors — healthcare and social assistance; transportation, distribution and logistics; professional, scientific and technical services; advanced manufacturing; and construction — with the State's growth industries. It identifies the designation of the County Department of Human Services as One-Stop Operator as a structural advantage, linking workforce services directly to TANF, General Assistance and SNAP.

Source: UCWDB Two-Year Plan Modification, December 2025, and the Board's adopting resolution (January 28, 2026).

Northern New Jersey Regional Plan

Union County is one of eight local workforce areas in the Northern New Jersey planning region defined by NJDOL — Bergen, Essex, Newark, Hudson/Jersey City, Passaic, Union, Greater Raritan (Somerset and Hunterdon) and Morris/Sussex/Warren — covering ten counties, more than half of the State's population and 53% of its private-sector wages. The region's WIOA Regional Plan, first adopted March 31, 2023, was updated on March 15, 2026. The Union County Board took part in drafting the plan, integrated its strategies into the local plan and its modification, and posted the plan on its website for the 30-day public comment period that regional planning requires.

Regional vision. To align and connect successful regional strategies and organizations so that individuals and industries become and remain competitive, inventive and innovative, and to create an inclusive regional workforce system that adapts to the needs of businesses and residents and collaborates with educational institutions and community partners.

Regional goals and priorities. The plan seeks a public workforce system that is more valuable and easier to access; equitable access to the information, training and supports needed for quality employment; fast, efficient hiring for employers offering quality jobs; and a demand-driven system aligned with employer needs. Its strategic priorities include expanded outreach and support services in overburdened communities, career pathways for the working poor, co-enrollment and functional alignment across One-Stop partners, industry-valued credentials and apprenticeships, deeper business partnerships through the State's Industry Partnerships, shared technology, professional development for workforce staff, and stronger local governance through a regional workforce team. The region's guiding theme is to plan regionally and spend locally.

The 2026 Regional Update

North Jersey Partners, the nonprofit consortium that drafted the 2023 plan, no longer exists, but the region's boards have continued their collaboration without interruption. The 2026 update notes that PY2024 regional results were strong in measurable skill gains and median earnings, with room to grow in credential attainment and employment after exit, and concentrates the region's work in three areas:

- **Leveraging resources:** staff participation in State and national artificial intelligence initiatives; sharing a partner-grantee referral MOU and a one-page Co-enrollment Matrix across the region as best practices; the shift from encouraged to required co-enrollment and to functional teams in the One-Stop centers; the Engage by Cell mobile platform for outreach to youth, new unemployment claimants, WorkFirst New Jersey participants and RESEA customers; and the expansion of WorkFirst New Jersey career services beginning in early 2026.
- **Regional business trends:** healthcare accounts for an estimated 25% to 30% of job postings across the region, while home health aide, CNA and patient care roles are hard to fill and retain, calling for career pathways with wage steps; film and television production is growing into a "Hollywood East" corridor that needs apprenticeship pipelines; employer-funded college programs in manufacturing and information technology, such as a six-month aseptic manufacturing track with starting salaries near \$60,000, are placing completers directly into careers; and the region is examining why job growth (1.0% from 2019 to 2024, against 4.4% nationally) and labor force participation (down from 67.2% to 64.9%) have lagged.
- **Policy development and compliance:** implementing the 32 new or updated NJDOL policies, with priority on mandatory co-enrollment, functional alignment, expanded self-attestation, ITA revisions, the 47-plus required local policies and written fiscal procedures, and on measurable skill gains, now subject to sanctions. By the end of PY25 the boards committed to shared practices for co-enrollment data entry in AOSOS, functional team documentation and cross-training, updated local policies, tighter vendor and fiscal monitoring, and cross-area employer engagement.

The region also commits to sector coordination in healthcare, transportation and logistics, advanced manufacturing and construction; coordinated services for veterans, individuals with disabilities, English language learners, justice-involved individuals and opportunity youth; data quality and preparation for the State's new case-management system; and continued work through the Garden State Employment and Training Association.

How the Regional Plan Is Carried Out Locally

The regional update and the Board's Two-Year Plan Modification were developed in the same period and share one agenda. The same 32 NJDOL policies, mandatory co-enrollment, functional teams and 47-plus required local policies drive both, and in PY25 the Board carried them out locally through the 15 Title I policies, the Policies and Procedures Manual and the AJC's functional-team restructuring. Union County's priority sectors match the region's, and the region's concern with entry-level healthcare retention is reflected in the Board's successful effort to restore CNA training to the Eligible Training Provider List. The Board's AI Strategy Subcommittee and Introduction to AI course parallel the region's AI initiatives, and its Digital Equity Training and Adult Literacy Innovations consortia put the regional priority for overburdened communities and English language learners into practice.

Source: North Jersey Partners WIOA Regional Plan, March 31, 2023, updated March 15, 2026 (Sections I and IV).

SETC Certification

Current status: Certified. On August 26, 2026, the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission approved the certification of the Union County Workforce Development Board under WIOA Section 107(c)(2) and 20 CFR 679.320, valid July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2028. The SETC's review

covered board composition, governance structure, bylaws, strategic planning and performance, and found that the Board met and exceeded the established criteria.

Throughout PY25 the Board operated under its 2024–2026 certification while completing the requirements for recertification:

- Adopted the Two-Year Local Plan Modification (January 28, 2026).
- Adopted a revised Memorandum of Understanding with the Union County Board of County Commissioners defining each body's WIOA roles for a two-year term (April 22, 2026).
- Certified the Union County AJC for PY25 against the SETC Quality Benchmarking Tool (April 22, 2026).
- Authorized and submitted the Application for Local WDB Certification 2026–2028 and Confirmation of Interest in Maintaining Status by May 15, 2026.

Source: SETC certification approval letter dated August 26, 2026; Board resolutions of January 28 and April 22, 2026.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SIGNIFICANT RESOLUTIONS

Between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026, the Board and its Executive Committee adopted 26 resolutions. The most significant are summarized below.

Program Year 2025 Budget

On July 23, 2025, before WorkFirst New Jersey funds were awarded, the Board adopted a temporary PY25 budget of \$4,941,910 based on the WIOA Notices of Award to keep services running. On October 15, 2025, it adopted the full \$7,155,579 budget adding the FY26 WFNJ TANF (\$1,500,000) and SNAP (\$713,669) awards and their performance goals. On December 10, 2025, it amended the budget to restructure participant services — eliminating a general work activities line and directing \$1,806,415 to Individual Training Accounts, \$1,044,153 to work-based learning and training, \$250,000 to supportive services, and \$521,001 to youth career services and work experience.

Two-Year Local Plan Modification

On January 28, 2026, the Board adopted the Two-Year Plan Modification for Program Years 2024–2027 and authorized its submission to the SETC and NJDOL, committing to mandatory co-enrollment, functional alignment, required local policies, Youth corrective action and retention services, and quarterly implementation reports to the Board. See Two-Year Local Plan Modification, above.

WIOA Title I Policies

On January 28, 2026, the Board adopted fifteen WIOA Title I policies governing the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs. The policies took effect on adoption, replaced prior local policies on the same subjects, are reviewed annually, and were distributed to subrecipients, service providers and American Job Center partners. The policies adopted are:

- Supportive Services and Needs-Related Payments Policy
- Follow-Up Services Policy
- Priority of Service Policy
- Confidentiality and Data Security Policy
- Youth Work Experience and Incentive Payments Policy
- Conflict of Interest in Procurement Policy
- American Job Center Certification Policy

- Individual Training Accounts Policy
- Work-Based Learning Policy
- On-the-Job Training Policy
- Incumbent Worker Training Policy
- Youth Requiring Additional Assistance Eligibility Policy
- Selective Service Registration Policy
- Transitional Jobs Policy
- Unified Complaint Resolution Policy

Policies and Procedures Manual

On April 22, 2026, the Board received the Director's proposed Policies and Procedures Manual, placed it into interim effect that day, and opened a review period for Board members, subrecipients and partners through July 15, 2026. No comments or amendments were received, and on July 29, 2026 the Board formally adopted the manual without amendment. The adopted manual contains 46 policies and procedures in three series; the Conflict of Interest Policy, omitted from the April list by clerical error, was added at adoption.

Program Administration and Subrecipient Management

- Subrecipient Selection Policy
- Subrecipient Determination Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Subaward Agreement Policy
- Monitoring Plan Policy
- Corrective Action Policy
- Performance Accountability Policy
- Data Integrity Policy
- Records Retention Policy
- Board Governance Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Incident Reporting Policy
- Personnel and Staffing Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy

Fiscal Management and Compliance

- Internal Controls Policy
- Accounting System Policy
- Cash Management Policy
- Budget Management Policy
- Allowable Costs Policy
- Cost Allocation Policy
- Program Income Policy
- Procurement Policy (Revised)

- Financial Reporting Policy (Revised)
- Audit Requirements Policy
- Closeout Policy
- Credit Card Policy
- Obligation and De-obligation Policy
- Records Retention Policy (Fiscal)
- Stand-In Costs Policy
- Cost Sharing and Match Policy
- Donations and Contributions Policy
- Travel and Training Policy
- Supplies Policy
- Equipment Inventory Policy
- Safeguards for Assets Policy
- Disposition Procedures
- Whistleblower Protection Policy

Monitoring Procedures

- Risk-Based Monitoring Framework
- Pre-Monitoring Procedures
- On-Site Monitoring Procedures
- Desk Review Procedures
- Monitoring Report Standards
- Corrective Action Resolution
- Technical Assistance Procedures
- Monitoring Tool Governance
- Youth Monitoring Procedures

Revised Memorandum of Understanding with the County Commissioners

The Board adopted a revised MOU with the Union County Board of County Commissioners defining each body's roles and responsibilities under WIOA, authorized the Chairperson to execute it upon the Commissioners' concurrence, and set a two-year term.

AJC Certification and SETC Recertification

The Board certified the Union County American Job Center — the Elizabeth and Plainfield sites — for PY25 under WIOA Section 121 and 20 CFR 678.800, based on its Evaluation Committee's review, and authorized submission of the Application for Local WDB Certification 2026–2028 to the SETC by May 15, 2026. The SETC approved the Board's certification on August 26, 2026.

Out-of-School Youth Services Contract

After a competitive RFP that drew two proposals, the Board awarded Union County Vocational-Technical Schools a contract of up to \$333,000 for affiliate AJC out-of-school youth services from September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2026. The proposal averaged 96 of 100 points and builds on UCVTS's Simon Youth Academy at The Mills at Jersey Gardens, which has maintained a 100% graduation rate for eligible students since 2018 and offers vocational rotations in cosmetology, HVAC, auto mechanics and graphic design.

Continuity of American Job Center Services

The Board extended the County Department of Human Services agreements as AJC Operator (up to \$25,000 for July–September 2025, then \$100,000 for October 2025–September 2026) and as Provider of Career Services (\$1,700,000 in WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, TANF and SNAP funds for October 2025–September 2026), and authorized the close-out of UCNJ's affiliate AJC career services agreement under 2 CFR 200.344.

WIOA Youth Services

The Board exercised its option to extend United Way of Greater Union County's WIOA youth services contract for calendar year 2026, in an amount not to exceed \$600,000.

Digital Equity Training Partner Awards

The Board awarded \$850,000 in Digital Equity Training agreements through May 31, 2026 — Plainfield Public Library \$202,500, UCNJ \$202,500, the Department of Human Services/AJC \$102,500, and United Way of Greater Union County \$342,500, including \$240,000 for consortium supportive services — funded by the Board's \$1,000,000 NJDOL WFNJ State Appropriation award.

WorkFirst New Jersey Work-Based Learning Procurement

To meet the FY26 WFNJ placement and retention mandates, the Board authorized an RFP for sub-recipients to provide on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, apprenticeships and supportive services to TANF and SNAP participants. After reviewing the proposals received under the February 18, 2026 RFP, the Board rejected all of them and authorized a revised RFP focused on Transitional Jobs.

Sub-Recipient Monitoring Services

The Board authorized an RFP for independent sub-recipient monitoring services covering AOSOS and NJDOL-system compliance, data entry and data validation, participant files, and performance reporting for WIOA and WFNJ programs.

Performance Data and Governance Support

The Board renewed its FutureWorks BI subscription (\$12,971) for performance reporting, awarded a one-year general counsel contract to Weber Dowd Law, LLC after an RFQ, not to exceed \$15,000, and set its 2026 regular meeting schedule with public notice under WIOA Section 107(e) and the Open Public Meetings Act.

Source: UCWDB adopted resolutions and Resolution Tracker 2013–2026.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Evaluation and Accountability

The Board holds its providers to measurable results, backs every expenditure with adopted policy and fiscal controls, and moves resources toward training that leads to employment. In PY25 that work took six forms.

Board Oversight of Performance and Budget at Every Meeting

Reviewing performance and spending is one of the Board's core oversight duties, and in PY25 both were standing items on the agenda of every full Board meeting. At each meeting the Director presented a Budget and Expense Report, drawn from the State's IGS expenditure system, showing each grant's budget, disbursements, unexpended balance and utilization rate for both open program years, and, whenever current data were available, a Performance Report drawn from FutureWorks BI, comparing actual results on

each WIOA indicator with the negotiated goal. Because Adult and Dislocated Worker services are delivered by one provider and Youth services by another, each program is reported separately against its own goals, cohort and prior-year results, so that one provider's results are never averaged into another's. The AJC, United Way of Greater Union County and the Title II consortium also reported at each meeting, and the Executive Committee, which the Strategic Plan charges with reviewing budget and performance reports, acted for the Board between meetings.

Meeting	Budget and Expense Report	Performance Report
July 23, 2025	PY25 temporary budget and Q1 staffing allocations; expenditures through June 30, 2025; \$2 million Summer Youth award	FutureWorks performance and budget indicators closing PY24; AJC service counts
October 15, 2025	Full PY25 budget with the new \$2.2 million FY26 WFNJ award; impact of the federal shutdown and the State's delayed Notices of Award	New WFNJ standards reviewed: 200 participants, 80% placement, 60% retention at six months; PY25 FutureWorks data not yet available
December 10, 2025	Three program years managed at once (PY23 closed, PY24 midway, PY25 begun), about \$9 million received; budget amended toward ITAs and work-based learning	AJC highlights on training completions, WFNJ participation, adult literacy, Employment Service and DVRS activity; student-intern data visualizations
January 28, 2026	PY24: \$8.16 million, 84% disbursed; PY25: \$8.16 million including Digital Equity, 1% disbursed as the State directed PY24 funds be spent first	PY25 to date: Adult and Dislocated Worker each met 3 of 5 goals, with median earnings and credentials above goal; AJC delivered 572 orientations, 167 assessments and 31 completed trainings from July–December 2025
April 22, 2026	Through February 2026: PY24 WIOA 84% spent with \$881,000 remaining; PY25 WIOA 17% (\$857,000 of \$4.94 million); WFNJ and Digital Equity 11%	PY25 to date: Dislocated Worker met all 5 goals; Adult met 3 of 5, with 2nd- and 4th-quarter employment below goal; PY24 final results also reviewed
July 29, 2026 (year-end review)	IGX June 2026: all PY24 Title I grants 100% expended; PY25 \$2.56 million expended with 45.9% committed; \$7.54 million committed across a \$11.95 million, 10-grant portfolio	PY25 year-end: Adult 3 of 5 goals met; Dislocated Worker 4 of 5 met and all 5 at 90% or better; Youth 4 of 5 at 90% or better; exiter cohorts 3.1 to 6.6 times PY24

Sources: UCWDB meeting minutes and Director's presentations, July 23, 2025 through July 29, 2026; FutureWorks BI performance reports; IGX Budget and Expense Reports.

This regular review shaped Board action during the year. Low early spending on the PY24 grants led the Board to monitor them at every meeting until all three closed fully spent. Adult employment results below goal became the focus of the retention strategy in the Two-Year Plan Modification. Late WFNJ awards and the new placement mandates led the Board to restructure the budget toward training and work-based learning, and April's data drove the Board's attention to Adult Literacy Innovations spending, which reached 99% committed by year-end.

Policy Framework

The Board rebuilt its local policy framework in PY25. It adopted fifteen WIOA Title I policies in January 2026 covering eligibility-related services, training, work-based learning, youth services, data security, procurement and customer complaints, and in April 2026 placed a comprehensive Policies and Procedures Manual for program administration, fiscal management and monitoring into interim effect, adopting it formally on July 29, 2026. Both sets of policies are listed in Highlights of Significant Resolutions.

American Job Center Certification

The Board's Evaluation Committee reviewed the Elizabeth and Plainfield AJCs for PY25 against the SETC Quality Benchmarking Tool's seven criteria, including accessibility under WIOA Section 188, and the Board certified the AJC on April 22, 2026. The review noted stronger partner integration, front-line cross-training

and co-location between the AJC and the Division of Social Services, and the AJC Operator advanced standardized customer surveys and universal intake procedures across partners.

Fiscal Integrity

Staff introduced an enhanced voucher review that records each finding and its dollar impact in a standard log, giving staff and vendors a clear trail for identifying patterns. All three PY24 Title I grants closed at 100% expenditure with no federal funds lapsed.

Fiscal Standard Operating Procedures

In PY25, Board staff and County Finance wrote down the Board's core fiscal processes as standard operating procedures, so that monthly reporting to NJDOL and the review of every invoice follow the same documented, repeatable steps whoever performs them. The procedures were provided to NJDOL's Office of Internal Audit for its 2026 fiscal monitoring review.

- **Monthly Local Area Report to NJDOL:** sets out how the monthly expenditure report is prepared and submitted through the State's IGX system. Staff generate five Edmunds financial reports for each open program year, reconcile them against one another (encumbrances, requisitions, balances and audit-trail totals), and review the transaction audit trail for transfers, voids, cross-grant charges and prior-period payroll. The SOP also covers preparing supporting schedules, consolidating them into final reconciliation schedules, entering and re-checking the data in IGX, and signing the certification letter. It handles overlapping program years, WorkFirst New Jersey's October–September cycle and special grants such as the Summer Youth program and Digital Equity Training, and it adds close-out monitoring for grants near the end of their performance period. A second reviewer must approve every submission, and a chart-of-accounts appendix maps each grant for the current program years. The procedure was comprehensively revised in February 2026.
- **Supporting schedule procedures:** companion procedures for each schedule behind the monthly report: salary and fringe benefits, cash disbursement analysis, accrual expenses, the reconciliation schedule, contract payables, and the monthly disbursements schedule attached to the IGX expenditure report.
- **Invoice Processing and Backup Documentation:** applies to Board staff, subrecipients and vendors across WIOA Title I, WorkFirst New Jersey and SNAP Employment and Training. Every invoice must include a master invoice summary and a separate package for each cost category, with a written narrative and full backup showing that each cost is allowable, allocable and reasonable under 2 CFR 200.403–405. The SOP sets specific requirements for salaries, fringe benefits, youth work experience (including tracking of the 20% minimum), supportive services, youth program elements, supplies, equipment, rent, Individual Training Accounts and indirect costs. It also establishes a ten-step review with separation of duties between reviewer and approver; invoices due by the 15th of each month with an updated monthly budget tracker; a flag on any budget category more than 10% off target; and no transfers between Adult, In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth accounts without a contract amendment. Its timelines are payment of complete invoices within 30 days, return of incomplete packages within three business days, notice of questioned costs within ten, and escalation to the Director at fifteen. Version 7 was issued in May 2026.

AJC Network Assessment and Customer Feedback

In PY25 the One-Stop Operator examined how the AJC network works from the customer's side. It surveyed 15 partner organizations on the services they provide; ran a two-part Mock AJC simulation in July and September 2025 in which partner staff role-played customers from the front door through referral; and held working sessions on intake and assessment, functional teams, customer flow and referrals. The resulting

AJC Network Assessment, presented to partners in December 2025, found a broad network of services held back by inconsistent triage, no standard referral process, partner data systems that do not share information, and uneven follow-up. Its recommendations became the Operator's work plan for the rest of the year, described under Innovations and Improvements.

The Operator also standardized the network's customer satisfaction survey. Of 118 Adult and Dislocated Worker customers surveyed in the first half of 2026, 86.4% rated their experience good or excellent (86.1% of adults and 86.6% of dislocated workers), above the network's standard of 85%. Lower-rated responses are reviewed for recurring concerns, and the Operator drafted integrated performance measures for placement, retention, credential documentation, referral follow-through and employer satisfaction to track the network as a whole.

Youth Provider Data Quality

The Two-Year Plan Modification named data quality and documentation as a performance priority, and United Way of Greater Union County made it a focus of PY25. When the work began, many youth records in AOSOS held little usable information. United Way staff reviewed hundreds of participant profiles, brought case notes and service records up to date, corrected funding status so eligible youth were properly funded, and documented the link from each youth's assessment and Individual Service Strategy to the services, skill gains, credentials, placement and follow-up that resulted. Staff joined GSETA calls and technical-assistance sessions with NJDOL and established an ongoing quality-review process. Complete documentation matters: Youth measurable skill gains, which appeared as 1 of 5 records in the FutureWorks data presented to the Board in July 2026, stood at 38 of 55 in NJDOL's official PY25 results once the full cohort was recorded.

Oversight of Providers

The Board conducts risk-based subrecipient and fiscal monitoring of its service providers under the M-Series procedures, issued a Request for Proposals for independent sub-recipient monitoring services covering AOSOS data validation, participant files and performance reporting, and participated in NJDOL and SETC review activities during the year.

Deploying Resources for Impact

In December 2025 the Board restructured the participant services portion of its PY25 budget, eliminating a general work activities line and directing \$1,806,415 to Individual Training Accounts and \$1,044,153 to work-based learning and training — together \$2.85 million, about 40% of the budget. The Board also extended its career services, operator and youth provider agreements to keep services continuous and awarded the out-of-school youth contract to UCVTS after a competitive process. The Board's significant actions are summarized in Highlights of Significant Resolutions.

External Environment Snapshot

Union County's labor market in PY25 was volatile. Unemployment rose from 6.0% in July 2025 to a peak of 6.2% in September, eased to 4.7% by December, rose again to 5.5% in February 2026, and reached its low of 4.2% in April before ending the program year at 4.6% in June 2026. The number of unemployed residents fell from 18,592 in September 2025 to 14,129 in June 2026, a decline of about 4,460 people, while the labor force held steady at roughly 301,000 to 307,000. The county's rate remained above the New Jersey and national rates in every month of the year.

Month	Labor Force	Unemployed	Union County	New Jersey	United States
July 2025	302,903	18,149	6.0%	5.9%	4.6%
August 2025	300,921	18,300	6.1%	5.8%	4.5%

UNION COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
PROGRAM YEAR 2025

Month	Labor Force	Unemployed	Union County	New Jersey	United States
September 2025	301,230	18,592	6.2%	5.7%	4.3%
October 2025	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
November 2025	305,413	15,330	5.0%	4.7%	4.3%
December 2025	302,735	14,264	4.7%	4.5%	4.1%
January 2026	303,466	15,267	5.0%	4.9%	4.7%
February 2026	305,436	16,700	5.5%	5.3%	4.7%
March 2026	306,887	15,218	5.0%	4.7%	4.3%
April 2026	306,252	12,982	4.2%	4.1%	4.0%
May 2026	306,441	13,515	4.4%	4.2%	4.1%
June 2026	306,466	14,129	4.6%	4.4%	4.4%

Sources: Union County and New Jersey — NJDOL Office of Research and Information, Labor Force Estimates by Area (Local Area Unemployment Statistics), 2025 Benchmark, not seasonally adjusted. United States — U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (LNU04000000), not seasonally adjusted. Retrieved September 23, 2026. No LAUS estimates were produced for October 2025 because of the federal government shutdown.

A churn economy. The Two-Year Plan Modification describes a local economy defined by churn rather than simple growth or contraction: the county's largest employer was cutting administrative roles while aggressively hiring for advanced manufacturing. Displaced professional and administrative workers need reskilling into technical roles, not only job placement, which shaped the Board's Rapid Response and Reskilling framework and its shift of funds into training.

Priority industries. Healthcare and social assistance remains the county's largest sector, with more than 35,000 jobs. Transportation, distribution and logistics benefits from the county's position at Port Newark-Elizabeth; pharmaceutical and advanced manufacturing anchors the county's role in New Jersey's life sciences cluster; and technology skills are increasingly required across all sectors.

Growth sectors. NJDOL's February 2026 profile of Union County shows health care and social assistance as the largest private employer, with 35,125 jobs at 3,114 establishments in 2024, followed by retail trade (25,097), administrative and waste services (15,867), professional and technical services (15,456) and accommodation and food services (15,357). From 2018 to 2024, employment grew fastest in information (61.2%), educational services (26.3%) and transportation and warehousing (26.1%), and health care and social assistance added 11.3%, while retail trade fell 11.1%. NJDOL's 2022–2032 projections point the same way: transportation and material moving occupations are expected to add the most jobs in the county, followed by healthcare support and healthcare practitioners. Those are the fields in which the Board concentrated its PY25 training investment.

Projected Employment Growth by Occupational Group, Union County, 2022–2032 (Top 5)

Occupational Group	2022	2032	Change	% Change
Transportation and Material Moving	31,600	34,450	2,850	9.0%
Healthcare Support	10,750	12,500	1,750	16.3%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	13,450	14,950	1,500	11.2%
Management	18,400	19,400	1,000	5.4%
Computer and Mathematical	8,900	9,850	950	10.6%

Source: NJDOL Division of Economic and Demographic Research, Union County profile, February 2026 (2024 industry employment; 2022–2032 occupational employment projections).

What employers are posting. NJDOL job-posting data for February through August 2026 show where Union County employers were hiring. Manufacturing led all industries with 717 postings, followed by administrative and support services (691) and health care and social assistance (635). Registered nurses

were the most-posted occupation (206), and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers ranked third (120), the occupation served by Commercial Driver's License training, the Board's largest Individual Training Account program in PY25. Merck & Co. posted far more openings than any other employer (412), followed by Atlantic Health System (89), UCNJ (69) and RWJBarnabas Health (45); by municipality, Elizabeth (920), Rahway (740) and Union (509) had the most openings. Employers most often asked for communication, problem-solving and customer service skills and for proficiency in Microsoft Office and Excel, and artificial intelligence appeared among the specialized skills they sought, reinforcing the work of the Board's AI Strategy Committee.

Top 10 Occupations and Industries by Job Postings, Union County, February–August 2026

Rank	Occupation	Postings	Industry	Postings
1	Registered Nurses	206	Manufacturing	717
2	Retail Salespersons	148	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	691
3	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	120	Health Care and Social Assistance	635
4	Project Management Specialists	103	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	458
5	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	96	Retail Trade	431
6	Customer Service Representatives	95	Educational Services	183
7	Medical and Health Services Managers	76	Wholesale Trade	171
8	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	60	Accommodation and Food Services	158
9	Marketing Managers	58	Transportation and Warehousing	148
10	Accountants and Auditors	57	Finance and Insurance	126

Source: NJDOL Division of Economic and Demographic Research, Job Postings: Union County, February–August 2026 (Lightcast data), prepared September 2026. The period extends two months beyond the program year.

Pressure on entry-level healthcare. The temporary removal of Certified Nursing Assistant training from the Eligible Training Provider List limited options for residents seeking entry-level healthcare careers until NJDOL approved its reinstatement in December 2025.

Changing public assistance requirements. Federal legislation affecting SNAP and TANF administration, delayed WFNJ Notices of Award, and a shift of the WFNJ funding cycle to October–September changed how the Board serves public assistance recipients, while new FY26 WFNJ requirements set 80% placement and 60% retention standards.

Challenges and Resolutions

1. Restoring Entry-Level Healthcare Training

Challenge: Certified Nursing Assistant training was temporarily removed from the Eligible Training Provider List, closing the most-requested entry-level healthcare pathway for Union County residents.

Resolution: The Director led a waiver request to NJDOL, secured employer letters of support, and worked with training providers to document local demand for CNA and patient care technician training.

Impact: After several months of advocacy, NJDOL approved the reinstatement of CNA training, reported to the Board on December 10, 2025. Partners, including Workforce Advantage, credited the effort with restoring a pathway that employers and residents rely on.

2. The Shift to Placement-Driven WorkFirst New Jersey Outcomes

Challenge: PY25 brought an abrupt change in WorkFirst New Jersey. The FY26 Notice of Award, received October 1, 2025, and its addendum moved the program from measuring participation in work activities to requiring job placement. For October 1, 2025 through September 30, 2026, Union County must enroll 200 TANF and 95 SNAP participants, place at least 80% of all participants in unsubsidized employment, and retain at least 60% of those placed for 180 days, while reporting through a new monthly dashboard. The addendum warned that funds could be rescinded if dashboards were not submitted or goals were not met. By comparison, the federal TANF work participation standard is 50%, and the placement benchmark for the same population in the State's Digital Equity grant is 30%. NJDOL provided little policy guidance on how local areas were to achieve these outcomes for residents facing some of the greatest barriers to work. The late award also compressed a twelve-month allocation into roughly nine months and forced WFNJ procurements to be rewritten. At the same time, federal changes to SNAP work rules for able-bodied adults without dependents under Public Law 119-21 expanded the number of residents who must receive career services beginning in early 2026.

Resolution: The Board raised these concerns directly with NJDOL. Together with every local workforce board director in the State, through the Garden State Employment and Training Association, it submitted a formal response to the addendum that proposed more attainable benchmarks and asked NJDOL to open a dialogue on alternative expectations. Locally, the Board kept partners informed, worked with the Department of Human Services on operational strategies, adopted a temporary budget to keep services running, restructured the PY25 budget toward Individual Training Accounts and work-based learning, and issued an RFP for WFNJ work-based learning and training. When the proposals received did not meet program needs, it rejected them and authorized a new RFP focused on Transitional Jobs. When NJDOL circulated draft SNAP Employment and Training and ABAWD guidance for local comment in August 2026, the Board submitted detailed comments. It offered ten recommendations, with proposed replacement language, to make the guidance workable on the day it takes effect: reconciling the program's voluntary-participation premise with its non-compliance provisions; defining the roles of the One-Stop Career Center, required partners and contracted providers; conforming the guidance to Public Law 119-21; limiting components to those approved in the State Plan; completing the list of ABAWD exceptions and adding geographic waivers; establishing a way to report ABAWD participation hours to county social services; adding a confidentiality and data-sharing framework; and identifying the funding source for each assigned duty. The Board also posed eight questions for clarification and offered to take part in a technical workgroup.

Impact: \$1.81 million in Individual Training Accounts and \$1.04 million in work-based learning became available. From January through June 2026, the AJC served 956 WFNJ customers, made 55 training referrals leading to 19 enrollments and 19 credentials, and, according to the NJDOL WorkFirst New Jersey dashboard through August 2026, placed 21 participants in unsubsidized employment (11 TANF and 10 SNAP), with TANF placements averaging \$21.21 per hour.

3. Sustaining Adult Education Through a Federal Funding Freeze

Challenge: A July 2025 federal stop order froze WIOA Title II adult education funds, affecting classes for about 700 adult learners and forcing UCNJ to downsize.

Resolution: The Union County Adult Basic Literacy Education consortium kept recruiting, while the Board's Adult Literacy Innovations consortium continued co-enrolled ESL, digital literacy and integrated education and training classes.

Impact: The consortium enrolled 496 learners against a Level of Service goal of 399, and preliminary FY26 results exceeded every State target: Measurable Skill Gains 66.76% (target 57%), 2nd-quarter employment 60.00% (target 45%), 4th-quarter employment 60.71% (target 47%), and median earnings \$7,751.50 (benchmark \$6,600).

4. Balancing Oversight and Service Delivery

Challenge: The Board values State oversight as part of a shared commitment to accountability and continuous improvement. In PY25, however, reviews by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development came in close succession: policy monitoring, procurement monitoring, governance monitoring, fiscal monitoring and data validation. These ran alongside the State Employment and Training Commission's certification process, a substantial undertaking in its own right. For fiscal monitoring alone, the Board assembled and submitted approximately 14,000 documents. The process often involved several rounds of requests, including requests to resubmit documents that had already been provided. All of the work of scanning records and uploading them into NJDOL's document system fell to Board staff, and that system was not always available; on at least one occasion, documents the Board had already uploaded were lost and had to be submitted again. With a small staff, the cumulative effort competed directly with the time available for planning, partnership development and program improvement.

Resolution: The Board met every request in full and on time, and treated each review as an opportunity to strengthen its systems. It documented its fiscal processes in written standard operating procedures, adopted a comprehensive Policies and Procedures Manual, organized its records so that documents can be produced efficiently, and completed the SETC certification process.

Impact: The Board completed each review and received SETC certification for 2026–2028, and it enters PY26 with stronger documentation and internal controls. Looking ahead, the Board would welcome the opportunity to work with NJDOL on a coordinated monitoring calendar, consolidated document requests, and a reliable shared repository in which documents submitted once can be relied on across reviews, so that State oversight and local service delivery can continue to reinforce each other.

5. Moving from Program Silos to One AJC Network

Challenge: The AJC network offers a wide range of services, but in PY25 it still operated largely by program. Each partner ran its own intake, referrals moved by email with no common form or follow-up, partner data systems did not share information, and counselor caseloads ranged from 50 to 300. The contract for the UC Works referral platform was extended only through May 2026, leaving partners to rely on manual processes while a replacement is explored.

Resolution: The One-Stop Operator assessed the network with its partners and built a common operating framework: universal intake, a standard referral and feedback loop, a network directory, customer feedback procedures and a six-function team model. Partners signed on to functional sub-teams in spring 2026 to carry the model into daily operations.

Impact: The network enters PY26 with shared procedures and a baseline of 86.4% customer satisfaction. Partners are evaluating Launchpad, a Salesforce-based platform, and other options for an integrated case-management system that would support referrals, co-enrollment and shared reporting.

Innovations and Improvements

AI Strategy: Preparing the Workforce for Artificial Intelligence

In February 2025 the Board created an ad hoc AI Strategy Committee under the Executive Committee to assess how artificial intelligence is changing local jobs, identify opportunities, and build AI-ready career pathways for Union County residents. With the active involvement of Board Chairman Stan Robinson, Jr., the committee met throughout PY25, in August and November 2025 and in March 2026, and closed the year with a July 1, 2026 session. Its work moved from understanding the issue, to measuring its local impact, to deciding how the Board will respond.

- **Setting the direction.** Early meetings grounded the committee in the federal policy context — America's AI Action Plan (July 2025) and USDOL guidance encouraging WIOA funds for AI skill-

building (TEGL 03-25) — and in how the Board itself could use AI. Staff developed a plan for an AI-powered governance workspace to streamline board processes, strengthen data-driven decisions and support compliance, and began using AI tools to organize and summarize Board resolutions and materials.

- **Measuring the local impact.** At its March 11, 2026 meeting the committee reviewed USDOL's AI Literacy Framework (TEN 07-25) and new national research on AI's labor-market effects, and examined an analysis that overlaid AI-exposure scores on the 149 occupations on New Jersey's Labor Demand Occupations List — the list that determines which training the Board can fund. Nearly one in five New Jersey workers in those occupations, about 333,000 people, work in jobs with high or moderately high AI exposure, and six in-demand occupations, including medical records specialists, are among the most exposed nationally. Direct-care healthcare and the skilled trades show almost no exposure. The committee concluded that the Board should add AI exposure as a second screen when approving training, equip case managers to counsel participants on AI risk, and engage training providers on adapting their curricula.
- **Acting on State guidance.** After NJDOL issued WD-PY25-14 in April 2026 encouraging local areas to build AI skills with existing WIOA authority, the committee reviewed a staff analysis of the allowable pathways — youth work experience and program elements, Adult and Dislocated Worker career and training services, and work-based learning such as on-the-job training and apprenticeship — along with no-cost resources such as SkillUp NJ's more than 130 free AI courses. At its July 1, 2026 meeting the committee decided to move ahead locally rather than wait for further federal guidance, and to build AI into the Board's existing training policies and operational guidance rather than adopt a stand-alone policy, with strict safeguards for personally identifiable and client data. Members also identified the need for hands-on AI workshops for employers, better outreach to businesses, closer alignment with community college curricula, and sector pilots, beginning with transportation and logistics.

The work also reached participants in PY25: the Digital Equity Training program added an Introduction to AI course, developed by UCNJ with the Board, that teaches WorkFirst New Jersey participants AI basics and how to use AI tools for resumes, interview preparation and professional branding.

Sources: AI Strategy Committee meeting records and materials, August 2025 – July 2026; staff memorandum on NJDOL WD-PY25-14, June 29, 2026.

Digital Equity Training — A New \$1,000,000 State Grant

NJDOL awarded the Board up to \$1,000,000 from the WFNJ State Appropriation for June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2026 to build digital skills for at least 125 WorkFirst New Jersey customers in the county's communities of opportunity. The Board awarded \$850,000 to a consortium: Plainfield Public Library (\$202,500), UCNJ (\$202,500), the County Department of Human Services/AJC (\$102,500), and United Way of Greater Union County (\$342,500, including \$240,000 for consortium supportive services). Participants followed individualized Digital Literacy Plans from foundational skills to industry credentials — Northstar Digital Literacy, IC3 and Microsoft Office Specialist, with pathways to Google IT Support and CompTIA A+ — through a hybrid, simulcast classroom model with loaner laptops and Wi-Fi hotspots, and were co-enrolled in WIOA Youth (ages 18–24) or WIOA Adult (25 and older). The proposal set goals of 80% credential attainment, 30% placement within two quarters, and 70% retention at six months. Final results: the consortium enrolled 33 Union County WorkFirst New Jersey participants; 15 completed training, completers earned 16 industry-recognized credentials (13 IC3 and 3 Northstar Digital Literacy certificates), and 2 entered employment. An additional 17 participants from Middlesex County, reported through the Middlesex Workforce Development Board, also took part; 6 completed training, 6 earned IC3 credentials and 1 entered employment. In all, the program served 50 participants, of whom 21 completed training, 22 earned credentials and 3 entered employment.

Summer Youth Work Experience Program — \$1,996,800

NJDOL awarded the County \$1,996,800 in WIOA Statewide Set-Aside and WorkFirst New Jersey funds for the Summer Youth Work Experience Program, April 1 through October 31, 2025. Under agreements approved by the Board, the City of Elizabeth (up to \$1,205,000 for 300 youth) and United Way of Greater Union County (up to \$745,000, amended to 185 youth) delivered paid work experience of up to 200 hours and \$3,400 per participant to young people ages 16–24, with partners including Community Access Unlimited, Project SEARCH at Overlook Medical Center, UCNJ, UCVTS, the Elizabeth Development Company, the Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth, and the Cities of Rahway and Plainfield. More than 40 worksite sponsors hosted participants. Every participant received work-readiness training in financial literacy, resume building, entrepreneurship, diversity awareness and workplace harassment prevention, plus mental health workshops; 93% of youth reported feeling supported and safe, with an overall satisfaction score of 4.04. Electronic timekeeping and debit-card payroll moved stipends quickly, and youth who asked about WIOA at paycheck pickup were co-enrolled into year-round WIOA Youth services. In all, 449 youth were served, 401 in school and 47 out of school, and together they logged about 74,000 hours of paid work experience, an average of 165 hours each; 400 worked at least 100 hours and 120 completed the full 200 hours. Seventy-one youth received supportive services, and 39 were SNAP or TANF recipients. Final expenditures totaled \$1,577,161.

Adult Literacy Innovations Consortium

The \$500,000 Adult Literacy Innovations grant, accepted in PY24 and active throughout PY25 through September 30, 2026, links UCNJ, Plainfield Public Library, Workforce Advantage and the AJC in a 24-month program for 162 participants. It delivers Microsoft Office Specialist training for non-native speakers, ESL workforce preparation, integrated ESL and IC3 digital literacy, and high school equivalency preparation, with live Voice interpretation in more than 240 languages, including American Sign Language, so intake staff, case managers and instructors can serve residents in their own language. Participants are co-enrolled in WIOA or WFNJ to connect literacy gains to careers.

An Integrated, Customer-Centered AJC Network

The One-Stop Operator turned the findings of its network assessment into working tools that change how customers move through the AJC:

- **Six functional teams.** Services are organized by what the customer needs rather than by funding stream: Welcome and Triage, Career Navigation, Career Services, Skills Development and Training, Barrier Resolution and Support Services, and Business Services.
- **Welcome and Universal Intake.** A single intake at any partner, completed in 12 to 15 minutes, captures the customer's goal once and routes the customer to the right team with a warm handoff.
- **Standardized referrals and follow-up.** Universal referral forms and a feedback loop ensure each referral is tracked and the referring partner learns the outcome.
- **AJC Network Directory.** A living directory of 15 partner agencies, with services, eligibility and referral contacts, updated regularly.
- **Customer and employer feedback.** Standard job seeker and employer surveys feed a continuous-improvement process with corrective action tracking.

Sources: One-Stop Operator's Record of Activities during PY2025; AJC Network Assessment Report; AJC Operator's Committee minutes, July 2025 – May 2026; AJC Job Seeker Feedback Survey Analysis.

Youth Services: Bringing the One-Stop to Young People

United Way of Greater Union County reorganized WIOA youth services in PY25 so that services come to young people instead of the other way around:

- **Youth Festival.** In August 2025, United Way's Youth Festival reached about 1,000 youth and family members, connecting them in one place with youth programs, trade schools, colleges, career resources, school supplies and food, and serving as a recruitment pipeline into WIOA.
- **Services inside the schools.** Partner high schools provided space for weekly after-school WIOA programming, removing the need for students to travel to a separate site and keeping counselors in steady contact with them.
- **Career Connection events.** Industry panels in healthcare and construction let youth meet professionals, colleges and training providers and begin applications on the spot.
- **Driver's licenses as a workforce strategy.** Because out-of-school youth often lack access to driver education, United Way helped 20 of them pass the learner permit examination and is supporting them toward a license that opens jobs and training sites that are hard to reach by public transit.
- **Meeting basic needs.** A food pantry and resource closet with food, clothing and hygiene items, baby essentials for young parents, and 75 Thanksgiving food packages for youth and their families kept participants focused on school and work.
- **Specialized partners.** Prevention Links (job coaching, IC3 and GED support), Dramatic Stages (leadership), LearnUp (career readiness), S.O.A.R. (entrepreneurship), Mental Hop (mental health and wellness workshops) and Empower Somerset (prevention education) added services no single program could provide.
- **Co-enrollment.** Youth were co-enrolled with Simon Youth Academy, New Jersey Youth Corps and YouthBuild so each program contributed what it does best. At Simon Youth Academy, where United Way provides WIOA services, 21 students graduated in 2024–25 and 22 in 2025–26.
- **Work experience with credentials.** Twenty-two youth held paid work experience in FY25 and 29 in FY26, supported by weekly career-readiness workshops, site visits and employer evaluations. Youth placed with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program also completed IRS VITA tax preparer and quality review training; five youth earned IRS tax-preparation certifications and helped prepare returns for more than 1,000 Union County residents, returning over \$1 million in refunds to the community.

Source: United Way of Greater Union County, PY25 WIOA Youth Impact and Success Stories (October 2026).

Data-Driven Oversight

The Board expanded its use of data in governance: FutureWorks performance dashboards reported by provider, the enhanced voucher review described above, and a partnership with Union County Magnet High School, within UCVTS, whose student interns produced labor-market and job-posting visualizations presented to the Board in December 2025 and April 2026.

Success Stories

The NJDOL Checklist calls for at least four success stories: one each from the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs and one from an employer partner. The stories below were provided by the American Job Center and United Way of Greater Union County. Participant names are pseudonyms.

Adult (including WorkFirst New Jersey)

Walee. Walee, a SNAP recipient enrolled in WorkFirst New Jersey, began in the Board's Digital Equity Training program and moved on to Commercial Driver's License training through a WIOA Adult Individual Training Account. He earned his Class A CDL and was hired full time as a driver for National Grid at \$28 an hour.

Samantha. Samantha, a TANF recipient, came to the American Job Center seeking Medical Billing and Coding training so she could find stable work to support her family. A referral to Community Coordinated Child Care (4C's) resolved her child care needs, and with a WIOA Adult Individual Training Account she completed the program, earned her Medical Billing and Coding Specialist credential, and was hired as a receptionist at a fitness center at \$17 an hour.

Dislocated Worker

Jakub. Jakub was laid off from his job as a line striper with Traffic Lines, Inc.; returning to the position required a Commercial Driver's License. With the American Job Center's help, he enrolled in CDL training, finished ahead of schedule, and was rehired by Traffic Lines as a Line Striper/Painter A2. He now earns \$65.00 an hour on job sites and \$15.90 an hour for shop and travel time.

Myron. After losing his long-time job as a Senior IT Analyst, Myron exhausted his unemployment benefits and interviewed repeatedly without an offer. Recognizing that employers expected current industry certifications, he worked with the American Job Center to complete Amazon Web Services (AWS) Solutions Architect training and earned the certification. Centene then hired him as Manager of Software Application Development at about \$170,000 a year.

Youth

Out-of-School Youth. While completing her diploma at the Simon Youth Academy and expecting her first child, a young woman enrolled in United Way of Greater Union County's WIOA youth program. Case management, supportive services, a paid work experience, and co-enrollment in New Jersey Youth Corps for tutoring kept her on track. She earned her high school diploma and is now enrolled in Medical Assistant training, the start of a career in healthcare.

In-School Youth. A high school student entered United Way's WIOA In-School Youth program unsure of his plans after graduation. Career exploration and individualized planning pointed him to sports management, and a paid work experience with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, where he completed IRS VITA training and prepared returns for community members, built his client-service and professional skills. After graduating, he enrolled at Montclair State University to study sports management.

Employer Partner

Traffic Lines, Inc. Traffic Lines, a road-striping contractor, requires its line stripers to hold a Commercial Driver's License to drive company vehicles to job sites. When Jakub, a laid-off line striper, needed that license to return, the American Job Center enrolled him in CDL training through the Dislocated Worker program. Once he earned his license, Traffic Lines rehired him as a Line Striper/Painter A2, bringing back an experienced employee it already knew and returning a county resident to work at \$65.00 an hour on job sites.

Union Beverage Packers LLC. Union Beverage Packers partnered with UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ, and the Union County American Job Center on training built around its workforce. UCNJ delivered on-the-job training for new hires, customized leadership development for supervisors, and an English as a Second Language module to strengthen workplace communication, while the AJC handled eligibility and documentation so the training could begin without delay. The partnership shortened onboarding, raised productivity, and strengthened retention by pairing skill development with supportive services.

PERFORMANCE AND FUNDING METRICS

Performance Metrics

WIOA Section 116 establishes primary indicators of performance for the Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs: employment in the 2nd and 4th quarters after exit, median earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit, credential attainment, and measurable skill gains. Each indicator measures a different cohort, because outcomes are measured at different points after exit. Every PY25 goal is higher than its PY24 counterpart.

Adult Program — PY 2025

Performance Indicator	PY25 Goal	PY25 Outcome	Numer-ator	Denom-inator	% of Goal	PY22–25 Average
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	70.00%	64.3%	128	199	91.9%	67.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	68.00%	60.4%	32	53	88.8%	64.3%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,300	\$9,188	—	—	125.9%	\$8,655
Credential Attainment	64.00%	78.3%	18	23	122.3%	73.8%
Measurable Skill Gains	68.00%	93.2%	96	103	137.1%	92.2%

Dislocated Worker Program — PY 2025

Performance Indicator	PY25 Goal	PY25 Outcome	Numer-ator	Denom-inator	% of Goal	PY22–25 Average
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	64.50%	64.1%	399	622	99.4%	67.3%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	69.30%	71.4%	55	77	103.0%	71.3%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$9,300	\$10,840	—	—	116.6%	\$10,427
Credential Attainment	72.00%	80.4%	41	51	111.7%	79.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	70.50%	96.7%	176	182	137.2%	94.9%

Youth Program — PY 2025

Performance Indicator	PY25 Goal	PY25 Outcome	Numer-ator	Denom-inator	% of Goal	PY22–25 Average
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	65.70%	80.6%	58	72	122.7%	59.4%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	66.50%	62.5%	15	24	94.0%	56.2%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,400	\$4,148	—	—	122.0%	\$3,516
Credential Attainment	53.70%	77.3%	17	22	143.9%	51.1%
Measurable Skill Gains	74.00%	69.1%	38	55	93.4%	87.6%

Source (all three tables): NJDOL Office of Research and Information, letter of September 3, 2026 on PY 2026–2027 performance goals, Attachment 1: Local Area WIOA Performance for PY 2025 and Average for PY 2022–PY 2025. Goals: PY25 negotiated local levels (FutureWorks BI, LWDB Goal view). % of Goal = outcome divided by goal, before the end-of-year statistical adjustment.

Discussion. By NJDOL's official count, Union County performed at 90% or better of goal on 14 of 15 Title I indicators and met or exceeded 10. Median earnings and credential attainment exceeded goals in every program, and measurable skill gains for adults and dislocated workers were about 137% of goal. Dislocated Worker results met or exceeded four goals and came within 0.4 points of the fifth, with 399 of 622 exiters employed in the second quarter. Youth results improved sharply over the PY2022–2025 average: 2nd-quarter placement in employment or education rose to 80.6% (average 59.4%) and credential attainment to 77.3% (average 51.1%). The one indicator below 90% was Adult 4th-quarter employment at 60.4% (88.8% of goal), and Youth measurable skill gains, at 69.1%, fell below both the goal and the program's four-year average. Both are the retention and documentation issues the Two-Year Plan Modification targets.

Youth provider results. United Way of Greater Union County served 130 in-school and out-of-school youth during PY25: 93 who enrolled in PY24 and continued to receive services, and 37 new enrollees. United Way's PY25 impact report documents 77 measurable skill gains and 40 credentials among in-school youth, primarily high school diplomas, with 30 moving on to postsecondary education, and 68 measurable skill gains and 53 credentials among out-of-school youth, including high school and high school equivalency diplomas, CPR certification and IC3 digital literacy certification. Among out-of-school youth, 11 entered postsecondary education and 60 moved into employment, occupational skills training or continued education. After exit, participants enrolled at UCNJ (including in nursing), Kean University and Montclair State University; joined YouthBuild and New Jersey Youth Corps; entered HVAC and electrical apprenticeships and medical assistant training; enlisted in the military; and went to work.

WIOA Youth Program Elements Delivered by United Way, PY25

Program Element	In-School Youth	Out-of-School Youth
Tutoring and academic support	69	63
Alternative secondary school services	—	65
Paid work experience (FY25 and FY26)	36	15
Occupational skills training	—	40
Education concurrent with workforce preparation	40	28
Leadership development	88	63
Supportive services	8	22
Adult mentoring	11	—
Comprehensive guidance and counseling	21	23
Labor market and employment information	89	Program-wide
Postsecondary preparation and transition	89	41

Source: United Way of Greater Union County, PY25 WIOA Youth Impact and Success Stories (October 2026), and Youth Element Report (July 2026). Financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills training and follow-up services were delivered through program curriculum and partner programming and are not counted separately. Counts are services documented by the provider and may include the same youth in more than one element.

WIOA Training by Industry Sector

In PY25, 234 Adult and Dislocated Worker participants began training funded through WIOA Individual Training Accounts. Transportation and logistics accounted for the largest share, driven by Commercial Driver's License Class A training, which enrolled 89 participants, more than any other program. Healthcare followed with 54 enrollments, led by medical assistant and medical billing and coding programs. By September 2026, participants had earned 137 credentials, and 51 were still in training or awaiting their credential.

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Industry Sector	# Enrolled in Training	Program with Highest Enrollment	Credentials for That Program
Transportation and Logistics	99	CDL Class A (89 enrolled)	CDL Class A license (57 earned)
Healthcare	54	Medical Assistant (18 enrolled)	Clinical or Certified Medical Assistant certificate (9 earned)
Professional and Business Services	30	Project Management (11 enrolled)	PMP, CAPM and Agile Scrum certifications (8 earned)
Information Technology	28	Network and Security (9 enrolled)	CompTIA A+, Network+ and Security+ (4 earned)
Construction and Skilled Trades	15	HVAC (9 enrolled)	HVAC certificate (in progress)
Other Sectors	8	Nail Technology (3 enrolled)	Nail Technology certificate (2 earned)
Total	234		

Source: UCAJC ITA Bridge Workbook (AOSOS P-201C active enrollees matched to ITA contract records), September 2026. Includes WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Individual Training Accounts that began July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Board staff assigned sectors by training program. Credential counts as recorded through September 2026.

Workforce Training for New Enrollments by Funding

Training enrollments for PY25 are shown below by funding source. Most WorkFirst New Jersey participants who entered training were co-enrolled in WIOA Adult and received an Individual Training Account, so the WorkFirst rows overlap the WIOA Adult count and are not added to the total.

Funding Source	New Training Enrollments (PY25)	Notes
WIOA Adult	92	Individual Training Accounts; 58 credentials earned
WIOA Dislocated Worker	142	Individual Training Accounts; 79 credentials earned
WIOA Youth	40	Out-of-school youth in occupational skills training, as reported by United Way of Greater Union County for PY25
WFNJ TANF	3	FY26 grant year, October 2025–June 2026; co-enrolled in WIOA Adult
WFNJ SNAP	46	FY26 grant year, October 2025–June 2026; most co-enrolled in WIOA Adult
WFNJ General Assistance	6	FY26 grant year, October 2025–June 2026; most co-enrolled in WIOA Adult
Total WIOA Title I	274	WorkFirst New Jersey enrollments (55) overlap the WIOA Adult count

Sources: UCAJC ITA Bridge Workbook, September 2026; United Way of Greater Union County, PY25 WIOA Youth Impact and Success Stories, October 2026; NJDOL WorkFirst New Jersey/SNAP E&T dashboard, Training Tracking, reporting month August 2026.

WDB Program Funding

The Board adopted a temporary PY25 budget on July 23, 2025 based on the WIOA Notices of Award (\$4,941,910), adopted the full PY25 budget on October 15, 2025 after the FY26 WFNJ awards arrived (\$7,155,579), and adopted the final amended budget on December 10, 2025 (\$7,155,579).

Program / Source	Amount
WIOA / US DOL	
Adult	\$1,402,091

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Program / Source	Amount
Dislocated Worker	\$2,153,345
Youth (In-School \$343,375; Out-of-School \$1,030,128)	\$1,373,503
Total WIOA	\$4,928,939
Work First New Jersey / NJDOL (FY26 award, October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026)	
TANF — all activities	\$1,500,000
GA/SNAP — all activities	\$713,669
Total WFNJ	\$2,213,669
WIOA Data Reporting and Analysis	\$12,971
TOTAL PY25 BUDGET (final amended budget)	\$7,155,579

Sources: budget allocation tables adopted October 15 and December 10, 2025; PY25 WIOA Notices of Award; FY26 WFNJ Addendum to Notice of Award. The NJDOL template divides TANF and GA/SNAP into case management, needs-based and work verification lines; that breakdown was not in the Board file.

Final PY25 Budget by Category

Category	WIOA	WFNJ	Total	Share
Participant career services (ITAs, work-based learning, supportive services, youth work experience)	\$2,421,569	\$1,200,000	\$3,621,569	50.6%
Provider of career services (AJC Operator, career services, youth provider)	\$1,680,000	\$720,000	\$2,400,000	33.5%
Administration	\$492,895	\$221,367	\$714,262	10.0%
Regulatory operating	\$243,421	\$25,589	\$269,010	3.8%
Operations	\$104,025	\$46,713	\$150,738	2.1%
Total	\$4,941,910	\$2,213,669	\$7,155,579	100.0%

WIOA column includes the \$12,971 Data Reporting allocation. WIOA administration equals 9.97% of WIOA funds, within the 10% cap; 75.0% of WIOA Youth funds are budgeted for out-of-school youth.

Additional State Grants Active in PY25

Grant	Funding Source	Period	Amount
Summer Youth Work Experience Program	NJDOL — WIOA Set-Aside and WFNJ	Apr 1 – Oct 31, 2025	\$1,996,800
Digital Equity Training	NJDOL — WFNJ State Appropriation	Jun 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026	\$1,000,000
Total new State grants			\$2,996,800
Total PY25 resources (budget plus new grants)			\$10,152,379
Adult Literacy Innovations (awarded and reported in PY24; active through Sept 30, 2026)	NJDOL	24 months	\$500,000

Sources: SYWEP Notice of Award, March 5, 2025; Digital Equity Training Notice of Award, June 1, 2025; Board acceptance of the Adult Literacy Innovations award (PY24).

Expenditure Status at Program Year End

As of June 2026, PY25 WIOA Title I funds — in year one of a two-year period of availability — were 36.4% disbursed (\$1.79 million of \$4,928,939), with a further \$1,181,694 under contract. The FY26 WFNJ TANF and SNAP grants, which run through September 30, 2026, were 24.1% disbursed (\$532,481 of \$2,213,669), reflecting the late Notices of Award. All three PY24 Title I grants closed at 100% expenditure,

and the Digital Equity Training contract closed May 31, 2026 with \$768,390 unexpended. The Summer Youth program expended \$1,577,161, or 79% of its award.

Source: IGX Non-Competitive Expenditure Reports, June 2026, presented to the Board July 29, 2026; IGX Summer Youth Expenditure Report, October 2025.

Glossary of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
ABLE	Adult Basic Literacy Education
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AJC	American Job Center
AOSOS	America's One-Stop Operating System
AWS	Amazon Web Services
CBVI	Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
CDL	Commercial Driver's License
CNA	Certified Nursing Assistant
DHS	Department of Human Services
DVRS	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
DW	Dislocated Worker
ETPL	Eligible Training Provider List
GA	General Assistance
HSE	High School Equivalency
IC3	Internet and Computing Core Certification
IET	Integrated Education and Training
ITA	Individual Training Account
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSG	Measurable Skill Gains
NJDOL	New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OSY	Out-of-School Youth
RFP	Request for Proposals
SETC	State Employment and Training Commission
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SYWEP	Summer Youth Work Experience Program
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
UCNJ	UCNJ Union College of Union County, NJ
UCVTS	Union County Vocational-Technical Schools
UCWDB	Union County Workforce Development Board
WBL	Work-Based Learning
WFNJ	Work First New Jersey
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

CLOSING

Program Year 2025 asked Union County's workforce system to do more under pressure: a volatile labor market, late WFNJ awards, a federal pause in adult education funding, the temporary loss of a key healthcare training pathway, and new placement and retention mandates. The Board met those pressures by moving its budget toward training, securing nearly \$3 million in new State grants for summer youth employment and digital skills, restoring CNA training, and building the policy, fiscal and monitoring framework that earned SETC certification for 2026–2028.

Looking ahead to Program Year 2026, the Board will:

- Competitively procure a comprehensive One-Stop Career Center and affiliate out-of-school youth services (authorized by the Board on July 29, 2026).
- Adopt the PY2026–2027 local performance goals set by NJDOL's local statistical adjustment model (letter of September 3, 2026), and close the gaps in Adult 4th-quarter employment and Youth measurable skill gains through stronger follow-up, retention checks and complete, timely recording of participant data in AOSOS.
- Expand work-based learning and transitional jobs to meet WFNJ placement and retention mandates.
- Carry AI readiness and digital skills into every training pathway.
- Complete the move to an integrated AJC network of functional teams, universal intake and a shared case-management system.

These results are possible because of the shared commitment of the Union County Board of County Commissioners, the Board's members, the American Job Center partners, service providers, employers and labor partners, and the residents who trust the system with their careers. Together, Union County will continue to build a workforce system where opportunity is accessible and economic mobility is real.

Union County Workforce Development Board

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