

Section IV: Program Design and Evaluation

1. A description of the SC Works delivery system in the local area, including:

- ***How the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers:***

Career Services are available to everyone in Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. These services include workshops, job fairs, recruitment events, interviewing skills training, and resume development. The LinkedIn Learning Platform to which Equus Workforce Solutions subscribes (web-based skills training) has 13,000 courses for customers and upon completion, they may upload certificates to their LinkedIn profile. This platform also has online training modules in basic computer skills and Microsoft Office training, essential skills needed in the current workforce. Customers are introduced to all that is available to them through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). SC Works is able to provide funds, when available, for training/education for those who qualify. Customer needs and interests are assessed to target the precise steps required to obtain meaningful employment. Every effort is then made to provide very specific assistance to each customer based on their unique need (example of a specific need is purchasing eyewear needed so they can be successful in their educational training). Appropriate referrals are then made. Many local partners are available to further these services. Section III gives a more detailed description of just how the SC Works delivery system operates. Also, the attached Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement gives further detail on partner services and contributions.

The Upstate Workforce Board's Chief Operating Officer is the primary liaison to the WIOA service providers. This staff member meets with providers consistently to ensure WIOA compliance for the federal, state and local level requirements. Survey completion is encouraged and received from job seekers and employers. Any deficiency identified is immediately addressed. The Upstate Workforce Board requires the completion and submission of monthly dashboards on performance, events and community engagement. This dashboard is given to the corresponding Upstate Workforce Board committee with the grantee present for discussion. The SC Works Director also requires social media statistics be met.

~~Pre-COVID 19, the SC Works Operator held a "stand-up" meeting every morning at the beginning of the work day to share information. All on-site partners are invited to participate daily. The Operator looks forward to beginning these meetings again as soon as it is feasible.~~ Equus holds a weekly 'stand-up' meeting

for WIOA funded staff and all partners are invited and strongly encourage to attend.

Additionally, the Upstate Workforce Board Director ~~held~~ holds quarterly grantee meetings. It is at these meetings that a review of instruction letters, policies and performance are reviewed for clarification. This time also allows grantees an opportunity to vent any frustrations they may have or report activities of concern. ~~During program year 2020, a monthly grantee meeting will occur.~~ Ongoing training is provided to grantees upon request. The employees working for the grantees are also asked during monitoring if further training is needed. This ensures that a process of continuous improvement is in place.

The Upstate Workforce Board Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer formerly monitor the programs funded by the Upstate Workforce Board on a yearly basis and a formal report is issued. Throughout the year, desktop monitoring is performed. Secret shoppers are hired to shop the services of our programs and formal reports are sent to the Upstate Workforce Board. At times, the shoppers may wear recording devices. This has proven to be the best method of checking the services of our programs and allows us to address any areas needing improvement. It also allows us to praise staff on what is working well. During the pandemic, we did not procure secret shopping, but may resume this program year.

The Upstate Workforce Board provides written instruction to WIOA service providers. The most recent instruction letters can be found at <http://www.upstaterworkforceboard.org/local-instruction-letters> .

- ***How the local board will target rural communities, including facilitating increased access to services provided through the SC Works delivery system through the use of technology and other means;***

The local library systems have been a key way we have connected with the rural areas. There are 13 public library locations in Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. The libraries normally have meeting space available. They serve as key access points for customers in remote areas. Trained library staff are able to assist the customers with computer access, information about SC Works and knowledge about community partners.

When COVID-19 occurred, things changed drastically as it relates to connection with job seekers, WIOA customers and employers. The following methods were used:

- ✓ Youth programs developed student packets with instructions for students to work from home much like the K-12 schools have done. Youth program staff stay in touch with the students via phone and email to ensure that they are staying on task and were available during regular hours for participant questions/assistance. Zoom meetings to offer instruction were hosted. They have also asked students to take online workshops offered by SC Works. The students have access to The Academy from Equus Workforce Solutions.
- ✓ SC Works Talent Development Staff used email and video Webex sessions to stay in touch with clients. A few new clients were even registered into WIOA through remote means. Some customers switched to online classes rather than in-person classes. Some customers participated in online workshops.
- ✓ The WIOA staff person responsible for workshops scheduled and conducted them through Webex. SC Works staff have also provided WIOA orientations via Webex video sessions.
- ✓ Business Services Team staffers positioned themselves as a convener and provided information and resources in real time to the businesses in our area. They are now able to provide virtual employer workshops and virtual job fairs through a recently purchased platform that facilitates these services. Unfortunately, no such services were available through the SC Department of Employment and Workforce or the SC Works Online System that would adequately do what was needed to support a job fair in a professional and helpful manner. The first large scale virtual job fair was held May 7, 2020. Recruiting and matching services were provided virtually. Over 500 job seekers attended and over 40 employers had virtual booths. The event was a big success.
- ✓ The Greater Upstate Manufacturing Sector Partnership meets every two weeks via Zoom. This effort was founded by efforts of the WIOA staff. Business managers have found so much value in networking together that their meeting has gained a life of its own. There is an update on this group earlier in this document. It is now called the Upstate Manufacturing Network.
- ✓ IWT and OJT customers are served virtually. We are now serving these customers in person.
- ✓ Meetings started being conducted via Zoom or Webex. Not requiring travel has likely improved participation.

Going forward, everyone now realizes that we don't have to be face-to-face to serve job seekers and businesses. We don't have to travel to go to a meeting. This may be a new way of doing business even after COVID-19 is eliminated. We see an increased use of technology for connecting with individuals, especially in the remote areas. This certainly will be a way we can case manage and converse with customers without them having to physically come to a center. Update: Zoom, Webex and Teams have changed the world of work as we still have several meetings online rather than in person. It is important to meet occasionally in person to maintain close relationships. Online meetings save on travel costs when budgets are tight.

This crisis has also taught us that not all training must be in a classroom. Some individuals do fine with online classes. SC Works uses Facebook and Twitter to communicate important information about services, workshops and job fairs. SC Works through www.SCworks.org has a mobile app that allows customers to access information and services.

We hope to continue experimenting with virtual services and have a mix of in person and virtual options for the customers. New technology will continue to emerge due to the COVID-19 crisis. We look forward to exploring all of these emerging options.

- ***How entities within the SC Works delivery system, including center operators and partners, will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities:***

The Upstate WIOA programs provide services to all customers without regard to race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, disability, marital or veteran status, or any other legally protected status. Quality services and effective communication to all customers are very important to the Upstate Workforce Board. To assure all accessibility requirements of Section 188 of the WIOA law are met, the Upstate Workforce Board staff schedule visits to service provider locations and make every effort to accommodate customers facing various challenges. A local instruction letter is in place that addresses the needs of customers who do not have English as their primary language <https://www.upstaterwfb.com/files/files/wia%2013-03%20amend%201.pdf>. This ensures that the Upstate Workforce Board meets

the requirements of Limited English Proficiency customers. All enrolled customers receive a grievance handout that details their rights to services and how to file complaints, as necessary, against any organization not serving them according to those rights.

Recently, Assistive Technology in the Resource Rooms of each of the SCWorks centers were updated to ensure vision impaired customers have access to services. ZoomText is a software that brings advanced text magnification and powerful reading tools to a computer. Vision impaired customers' experience surfing the web, creating a document, or emailing. These features allow customers to use the computer applications more easily than ever before. Also, the Assistive Technology designated computer is equipped with such products as a large monitor, an adjustable table for wheelchair users, a modified keyboard, joystick, trackball and JAWS for reading text.

Upon assignment, new staff (both operator and on-site partners) and volunteers receive training on the operations of the center and its many parts. The Resource Room equipment, along with its ADA assistive technology, are highlighted in this training. Follow up refresher training is conducted, as deemed necessary, by the Comprehensive SC Works Center Manager and other center leaders.

As stated in the SC Works Certification Management Standards, "There are consistent expectations for physical infrastructure and facilities which includes accessibility of each SC Works Center so that all job seekers and business customers can fully participate in the services offered." In an effort to provide staff training and support, the state EO staff provided training to local staff on serving customers with disabilities. When re-location of an SC Works Center is considered, compliance with ADA is of paramount concern. The Upstate Local Area contracted with Able SC to assure the accessibility of the new Cherokee facility a few years ago. The local EO officer also monitors to ensure accessibility to programs and facilities annually. Update: The Comprehensive Center has re-located to 145 North Church Street, B110, Spartanburg, SC 29306. The space is ADA compliant. Staff are working with developers and architects to ensure the new space is also ADA Compliant.

The Upstate Workforce Board's Disabilities Committee reviews and provides information as needed to local service providers. This assists with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. This information may include issues relating to compliance with section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). It may also address programmatic and physical access to the services, programs and activities of the one stop delivery system. These interim communications may also address additional training for staff on providing

support for accommodations as well as targeted ways for helping employers with accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

One function of the Disabilities Committee is to make recommendations to the full Upstate Workforce Board on its full range of disability access issues. It may suggest ways to facilitate the participation of customers with disabilities. This Committee can be flexible in its formulation and is intended to provide an effective means for participants with interests in this area to exchange ideas and develop recommendations for accessibility solutions. This will, in turn, enhance the board's policy making on disability access issues. A board member of the Upstate Workforce Board chairs the Disabilities Committee. The Committee consists of board members appointed by the Upstate Workforce Board Chair and individuals within community partners that are appointed by the Disabilities Committee Chair.

The Disabilities Committee partners with organizations such as AbleSC, SC Vocational Rehabilitation, SC School for the Deaf and the Blind and SC Department of Employment and Workforce to provide disabilities training for the Upstate Workforce Board staff and service provider staff. Staff members of the other partners in our service area also benefit by the work of this committee. Topics covered include: understanding disabilities and the misconceptions that go along with them, hidden disabilities, hiring and retaining individuals with disabilities, etc. There is an upcoming training that is being planned for **There was a training held in the spring of 2021. This will offer The trainers shared** expertise to educators on guiding students with disabilities toward post-secondary training and careers. This training will be in partnership with the Regional Center for Educational Support and our 9 school districts.

Update: The committee has planned and hosted several events geared towards, staff, partners and employers. All events focus on increasing disability awareness. The committee strives to offer a minimum of one event per program year.

~~SC Works staff attend the Safety Net meetings where tough cases may be shared with a group of providers. The goal is finding solutions. Predictably, many cases brought before the group are for individuals with disabilities.~~

- ***Identification of the roles and resource contributions of the SC Works partners.***

Core Partners Include:

SC Vocational Rehabilitation

- For GED & High School Diploma, WIN Assessments
- Assistance with workforce development and training for individuals with disabilities

Job Corps

- Handles recruiting and application process to a Job Corps Center

Equus Workforce Solutions

- Adult and Dislocated Worker comprehensive services, supportive services, training and employment

SC Commission for the Blind

- Assistance with workforce development and training for blind individuals

SC Department of Employment and Workforce

- Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services, Unemployment Insurance, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Reemployment Services, Veterans programs, SCWOS

Able SC

- A change agent committed to fostering an inclusive society that empowers individuals with disabilities to live fully engaged and self-directed lives. Able SC is an organization lead by individuals with disabilities that challenges stereotypes, protest disability rights and champion social reform.

USC Upstate Achieve

- Youth provider for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act – serves youth ages 16-24 (detail in Section III,2)

Adult Learning Center

- Receives adult education funding for GED instruction
- English as a Second Language

Goodwill

- Senior Community Service Employment Program

Adult Education

- High School Diploma or GED Instruction

Piedmont Community Actions

- Community Service Block Grant

SC Department of Social Services

- Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program and TANF
- Childcare Voucher Program

Spartanburg Community College

- Perkins Career and Technical Education

Spartanburg Housing Authority

- Housing Assistance

Indian Development Council

- Indian and Native American Program

We have many other partners such as United Way, SC Legal Services, Upstate Fatherhood Coalition, and many others in every county. Please also view our MOU/IFA (attachment) that is negotiated annually for more information on our partnerships.

In the Upstate Workforce Area, the SC Works Centers are operated by Equus Workforce Solutions. They were assigned this role based on the results of a competitive procurement process. They provide day-to-day support for SC Works System operations in all three locations. The SC Works Project Director provides strategic oversight to the entire system, regardless of where it is hosted or by whom it is managed. Several partner programs (see Section III and attachments for more detail) support infrastructure costs with cash support and/or with staff assistance in the centers. The remaining partners provide support in terms of electronic access to their services, periodically stationing personnel in the SC Works Centers, participation on the business services team and/or collaborating to plan and implement special projects and events.

2. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), career services are available to everyone. These services include workshops (such as interviewing skills, resume development, social media networking and basic computer skills) as well as job fairs and recruitment events. Other offerings include: ~~The Academy by~~ LinkedIn Learning offers 13,000 courses and is paid for by Equus Workforce Solutions (web-based skills training), assessments for referral to WIOA, WIOA Orientation, self-directed and staff assisted job searches and more. Funding is available for qualified individuals in need of additional education and training to upgrade their skills.

Individuals may be laid off due to a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN), business closing or substantial layoff. The state Dislocated Worker Rapid Response Department of the SC Department of Employment and Workforce coordinates meetings and the local Director of Business Services presents information to these workers. These presentations include guidance about filing for unemployment compensation as well as familiarization with Workforce Information and Opportunity Act (WIOA) opportunities. The discussion includes methods to get the workers back into a job as quickly as possible.

SC Works program enrollment in the Adult category must use a “priority of service” method. This includes giving priority to those with a Veteran status, on public assistance, low income and those with basic skills deficiencies for enrollment into WIOA. The State Workforce Board requires that 70% of the individuals we serve fall into these categories. This requirement does serve to limit us from serving the needs of businesses when there is a very low unemployment rate. Many of the working poor tend to be just above the income threshold. ~~Pre-COVID, there were~~ There are more jobs than people willing to work to fill them. If the priority of service percentage were changed to 50% rather than 70%, we could fill more jobs with on-the-job training and place more individuals into college. Other partners can serve more of these lower income individuals until they are ready for training and higher-level employment. If they are very low basic skills, they will not be able to attend post-secondary training. Our performance measures are too high in the area of wages to place individuals in low-wage jobs for which they might be suited until their basic skills levels improve. Many states only require the 50% threshold. Having a 70% requirement makes sense if you have a high unemployment rate. But in a great economy with low unemployment, the needs of businesses should drive these types of decisions. This percentage threshold should be a decision made by the local workforce boards since they know their local economy and business needs. This flexibility is specifically allowed by the WIOA law and regulations. The needs of South Carolina would be well served if the State Workforce Board would allow this adjustment.

Adult and Dislocated Workers who are enrolled in WIOA are provided personalized and individualized assistance. They are assessed to determine their skill sets, employment history, previous education and goals in order to gauge their employability at a self-sufficient wage. In instances where a customer may have employment barriers such as a criminal history or need for a GED, guidance is provided to help address these needs. WIN and Traitify Interest Profile ~~are~~ were administered to all WIOA enrollees in the past. WIN testing came to a halt, and we have not had this assessment for many months due to a challenge in the courts. We hope to have WorkKeys or WIN available soon. With these assessment results, Talent Development Specialists provide individualized job coaching to help the customer identify their needs and establish employment goals. Together they build an individual employment plan.

If it is determined that the customer is in need of employment skills, a training track may be deemed necessary. Training is contextualized with regard to local labor market information and the Upstate Workforce Board approved training lists. The Upstate Workforce Board has set the training target to be for advanced manufacturing, construction, healthcare, logistics and IT. SC Works is approved to pay \$12,000 over a two-year period to train an individual. WIOA funds are “the last payer resort” and other forms of payment for which the client is eligible are applied first before WIOA funds are spent.

Upon completion of training, Talent Development Specialists continue to provide services such as career counseling, job referrals, mock interviews, resume review and other areas of support. This continues until the customer is employed.

Supportive services, based on verified customer need, are also available in the form of transportation assistance, emergency assistance, help with internet cost for online training, computer purchase, childcare reimbursement at a capped amount, etc.

3. *A description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.*

The Upstate Workforce Board delegates local rapid response activities to SC Works. SC Works partners with the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) to offer rapid response services. Upon receipt of a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification, a collaborative meeting occurs to conduct fact-finding. This helps target the most appropriate services for the company and its employees. The SC Works staff members participate in management meetings and in group orientation sessions for the affected workers. By meeting with the affected worker group prior to the layoff date, SC Works employees are sometimes able to assist those individuals in obtaining employment *before* they need to draw unemployment insurance. SC Works often schedules job fairs for local companies who are hiring, and for the affected worker group before the layoff date. In addition to job fairs, local SC Works staff develop job seeker packets highlighting local opportunities available for direct hire placement as well as placement through WIOA on -the-job training. The Regional Director of Business Solutions manages coordination with local employers interested in hiring individuals impacted by upcoming layoffs. SC Works Upstate invites Adult Education and SC Vocational Rehabilitation to provide services to impacted workers, as needed, (often prior to the layoff). SC Works Upstate makes accommodations to ensure these services are given priority before layoff. We realize the importance of reaching out to individuals early in the process.

If it has been determined that the closure or significant layoff will have a great impact on the local area, additional state resources can be accessed. Under extreme circumstances, a temporary one-stop can be set up at the business to assist the affected workers.

In addition to rapid response services, the Upstate Workforce Board's designated Director of Business Solutions works closely with SCDEW to execute rapid response incumbent worker training grants used for layoff aversion. The Director of Business Solutions partners with the SC Manufacturing Extension Partnership staff to identify companies in Spartanburg, Cherokee and Union counties that may be struggling and considering layoffs. Additionally, the Director of Business Solutions meets with local economic developers, ReadySC staff and chambers of commerce staff to create awareness of the incumbent worker training program. This collaborative effort provides the best opportunity to identify struggling companies and offer a potential solution to turn the businesses around and ultimately avert layoffs. Recently, SC Works Upstate was able to eliminate a layoff at a local plant, Cooper Standard Automotive, by securing rapid response incumbent worker training funds from the SC Department of Employment and Workforce to train workers while being paid, during a production shutdown. Spartanburg Community College was paid from the grant to conduct the training.

Additionally, SC Works staff work to connect local companies together to decrease the cost of raw materials. Referring and building local business collaboration averts layoffs by decreasing the overall expenses and increasing profit for Upstate businesses.

4. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities.

We have one youth program for program year 2021. This is the USC Upstate ACHIEVE (Academic Challenges Helping Individuals Expand Values and Education) program. They focus specifically on the area's socially and economically vulnerable youth. The program serves Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. The program is provided year-round and does not take the summer off like some education programs. ACHIEVE serves 85 youth ages 16 – 24.

ACHIEVE operates a comprehensive, youth basic skills, pre-employment and employment program for school dropouts in need of obtaining a GED or out-of-school youth who need upgrading in basic skills. This training is done on-site, where ACHIEVE is co-located with SC Works Spartanburg in the Spartanburg Community College downtown campus in the Business Technology Center at 145 North Church Street in Spartanburg which is also where the SC Works Comprehensive Center is located. ACHIEVE has vans and van drivers that transport the students to and from their homes. Over the past year, two vehicles were secured from grants received by the Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation totaling over \$53,000.00. These vehicles replaced two 2006 vans. The Upstate Workforce Board allocated funding for a third van to replace another very old van. This

transportation is the primary reason the students are successful as many have no transportation options.

ACHIEVE is designed to help youth gain their full potential in education and employment, and to become productive citizens. The youth are assessed to determine their individual needs and receive personalized assistance while in the program. While academic skills are a main part of the program, intensive work readiness to identify career pathways, including occupational skills and post-secondary education for gainful employability, is the driving force.

ACHIEVE is required to serve youth with one or more of the required barriers to employment. Barriers include unemployment, offender status, runaway/foster care/homeless, disabled, pregnant/parenting and/or no driver's license. Over the years, ACHIEVE has worked with many youths with disabilities. Often, the disability is not documented, and it is very difficult for ACHIEVE staff to obtain this information since the student has been released from the secondary schools. For several years, the disability documentation could be obtained from the schools, but HIPPA privacy regulations changed this. Further, students are reluctant to disclose a disability. It might be behavioral, dyslexia, ADHD, etc. Many students come to ACHIEVE because they have been expelled from high school or are referred by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). The Adult Education partner places a staff member at the site of ACHIEVE at no cost to our program. She serves as the GED instructor for the program. This is a great partnership. This instructor provides the students with core GED preparation and basic skills upgrading. Students receive on-site classroom and individualized instruction in reading, writing and math skills. The instructor must have the ability to figure out how each student learns and adapt instruction to that student. This is the reason they failed in high school. They did not get the necessary, individualized instruction based on their ability. It has always been the philosophy of the program that activities can be planned accordingly and re-evaluated as necessary to accommodate the needs of the student (and the student's disability). The youth have access to the ADA stations located in the SC Works centers. The staff rely on guidance from the Upstate Workforce Board and the experience of SC Works partners in providing any other accommodations that may be required. Student success is the goal of all partners.

Many community partner programs are available in the Upstate Workforce Area that serve youth. We often receive and make referrals to these organizations. In the following link, there are several organizations listed that help individuals which include youth in the area. <https://uwpiedmont.galaxydigital.com/agency/>

The Upstate Workforce Board works closely with Project Search and serves on their Business Advisory Council. Project Search is a high school transition program that ensures center readiness for students in special education programs. This program is different in that it is a school-to-work program that takes place entirely at work during the student's

senior year of high school. Spartanburg County District 6 partners with the Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System to provide internship opportunities for their students. SC Vocational Rehabilitation provides students with job coaching. During the year, students intern with three different departments, gaining valuable work experience that can lead to employment. The Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director and a past Upstate Workforce Board Member introduced the program to Spartanburg leaders through a convened meeting for the purpose of getting a Project Search site in the Upstate. It was the first in South Carolina. Now, there are many Project Search sites in South Carolina mostly modeled after the Spartanburg program. Spartanburg Regional Healthcare has also expanded the Project Search program to their Cherokee County hospital. Sadly, the Upstate Workforce Board staff have not been able to perform co-enrollment into the Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act programs as SCDEW/DOL does not recognize the training as a legitimate training for the Eligible Training Provider List. This co-enrollment would be very beneficial to the students as many are in need of transportation help throughout the year in addition to help with transitional employment. We have been able to help some students with transportation in the past through our non-profit, the Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation.

5. A description of how the fourteen youth program elements are integrated in program design, including a description of partnerships or formalized agreements in place for the provision of program elements not provided by the local program.

ACHIEVE either has the elements available from their program or they have a memorandum of agreement on file with all partners providing any of the requisite fourteen elements. The ACHIEVE Director provides the list of the partnering agencies to the Upstate Workforce Board office no later than the end of the first quarter of each program year.

The Fourteen Elements:

1. Tutoring & study skills leading to the completion of the GED: ACHIEVE provides GED instructional training and basic skills upgrading for high school dropouts or those lacking basic skills. Students receive classroom and individualized instruction in reading, writing and math skills. Those on a GED track continue until they achieve a functional grade level high enough to take the GED exam. Once that level is attained, ACHIEVE schedules them for the GED exam. If the student fails any part of the GED, they continue in the classroom until they are ready to retake the GED. GED instruction is held 4 days per week for 4 hours per day.
2. Youth Alternative Secondary School Services: The ACHIEVE program is an alternative program.

3. **Occupational Skills Training:** Occupational skills training must be offered to students on-site at ACHIEVE or at a local training provider location. Each student will be given the opportunity to choose from curriculums that meet their interests. Upon completion of the training, a certificate will be kept on file. The training must meet the SCDEW/DOL definition of a degree/certificate. Some of the trainings offered during program year 2020 2021 are forklift certification, certified nursing assistant, phlebotomy certification, CellBotics, CDL and NCCER.
4. **Work Experience:** Granted funds may be used to pay stipends for work experiences in the public or private sectors. The ACHIEVE staff will maintain appropriate paperwork on all work-based activities. Work experiences should not exceed 480 hours.
5. **Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster:** While customers are attending classes, and usually after receiving pre-employment (work readiness training), they may engage in occupational skills training. These types of training activities may lead to an attainment of a degree/certificate and may result in a work experience and continue to employment. Where possible, customers will be grouped into cohorts, depending on occupational interests, for educational services, related workforce readiness and industry-specific training.
6. **Youth Leadership Development Services:** Leadership development includes tours of community colleges, local colleges and universities, field trips to cultural events, a guest speaker program and a life/work skills training component. The life/work skills training component provides students with the opportunity to participate in community service projects as well as help them to develop and/or enhance communication skills vital to success in the workplace. Community involvement and a sense of civic responsibility are also fostered through group projects and volunteer opportunities. Recent past projects have been held at ~~Mobile Meals and the Soup Kitchen~~ Ruth's Gleanings and the Period Project and included activities such as volunteering in food drives and helping to set up projects for community agencies.

All leadership development opportunities are developed in conjunction with each county's appropriate agencies through linkages. These activities are designed to be fun, informative and motivational, while meeting pre-determined, measurable outcome expectations.

7. **Supportive Services:** Supportive services for customers are offered in the areas of transportation, childcare, educational fees, work clothing, assistance with toiletries and household needs and any other funded service that may be needed to remove a barrier and promote educational and employment activities. Since students often

come to class hungry, the Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation helped secure donations so that ACHIEVE staff could create a food pantry for students. Donations are secured to continually supply the pantry. Often, supportive services are also offered through partnering agencies.

8. **Youth/Adult Mentoring:** ACHIEVE provides adult mentoring through job shadowing and worksite supervisors, tutors and community organizations for those individuals determined to be in need of adult guidance through initial assessment.
9. **Follow Up:** ACHIEVE follows up not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate. This follow up is done via phone, email, text or social media options. Information obtained in these post-program contacts may be used to make program adjustments.
10. **Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling:** This may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referrals through alcohol and drug abuse recovery agencies. Any needed behavioral counseling may be done through the Department of Juvenile Justice. Academic and career counseling services are provided to all customers. Mental health counseling is offered to all customers and is provided to interested customers at intervals deemed appropriate by the staff. These mental health referrals are offered to customers needing assistance outside of the scope of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services. It would be very beneficial if the youth program could actually pay for immediate psychiatric counseling for some of the students. Tragically, we have had several students commit suicide over the years. Our programs continue to work with community partners to identify and recruit eligible customers who will benefit from all aspects of our services. These partners include DSS, local school districts, Birth Matters, Safe Homes Rape Crisis, The Forrester Center, SC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and many others. These have been lead partners for providing information on pregnancy counseling, sex abuse counseling, domestic violence counseling, bullying counseling, etc. ACHIEVE was able to secure a licensed therapist through a non-WIOA grant to provide behavioral counseling to the students.
11. **Financial Literacy Education:** Workshops are provided in partnership with local business and non-profit organizations to introduce students to financial literacy and budget management. Topics may include developing and following a workable budget, establishing and monitoring credit, choosing a checking and savings account, planning for large expenditures and maintaining appropriate insurance. Attention is also given to planning for costs associated with post-secondary education and training.

12. **Entrepreneurial Skills Training:** This is a part of the pre-employment and career pathway training to acquaint customers with owning one's own business. Workshops are provided in partnership with local businesses and non-profit organizations and focus on researching the market, creating a business plan and securing and managing finances.
13. **Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling and career exploration services:** A Career Development Specialist/Job Coach ensures that students have access to the most up-to-date labor market information pulled from the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.
14. **Activities that help youth prepare for and transition into post-secondary education and training:** Services are provided through a series of workshops and field trips designed to explore post-secondary options, arrange financing and create a plan to implement enrollment. Additional services, especially those related to financial aid and scheduling, may be provided through one-on-one case management. The Upstate Workforce Board staff are also available to speak to classes.
6. ***If using the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA Section 3(5)(B), what is the LWDA's policy that further defines how to determine if a youth is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. If your area continues to use TABE for determining youth basic skills deficiency, a local policy is not required.***

ACHIEVE utilizes the TABE/GED Ready tests to determine basic skills deficiency.

7. ***A description of how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.***

All individuals without a high school diploma or GED are referred to Adult Education, the Adult Learning Center or USC Upstate ACHIEVE. In addition, businesses with a high number of employees without a High School Diploma/GED are encouraged to take advantage of Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) funds to upskill their existing workforce.

~~Individuals may take the practice tests at www.winersystem.com. They choose the assessment they want/need to practice on: Applied Mathematics, Locating Information and/or Reading for Information. Unlike WorkKeys, WIN does not have the same remediation offerings. The State of South Carolina has not offered WIN or WorkKeys for a while and as of 10/25/22, it is still not available.~~

Anyone needing help with FAFSA is helped by SC Works, ACHIEVE, Upstate Workforce Board staff or referred to other agencies that will help them.

SC Works and the Upstate Workforce Board employees participate in career fairs in the middle and high schools and speak in classrooms about careers in the area. We also speak about the importance of post-secondary education. We have presentations that were developed in-house. We are also able to do manufacturing simulation and make extensive use of virtual reality technology. Schools may check out our virtual reality equipment for their use. SC Works serves as the point of contact for educators interested in implementing virtual reality experiences for students in the Upstate Workforce Area.

~~With our comprehensive SC Works One-Stop co-located with the Spartanburg Community College, it allows us to showcase the college and provide tours to interested individuals. We also conduct several recruiting events at the site.~~ The Director of Advanced Manufacturing from Spartanburg Community College has a seat on the Upstate Workforce Board. This greatly enhances inter-program coordination.

The ACHIEVE youth program students participate in field trips to colleges in the area. SC Works, ACHIEVE and the Upstate Workforce Board employees stand ready to speak to any group about the importance of secondary education completion and post-secondary education and show the increase in earnings based on educational attainment.

~~We also have partnered with the SC Department of Commerce's local Regional Center on a Career Showcase held yearly for all 9th grade students in Cherokee, Spartanburg and Union counties. This showcase may serve up to 4,500 9th grade students and has approximately fifty businesses on-site showcasing their products, work culture and jobs. Several colleges also have booths. This was held at the Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium last October (2019). Due to COVID-19, we are working with the Regional Center Director to hold the event virtually this year using our Virtual Job Fair platform. SC Works and the Upstate Workforce Board staffers help with this event each year.~~ The showcase will not be held this year. However, we will still partner with the SC Department of Commerce's local Regional Center to directly connect industry and educators. Our goal is to provide a space for industry partners to create awareness of available opportunities, both direct and through apprenticeship tracks; and to provide a space for students and educators to learn more about the local labor market and potential resources to assist with learning after high school. The Upstate Workforce Board Chairman also serves on the Regional Center board.

A STEM summer camp has been held each year at Sims Middle School in Union. There are approximately 12 students in the camp each year. During the 2022 summer camp, we had 20 students attend. There is a focus on STEM subjects and STEM careers. Students tour colleges and businesses. ~~Due to COVID-19, we were not able to organize the program this year, but plan to start back next year.~~ Funds are raised from businesses, local

governments and other organizations to pay for the costs of the program. We are planning the same type of program for Cherokee County for the Summer of 2023.

KNOW(2) is a non-profit in Cherokee County with a focus on secondary education completion and post-secondary attainment. This organization was formed from the Cherokee County Community Indicators work started by the Upstate Workforce Board in partnership with United Way of the Piedmont. The Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director is an officer/board member of this vital educational support organization.

The Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director is an officer and board member of the USC Upstate Foundation. This foundation awards several scholarships each year to local high school students. The Upstate Workforce Board Associate Director serves on the Spartanburg Community College Foundation. Spartanburg Community College is currently offering free tuition.

The Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation (UWFC) is a non-profit that was started in 2010 to support the work of the Upstate Workforce Board. The Upstate Workforce Board Executive Director is a board member and officer. This board raises funds for workforce development projects which are not funded by WIOA. Each year, the UWFC gives scholarships to local students in memory of a past Upstate Workforce Board Member, Mr. Danny E. Allen. Mr. Allen helped form the non-profit. This organization partnered with several entities to provide virtual reality experiences related to STEM careers.

The non-profit funded a pilot project at Spartanburg County School District 3 called The In10tional project. Ten (10) students were selected to participate. We asked the district to select 10 students with no solid plans after high school. We worked with the students for 4 months (approximately 5 meetings) to help them figure out a pathway after high school. The meetings included business speakers, college tours, soft skills training, career assessments, videos and virtual reality. We continue to apply for funds to offer this project to all nine school districts in the Upstate Workforce Area. We find that many students need additional help in planning a solid career path.

In addition to partnerships with K-12, the Upstate Workforce Board and SC Works collaborate with local technical colleges to define strategies and reduce duplication by:

- Serving as co-applicants on grant opportunities;
- Building customized training programs, based on industry requirements (such as IWT, IWTRR, and short-term continuing education projects);
- Serving as ambassadors of the apprenticeship model, which may also be supported through WIOA funds; and

- Building and filling programs (like Operation Workforce Training), often leading to WIOA funded on-the-job training following completion of the classroom training.

In addition to collaboration and partnership among the technical college system, SC Works partners with higher education to promote and coordinate job fair events, and internship or work experience events. Additionally, SC Works provides an overview of available services beyond college related to career paths, apprenticeships and on-the-job training. Existing local partnerships or projects within the Upstate include Limestone University, Spartanburg Methodist College and the Universities of South Carolina Upstate and Union.

There are other examples in other parts of this document.

8. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation, childcare, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

In the Upstate, we have had a long-standing problem with the lack of affordable/available transportation. Individuals in outlying areas and rural counties cannot get to jobs and education. These people ~~were~~ **are** needed in the workforce when we are under 5% unemployment. ~~Once recovery occurs, we believe there will be more private sector led transportation efforts in the area to address this need for workers and learners.~~ Commute with Enterprise is an option that ~~was~~ **is** being considered and used ~~pre-COVID-19~~ (<https://www.commutewithenterprise.com>) in the Upstate Workforce Area to help address transportation barriers. ~~The Economic Futures Group/Spartanburg Area Chamber, OneSpartanburg, SC Works Business Solutions, United Way and private businesses were considering are using this partnership utilizing~~ Commute with Enterprise. Per their website, it reads "Commute with Enterprise remains committed to helping your workforce move forward. As an essential service provider, Commute with Enterprise is staying open to serve customers who rely on us to get employees to and from work - including those who are on the front lines of relief efforts." The SC Works Business Solutions Team often refers companies struggling to fill jobs offering lower market wages in rural areas to Commute with Enterprise. Through collaboration with existing workforce partners, several companies have been able to tap into a pool of candidates who would not have been available without transportation.

The Upstate Workforce Board has used Uber and Lyft in some cases for transportation for customers to solve emergency transportation, last minute issues. Transportation solutions are definitely a focus for the Upstate Workforce Board as well as many partnering programs.

The SC Works Talent Development Specialists have been able to solve most childcare problems in the past except those related to individuals working on the 2nd or 3rd shifts. ~~When COVID-19 hit, this changed when childcare centers closed. We fear this may continue to be a problem. We do not have a solution for this, but will work with other community leaders to address any problems in this area.~~ The Talent Development Specialists work closely with DSS on childcare vouchers. They also work closely with other partners on support services. The Upstate Workforce Board has issued an updated instruction letter for supportive services - <https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/R17-02%281%29.pdf>.
https://www.upstateworkforceboard.org/files/files/Scans_2021011312123200.pdf

9. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the SC Works delivery system.

Partnership meetings occur monthly and at those meetings, challenges are discussed. Partners also discuss any new grants/programs. Partners tend to work well together on most identified issues. Not all of the partners use the SC Works Operating System (SCWOS), so there is duplication. This will not change unless the Governor requires that all agencies performing workforce activities use one single system. ~~The State Workforce Board is now considering Zip Recruiter. If SC Works is to use both systems, this will complicate matters even more. We do feel Zip Recruiter would probably be much more user friendly than the current SCWOS. Having a single, designated system will be most helpful.~~ The Upstate Workforce Board's designated Director of Business Solutions oversees the function of the Business Solutions Team for the SC Works system.

In the past, this has been challenging when individuals do not follow her lead. In an effort to avoid duplication with WIOA and Wagner-Peyser, the Director of Business Solutions, at times, comes to the Upstate Workforce Futures Corporation for help with funding to address an immediate issue for the business customer(s). At other times, we use another community partner in order to react quickly. ~~Mostly, when this occurs, it is an issue from the Columbia SCDEW office and not a local decision by SCDEW staff.~~ These cases do not happen often, but they do occur and we have had to work around the barriers when they cannot be solved by partner staff. We have to do what is needed to serve the business customers in a timely manner. ~~These types of challenges will never be totally avoided until the Wagner-Peyser staff are fully under the SC Works Operator which is now allowed by USDOL (see <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=ETA-2019-0004-0001>).~~ If you cannot hire and fire staff, you cannot have optimum quality, customer services and processes. Responsibility and authority must go together. **Unfortunately, this system is set up this way.** This lack of coordination for business services leaves the Business Services Workforce Solutions Manager and One Stop Project Manager with complete responsibility, but with little authority over partner staff actions. You would never see

~~such a dysfunctional set up like this one under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act in the private sector. It just does not work well. We strongly encourage the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) Director to consider this staffing flexibility that is now allowed by the US Department of Labor. It would mean a reduction in staff for SCDEW and improve the system.~~

In addition to our core, required and optional partners, there are many other community partners. We seek out partners that help us solve problems in serving those seeking services whether it is an individual in need of work or training, or a business in need of workers or other services. We have worked with the United Way, Northside Development Group, HR associations, Regional Centers under the Department of Commerce, chambers, economic developers and many more organizations to address workforce challenges.

10. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under the WIOA Title II, including how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA requirements.

The adult education partners work very well with the Upstate workforce development system. Cross referrals occur often between adult education providers and the other partners in the SC Works system. Spartanburg County Adult Education and the Adult Learning Center are core partners. Spartanburg Adult Education provides an instructor for the ACHIEVE program. The Directors of the Adult Learning Center and Spartanburg County Adult Education are both on the Upstate Workforce Board. The Cherokee County Adult Education Director rotated off the Upstate Workforce Board on June 30, 2020 and is now a staff person in the USC Upstate ACHIEVE program. During PY22, USC Upstate ACHIEVE, Adult Education and the Adult Learning Center are increasing co-enrollments. This goal is to increase services available to Adult Education and Adult Learning Center students. Services being targeted are work-based learning activities, driver's education, occupational skills training in addition to many others.

The Upstate Workforce Board (UWB) participated in the last Adult Education Application Review process. We were able to secure UWB member volunteers. We are not sure what the process will be this time. The last review was cumbersome, and the SC Department of Education realized this and plans changes for this round of reviews. We will once again ask for Upstate Workforce Board members to participate with Adult Education on the review process once they issue the instructions.

Note: The second round of reviews was still very involved and overwhelming for board members. Board staff will continue to support board members through this process.