

Mohawk Valley Region  
Local Workforce Development Boards  
2017 Regional Plan  
*Updated 2020*

## Mohawk Valley 2017 Regional Plan

### **a. Regional Service Strategies, including Cooperative Service Delivery Agreements:**

The Local Workforce Development Boards of Fulton, Montgomery, and Schoharie and Herkimer, Madison, and Oneida Counties are committed to providing seamless delivery of services to our customers, recognizing that continuous improvement is critical to the goal of a truly seamless delivery of services. The LWDBs of the Mohawk Valley agree to provide WIOA Basic and Individualized Career Services to all Adult and Dislocated Worker customers regardless of which Career Center they visit to access services. Registration will be completed through the One Stop Operating System (OSOS), and all staff will enter customer activities, services, and comments in a timely manner. This coordination of service delivery will assist businesses, jobseekers, and employees in times of business growth as well as business downsizing or closing.

Attached is a Cooperative Service Delivery Agreement.

### **b. Sector Initiatives for In-Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations:**

Based on input from more than 300 stakeholders across the region, the Workforce Development Board of Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties and its partners have developed the Mohawk Valley Advanced Manufacturing Project to help employers and training providers better align training education resources with the needs of our employers.

After meetings across the region and efforts by key partners to drill down into the specifics of several key clusters, the region agreed to educational priorities that include the development of a stronger manufacturing pipeline that begins with the development of strong foundational math and science skills in the pre-college population and a focus on teaching innovation to develop a flexible change-oriented workforce. The region is also building bridges to connect employers who need workers with potential employees whose barriers to employment include language issues. Employers noted that off-the-shelf language programs fail to help them fully harness the potential of the region's refugee populations. Employers noted that as they compete in a global environment, just-in-time training for incumbent workers is vital to giving their workers the skills they need to compete against the word and win and also to address key health and safety regulations in an ever-evolving workplace.

The plan, endorsed by local leaders across the region, serves as the road map for the WDB and its partners as they collaborate to develop solutions that can power the region's manufacturing sector in the years to come.

**c. Collection and Analysis of Regional Labor Market Data:**

Based on data from NYS Department of Labor's Regional Economist, information from our Regional Business Services Team and individual LWDB Business Services Teams and Boards, it is easy to document the abundance of middle skill job openings across the Mohawk Valley Region in Health Care. Examples of medium to high priority jobs in the region, the FMS LWDA, and the HMO LWDA include Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Radiologic Technologists, Physical Therapists, and other Healthcare Workers. In light of an aging population, particularly in upstate New York, and the retirement of many older workers, the need for new health care workers in the pipeline will be ongoing for the foreseeable future.

Additionally, also based on data from NYS Department of Labor's Regional Economist, information from our Regional Business Services Team and individual LWDB Business Services Teams and Boards, it is easy to document the many middle skill job openings across the Mohawk Valley Region in Advanced Manufacturing and associated fields such as Transportation. While the belief is that Manufacturing is no longer a demand occupation in upstate New York, the fact is that the industry has not gone away, but that it has changed, requiring employees with greater skills in science, technology, engineering and math. Examples of medium to high priority Advanced Manufacturing jobs in the region, the FMS LWDA, and the HMO LWDA include Computer Controlled Machine Tool Operators; Machinists; Welders; Electricians; Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Mechanics, Multiple Machine Tool setters, Fork Lift Operators, Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics, and Commercial Truck Drivers.

Recently Agri-Business is dramatically increasing along with Craft Brewing, Distilling and Farm to Table Initiatives. Our industrial base has kept pace with dairy processing expansion and innovation, producing for local, downstate and global markets. The region is positioned to serve a growing demand for sustainably produced craft foods and beverages to domestic and international markets. This continued growth will lead to more jobs and enhanced wages in our communities.

In addition to the production of goods in the Agri-Business sector, this sector has also fostered increased interest in tourism. The tourism sector employs more than 25,000 in the Mohawk Valley. Jobs in the tourism sector tend to be more entry level and provide hard to serve workers with an opportunity to gain skills and experience.

UI rates across the counties of the Mohawk Region have remained the same or increased slightly over the last year. For November 2019, the regional mean is 4.03% and the median is 4.05%. The unemployment rate in the Utica-Rome MSA increased from 3.8 percent in November 2018 to 3.9 percent in November 2019. Many of the people in the remaining pool of the unemployed include those that WIOA targets as Priority and Special Populations. In addition to Veterans, WIOA targets Special Populations including Ex-Offenders, those who are Basic Skills Deficient, Low Income and Public Assistance, Older workers, Out-of-School Youth ages 16 to 24 years, and workers affected by the opioid crisis. They have the greatest barriers to employment and require more basic training such as soft skills, literacy, and basic computer skills before they are ready for more advanced training in STEM skills and occupations.

One of the greatest concerns of our region should be that if businesses cannot acquire skilled employees locally or regionally, they will either recruit from outside the region or move their industry to where the workforce is.

**d. The Establishment of a Regional Spending Plan (including administrative cost arrangements between LWDBs and pooling of funds where applicable):**

The LWDBs have established a Regional Spending Plan which focuses on businesses/industries that cross county/LWDB lines in their need for new employees and upgrading of current employees. The LWDBs agree (within their funding ability) to provide training services and funds as long as either the business or employee resides within their LWDB. The Regional Spending Plan also includes the ability to share administrative costs if the need is identified and agreed to by both FMS and HMO WDBs.

**e. The Coordination of Supportive Services:**

The LWDBs recognize that the provision of Supportive Services can be critical to the success of WIOA participants in training programs. FMS and HMO agree to share their supportive services policies with all regional workforce staff for their reference so that they can provide the most informed services and referrals to participants and potential participants.

**f. The Coordination of Services with Economic Development Partners:**

The LWDBs of the Mohawk Valley Region strive to align our initiatives and strategies with the Mohawk Valley Regional Economic Development Council and to work closely with many economic development partners to share information and provide seamless services through a Workforce Development/Economic Development partnership. These partners include Chambers of Commerce, Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs), the Fulton County Center for Regional Growth, the Montgomery County Business Development Center, the Mohawk Valley Regional Business Services Team, the Regional Workforce Development Task Force, the Schoharie County Chamber Business Development Committee, the Mohawk Valley Revitalization Committee, and others.

The WDB Executive Directors also attend Mohawk Valley REDC meetings as possible, in part to ensure that the workforce programs and strategies mesh closely with the needs of the region, as defined by the REDC.

When economic development agencies bring in site selection teams to view potential sites, LWDB Directors or their staff are available to meet with the teams to provide information on the

local and regional workforce and training opportunities available through the LWDBs and their partners.

**g. An Agreement Concerning Performance Accountability Measure Negotiation and Reporting:**

The FMS and HMO WDBs agree to review quarterly performance reports as a regional team to identify issues of performance and to develop performance improvement plans that benefit not only each individual LWDB's performance, but the **region** as a whole. Once performance improvement plans have been developed, this information will be shared with workforce staff to give them a better understanding of how the delivery of services may impact on performance. The FMS and HMO WDBs will discuss Performance Measure negotiations prior to negotiations with NYSDOL, to ensure coordination and collaboration between the LWDBs.

### **Mohawk Valley LWDBs Cooperative Service Delivery Agreement**

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