



**POLICY  
NUMBER**  
  
**123**

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| <b>Title:</b>     | Regional Planning Area Identification and Requirements |
| <b>Program:</b>   | Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act               |
| <b>Effective:</b> | December 22, 2023                                      |

**I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process for identifying regional planning areas (planning regions) for groups of two or more local workforce development areas (local areas) under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), as well as the correlating regional planning requirements.

**II. BACKGROUND**

Under WIOA (Pub. L. 113-128), as part of the process for developing the state plan, states must identify planning regions in the state after consultation with the local workforce development boards (LWDBs) and chief local elected officials (CLEOs) in the local areas. The Governor must assign local areas to a region prior to submission of the state’s WIOA Unified or Combined Plan.

**III. AUTHORITY**

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

[2 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) 679.200-679.210; 20 CFR 679.500-679.540](#)

[CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2023.09.19.A.1 - Regional Planning Areas](#)

## IV. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of identifying planning regions is to align workforce development activities and resources with larger regional economic development areas and available resources to provide coordinated and efficient services to both job seekers and employers. Additionally, the state workforce development board (state board) has communicated the following goals for the creation of regional planning areas as they relate to Florida's Workforce Transformation Plan:

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

CareerSource Florida, in collaboration with the Governor's Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH) Office, the Florida Department of Commerce (FloridaCommerce) and LWDBs, will develop recommendations to the Governor and state board for the identification of planning regions in the state.

### A. Requirements for Identifying Planning Regions

All local areas in the state must be part of a planning region. Two or more LWDBs may request for their local areas to be identified as a planning region by submitting the Request for Regional Planning Area Identification (Attachment A) and supporting documentation as outlined in the application to the Florida Department of Commerce (FloridaCommerce) via email at [LWDBGovernance@commerce.fl.gov](mailto:LWDBGovernance@commerce.fl.gov). FloridaCommerce will review the LWDBs' request for compliance with federal and state requirements as well as this policy. FloridaCommerce will make a recommendation for the state board's consideration on whether to approve the LWDBs' request to be identified as a planning region.

Requirements for identifying a planning region, per 20 CFR 679.210(b) and CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2023.09.19.A.1 are outlined as follows:

- (1) Planning regions must include, at a minimum, two contiguous local areas within Florida<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Although WIOA allows planning regions to also consist of one local area and two or more contiguous local areas in two or more states, Florida's planning regions will be two or more contiguous local areas within Florida.

- (2) Consideration will be given to the extent to which the local areas in the proposed planning region:
  - (a) Share a single labor market;
  - (b) Share a common economic development area; and
  - (c) Possess federal and non-federal resources, including appropriate education and training institutions, to administer activities under WIOA, subtitle B.
  
- (3) The following factors will also be evaluated:
  - (a) Population centers;
  - (b) Commuting patterns;
  - (c) Industrial composition;
  - (d) Location quotients;
  - (e) Labor force conditions; and
  - (f) Geographic boundaries.
  
- (4) The request must contain the signature of all the CLEOs of the units of local government that will make up the planning region in order to demonstrate that the request is the consensus of all the units of local government involved.
  
- (5) CareerSource Florida will submit its recommendation to the Governor within ten business days of the state board's decision.

## **B. Regional Planning Process Requirements**

Planning regions are subject to the regional planning requirements outlined in 20 CFR 679.510. LWDBs and CLEOs within an identified planning region must participate in a regional planning process that results in the:

- (1) Preparation of a regional plan that meets the requirements outlined in 20 CFR 679.510(a)(2), CareerSource Florida Strategic Policy 2023.09.19.A.1, and complies with the instructions issued by CareerSource Florida, in coordination with FloridaCommerce.
- (2) Establishment of regional service strategies using cooperative service delivery agreements that include but are not limited to:
  - a. Consistent eligibility standards and enrollment processes.
  - b. Common training and coordination of supportive service offerings, as appropriate.
  - c. Common technology tools and sharing of data within tools outside of Employ Florida.
- (3) Development and implementation of sector strategies for in-demand sectors or occupations.

- (4) Collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the State<sup>2</sup>).
- (5) Coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate.
- (6) Coordination of transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate.
- (7) Coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers.
- (8) Establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with FloridaCommerce on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region<sup>3</sup>.

### **C. Regional Plan**

LWDBs in an identified planning region will have to work together to formulate a regional plan as an addendum to each of their local plans in accordance with regional planning instructions issued by CareerSource Florida, in coordination with FloridaCommerce.

### **D. Continued Identification as a Regional Planning Area**

Once identified, planning regions will remain in effect as long as federal and state requirements for planning regions continue to be met. With each submission of the regional plan to the state, the respective LWDBs and CLEOs will certify that the requirements to be identified as a planning region continue to be met.

Subsequent to planning regions being initially identified, LWDBs that seek to be identified in a new planning region must submit a new Request for Planning Region Identification to FloridaCommerce in accordance with **Section IV.A. Requirements for Identifying Regional Planning Areas** of this policy.

The state's identified planning regions must be included in the state's WIOA Unified or Combined Plan. Therefore, requests to be identified as a planning region that are approved and coincide with the state's drafting of the Unified or Combined Plan will be included in the state's next submission of the plan to the U.S. Department of Labor. Requests to be

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<sup>2</sup> The state will provide technical assistance and labor market data, as requested by local areas, to assist with such regional planning and subsequent service delivery efforts.

<sup>3</sup> WIOA sec. 107(d)(9) and [Administrative Policy 088 – Negotiated Local Levels of Performance Requirements](#) require that locals negotiate performance, and 20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(viii) requires an agreement between the LWDBs and CLEOS for how a planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with [FloridaCommerce] on local levels of performance. The representatives of each local area within a planning region are responsible for the performance negotiation process.

identified as a planning region may be received at any time with review and consideration taking place at the next reasonably available meeting of the state board.

Please note, the Governor may review planning regions at any time to evaluate whether the planning region continues to meet the requirements of being identified as such. The Governor may also designate a planning region as authorized by WIOA.

## V. DEFINITIONS

- (1) **Consultation** – A robust conversation in which all parties are given the opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions.
- (2) **Local Workforce Development Area (Local Area)** – A geographical area that serves as the jurisdiction for the administration of workforce development activities and has been granted such designation by meeting criteria as prescribed in [Administrative Policy 94 – Local Workforce Development Area Designation](#).
- (3) **Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)** – A board established under WIOA sec. 107, to set forth policy for the local workforce development system.
- (4) **Regional Planning Area** – A “planning region” as described in WIOA sec. 106(a)(2)(B).

## VI. RESOURCES

[Attachment A: Request for Regional Planning Area Identification](#)