



2023.09.19.A.1

Strategic Policy

Title:	Regional Planning Areas Strategic Policy
Adopted:	09/19/2023
Effective:	09/19/2023

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

A Regional Planning Area is made up of two or more local workforce development areas to improve workforce system alignment within larger economic development areas to support economic mobility, growth and prosperity.

The intended goals of establishing Regional Planning Areas across neighboring local workforce development areas include but are not limited to:

- Aligning workforce strategies to address the needs of shared industry sectors, employers and significant populations of job seekers.
- Addressing common labor shortages and worker skills gaps with aligned service strategies.
- Realizing system efficiencies through reducing resource costs (monetary, time or other).

Beyond establishing formal Regional Planning Areas as defined in this policy, local workforce development areas are encouraged to engage in other partnership opportunities with the broader CareerSource Florida network that achieves these goals.

II. BACKGROUND

Public Law 113 – 128, The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), requires the state workforce development board to assist the Governor in developing, implementing and modifying a State Workforce Development Plan. Florida’s WIOA State Plan describes Florida’s strategy for supporting the publicly funded workforce system. WIOA Section 106 describes the process by which the Governor designates local workforce development areas within the state. Local areas are designated consistent with labor market areas in the state;

are consistent with regional economic development areas in the state; and have available the federal and non-federal resources necessary to effectively administer WIOA activities including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools.

The Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Act was signed into law in June 2021. The REACH Act addresses the evolving needs of Florida's economy by increasing the level of collaboration and cooperation among state businesses and education communities while improving training within and access to a more integrated workforce and education system for all Floridians. The law takes an integrated, collaborative approach to strengthen partnerships and enhance access to education, training and employment opportunities within and across key workforce, education and support services systems that are the backbone of Florida's comprehensive workforce development ecosystem.

In December 2021, the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors approved CareerSource Florida Policy 2021.12.09.A.1 – Comprehensive Employment, Education and Training Strategy. This strategic policy encourages local workforce development boards to use all allowable resources and to collaborate with all partners to develop innovative strategies that create simplified access to Florida's workforce system and provide excellent customer service for Florida's job seekers and businesses; focus on continuous improvement, strengthen partnerships to leverage shared resources and eliminate duplication of services; align programs and resources to meet local market demand in occupations that lead to self-sustaining jobs; and, implement data-driven accountability measures and quantifiable outcomes related to training programs, employment and services to Florida businesses.

On Feb. 23, 2023, the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors approved the Florida Workforce System Transformation Plan, a three-pillar plan directing the CareerSource Florida network to modernize the local workforce development board governance structure in the nation's third-largest state and better position the system to be more customer-centered, cost effective and responsive to meet workforce talent demands. The plan focuses on:

- Alignment and consolidation for local workforce development boards.
- System-wide improvements for improved customer consistency and better leveraging of public funds; and
- Regional planning to further promote workforce system alignment with education and economic development and optimize opportunities for regional growth.

The Governor subsequently affirmed the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors' recommendation to realign and consolidate local workforce development areas as outlined in the Florida Workforce System Transformation Plan.

III. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Florida Workforce System Transformation Plan directs the CareerSource Florida network to establish Regional Planning Areas. The requirements for Regional Planning Areas in this policy are established by WIOA, Florida law, and actions by the CareerSource Florida Board of Directors.

CareerSource Florida, in collaboration with the Governor's REACH Office, FloridaCommerce and local workforce development boards, shall develop recommendations to the Governor and state workforce development board for the designation of Regional Planning Areas for the state. Local workforce development boards may request designation as a Regional Planning Area by submitting the request and supporting documentation to the state workforce development board for consideration.

The state, after consultation with local workforce development boards and chief local elected officials for the Regional Planning Area, shall require the local workforce development boards and chief local elected officials within a planning region to include the shared Regional Planning Area objectives, activities, and performance elements as a regional addendum to each local workforce development board's WIOA local plan. The state shall provide technical assistance and labor market data, as requested by local areas, to assist with such regional planning and subsequent service delivery efforts.

Regional Planning Area and local WIOA plans must align with Florida's WIOA Statewide Plan.

Requirements for Regional Planning Areas:

- Each local workforce development area must be part of a Regional Planning Area.
- Regional Planning Areas must include, at a minimum, two contiguous local workforce development areas within Florida.
- Regional Planning Areas shall have relevant relationships as evidenced by population centers, commuting patterns, industrial composition, location quotients, labor force conditions and geographic boundaries.
- Regional Planning Areas shall establish a shared regional service strategy with a defined goal.
- Regional planning areas shall establish administrative cost arrangements across local workforce development areas. Acceptable examples of administrative cost arrangements include but are not limited to shared staff, technology systems, or back-end administrative support tools.
- Chief Local Elected Officials in a new regional planning area **MUST** participate in the regional planning process that results in the inclusion of the shared regional objectives and initiatives as an addendum to each local workforce development board's WIOA plan.
- The regional plan must include a description of activities that result in the following items:
 - Establishment of regional service strategies using cooperative service delivery agreements that include but are not limited to:
 - Consistent eligibility standards and enrollment processes.
 - Common training and coordination of supportive service offerings.
 - Common technology tools and sharing of data within tools outside of Employ Florida.
 - Development and implementation of sector strategies for in-demand sectors or occupations.

- Collection and analysis of regional labor market data.
- Coordination of supportive services.
- Coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers.
- Establishment of agreement concerning how the regional planning area will collectively negotiate performance for the local workforce development areas or the planning region.

IV. AUTHORITIES

[Public Law 113-128, The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act \(WIOA\)](#)

[Chapter 445.003 – 445.007, Florida Statutes](#)

[Chapter 2021-164, Laws of Florida, The Reimagining Education and Career Help Act](#)

[CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2000.08.15.I.8D -- Certification of Local Workforce Development Boards](#)

[CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2020.02.20.A.1 – Board Governance and Leadership](#)

[CareerSource Florida Administrative Policy 094 – Local Workforce Development Area Designation](#)

[Consolidated Action Item – Reimagining Florida’s Workforce System](#)

V. RESOURCES

[Reimagining Florida’s Workforce System: A Three-Pillar Plan for Transformation](#)

[Future State Options Report](#)

[Background Research and Analysis Report](#)