

Orientation Guide for the Colorado Workforce Development Council

Updated October 2013



Colorado Workforce
Development Council

Introduction

As a [Colorado Workforce Development Council](#) (CWDC) member, you are part of a convening body for the state of Colorado that represents the interest of all communities relevant to economic vitality, education, and training, in support of and focused on the development of a well-trained workforce to meet the needs of business.

As a newly appointed State Workforce Council member, you join 50 other [appointees](#) given the responsibility for setting the strategic direction for the state workforce system. You were appointed to advise the Governor and state level leaders on ideas and policies that can create a rich environment for economic prosperity in Colorado.

In addition, as a member of the Council, you assume a critical leadership role in the local workforce system, building links between workforce development, economic development, education to implement an employer-driven workforce system that encourages local innovation and community partnerships.

The [CWDC Bylaws](#) state:

This Council shall serve as the convening body for the state of Colorado that represents the interests of all communities relevant to economic vitality, education, and training, in support of and focused on business.

The Council is responsible for setting the strategic direction for the state workforce system...will direct collaborative efforts, led by business representatives appointed from across the state of Colorado, in cooperation with the workforce system, education, and economic development groups, in an effort to create a rich environment for economic prosperity...

This Orientation Guide was prepared by Mary Russell and Peace Bransberger for the Colorado Workforce Development Council. Information for the Guide came from a variety of resources, including the National Association of Workforce Board who gave permission to use text and graphics from their publication, Workforce Investment Act 101, a Toolkit for Elected Officials.

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History of Employment and Training Programs

Government-sponsored employment and training programs date back to the “New Deal” legislation of the 1930s. Legislation such as the Wagner-Peyser Act (WP), Manpower Development Training Act (MDTA), Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) has defined the federal effort to reduce unemployment and to respond to cyclical and structural occurrences in the labor market. The basic thrust of federal efforts to date had been to train unemployed and economically disadvantaged persons for available jobs. During recessionary periods, federal, state and local employment and training efforts also undertook job creation activities, thereby assisting employers to expand with wage subsidies and customized training for the disadvantaged.

Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) were preceded by Private Industry Councils (PICs) which had a narrower function than the Boards. PICs were first created in 1978 under the Private Sector Initiative Program to increase private sector involvement in federal job training programs. Four years later, they became the key local governing bodies under the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982. Later legislation relating to the training and placement of welfare recipients, federal funding of vocational education and programs for dislocated workers invested PICs with additional oversight responsibilities. In 1998 the entire federal approach to workforce development was reformed under the Workforce Investment Act. In the process PICs were eliminated and Workforce Investment Boards were created.

The Workforce Investment Act

The Federal [Workforce Investment Act](#) of 1998 (WIA) ([plain version](#)) created a new comprehensive workforce investment system that is

- ***customer focused to help Americans access the tools they need to manage their careers through information and high quality services and***
- ***to help companies find the workers that they need to be successful.***

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The main goal of WIA was to overhaul and consolidate the fragmented system of US workforce development programs prior to 1998. It represented the first major job training reform in more than 15 years, replacing JTPA. The primary change that WIA made to JTPA was to mandate state and local workforce investment boards (LWIBs) and their core membership and functions. WIA requires each state to support a state-level workforce investment board.

The Workforce Investment Act is designed to improve the quality of the workforce, encourage career mobility, and improve business competitiveness through increased workforce productivity. WIA legislation has seven key principles:

- *Streamline the availability of services and information through a One-Stop system (workforce centers) where federal, state, and local workforce services are in one physical and virtual location.*
- *Ensure universal access to basic workforce services.*
- *Provide increased state and local flexibility to implement innovative and comprehensive workforce systems; changes are made regularly to respond quickly in a rapidly changing economic environment.*
- *Increase the accountability of the state, local councils, and contractors for appropriate use of tax dollars toward achieving successful performance outcomes. The system is based on clear, measurable indicators of success. Training providers must meet or exceed state and local council performance standards and results are public information.*
- *The system is driven by the demands of business and industry and based on the ever changing requirements of the workplace. Focusing on business needs creates a stronger, interactive role for employers and councils.*
- *Recognize the critical link between workforce development activities and the growth of the local economy.*
- *Work with employers to identify their workforce needs and empowering job seekers to move rapidly into employment by choosing services that best suit their needs.*

In 2011, US Department of Labor Secretary Hilda L. Solis established a vision for the Department of "good jobs for everyone." The Employment and Training Administration's (ETA's) workforce programs have a critical role to play in realizing the Secretary's vision of good jobs. ETA provides high quality employment assistance, labor market information, job training, and income support through the administration of the following programs: adults, dislocated workers, youth, and targeted populations authorized by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA).

Basis for Authority

The Workforce Investment Act creates an avenue for business to participate in the local delivery of Workforce Development Services. The principal vehicle for this is through Workforce Investment Board (WIBs) which are chaired by private sector members of the local community. This same legislation authorized the Governor to establish a workforce investment council ([Colorado 24-46.3-101](#)) to assist the Governor in the development of the State workforce investment plan and to carry out additional specified functions. Members were appointed to a State Workforce Council during the Owens' and the Ritter administrations.

- Governor Ritter's Colorado Jobs Cabinet issued a [report](#) in 2009 calling for an improved framework for strengthening Colorado's talent development pipeline and reforming the systems that support these efforts. This resulted in a new [Executive Order B-2010-012](#) in 2010 by Governor Ritter reconstituting the Colorado Workforce Development Council with the expectation that they think beyond the WIA requirements and envision a business-driven leadership body that will help think and act big to address gaps and deficiencies.

Role of the Colorado Workforce Development Council

The Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) advises the Governor and the Colorado Legislature on policy matters related to all programs and activities funded by the Workforce Investment Act. The CWDC has been engaged in creative alliances with industry, economic development, and education, which have helped to infuse over \$10 million into the workforce system to support the enrollment, training, and placement of the unemployed, under-employed, and incumbent workers into high-wage jobs. These partnerships reflect the critical importance of education, employment, and economic development to the State's edge and empower the system to be responsive to local issues.

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- Members of the state council are appointed by the Governor and nominations can come from business organizations, local workforce regions and others. The Council must have a business majority and a business chair plus representatives of state partner agencies, legislators, and labor organizations.
 - *Council members develop and approve the state WIA and Wagner-Peyser plan*
 - *Review and approve local plans*
 - *Provide comments on the annual Carl Perkins vocational Education Plan*
 - *Prepare the WIA annual report (delegated to staff)*
 - *Certify local workforce investment boards every two years (based on membership and performance accountability)*
 - *Develop alternate allocation formulas for distribution of WIA Adult and youth program formula funding to local regions, as needed*
 - *Designate local workforce areas as required by WIA*
 - *Develop linkages to coordinate and avoid duplication of programs*
 - *Support the development of the statewide employment statistics system*
 - *Support continuous improvement of the statewide workforce system and its performance outcomes*
- The CWDC dispenses the WIA 10% Discretionary Funds to the local regions to ensure that continuous improvement and collaboration are thoroughly implanted within the Colorado workforce system mode of operation.
- Council members are visionaries, advisors, change agents as well as customers and custodians of the workforce development system. Every Council member can and should be an articulate voice and advocate for their particular industry, agency, organization, or region. Their voice can be heard by attending all scheduled Council [meetings](#) and speaking up ([Roberts Rules of Order](#)).
- Council members share their expertise by serving on a [sub-committee](#) or task group.
- The Colorado Workforce Development Council has standing committees:

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- The Executive Committee is appointed by the CWDC membership to ensure that the CWDC is focused on carrying out the goals and actions of the strategic plan in alignment with the Colorado Blueprint.
 - The Education & Training Committee serves as the advisory board to the State Youth Council (SYC), Career Pathways, and the Governor’s STEM Action Plan. The State Youth Council (SYC) focuses on initiatives around youth in Colorado and how they can best receive training, education, and workforce assistance through the workforce development system.
 - The Advocacy Committee reviews, evaluates and communicates policy and legislation that will impact workforce issues that contribute to Colorado’s overall economic vitality. The committee also has oversight of awareness and alignment efforts.
 - The Sectors Steering Committee works to progress the industry sectors initiative in Colorado.
-
- Every state Workforce Council across the nation takes to heart what the Workforce Investment Act intended: improving the quality of the workforce, encouraging career mobility, and improving business competitiveness through increased workforce productivity.
 - Strategic planning is the essential foundation for state and local workforce development. It is the culmination of long-term goal setting, future-oriented thinking, and sound decision making. The strategic plan establishes a path between the present and a vision for the future. Through strategic planning conducted last year, Colorado Workforce Development Council members declared a vision that “Every Colorado business has access to a skilled workforce and every Coloradan has access to meaningful employment, resulting in statewide economic vitality.” ([CWDC Strategic Plan](#))
 - The mission of the CWDC is to create and sustain a business-led Colorado talent system that appropriately integrates the work of economic development, education, training and workforce development to meet the needs of businesses, students and job-seekers.

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- In 2013, the CWDC updated its strategic goals to reflect its focus on alignment, systems transformation, and sub-committee work.
 - Goal 1: Assess, improve and integrate services and programs supporting business, employment, and education.*
 - Goal 2: Establish an integrated system of measurements and outcomes to ensure evidence-based strategic decisions regarding investments in Colorado's talent system.*
 - Goal 3: Strengthen and fully utilize the CWDC network to ensure active and timely communication, seek and share information on relevant issues, and advance Colorado's talent system.*
 - Goal 4: Utilize the CWDC committees and task-forces to convene partners, increase collaboration, leverage resources and ensure coordination and support of grant opportunities.*
 - Goal 5: Champion the creation of user-friendly information sources that provide businesses and individuals with easily accessible information and resources.*
- Council members are the connection to the local regions and communities. Each Council member has a responsibility to coordinate information to the regions they represent as well as bring critical issues back to the Council.
- When Governor John Hickenlooper took office in 2011, he engaged more than 5,000 Coloradans from all 64 counties in developing a comprehensive and collaborative approach to economic development. A state team composed of representatives of a dozen state agencies and statewide organizations traveled more than 6,000 miles to gather input from every corner, valley and plain that makes up Colorado. Every county put together a summary expressing the needs, priorities, vision, strengths and weaknesses of its local economy. These county summaries were rolled up into 14 regional statements. Based on the county and regional input, the project identified the following six focus areas to promote economic development in Colorado ([Colorado Blueprint](#)).

I. Build a Business-Friendly Environment	II. Retain, Grow & Recruit Companies	III. Increase Access to Capital
IV. Create & Market a Stronger Colorado Brand	V. Educate & Train the Workforce of the Future	VI. Cultivate Innovation & Technology

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When the CWDC strategic plan and the Colorado Blueprint are compared, the CWDC is in alignment with the goals and strategies. The CWDC, in coordination with its state and local partners, is responsible for ensuring the success of Core Objective V. Educate and Train the Workforce of the Future.

- Previous Colorado Workforce Councils have tackled a number of statewide concerns and opportunities for improving the quality of the workforce. For example, The Work, Education, and Lifelong Learning Center (WELLS Center) was initiated by the State Council to address a nursing shortage across the state. The WELLS Center, located on the University of Colorado Hospital Anschutz Medical Campus, provides an array of state-of-the-art simulation tools for building clinical knowledge and advancing multi-disciplinary expertise in health care.
- During the George W. Bush administration, government agencies were asked to create continuous improvement plans. In response, Colorado's Workforce Council created The Continuous Improvement Management System (CIMS), to support local workforce regions on developing quality improvement plans. The Council aligned practices with the Colorado Performance Excellence organization and provided funding to incentivize and reward regions that demonstrated continuous improvement.

Sector Partnerships Strategy

- Sector partnerships are regional, employer-driven and sustained partnerships of business, workforce development, education, and other community stakeholders. They improve access to good jobs and/or increase job quality in ways that strengthen an industry's workforce. Sector partnerships share four elements that distinguish them from conventional workforce programs:
 - They focus intensively on a specific industry over a sustained time period, customizing solutions for multiple employers within a regional labor market.
 - They strengthen economic growth and industry competitiveness by identifying highest priority workforce challenges and creating new pathways into targeted industries, and toward good jobs and careers. This approach benefits low-income individuals and sustains and creates middle-class jobs.
 - They utilize conveners or workforce intermediary organizations that have a deep understanding of worker and employer issues in an industry and within a

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regional labor market. These organizations facilitate the many stakeholders involved to develop and implement industry-based workforce solutions.

- They promote systemic change that achieves benefits for the industry, workers, and the community.
- Previous councils took on the challenge of sector strategy by first convening training for local WIBs and regional workforce development staff on how to begin sector work. The most notable previous sector strategy was the US Department of Labor's WIRED grant, Workforce Innovations in Regional Economic Development, that set the stage for economic development, education, and employment to work more closely together on what's known as the Colorado Paradox – high number of residents with college degrees against a 25% state high school dropout rate.

Role of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

At the State level, the Employment and Training Division of the [Colorado Department of Labor and Employment](#) (CDLE) is the authorized WIA representative to the Federal government, responsible for carrying out the requirements of WIA Title I. This includes among many functions:

- *Drafting the WIA State Plans approved by DOL that guides the system; developing state policies;*
- *Establishing formula fund disbursements*
- *Negotiating state and local negotiated levels of performance*
- *Developing local plan guidelines and approving plans*
- *Establishing contracts*
- *Conducting program and fiscal monitoring and evaluation*
- *Maintaining DOL reporting requirements, training lists and websites. The ETA Division encompasses several important units, including Labor Market Information and Unemployment Insurance, all of whom perform functions relating to employment in the State of Colorado and play a role in Colorado's well-being.*
- *Serve as staff to the Colorado Workforce Development Council*

Local Workforce Investment Boards

A major piece of the WIA legislation created an avenue for business to participate in the local delivery of Workforce Development Services. The principal vehicle for this is through Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIBs) which are chaired by private sector members of the local community. Central to Colorado Workforce Development Council are the local workforce development boards and their respective service area created in agreement with local elected officials and require an agreement among government jurisdictions comprising the local area. The number of service areas in each state varies across the country. Using local economic development strategies, each of the 9 workforce regions and 10 sub-regions in Colorado plan, oversee, and evaluate workforce service delivery in its community, mostly through a “[one-stop](#)” operation. A major role of the local WIBs is strategic planning to meet the employment and training needs of local businesses and industries.

Local WIB Membership

The Chief Local Elected Official (usually county commissioner) of each workforce region appoints members of the local board after nomination processes are followed as mandated in WIA.

- *Local WIB membership must have a majority (minimum 51%) of business representatives who reflect the composition of the local and regional pool of employers.*
- *The Chair of the Board must be a private sector representative elected by the Board.*
- *Other WIB representatives must come from the following*
 - *Economic development authorities, agencies or organizations*
 - *Organized Labor*
 - *Community and/or faith-based organizations*
 - *Education, including community college, career and technical school, local school district, adult education and literacy*
 - *One stop partners: CO Dept. of Labor including Wagner-Peyser, Veterans Services, Unemployment Insurance, and Vocational Rehabilitation; local or State Older American’s Act; Housing and Urban Development; Community Services Block Grant; Carl D. Perkins programs (if not represented through the county Vocational and Technical/Career School); Human/Social Services; One-stop operator.*

- The wide variety of organizations represented on each board ensures input from experts throughout the community. Through oversight and evaluation, the boards ensure that their strategic and operational plans are implemented. Local control may appear to constrain any statewide approach however, this local representation is a way for local voices and needs to be represented in a forum at which Colorado commonalities are determined and moved forward.

Roles and Responsibilities of LWIBs

- *Local WIBs can best serve elected officials when there is a clear, articulate vision for workforce development in their area. The local Workforce Investment Board creates and provides oversight of a five-year strategic plan for the Workforce Investment Act program services. Although this plan is usually written by staff from the local workforce region, it is based on the priorities the local WIB has developed as a result of strategic planning.*
- *Local WIBs should forge strong partnerships between business and the workforce development community*
- *Local WIBs should develop and approve policy for workforce initiatives in their respective region, based on their strategic plan, e.g., priority of service for training*
- *Local WIBs should, at every opportunity, promote the work of the Board and of the local workforce region.*
- *Local WIBS should recruit business to receive services*
- *Local WIBs appoint members of the local Youth Council.*
- *Local WIBs should attend all scheduled meetings and speak up.*
- *Local WIBs should share their expertise by service on a sub-committee or task group*
- *Local WIBs should work as a team*
- *Local WIBs should be engaged in Sector Initiatives*
- *Given the relatively small scope of directly WFC-focused funding, Local WIBs should generate and execute opportunities to leverage other resources.*

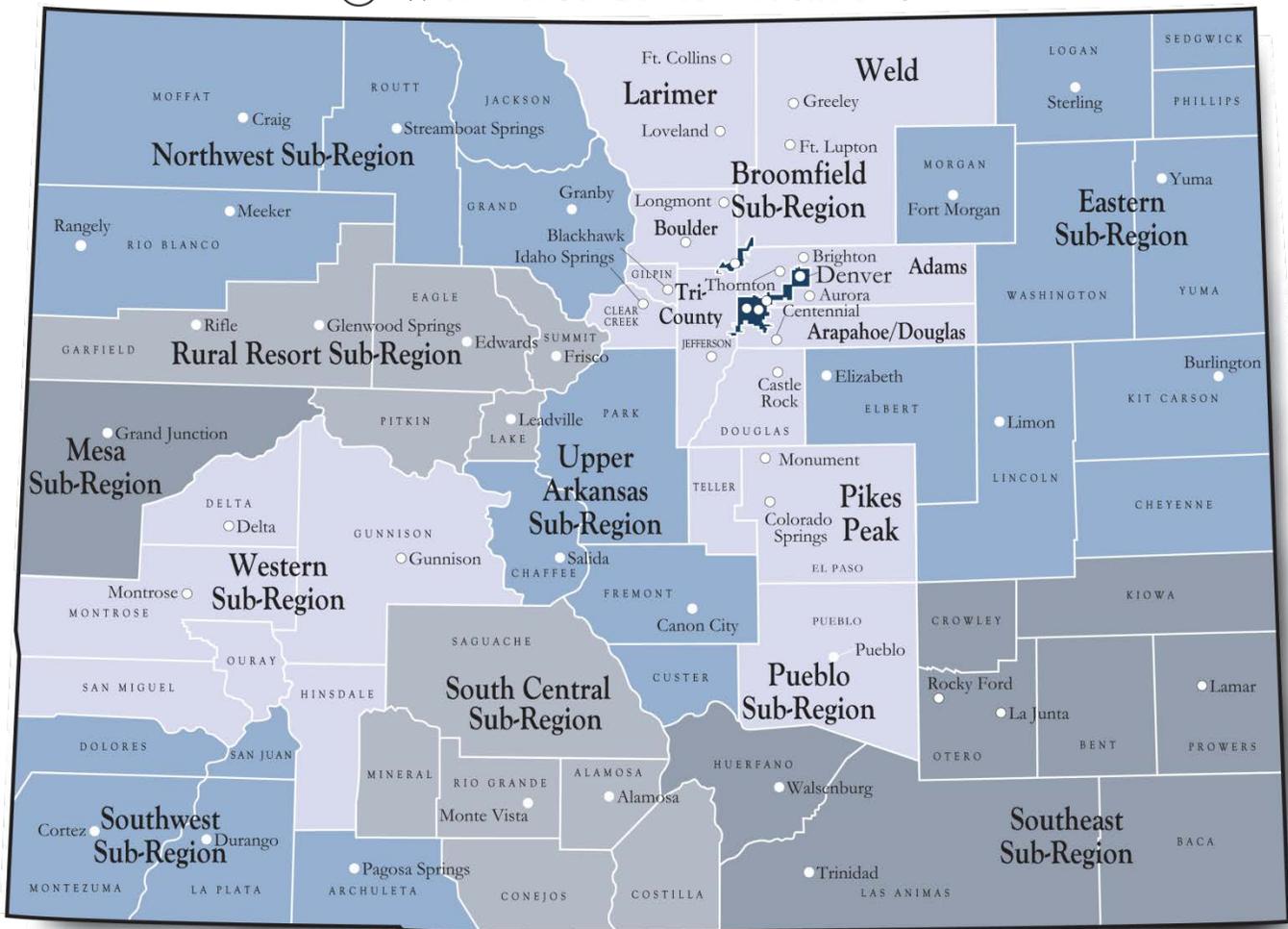
Workforce Centers (One-Stop Centers)

The Wagner-Peyser Act became law in 1933 and the nationwide public employment service (Job Service Centers) was established. This program is a federally funded labor exchange developed to match up employers with qualified out of work job applicants. It is linked to the unemployment compensation program, helping applicants filing for unemployment benefits to find new employment opportunities.

- The WIA legislation expanded this concept by creating One-Stop Career Centers or Workforce Centers. At the heart of the Workforce Centers is the ability to provide services to businesses seeking skilled workers, employment assistance to individuals and workforce and economic information services to all customers. [ConnectingColorado](#) is the electronic portal for employment and training for businesses, unemployed workers, and employed workers seeking to move up the career ladder. ConnectingColorado is a state-centered employment exchange, linking employers in all parts of the state with anyone looking for a job. It is available at no cost to employers or job seekers.
- Examples of services at local Colorado Workforce Centers for businesses: Account Management Services; Recruitment, Screening and Hiring; Assessment and Training; Consulting Services; Human Resource Augmentation; Special Events; Veteran Services; Weekly E-Blasts; Business Employer Forums; Job Fairs; Rapid Response; Labor Market Information/ EMSI; Federal Bonding & Tax Credits
- Examples of services at local Colorado Workforce Centers for job seekers: Computer resource center with training tutorials; career information software; career counseling; assessment tools, referrals to job openings, training scholarships (WIA), self-directed training, career development workshops, assistive technology, ESL; statewide applicant database, hiring events, on-the-job training or internships; targeted wage data, labor market information, education forums.
- WIA requires that each region have a least one comprehensive physical center that provides the core services listed in WIA and must provide access to other programs and activities carried out by the region.

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○ Workforce Center Locations



Map provided by Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Youth Councils

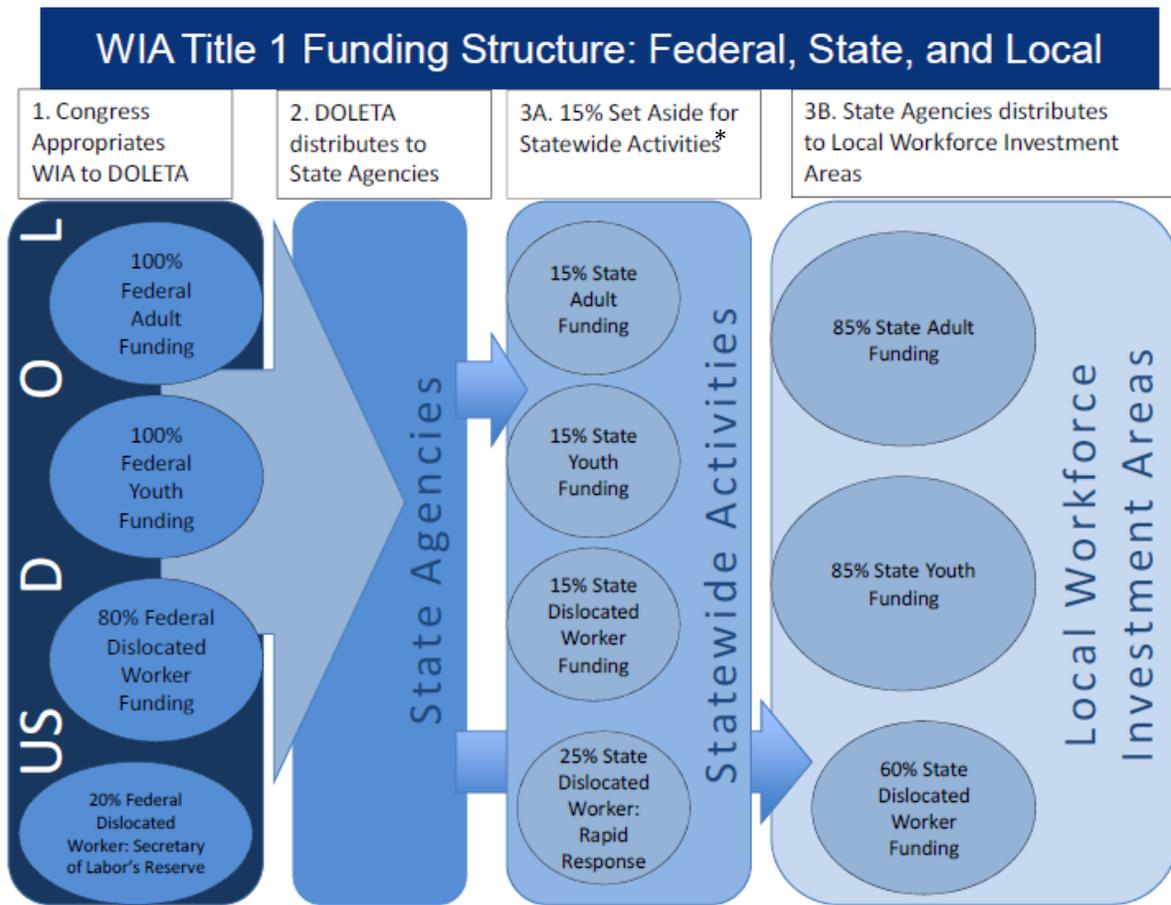
The Workforce Investment Act made significant changes to youth services to foster the creation of comprehensive youth development systems at the local level. WIA consolidated year round and summer programs into a single formula-based funding stream. WIA requires that local Workforce Investment Boards establish Youth Councils as subgroups to coordinate and oversee WIA youth services. Services are targeted to low-income youth, ages 14 through 21, who face one or more challenges as defined in the law to successful workforce entry. WIA requires that ten program elements, reflecting a focus on youth development, be made available to youth participants as well as one year of follow-up services.

- *Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies*
- *Alternative secondary school services*
- *Summer employment opportunities that are linked to academic and occupational learning*
- *Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing*
- *Occupational skills training*
- *Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors during non-school hours*
- *Supportive services*
- *Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months*
- *Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation*
- *Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral*

Funding

Congress appropriates WIA funds usually in the spring of each year, which are formula-allocated to states and designated Indian tribes, and distributed to the states by the US Department of Labor on July 1 each year.

- These State allotments are provided through DOL for the Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Further calculations are then determined based on WIA criteria in order for CDLE to issue formula allocation amounts to each Colorado workforce region.
- Each state keeps a portion of the money for administration and discretionary initiatives, but most funds are formula-allocated to regions to support their one-stop centers and the WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. The formula allocation amounts constitute 80% of the State allotment.
- The federal funding has a three year life-cycle, although due to demand, the local regions have a relatively high spend-down rate. Local regions are allowed to utilize 10% of the formula funds for administrative costs. In addition, 5% of the State allotment is a State set-aside for administration.

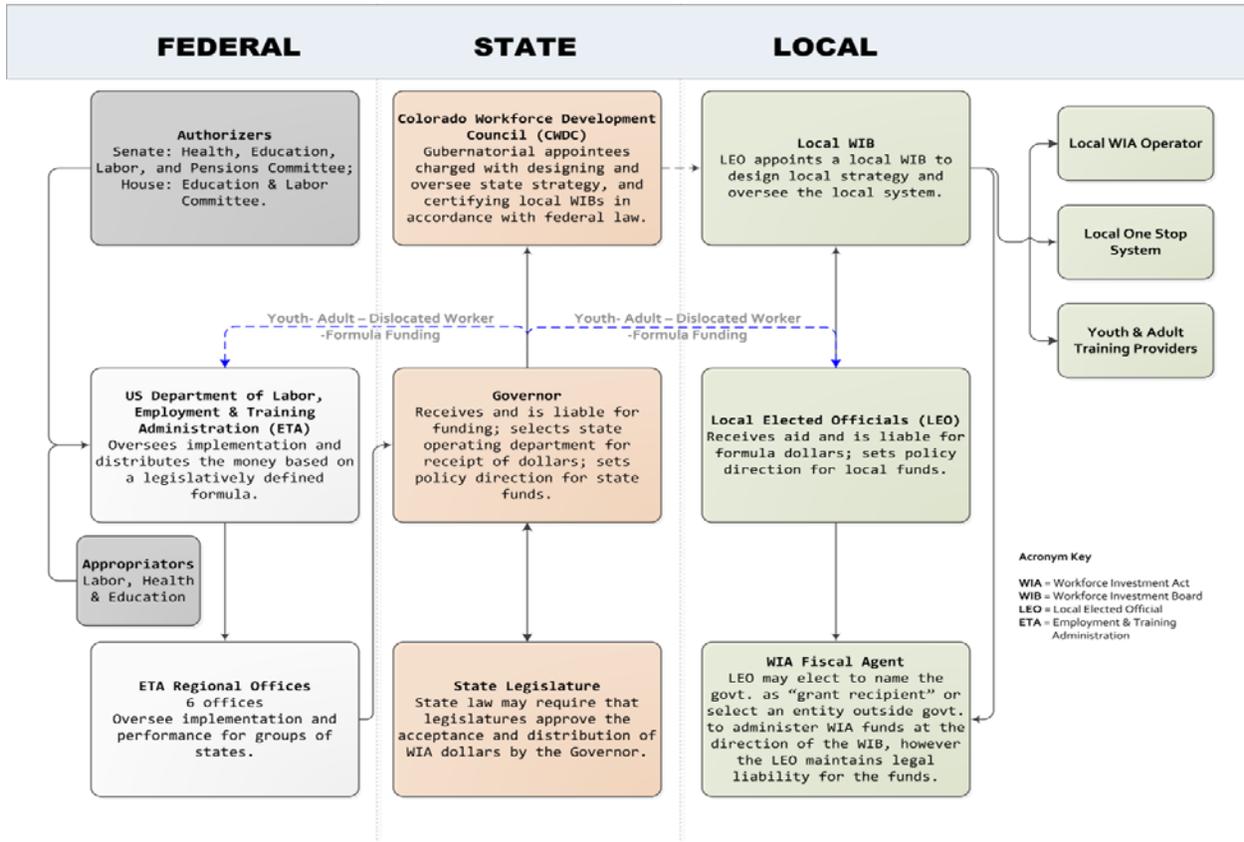


Graph from National Association of Workforce Boards *Workforce Investment Act 101, A Toolkit for Elected Officials*

*10% Discretionary Fund administered by CWDC

*5% Admin administered by CDLE to support statewide workforce development programs

Relational Map



Graph adapted from National Association of Workforce Boards *Workforce Investment Act 101, A Toolkit for Elected Officials*

Data Sources

A critical component for all workforce planning is the availability and application of labor market information. Labor market information should be used during the planning process and used regularly to reassess and evaluate current labor market conditions when:

- *analyzing economic factors and trends*
- *conducting needs analyses*
- *designing service delivery strategies*

Every local workforce development region uses various data sources to determine best strategies and tactics for carrying out annual plans. Some of the sources include the [unemployment rate](#), the supply/demand report, [The Leeds School of Business](#) reports on growing and declining industries in Colorado, as well as [Economic Modeling Specialists Inc.](#) that provides tools and data to understand employment and [Colorado labor markets](#). The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's [Labor Market Information Gateway](#) site provides services for both business and job seeker including labor market analysis.

Measurements of Success

WIA specifies core indicators of performance that apply to workforce investment programs administered at the state and local level. These include: rates of entry into unsubsidized employment by participants, employment retention rates, earnings six months after entry, and skill educational attainment. These indicators do not apply to participants who receive core services or information activities. WIA legislation includes financial incentives for high performance on these measures and financial sanctions for poor performance.

- *Adult and Dislocated Workers Common Measures*

Entered Employment

Employment Retention

Average Earnings

- *Youth Common Measures*

Literacy/Numeracy

Placement

Degree/Certificate

STATEWIDE			
ADULT		DISLOCATED WORKER	
Standard	Percent of Goal	Standard	Percent of Goal
Entered Employment	92%	Entered Employment	96%
Retention	98%	Retention	99%
Average Earnings	113%	Average Earnings	110%
YOUTH			
Standard	Percent of Goal		
Literacy/Numeracy	97%		
Placement	90%		
Degree/Certificate	108%		

Chart from *Colorado's WIA 2009 Annual Report*

Resources and recommended reading

Colorado Counties Incorporated <http://www.ccionline.org/>

Colorado Department of Labor and Employment
www.colorado.gov/cdle

Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade www.advancecolorado.com

Colorado Workforce Development Council
www.colorado.gov/cdle/cwdc

e-Colorado, a portal to access a wide variety of employment and training resources
www.e-colorado.org

Colorado University Leeds School of Business www.leeds.colorado.edu

Connecting Colorado www.Connectingcolorado.org

National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) <http://www.nawb.org/>

National Association of Workforce Development Professionals <http://nawdp.org>

National Governors Association www.nga.org

National Network of Sector Partners <http://www.insightcced.org/index.php?page=nnsp>

National Workforce Association www.nwaonline.org

Roberts Rules of Order: <http://www.robertsrules.com/>

Self Assessment Tool for Workforce Boards (published by NAWB)
<http://www.nawb.org/documents/Self%20Assessment%20Tool%20for%20Workforce%20Investment%20Boards.pdf>

The Road to Sector Success: A Guide for Workforce Boards (published by NAWB)
http://www.nawb.org/documents/sector_strategies_full.pdf

US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Division <http://www.doleta.gov/etainfo/>

Workforce Investment Act 101, a Toolkit for Elected Officials
<http://www.nawb.org/documents/Publications/WIA%20101%20with%20discussion%20sections.pdf>

Workforce³One (WIA best practices, webinars, publications) www.workforce3one.org