



# Recovery Act Plan

## Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation

*Serving the counties of Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union*

### Background

The Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization formed in 2000 and is a Workforce Investment Board (WIB) authorized under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. CPWDC governs workforce development policy for the nine-county region of Central Pennsylvania (Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder and Union Counties).

Under the guidance of its private sector led Board of Directors, the strength of the CPWDC is its continuing ability to adapt to the ever increasing complexities of human capital development. The core philosophy of the CPWDC is that successful workforce development initiatives must be approached holistically. In the context of labor demand, workforce must be viewed as an instrument of economic development and must add relevance to key industries. Workforce development models require high levels of innovation and the constant “re-tooling” of these systems.

CPWDC’s **mission** is to be the leading vehicle for regional unification, coordination, integration and alignment of workforce activities, resources and initiatives to support economic sustainability, improve education systems and develop and retain a quality labor force in Central Pennsylvania. CPWDC’s **vision** is to be recognized as the premiere agency for workforce development strategies and activities and to build the capacity of the workforce system through systematic change, integration of resources and continuous improvement in the Central Region.

The CPWDC currently operates seven (7) Pennsylvania (PA) CareerLinks throughout the region. However, what distinguishes the CPWDC’s PA CareerLink initiative from many others is the systemic regional approach to building workforce programs. The strengths of the system is that each of the facilities is fully integrated and allows staffing, programs and initiatives to work independent of the facilities and/or to be interchangeable from one facility to the next. Services, including those designed to assist job seekers and businesses, are managed from a regional perspective that allows for maximum impact, while operating at the highest possible level of efficiency. Job development and Rapid Response services are examples of programs that are managed regionally.

While the CPWDC covers a large area geographically, the region’s population (600,000) and labor force (260,000) are relatively small. Yet, the outcome from our system-driven model, which is constantly being re-tooled and enhanced, allows the region to engage employers and job seekers on a level that is comparable to the Commonwealth’s urban counterparts.

CPWDC intends to utilize the \$4.7 million available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to increase the number of adults, dislocated workers and youth served through the region’s PA CareerLinks. Using the ARRA funding according to its “stimulus” intent, the CPWDC will supplement, not supplant, existing services, focus on industries with current and future sustainable employment opportunities, increase training opportunities and expand partnerships to leverage resources and maximize services. The following document outlines CPWDC’s Recovery Act plan to ensure full expenditure of ARRA funding by June 2011. The CPWDC Recovery Act Plan was presented to the full Workforce Investment Board at a publicly advertised meeting on May 15, 2009. A motion to accept the CPWDC American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Plan for submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry was approved by the Workforce Investment Board.

## **1. Provide an analysis of the LWIA's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context.**

CPWDC's nine-county region has experienced a significant economic shift over the past 12 months. In early 2008, CPWDC's proactive strategies focused on expanding the available labor pool in preparation for converging factors poised to increase demand for a qualified workforce in an already tight labor market. The Region was experiencing the threat of an aging workforce, where more individuals were expected to retire than enter the labor force; the continuing challenge of creating a pipeline of youth that have the interest and pre-requisite skills to support the region's key industries; the development of a major distribution center that would create hundreds of jobs; and the emergence of the Marcellus Shale play as a significant opportunity for natural gas extraction that could create thousands of jobs.

During the past 12 months, economic conditions have altered the Region's labor market projections. Older workers are revising their retirement plans and are not exiting the workforce as quickly as once anticipated. Construction of the major distribution center has been postponed due to the economy. And, while the Marcellus Shale activity continues, the decline in natural gas prices and the need to develop local infrastructure has slowed the demand for local hiring.

Since January 2008, over 5,000 individuals have been dislocated due to plant closures or layoffs. The majority of those layoffs have occurred in the last 12 months. Every county has been impacted and diversified manufacturing sectors, including lumber and wood and factory built housing, have been most adversely impacted. Recently, the Region has experienced dislocations in the service sector, including health care. Between July 1, 2008 and March 31, 2009, 178 training contracts for tuition assistance funded through the Trade Act have been issued through the regional PA CareerLinks, which is significantly higher than any program year since 2004.

The regional unemployment rate as of March 2009 rose to 8.3%, which is the highest unemployment has been since June 1992. Over 25,000 residents are unemployed and we estimate that an additional 20,000 plus have become discouraged and are no longer seeking employment or are underemployed (i.e., working fewer hours than they desire, working for lower wages than previously earned, not utilizing their skills in their current employment).

PA CareerLink staff have identified several common attributes of individuals seeking services. There has been an increase in the number of dislocated workers who do not possess a high school diploma or GED. According to CPWDC's current policy governing intensive services for Adults and Dislocated Workers, a high school diploma or GED is required for access to assessment and training services. Since most employers require at least a high school diploma or GED for employment, the lack of such a credential represents a significant skill gap for employability. At the same time, individuals who possess a high school diploma or GED, but have been out of an educational environment for years and perhaps decades, are demonstrating skill gaps in workplace literacy and mathematic skills. Through referrals to Title II Adult Basic Education partners and access to the WIN courseware affiliated with the WorkKeys assessments, the PA CareerLinks can help address these basic skill gaps. In addition to basic academic skill deficiencies, local employers continue to cite the demand for an increased emphasis on workplace readiness skills, or the "soft skills" that often determine an individual's ability to be successful on the job.

The majority of individuals who have been dislocated in the Central Region over the past 12 months worked in manufacturing. While CPWDC anticipates some future employee recalls and growth in the region's manufacturing base, the jobs will most likely require different skills than currently possessed by the available workforce. For example, general laborers may be required to demonstrate increased competencies in technological, technical, mechanical and interpersonal areas that increase their potential within a workplace. Recovery Act activities will focus on building the skills of individuals through stackable credentials and defining the appropriate credentials to maximize re-employment opportunities. For individuals not interested or not able to return to manufacturing employment, additional skill gaps may exist between production competencies and those competencies required for employment in the healthcare, natural gas, energy or service sectors.

In a February 2009 CPWDC survey of 250 employers, 70% reported that their business had experienced a direct or indirect negative impact of the current economic situation due most often to overall market decline and declining demand for product or service from existing customers. An additional 19% anticipated a negative impact that has not yet been realized. Sixty-eight percent of employers were not currently hiring and 53% were unsure as to when hiring would resume. At the time of the survey, health care was the only sector in which more than 40% of the respondents indicated they were hiring. Forty-five percent of all survey respondents expected employment to remain flat into the summer months and 25% expect further decreases.

## **2. What is the LWIA's vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce?**

Within the economic context, the role of the Central Region PA CareerLinks has changed over the past 12 months as well. A year ago, the PA CareerLinks were focused on matching job seekers with a variety of employers who were hiring along the skills and experience continuum. The services concentrated on preparing individuals to competitively seek employment in a timely fashion. Within this competitive labor market, the Region's PA CareerLinks have realized a 40% or greater decline in job orders posted by employers on CWDS. The PA CareerLink job seeking customers are likely unemployed or seeking additional employment to supplement one or more part-time jobs. Dislocated workers are likely skilled in production and labor, but may not be able to easily translate years, and sometimes decades, of experience into new career paths. The PA CareerLink staff are assisting an increased number of individuals who lack a high school diploma or GED or who need to brush up on basic, but applied, skills in areas such as math, reading and critical thinking. An increased number of individuals are expressing interest in pursuing training, but a high proportion of these individuals are unsure of what type of training to pursue or their desired career.

CPWDC's vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities is based around the concept of skills development and attainment that will increase opportunities for finding and retaining employment. CPWDC has developed concise and clear *Guiding Principles for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Funds* that will provide direction to CPWDC staff, the CareerLink Operators and staff and any subcontractors, including training providers and employers, who are receiving ARRA funding. In planning for full expenditure of funds by June 2011, CPWDC will evaluate all activities against the principles to ensure alignment with the "stimulus" intent of the funds.

CPWDC plans to weave the ARRA funded activities into its current mix of services available through the PA CareerLinks, yet brand and market Recovery funds uniquely and separately from other WIA funds in order to highlight the non-recurring nature and specific focus of the funding.

The foundation of a continuum of education and training opportunities is the identification of employer demand. Based on data from the Region's industry cluster analysis, the activities and input from Industry Partnerships and information from the Local Business Service Teams at each PA CareerLink, CPWDC has identified four industry priorities: Construction (including Factory Built Housing), Energy (including Marcellus Shale natural gas activity, renewable energy and energy efficiency), Health Care and Manufacturing. Within those industries, CPWDC will focus on the potential training needs related to Green Jobs as well as service sector opportunities that often cross industries or are captured in ancillary industry classifications. Although these priorities are not meant to be exclusive, CPWDC asserts that these industries offer the greatest opportunities for sustainable employment in the region.

The Central Region has established a target of spending 65% of Recovery Act Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to supplement the Region's training budget. For comparison, with annual formula allocations of Workforce Investment Act Adult and Dislocated Worker funds, the Central Region has only been able to budget 10% of funds for training activity due to the substantial costs of infrastructure and staff to support the 7 PA CareerLinks currently needed in such a large geographic area. By budgeting 65% of Recovery Act funding for training activities, CPWDC realizes a four-fold and ten-fold increase in training resources for Adults and Dislocated Workers, respectively. An additional 10% will be targeted to

support needs-based payments and support services for eligible trainees. One quarter of the budget will be available to support the administrative and programmatic duties of CPWDC and its subcontractors.

The intent of the training funds designated under the Recovery Act is to provide a continuum of skill attainment opportunities that are “stackable” and thereby maximize the number of individuals served with the funding by focusing on the critical skills that will increase an individual’s employment opportunities. For some, occupational training may be required for a new career, while skills training in one or more specific content areas leading to credentials may be the desired outcome for others.

In order to ensure that job seekers are successful in their training activities, CPWDC will identify the types of training that are of most value to employers and that are available within the Region. CPWDC is in the process of identifying the capacity of the Region’s training providers to assess where additional capacity for key training programs may be required to support the education and training continuum. These “stackable” skill attainment opportunities may include employability and soft skills, industry-specific credentials, classroom training, customized training, on the job training and work experiences.

CPWDC will require the use of assessment products, with a specific emphasis on WorkKeys® assessments, to determine an individual’s likelihood of successfully completing training and securing employment in their career of choice. WorkKeys® is a nationally recognized work-based assessment tool developed by ACT, Inc. Based on an evaluation of the skills required to perform a job, WorkKeys® assessments compare an individual’s skills in up to 9 skill areas to the skills required for the occupation. While WorkKeys® is not meant to replace the need for technical or occupation-specific training, the assessments measure cognitive abilities such as applied mathematics, reading for information, and locating information. Individuals in Central Pennsylvania may earn a gold, silver or bronze Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) depending on how they score on the assessment components of Applied Mathematics, Locating Information and Reading for Information. The CRC levels endorsed in Central Pennsylvania are consistent with the activity in more than 17 states that offer a portable credential linked directly to applied work skills identified through WorkKeys® assessments.

CPWDC will work closely with PA CareerLink staff to ensure that they understand current and emerging opportunities within each of the targeted industries, the foundational skills necessary to successfully complete a training program, the training that is most beneficial to employers and the capacity of regional training providers. Because many job seekers are looking for guidance on their best opportunities for re-employment, PA CareerLink staff guidance will be critical to directing them along the continuum of skill attainment opportunities.

**3. What is the LWIAs vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training, including the youth most in need of assistance, such as out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farmworker youth, youth with disabilities, and other youth at risk?**

CPWDC is using ARRA youth funding to serve hundreds of eligible youth through the Central Pennsylvania Summer Employment Experience program (branded as SEE Central Pennsylvania). CPWDC intends to engage youth in all nine counties by providing:

- meaningful work experiences that introduce and reinforce the rigors, demands, rewards and sanctions associated with holding a job; and
- appropriate supplemental enrichment activities including, but not limited to, academic advancement, career exploration and financial literacy that result in a demonstration of increased work readiness.

CPWDC recognizes that many youth in its largely rural region will not have the opportunity to gain valuable work skills through typical summer employment due to the current economic environment. Not only will youth be competing with each other for fewer summer jobs, as many businesses limit seasonal

hiring, but they will also be competing against adults who are seeking employment after being dislocated or to supplement their income. Understanding the opportunities youth will lack this summer, CPWDC has had an overwhelmingly supportive response from public and private employers in the region to provide a short-term employment experience for youth. Utilizing relationships established with the Industry Partnerships, as well as various networks focused on serving at-risk youth in local communities, youth will be placed in work experiences with private sector, government and non-profit employers. Many youth will learn about the contributions of their communities' public agencies and other community-based organizations through paid employment experiences or service learning projects.

In conjunction with a work experience, youth will receive various enrichment activities designed to expose them to the region's key industries and occupations, financial literacy, life skills, core academic instructional opportunities linked to the PA Academic Standards for Career Education and Work, and applied skills in reading, math and locating information connected to the WorkKeys® Career Readiness Certificate. Youth will be exposed to the region's postsecondary institutions, GED and short term training opportunities, as well as local labor market information on career ladders and emerging Green Jobs.

Overall, the goals of SEE Central Pennsylvania are to establish community partnerships to help:

- Youth **SEE**
  - The rigors, demands, rewards and sanctions associated with holding a job.
  - Their future through career opportunities in Central Pennsylvania.
  - How workplace readiness affects workforce success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Employers **SEE** the potential in the emerging workforce.
- The Public **SEE** how employers and youth can work together to improve their communities.

Recruitment of youth most in need of assistance has been undertaken utilizing several methods. Over the last two years, CPWDC has formed an extensive network of youth services providers through its PA Youth in Transition project. Partners include, but are not limited to, county governments, juvenile justice, children and youth services, foster care agencies, county assistance offices, school districts, food stamp outreach programs, adult education providers, the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps, and other community-based youth programs. In addition to these regional partnerships, the current year-round WIA youth provider has been awarded a competitive contract to operate the expanded SEE Central Pennsylvania program. This provider has consistently recruited and served a high number of youth each year, including a high percentage of out-of school youth, through locally developed relationships with other providers and venues serving disconnected youth. Several recruitment events targeted for out-of-school youth are being scheduled throughout the region and special referral mechanisms are being established among the CareerLink's Veteran's Representatives. The summer youth program will be co-located in each of the Region's seven CareerLink facilities, making connections and referrals from the Career Resource Area, Veteran's services and other programs quick and convenient.

The SEE Central Pennsylvania program aligns with CPWDC's vision to quickly prepare residents for the region's most in-demand occupations and with CPWDC's Youth Council mission to advocate, promote policy and offer services that provide youth with meaningful opportunities to access the knowledge and skill sets necessary to succeed in careers, as employees and productive members of our communities. ARRA funding will allow CPWDC to increase the number of youth who experience work first hand and are exposed to key industries through employer and college tours, integrated high quality enrichment and activities featuring components of Green Jobs. These opportunities will position youth with basic life skills, applied skills and knowledge necessary to obtain and maintain gainful employment in a competitive job market and as the local economies begin to expand.

**4. Identify the LWIA's key workforce investment system priorities and how each will lead to actualizing the LWIA's vision for workforce and economic development.**

Since its formation in 2000, CPWDC has focused on using data to drive the Region's workforce investment system priorities and will apply the same level of analysis for shifting priorities necessitated by the economic downturn and areas of focus for economic recovery. The ARRA funding will be one additional resource that can be used to support the Region's targeted industry activities in Construction (including Factory Built Housing), Energy (including Marcellus Shale natural gas activity, renewable energy and energy efficiency), Health Care and Manufacturing. With the exception of Energy, which is newly emerging as a significant opportunity for the Region, CPWDC has been focused on these industry priorities, and has responded to the cyclical and transformational environments in which industry exists.

Although construction, including residential, commercial and highway, has been negatively impacted by the housing market and economy, other areas of ARRA funding have the potential to provide a significant influx of capital improvements, including roads and bridges and school and municipal projects. Health Care continues to comprise approximately 15% of the region's workforce and there continues to be demand for skilled technician and professional positions, despite several years of campaigns directed at increasing the pipeline of health care workers. While the face of manufacturing in Central PA has changed since 2000, manufacturing continues to be a significant economic driver. Based on scenarios analyzed through Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc., CPWDC estimates that for every job lost in manufacturing, an additional job is lost elsewhere in the economy. For every dollar of earnings lost through a manufacturing dislocation, a total of \$1.75 is not paid out in wages, salaries and other compensation throughout the economy. CPWDC is closely monitoring the opportunities anticipated within the Energy industry. On the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy front, CPWDC will evaluate other opportunities through the Recovery Act, including the Weatherization Assistance Program, to determine what kind of jobs will be created as a result of increased emphasis on these programs. Additionally, CPWDC will monitor the implementation of Act 129 legislation that impacts electricity distribution companies through an increased focus on efficiency and alternative energy sources. There are a number of incubator projects underway in the region to support the development of solar, wind, biofuel and geothermal industries. By July 2009, CPWDC, through a partnership with the Pennsylvania College of Technology and Pennsylvania State University, will have useful data to evaluate the local job opportunities on a per well basis for activity in the Marcellus Shale.

As a data-driven organization, CPWDC will utilize its internal Research Department to examine changing or emerging industry and occupational trends. Anecdotal information from industry partnerships will be supplemented with historical, current and forecasted data from public sources such as Pennsylvania's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) and proprietary data tools like Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc. (EMSI), Decision Data, and Monster Government Solutions.

In order to position the PA CareerLinks for the increased demand for services, CPWDC will develop a Recovery Act Awareness Campaign that is based around the key workforce investment system priorities. Using strategies such as the "Here to Help" events and various media outlets, CPWDC will inform the public of the opportunities available in their communities, the types of training that will address skill gaps, and the services to support employment and training through the PA CareerLinks. The uniform, accurate and timely dissemination of information across the region will explain the Recovery Act benefits to job seekers and employers and focus on Green Jobs and service sector support within the industry priorities of Construction, Energy, Health Care and Manufacturing.

**5. What strategies are in place to address the Governor's priorities, the LWIA's priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through the analysis of the LWIA's economy and labor market?**

CPWDC's *Guiding Principles for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Funds* can be summarized by three broad themes. First, Recovery Act funds will be treated as separate, unique and limited funding that supplements WIA formula funding. CPWDC will maximize funding with the goal to provide quality services that will benefit as many eligible individuals as possible. Second, all Recovery Act funded activities will be linked to the identified industry priorities and driven by the Region's employers. Third, the funds will be used to support an increased emphasis on training along a continuum of "stackable" skill attainment

opportunities, ranging from work experience for youth participating in the summer youth program, to basic skill development, to workplace readiness assessments and soft skills training for low-skill job seekers, to industry-specific credentials, to classroom training, to on-the-job training for dislocated workers.

As a result of the Recovery Act funding, CPWDC will be able to serve an increased number of workers in need. Within the summer youth program, CPWDC expects to at least double the number of eligible low-income youth with barriers to employment that receive services. While the majority will participate in the summer-only component, out-of-school youth who require additional services will receive transition services beyond the summer youth experience in order to connect them to additional services, such as intensive case management, job training, workplace readiness activities, mentoring and support services that may be offered through the WIA Youth program or through other community partners.

In 2005, the Central PA CareerLinks implemented sweeping policy changes, developed in conjunction with CPWDC, geared toward increasing the number of individuals enrolled in Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. CPWDC recognized that the sequence of service (Core, Intensive and Training) intent of the Workforce Investment Act was not designed to hold customers back from moving rapidly to the level of service that may be necessary for them to secure employment. As a result of those changes, the Central Workforce Investment Area's PA CareerLink staff enrolled more adults and dislocated workers than any other area in Pennsylvania between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008, while meeting all performance measures. Within this context, the Central PA CareerLinks are positioned to further increase the number of individuals served with Recovery Act funding. WIA Title I partners will work closely with the Bureau of Workforce Development Partners (BWDP) staff to streamline the process for serving unemployment compensation (UC) claimants as the PREP program is expected to serve an additional 50,000 claimants statewide. PREP or the Profile ReEmployment Program is Pennsylvania's version of the federally mandated Worker Profiling and Re-employment Service system. PREP is designed to identify claimants who are most likely to exhaust unemployment compensation benefits and may need assistance to find a new job. CPWDC is investigating how data from PREP can be used to target activities and services to groups of UC claimants with similar occupational and industrial experiences.

In this economy, it is likely that an increased number of Adult and Dislocated Worker customers will require some level of skill training to increase their employability. The availability of training funds using WIA formula grants has been limited due to the costs of staffing and infrastructure across the nine-county region. Unless absolutely necessary for the delivery of services, Recovery Act funds will not be used for staffing or infrastructure that will not be sustainable outside the Recovery Plan. CPWDC will target 65% of the Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide a continuum of skill attainment opportunities. Within each of the four industry priorities (Construction, Energy, Health Care and Manufacturing), CPWDC will identify skill attainment pathways based on job seekers' experiences and education level. Training will focus on the level of skills training that will increase a customer's likelihood of employment. For example, some job seekers may need basic skills training to prepare for entry level employment, others may require short-term training resulting in a specific industry-recognized credential, and others may require a traditional classroom training experience to enter a new career.

In order for PA CareerLink staff to navigate the training continuum, CPWDC will provide relevant training to staff to increase their skills in providing career development in an economic downturn to connect job seekers to employment opportunities that may not be realized in the short-term. As Adults, including low-income and low-skill adults, and Dislocated Workers access services, CPWDC will work with the PA CareerLink staff to establish a triage system for moving them quickly and appropriately through the system, including identifying when a person is ready for work or education. WorkKeys<sup>®</sup> assessments will be required for all participants in order to gauge their preparedness for a career or training program.

The Central PA CareerLinks are prepared to serve a dual customer approach to meet the skill needs of employers and the needs of under-skilled adults. Each local PA CareerLink has an inter-agency and cross-functional Business Service Team (BST) that focuses on serving employer customers. A Regional BST, which includes CPWDC, contractor and state managers, oversees and coordinates the local BSTs and sets the strategy and goals for improving business services. BSTs will be charged with rapidly

identifying regional employers that are hiring or ramping up to hire and conveying that information to the staff case managing job seekers and CPWDC in order to identify opportunities for customized training or on-the-job training that will lead to employment. The local PA CareerLinks currently use an integrated approach to job development for TANF customers. CPWDC is exploring options to increase job development, career coaching and employment “support groups” for cohorts of Adults and Dislocated Workers with similar backgrounds, experiences and/or career goals.

In order to maximize services, the continuum of skill attainment activities must be broad and easily customized based on the varying needs of job seekers. As individuals move through the triage system, the focus will be on maximizing employment opportunities while minimizing time to completion. The stimulus intent of the Recovery Act funds is focused on increased access to training and supportive services to enable individuals to gain or enhance their skills and **quickly** rejoin the workforce in high growth, high demand jobs. Therefore, individuals must be assessed based on their current skills, their long-term career goal and then on the appropriate workforce activities along the continuum of skill attainment. The continuum will include a variety of activities including referrals to adult education for individuals lacking a high school diploma or GED, Career Readiness Certificates powered by WorkKeys<sup>®</sup>, pre-employment credential linked to employer endorsement, postsecondary education with an increased emphasis on partnerships with institutions of higher education including community colleges, registered apprenticeships, work experiences and “gap” activities if employment is not available immediately upon completion of the training program. In 2009, CPWDC and the local PA CareerLinks successfully piloted a pre-employment program for the Construction industry. Endorsed by local employers, the program combined WorkKeys<sup>®</sup> assessments with job readiness activities (e.g., resume writing, interviewing, career coaching) and industry-recognized curriculum. Upon successful completion of the five-week program, graduates were invited to a networking fair to discuss employment opportunities. Models for similar programs focused on Energy, Health Care and Manufacturing are currently being developed. Policies and procedures have been developed to provide needs related payments and supportive services to qualifying Adult and Dislocated Worker customers to ensure that they can successfully complete training while supporting themselves and their families.

In evaluating the PA CareerLink capacity for increased demand, CPWDC will explore all options, such as partnerships within local communities to augment facility space, including classrooms and computer labs, hours of operation and staff support. It is CPWDC's intent to use the best resources for delivering services and explore opportunities to expand partnerships beyond the current PA CareerLink partners. PA CareerLinks will act as a referral network to connect job seekers to services that cannot take place within a CareerLink facility or are already sponsored by other organizations, such as registered apprenticeships or adult education services or additional support services.

Finally, CPWDC recognizes that the workforce funds made available through the Recovery Act represent only a fraction of the total funding intended to help the economy recover and grow. Therefore, CPWDC will actively evaluate other opportunities available through the Recovery Act, including but not limited to weatherization, highway and bridge construction, environmental activities, housing, child care and health care. CPWDC will monitor the [recovery.pa.gov](http://recovery.pa.gov) website to identify activities that may lead to employment opportunities and routinely engage with other funding recipients.

**6. Describe innovative service delivery strategies the LWIA has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality, achieve better integration or meet other key LWIA goals.**

Using data and workforce information to guide strategic planning and service delivery, CPWDC has developed *Guiding Principles for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Funds* and designed a *Customer Flow Model*, a *Recovery Act Training Guide for the Central PA CareerLinks* and identified the *Recovery Act Industry Priorities*. Each component will be utilized to ensure that the Region's program design and implementation align to the intent of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The *Customer Flow Model* and the *Recovery Act Training Guide* have been designed to move customers through the system while meeting their individual needs and goals. The model outlines eligibility criteria, efforts to continually link job seekers and employers throughout the service period, referral to partner programs such as Title II Adult Basic Education and the use of the WorkKeys® career readiness assessments to facilitate the proper placement of individuals in training opportunities. These essential program models will be frequently evaluated and reviewed with PA CareerLink staff so that they are continually informed and provided with tools and resources needed to effectively provide job seekers with realistic career development strategies and appropriate and available training options.

Industry Partnership Project Managers throughout the region have been convened to assist in the identification of key skill areas and in-demand occupations. CPWDC will be requesting input from the region's employers throughout the implementation of the Recovery Plan so that the region remains proactive in meeting employer needs, while providing the workforce with skills to improve their job opportunities in new industries or occupations.

The Central Region has convened the Recovery Skills Network, which is a group of institutions of higher education including community colleges and career and technical centers. CPWDC is utilizing this network as a means to catalogue existing open enrollment availability and capacity for customized or cohort training programs related to the *Recovery Act Industry Priorities*. Training providers are being encouraged to incorporate "green" into traditional training programs. The Recovery Skills Network will also provide valuable information to guide the development of additional training programs to meet the needs of the region's employers and the region's workforce.

The statewide Eligible Training Provider list continues to be utilized for programs available to Adults and Dislocated Workers eligible for training assistance funding. In addition, CPWDC is prepared to develop and release RFPs for training programs along the skill continuum when demand for trainings exceeds current capacities or if training programs currently offered are not sufficient to meet the training requirements for identified high priority occupations. A gap analysis of current offerings is currently underway. For skill areas where programs do not currently exist, where open enrollment slots are very limited or which demand customized or cohort programs, CPWDC will develop protocols for contracting with training providers to expand the capacity while strategically managing the capacity as not to supply the market with more workers than can be absorbed into employment.

The Central Region is actively evaluating and exploring options for the development of PA CareerLink-based programs, cohort programs and individualized programs and focusing on identifying opportunities for customized job training to specifically link training to employers. A Customer Training Interest Tracking Form implemented in each of the local PA CareerLinks will aid in the development of cohort training opportunities. In an effort to increase service levels and develop a workforce for emerging occupations, there will be an initiative to develop targeted marketing of programs to identified dislocated workers who possess foundational skills but are in need of skill-oriented training for job readiness in order to return to employment. With the projected increase in individuals accessing training programs and the potential for expansion of innovative training delivery mechanisms, CPWDC is exploring options (e.g., partnerships within local communities), to address potential capacity issues, such as the need for classroom space or computer labs. Effective and quality service delivery may require expanding partnerships beyond the current PA CareerLink facilities and partners.

As part of the summer work experience for youth, a variety of worksites, including non-profit, government and community-based agencies and private employers, have been secured. The work experiences will provide eligible youth with employability skills and exposure to potential career opportunities.

**7. Describe the LWIB's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the investment of WIA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources.**

Increasing training access will begin with a comprehensive campaign to inform job seekers and employers of the opportunities that are available through ARRA. The regional campaign includes, but is not limited to, "Here to Help" sessions, targeted media releases to capitalize on opportunities to explain the Recovery Act benefits, outreach at job fairs and chamber events and through PA CareerLink Employer Services Representatives, engaging all Industry Partnership employers, targeted outreach to individuals who have received Rapid Response services and branding the WIA summer youth services as *SEE Central Pennsylvania* to recruit worksites and youth participants.

CPWDC's goal is to maximize funding by providing quality services that will benefit as many eligible individuals as possible. The Central Region will curtail the current policy requirement for participants to pay for their first semester of multi-semester training. This policy change will be effective for all WIA eligible and ARRA eligible individuals seeking training. A \$6,000 cap, previously instituted for ITAs, will remain the same for WIA and ARRA eligible training opportunities in order to maintain consistency between funding streams. However, special consideration may be given for training programs which exceed the \$6,000 cap, if the resulting occupation has the potential to provide wages above the Region's annual self-sufficiency rate (currently \$30,460). The Central Region is actively pursuing cohort programs, on-the-job training, customized job training, and fast-track programs which compress programs that are traditionally longer than one year into training that can be completed in less than 12 months, to meet the varying needs of the region's employers and the skill levels of the workforce. CPWDC's intent is to fully expend training funds by June 30, 2011.

The *Customer Flow Model* and the *Recovery Act Training Guide* have been designed to help PA CareerLink staff identify and provide customers with access to training opportunities. Individuals seeking services beyond those offered at the core level will be required to take the WorkKeys® assessments in Reading for Information, Applied Mathematics and Locating Information. Additional WorkKeys® assessments (e.g., Observation, Applied Technology and Teamwork) may be required for certain occupations. The scores obtained on the assessments will be an indicator of the individual's preparedness for work or training. An individual's training plan may involve the development of soft skills, which can be accomplished through participation in workshops provided by the PA CareerLinks.

The Recovery Skills Network, a group of institutions of higher education, community colleges and career and technical centers will be utilized to catalogue existing open enrollment availability and capacity for customized or cohort training programs so that CareerLink staff can enroll individuals into training programs that will provide higher skill levels while maximizing Recovery Act funding. Industry Partnership Project Managers throughout the region are assisting in the identification of key skill areas and in-demand occupations. Their input will be utilized throughout the implementation of the Recovery Plan so that the region remains proactive in meeting employer needs, while providing the workforce with skills to improve their job opportunities in new industries or occupations. Additionally, the Industry Partnership Project Managers will be asked to provide input on the appropriateness of utilizing curricula developed to meet incumbent worker training needs for adults and dislocated workers. For example, if an industry partnership has identified a diversity training program for incumbent workers, the same course, if offered prior to employment, may make a job seeker more marketable to employers.

#### **8. Describe the LWIA's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need.**

CPWDC is planning for full expenditure of ARRA youth funding during the summer of 2009. At a minimum, CPWDC plans to serve approximately 1,000 youth with ARRA youth funding. If constraints caused by limited worksite availability, difficulty in recruiting eligible youth or other factors beyond the control of CPWDC and its contractors make it difficult for full expenditure, up to 25% of funds may be used to provide summer experiences during the summer of 2010 or to provide "summer" experiences for out-of-school youth or after school programs for in-school youth during non-summer months. CPWDC has submitted a waiver requesting the ability to use ARRA funding to provide summer-type work experiences during the school year. Youth participating in these activities would be held only to the work readiness measure as required under the Recovery Act. Pending DOL's approval of the waiver to extend serving

out-of-school youth with ARRA funds through March 30, 2010, youth will be given an extended employment experience and additional services that could include connections to the ABLE Title II providers for GED completion and/or adult basic education, obtaining a WorkKeys® Career Readiness Certificate and Individual Training Accounts.

At a minimum, during the summer of 2009, CPWDC plans to provide summer employment experiences for at least 700 youth through two separate programs. Approximately 100 youth, ages 14 and 15, will be served through short-term (60 hours) summer programs which blend academic and service learning components. These programs will be operated through local school districts and an intermediate unit in conjunction with various community agencies. The majority of the program will focus on classroom instruction to provide youth with necessary supports throughout the summer months to promote academic readiness for the upcoming school year. This component is intended to help providers introduce real-world relevancy into core academic subjects through the integration of the PA Academic Standards for Career Education and Work (CEW). This model provides participants with a mixture of academic skill building, post secondary exposure, career exploration and work readiness. Activities that focus on increasing awareness of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) careers, Green Jobs and entrepreneurialism are also encouraged. Youth will participate in teams to develop projects that provide active service to communities or individuals, reflect service and learning goals, and reinforce academic standards as taught in the Academic Bridge component. These hands-on projects can range in duration from one day to several days, or could be integrated throughout the entire program. Projects will be highly visible to the public and will address a legitimate community need. The service learning component should include not only the “work”, but also the opportunity to learn about the organization that is benefitting from the “work” and the “work’s” impact on the community.

The remaining 600 youth, ages 16 to 24, will be engaged in the SEE Central Pennsylvania program, operated through the local PA CareerLinks. The program will offer case management, enrichment, assessment and worksite placements for all youth. Worksites will be with the for-profit, non-profit and government sectors and will offer a minimum of 25 hours and maximum of 35 hours of work per week. Worksites are being developed for two types of employment experiences:

- Team-based projects for youth ages 16 to 20; six youth will be placed on a team; the program provider will provide one team supervisor per team.
- Individual placements at worksites for youth ages 18 to 24; one or a limited number of youth may be placed at a worksite; supervision is provided by the worksite.

In recruiting worksites, CPWDC and the PA CareerLinks have used a variety of networks, including but not limited to Industry Partnership employers, community organizations with a particular emphasis on youth serving organizations, municipal and county governments and school districts. In the approval process, worksites will be evaluated on a number of criteria, including the meaningful nature of the work and the skill development potential for the placed youth.

To enhance each youth’s summer employment experience, providers are responsible for incorporating an array of enrichment activities. Such activities can include and are not limited to: career exploration such as employer tours, use of WorkKeys® assessments and corresponding WIN courseware, financial literacy, exposure to Green Jobs, life skills and work readiness, adult basic skills and GED preparation, and activities designed to introduce youth to postsecondary education opportunities. Enrichment activities will be age appropriate, youth-driven where feasible, have demonstrated success, and to the extent possible, be consistently provided across the region. A minimum of 30 to 35 hours of enrichment activities must be incorporated into the seven (7) week summer employment experience.

For both the younger and older youth programs, participants will earn stipends (14-15 year olds) and wages (16-24 year olds) based on their actual participation in the classroom and worksite activities. Provision of supportive services for participants is crucial for a successful summer employment experience. Supportive services can include, but are not limited to, transportation, health screenings, drug tests, clothing, other materials required to successfully participate on the job and incentives for

attendance and participation. Supportive service payments to youth may differ based on their individual placements or on the team on which they are placed.

**9. What policies and strategies does the LWIA have in place to ensure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L.107-288) (38 USC 4215), priority of service is provided to veterans (and certain spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the Department of Labor?**

The Central PA CareerLinks utilize a comprehensive *Customer Information Form* to gather individual customer data upon point of entry, including determining whether or not a person is a veteran or an eligible spouse of a veteran. PA CareerLink staff review this form with the customer to assist in the development of an individualized work or training plan. Veterans are immediately referred to the site's Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) or Disabled Veterans Employment Representative for Disabled Veterans (DVOP) to determine eligibility for services. If a participant is referred for Adult/Dislocated Worker services, they will be asked again whether or not they are a veteran or a spouse of a veteran.

Written policies and procedures have been developed and PA CareerLink staff members have been provided training to ensure compliance with the Veterans Act. The written policy clearly specifies that once an individual is identified as a veteran or an eligible spouse of a veteran they are entitled to priority of service under any job training program if they otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for participation in the specified program. The PA CareerLink Veteran Representative provides periodic presentations to other PA CareerLink staff to ensure continually compliance with the priority of service under the Veterans Act.

Adult and Dislocated Worker staff will track the number of participants within this category, as they are tracking the number of low income individuals they are serving. PA CareerLink staff are being instructed to coordinate with the DVOPs and LVERs in each site to ensure that individuals are properly identified and referred to services, including linkages to the youth summer employment program. For example, the new provision for qualified spouses to receive priority of service may require assistance from the Veterans staff to ensure that qualified spouses are identified properly. The criterion for eligible spouses is written on the tracking form for reference.

If there is a need to prioritize the order in which participants are served, staff are being instructed to serve the Veterans and Eligible Spouses first, and then the Low Income Non-Veterans.

**10. Describe the LWIA's strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services delivered through the LWIA's PA CareerLink delivery system are accessible to and will meet the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, migrant and seasonal farm workers, women, minorities, individuals training for nontraditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, limited English proficiency individuals, and people with disabilities).**

In order for each PA CareerLink site to be certified, it must pass the ADA requirements of accessibility granted through the Office of Equal Opportunity within the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. Equal Opportunity posters are clearly marked in entry ways and in staff rooms. An Equal Opportunity and Complaint Policy is included with the Region's ARRA Policy so that staff have detailed compliance instructions.

The Office of Equal Opportunity is conducting on-site visits to assess EO and ADA understanding, as well as, compliance. These reviews consist of interviewing individual staff members as to their responsibilities in serving participants and ensure that new and long-time staff know how to operate the ADA compliant equipment in each Career Resource Area.

In the Central PA CareerLinks, three bilingual staff are available to assist limited English proficiency individuals. In addition, the Language Line is being used to communicate and interpretation services will be procured as necessary.

The Central PA CareerLinks are focused on assisting diverse customers, including TANF and other low income individuals because the TANF funded EARN programs share facilities, workshops and staff with other PA CareerLink partners. Staff responsible for case management are trained to address issues that present as barriers to employment or training for low income customers.

Since priority use of Recovery Act funds for Adults is for services to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals, CPWDC has developed a Recovery Determination Sheet to allow the appropriate PA CareerLink staff to record TANF eligibility, public assistance and family income for each job seeker. Participants will be asked to specify their family income counting back six months from the date of registration. Staff will utilize the income levels of 70% of the Lower Level Standard Income Level (LLSIL) effective March 26, 2009. This process is not intended to deny Adults who are not low income or low skill access to training funds; however, if the demand for Recovery Adult training funds exceeds what the Region can provide, those low income and low skills individuals will be given priority.

To ensure CareerLink staff are able to effectively serve low skill individuals, CPWDC has purchased licenses to provide WorkKeys<sup>®</sup> assessments and WIN courseware, the corresponding software providing remedial training for the skill levels aligned with WorkKeys<sup>®</sup>, to any individual accessing services in the PA CareerLink. The PA CareerLink staff have been utilizing the WIN courseware that is available at each location to assist individuals with low skills meet the basic skill levels required for the occupation or training they are interested in pursuing. This tool provides staff with an indication of whether or not the individual needs brush-up in a skill area such as reading for information, locating information or applied mathematics where their skill levels are tracked by the database in WIN. For individuals that do not possess a GED or high school diploma, a referral is made to the ABLE Title II partner for assistance in obtaining their GED. CareerLink staff has indicated in a recent survey that they are serving increasing numbers of individuals without a GED or high school diploma, making these services even more critical during this economic downturn.

CPWDC is investigating methods for educating low-income individuals about the benefits of Recovery Act funding. Specifically, CPWDC intends to target individuals receiving Food Stamps, individuals who have exhausted their unemployment benefits and individuals who are underemployed either due to a lack of skills or the economy.

Adults will qualify for needs-related payments if they are enrolled in a program of training services under the Recovery Act and are unemployed and do not qualify for, or have ceased qualifying for, unemployment compensation or any other form of public assistance. Needs-related payments are meant to ensure that Adults have the means to assist in paying for training related expenses such as childcare and transportation costs while enrolled in a training program. The maximum needs-related payment that an Adult Recovery training participant may receive is \$2,600 in a 12-month period. This amount was determined by estimating a participant receiving \$20 a day for six months, based on a five-day school week, and requires full participation. Additionally, Adults may be eligible for up to \$250 in a 12-month period for support services to help cover training expenses that are not included in the cost of tuition, such as certifications, tools, uniforms, and books. Similarly, Dislocated Workers will qualify for the maximum needs-related payment and support services payments described above for Adults if they are unemployed, have ceased to qualify for unemployment compensation or trade readjustment assistance under TAA or NAFTA-TAA; and have been enrolled in a training program by the end of the 13th week after participant's recent layoff that resulted in a determination of the worker's eligibility as a dislocated worker.

**11. Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the local level to award grants and contracts for activities under title I of WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts.**

Upon notification of the receipt of ARRA funds, CPWDC pursued a competitive bid process for awarding the funds to support a summer youth program. Two separate Requests for Proposals (RFP) were issued. One RFP was issued to procure a contractor that could organize and manage a region-wide program and serve as the employer of record for an estimated 600 youth between the ages of 16 and 24. The provider will place youth in team or individual work experiences and provide appropriate enrichment activities to enhance the experience. CPWDC awarded the contract to a joint collaborative between Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc. (CSO) and Tuscarora Intermediate Unit (TIU). These agencies have extensive experience in serving at-risk youth as they receive Workforce Investment Act funding as the current competitively procured contractors for the year-round youth program.

A second RFP was released to secure multiple community-based providers to offer short-term summer experiences that blend academic and career development curricula with service learning experiences for 14 and 15 year olds. Upon evaluation of the proposals, CPWDC awarded three separate contracts to East Lycoming School District, Economics PA in conjunction with the Shamokin Area School District, and the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit (TIU) Education Services. Together, these three contractors will serve an estimated 100 youth.

Using a defined scoring mechanism, which was published with the RFP, all youth providers were approved by the CPWDC Youth Council and the Local Elected Officials Board and ratified by the full Workforce Investment Board on May 15, 2009.

In order to provide the broadest range of skill attainment opportunities to the many populations described above, CPWDC will explore additional ways to partner with institutions of higher education and other eligible training providers. After assessing available training opportunities and determining where gaps exist, CPWDC will issue a Request for Training to build a list of providers that have the capacity and expertise to develop cohort or customized training courses for multiple individuals to be trained for in-demand occupations. As cohorts are identified, or as customized training opportunities are linked to hiring employers, CPWDC will use the list to contract with institutions of higher education and other eligible training providers to offer additional training. These contracts will be used to provide non-existing or additional training capacity and will not be used to compete with locally available and accessible training programs that lead to the same employment outcome.

## **12. How will the LWIB ensure that ARRA funds will supplement, not supplant, existing resources?**

CPWDC's *Guiding Principles for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Funds* have been published to provide direction to CPWDC staff, PA CareerLink Operators, PA CareerLink staff and subcontractors, including training providers and employers accessing ARRA funding. The guiding principles specifically outlined to ensure that ARRA funds supplement, not supplant, existing resources include:

- CPWDC will brand and market training opportunities made possible by ARRA funding, to internal customers and external interests, as unique and separate from other WIA funds in order to highlight ARRA funding.
- The Central Region has established a target of 65% of Recovery Act Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to be utilized to supplement the Region's training budget in order to provide a continuum of skill attainment opportunities that are "stackable". For example, workplace readiness assessments, soft skills, industry-specific credentials, classroom training, customized training, on the job training and work experience.
- Unless absolutely necessary for the delivery of services, ARRA funds will not be used in the Central Region for staffing or infrastructure that will not be sustainable outside the prescribed Recovery Plan funding period.
- ARRA specific expenditures will be tracked separately from WIA Title I funds. Fiscal transparency, with an established mechanism to track ARRA expenditures, by program and by

subcontractor, including classroom and on the job training contracts, will be utilized to ensure that ARRA funding supplements, but does not supplant, existing resources.

In addition to the *Guiding Principles for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Funds*, a Customer Training Interest Tracking Form has been implemented in each of the Central Region PA CareerLinks to assist in evaluating customer eligibility and determining the appropriate funding source for each individual, which will provide a valuable tool to ensure that ARRA funding and WIA funding are spent simultaneously. The Recovery Act funding allows CPWDC to substantially expand its training budget and allow additional resources for classroom, customized and on the job training.

For youth services, the Central Pennsylvania year-round WIA youth program will continue to operate simultaneously with the enhanced summer employment experiences funded through the Recovery Act. CPWDC plans to increase the number of youth that are placed in work experiences at least 5-fold over current program availability. Additionally, career exploration and work experience will be offered to a younger youth population which allows for an expansion of program content that has been previously unavailable to this age group.

**13. Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the Local Area has in place to ensure not only compliance with the laws, regulations and guidance but also with the intent and spirit of ARRA.**

Established as the fiscal agent for the Central Region Workforce Investment Act and ARRA funds, CPWDC is responsible for overseeing, measuring, monitoring and determining compliance with implementation, operations and performance requirements. In order to ensure that quality of services meets expectations, CPWDC is developing ARRA policies to guide its subcontractors and vendors. Much of the information found in CPWDC's ARRA policies are derived from U.S. Department of Labor Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs), Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, including the Workforce Guidance Memos that are regularly produced and provided to the local WIAs to guide in implementation of ARRA funding.

One member of CPWDC staff is designated as the Quality Assurance Coordinator, and is responsible for evaluating the compliance and quality of services delivered across the nine-county Workforce Investment Area. It is the intention of CPWDC to perform the following monitoring duties on a regular basis:

- Assess the compliance of subcontractors against ARRA Policies, budgets and the performance expectations set by CPWDC and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. This will be accomplished through measures that include on-site visits, record reviews, reviews of customer flow reports and outcome records.
- Ensure subcontractor compliance with administrative and fiscal requirements.
- Monitor employers and training providers holding training agreements with CPWDC.
- Provide technical assistance as necessary to ensure full compliance with the letter and intent of the Recovery Act.

CPWDC plans to hire at least one temporary youth monitor to assist with the SEE Central Pennsylvania summer youth program. At a minimum, the temporary youth monitor will be responsible for sample case record monitoring and on-site visitations prior to and during youth participation at worksites. CPWDC will develop monitoring tools which will be utilized by both CPWDC and the subcontractors to review all worksites for compliance prior to and during the program. Subcontractors are required to provide regular programmatic monitoring of the worksites and teams to ensure that all worksites are providing meaningful experiences and supervisors, team leaders and youth are receiving the necessary supports.

Monitoring activities will focus on three (3) distinct areas. Compliance monitoring will examine the guidelines established by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, CPWDC's *Guiding Principles for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Funds* as well as standing Title I eligibility requirements.

Quality monitoring will focus on the “spirit” of the Recovery Act and on sharing superior ways to deliver a higher quality product. CPWDC will seek out best practices and success stories along the way. Since ARRA is uncharted territory, it will be essential to note best practices on an ongoing basis and share the information throughout the Region. This area is where the “spirit” of ARRA will be noted. Finally, performance monitoring will evaluate how well the Recovery Act funding was used to prepare and/or move participants into demand-driven training, post-secondary education and/or employment. The ultimate goal of any and all training must be a recognized skills certification, academic credential and/or employment. Therefore, CPWDC will utilize CWDS and spreadsheets to track the above participant outcomes. In addition, participant characteristics, such as low income or Veterans, will be tracked and that information will be current and available at all times. Actual performance goals have not yet been set at the local level.

#### Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

Each ARRA participant’s training contract will be reviewed by CPWDC before it is approved for funding. Every month a 10% random sample of files will be reviewed.

#### Youth

Each Youth Subcontractor will conduct weekly on-site monitoring of Youth worksites. The CPWDC Youth Monitor will conduct a broader oversight of the program through on-site visits and file reviews.

#### Fiscal

Administrative expenses are to be kept to a minimum and every dollar of Recovery Act funding will be reported during publicly advertised meetings of the CPWDC Executive Committee or full Workforce Investment Board meeting. CPWDC’s Financial Manager and Quality Assurance Coordinator will conduct on-site fiscal monitoring of each subcontractor at least twice each program year until Recovery Act funds are expended.

#### Training Providers

Training Providers will be monitored for contract compliance and EO compliance. A risk assessment basis will determine the frequency of visits:

- (a) Time lapse since last monitoring visit;
- (b) Change in personnel since original agreement with CPWDC was signed;
- (c) Share of contracted Recovery Act funds;
- (d) Number of complaints issued in last calendar year; and
- (e) Special contracts for customized or cohort programs

#### OJT Employers

All employers securing a training agreement with CPWDC for the first time will be monitored for contract compliance, as well as for Equal Opportunity Compliance.

### **14. Identify the performance indicators and goals established to track progress toward meeting strategic goals and implementing the LWIA’s vision for the workforce investment system.**

CPWDC has developed the following guiding principles for the implementation of the Recovery Act in Central Pennsylvania. The principles will provide direction to CPWDC staff, CareerLink Operators, CareerLink staff and subcontractors including training providers and employers that are accessing funding. In planning for the full expenditure of Recovery funds by June 2011, CPWDC will evaluate all activities against the following principles to ensure alignment with the “stimulus” intent of the funds.

1. Brand and market Recovery funds, for internal customers and external interests, uniquely and separately from other WIA funds in order to highlight the non-recurring nature of the funding.
2. Focus on skill attainment as it relates to increasing opportunities for finding employment.

3. Drive all investments in program development, training and other activities with data from the region's key industries, including the industry partnerships.
4. Maximize funding with the goal to provide quality services that will benefit as many eligible individuals as possible.
5. Unless absolutely necessary for the delivery of services, funds will not be used for staffing or infrastructure that will not be sustainable outside the Recovery Plan.
6. Ensure that all services increase individuals' opportunities for sustainable employment.
7. Target 65% of the Recovery Act Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide a continuum of skill attainment opportunities that are "stackable". For example, workplace readiness assessments, soft skills, industry-specific credentials, classroom training, customized training, on the job training and work experience.
8. Simplify the processes to determine eligibility, enroll participants and maintain customer information.
9. Require the use of assessment products, specifically WorkKeys results to determine an individual's likelihood of successfully completing training and securing employment in their career of choice.
10. Use the best resources for delivering services and explore opportunities to expand partnerships beyond the current PA CareerLink partners.

Additionally, in recognizing the high profile nature of the Recovery Act funds, CPWDC will ensure that internal controls, contractor performance requirements and service delivery plans are in accordance with the fiscal and programmatic transparency. Competitive procurement processes will be used where appropriate and necessary. CPWDC will establish a mechanism for tracking Recovery Act expenditures, by program and by subcontractor, including classroom and on-the-job training contracts. Additionally, CPWDC will establish a protocol and tracking mechanism for Recovery Act participants, their success in the programs and outcomes including employment and training participation.

Because of the transparency expectations surrounding the expenditures and outcomes regarding Recovery Act funding, CPWDC has added a section to its website [www.cpwdc.org](http://www.cpwdc.org) to highlight all Recovery Act related activity, including contracts and performance. The monthly accounting and expenditure of funds will be incorporated into the information presented on the website. Within 90 days of expenditures, all Recovery Act disbursements will be approved at a publicly advertised meeting of the Local Elected Officials/Workforce Investment Board and/or Executive Committee. Currently check registers are provided to the Chairman of the Workforce Investment Board and the Chairman of CPWDC's Audit/Finance Committee within two days of issuance. This check registry process will continue and an expenditure report detailing expenditures for ARRA related expenses will be added for their review and approval within two days of drawing down ARRA funds. CPWDC will keep detailed records of their electronic approval of the registers.

CPWDC has worked diligently over the course of the last two years to increase the number of individuals being served in intensive services under the Workforce Investment Act. The same expectation will be in place for serving Recovery Act customers. The expectation of CPWDC is that all federal performance measures will be met and CPWDC will monitor the levels quarterly as they become available. For the last five years, Workforce Investment Act Title I Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker performance measures have been met or exceeded.

The Central Region has also been successful in serving the fourth highest amount of youth in the Commonwealth through the year-round WIA Youth program while meeting and exceeding all Common Measures. By working with the same contractors for the majority of the summer program, CPWDC anticipates similar successes. Because youth ages 14 to 24 will be served through two different

programs, CPWDC will develop a Work Readiness Tool for the programs which will serve the 14 and 15 year olds, and another tool for the programs which serve the 16 to 24 year olds.

The Work Readiness tool for programs serving 14 and 15 year olds is based on five indicators: 1) Individual evaluation; 2) Career development evaluation; 3) Personal goal setting; 4) Goal achievement specific to the program curricula; and 5) Evaluation of youth's service learning experience. Youth must achieve at least four of the five indicators to be meet the work readiness measure. Each indicator will have its own corresponding instrument for evaluation. As an example, the Individual evaluation is based on a pre- and post review of work-based skills and behavior including attendance, attitude, following directions, respect and teamwork. Participants must show at least a ten-point gain on the individual evaluation to achieve that indicator.

The Work Readiness tool for programs serving 16 to 24 year olds is based on two main indicators. A pre and post test, based on content from work-based curricula, has been developed. Participants must score at least 80% on the post test. The Readiness indicator is also based on the participant's successful work maturity evaluation, which will be conducted by their worksite supervisor. Participants must score at least a level 3 out of 5 in all seven competency areas to be considered work ready. The competency measures include: punctuality, attendance, attitude, appearance, interpersonal relationships, task completion and timesheet completion. In order to meet the work readiness measure, youth must succeed in both the work-based curricula post-test and the work maturity evaluation.

CPWDC anticipates a gain in youth work readiness in no less than 85% of all participants. CPWDC will monitor progress toward these goals through collecting monthly reports, analyzing persistence rates, conducting on-site quality assurance visits, and conducting case record and case note reviews.