



Board Report

January 26, 2022

Participant Service Goals for PY'21

Program	Regional Plan Goals	Carry-In Clients	New in PY'21 (July 1-Dec. 31)	Total	Goal %
WIOA Adult	879	196	201	397	45%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	211	48	11	59	28%
WIOA Out of School Youth	172	19	15	34	20%
WIOA In School Youth	43	14	1	15	35%

COVID-19: Regional Update

Due to increased COVID positivity across the region, WorkOne locations resumed an appointment-only status as of January 4, 2022. WorkOne staff will continue to provide virtual services when requested. Staff are still sanitizing work areas within the WorkOne offices and limiting capacity in each office to maintain social distancing recommendations.

Region 8 continues to utilize Dislocated Worker Disaster Recovery funding to hire dislocated workers as temporary employees in WorkOne locations to assist with cleaning and monitoring office capacity limits. One of these positions remains filled at the Linton WorkOne. Several of the temporary employees from other WorkOne offices have been hired to fill the Workforce Training Assistant positions created by the WIOA Performance Support Grant. The Dislocated Worker Disaster Recovery funding will expire as of February 15, 2022.

Region 8 expects a significant number of job seekers to continue utilizing WorkOne services in the upcoming months as the additional Unemployment Insurance benefits have ceased and the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant funding has been extended through June 30, 2022. Positions for Workforce Training Coordinators in Brown, Lawrence and Monroe Counties are currently vacant. Region 8 will continue to seek qualified candidates to fill these positions.

UI Claims

Indiana ended its participation in all federally funded pandemic unemployment compensation programs.

Region 8 County Unemployment Rates

County	July	August	September	October	November
Brown	3.7%	3.5%	2.8%	2.1%	1.8%
Daviess	2.6%	2.6%	2.3%	1.7%	1.4%
Greene	4.0%	3.9%	3.3%	2.6%	2.1%
Lawrence	4.1%	4.0%	3.4%	2.4%	2.0%
Martin	2.8%	2.8%	2.4%	1.7%	1.5%
Monroe	3.7%	3.5%	2.7%	2.2%	1.7%
Orange	5.0%	4.9%	4.6%	3.0%	2.6%
Owen	4.2%	3.9%	3.5%	2.6%	2.2%

As of November 2021, Indiana's unemployment rate was 3%, which was well below the national rate of 4.2%. All of the Region 8 county rates have fallen below the state average.

Region 8 staff continue to answer basic UI questions and help customers use WorkOne computers to file UI claims. Customers who need additional assistance are required to call or email the UI Contact Center at DWD. Customers at the Linton and Bloomington WorkOne locations have the option of using a designated phone to speak directly with an Unemployment Specialist at the UI Contact Center. Customers have the option to file by phone if they do not have access to a computer or smart phone to file online.

Staff continue to assist customers with ID.me, a highly secure identity verification process that that was implemented in February 2021 to ensure claimants are able to access their unemployment benefits. This process was adopted due to claimants from several states being victimized by criminals using stolen identities to submit fraudulent unemployment claims. DWD has provided Region 8 with a few smart phones to assist customers in completing this process.

RESEA

Region 8 has maintained RESEA services using a telephonic/virtual service model. From October to December 2021, 252 individuals were required to participate in RESEA services. Of those required to participate, 114 Assessment Interviews were completed with a RESEA Specialist, which equates to a 45% Successful Interview rate for program participants. Of the remaining claimants, 37 had returned to work and the others have declined services due to various reasons. As the post-COVID-19 environment continues to change, the Region 8 RESEA team will continue to adapt our program processes to improve access and increase program participation.

WARN/Non-WARN Notices and Rapid Response Activities

There have been no WARN notices since the last board meeting.

Performance Highlights and Business Services Updates

From July 1 to December 31, 2021, the Business Service Team assisted with the following:

- **Work Based Learning** – 26 customers active in work-based learning (WBL) with regional employers.
- **WorkKeys** - 104 WorkKeys assessments have been administered since July. Business Services staff continue to engage with employers throughout the region to discuss the utilization of the assessments as part of their hiring process. There were 2 Platinum National Career Readiness Certificates awarded to Region 8 customers during this time frame.
- A total of **193 Distinct Employer contacts** were made, representing a **32%** achievement of our annual program goal of 600 contacts.
- A total of **997 Business Contacts** were made, representing a **59%** achievement of our annual program goal of 1,680 contacts. During this same time frame, employers searched **1,436 resumes** using the ICC resume database to fill job openings.

Ongoing Hiring Events and Job Fairs have begun taking place throughout the region:

- **Orange County Job Fair** - WorkOne sponsored a booth on December 2nd at the Orange County Community Building in Paoli which provided plenty of room for social distancing during the event. 33 employers participated in the fair with over 65 individuals in attendance. On-location interviews were conducted and 8 job offers were accepted. Orange County Career Advisor Cathy Tucker is pictured below discussing WorkOne services and job opportunities throughout the region.



- WorkOne hosted, sponsored and attended 15 hiring events throughout the region. A few of these events included BEDC Opportunity Expo, Washington H.S. College & Career Fair, Hoosier Hill Career Center (HHCC) Career Fair, Catalent & Resource MFG Hiring Events, Springs Valley H.S. Trades Fair and the IU Residential Program Services 4 Hiring Events.

GRANT UPDATES

National Dislocated Worker Employment Recovery Grant (DW-ERG)

Region 8 received approximately \$350,000 to provide Career Services, Training and Supportive Services to Dislocated Workers who have been affected by COVID-19. As of December 31st, 76 eligible workers have been enrolled to participate in career and training services.

WIOA Support Grant PY21

DWD extended another opportunity for Workforce Boards to apply for WIOA Performance Support Grant funding that must be spent by March 31, 2023. Region 8 was awarded approximately \$485,000 to fund the following initiatives to assist with capacity building, target populations, employer engagement and youth engagement:

1. **Pathways to apprenticeships-** Building upon Region 8's previous success with WorkINDiana and WRG programs, the region will create a pathway from short-term occupational skills training to a Registered Apprenticeship. New Registered Apprenticeships will be created to prepare participants for a career as a Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA), Welder, or Heating and Cooling (HVAC) Technician. A full-time position has been created to assist in the development and oversight of these apprenticeships.

UPDATE: As of November 2021, Gail Mitchell has been hired as the Coordinator of Apprenticeship and Work based Learning for Region 8. She is currently in the process of recruiting employers for the CCMA program as well as developing the Registered Apprenticeship Programs for Heating and Cooling (HVAC) Technician on behalf of the board. She will also be establishing the Welding apprenticeship in the near future.

2. **Youth Engagement Coordinator (YEC)-** A full-time position was developed to focus exclusively on marketing of available Youth services throughout the region, recruiting customers, and connecting potentially eligible Out of School Youth ages 18-24 with WIOA Career Advisors.

UPDATE: Juanita Sciscoe was hired in November 2021 as the Youth Engagement Coordinator for Region 8. Juanita has faced a few challenges due to the increase in COVID positivity, but has been able to begin establishing relationships throughout the region to recruit youth.

3. **WorkOne Customer Service-** Due to the increased number of UI claimant issues and pandemic-related impacts on workers, Career Advisors have been forced to shift their attention to assisting customers with those tasks. Region 8 will hire 6 additional part-time Workforce Training Assistants throughout the region. This will allow Career Advisors to refocus their attention to providing career counseling and job placement assistance to customers enrolled in Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs.

UPDATE: Region 8 has hired five (5) Workforce Training Assistants to assist in the local offices. One position remains open and interviews are currently taking place.



Next Level Jobs: Workforce Ready Grant and Employer Training Grant

As a part of the Indiana Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) "Rapid Recovery for a Better Future" initiative, the Governor dedicated funding available through the CARES Act to increase short-term training opportunities for more than 10,000 Hoosiers. In March 2021, Region 8 was awarded a budget of \$900,500 of Round 2 WRG funds to be used for tuition and supportive service assistance. From March 1st to December 31st, \$656,700 was spent on 213 students.

On January 1, 2022, Region 8 received another round of WRG funding for \$400,000. As of January 20th, approximately \$135,875 has already been obligated on tuition for 39 students.

Region 8 was also awarded \$420,000 of Employer Training Grant funds in May 2021 to reimburse employers for training new employees and/or upskilling of incumbent workers. Employers who would like more information about how to apply for these funds should contact Robin Branch (rbranch@vinu.edu) or Earl Isom (eisom@dwd.in.gov).

Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP)

In December 2020, the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board received \$100,000 in funding through a DOL-sponsored Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) grant. These funds were acquired by the Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships to sponsor and create Registered Apprenticeship opportunities throughout the Region 8 service area. These apprenticeship programs are designed to provide eligible youth and adult participants with an opportunity to gain specialized skills and training, enabling them to enter the workforce at an entry level with an increased potential for advancement in their chosen occupation. Individuals who successfully complete one of these Registered Apprenticeship programs will earn a nationally recognized credential.

Apprenticeship programs in Region 8 are focused in one of these major growth sectors: Advanced Manufacturing, Building and Construction, IT and Business Services, Health and Life sciences, Transportation and Logistics and Agriculture. In addition to allowing regions to establish their own Apprenticeships, these funds can also be utilized to support current DOL recognized Apprenticeship Programs. Since becoming a DOL recognized sponsor in May 2020, the Region 8 Workforce Board has created Registered Apprenticeship programs for the following occupations: Workforce Development Specialists, Biomanufacturing Technicians, Clinical Medical Assistants and Registered Behavioral Technicians. Partner employers thus far include Baxter International, Boston Scientific, Catalent Biologics, Cook Medical, Littlestar Center, Inc. and St. Vincent/Ascension-Bedford.

Through assistance from the WIOA Performance Support Grant, Region 8 was able to hire a staff member dedicated to the development and oversight of Region 8's Registered Apprenticeship program. Gail Mitchell, a previous Workforce Training Coordinator, officially accepted the Coordinator of Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning position in November 2021. Gail is currently working in collaboration with Monroe County Community School Corporation and Wagler Education and Training Center to develop additional programs for Welders and HVAC Technicians in Region 8.

- The JAG Career Development Conference (CDC) is taking place virtually this year. Judging will start on February 1, 2022. The Award Ceremony will be recorded and sent out on February 25, 2022. Students from all schools have been getting ready to compete and are excited to participate in this event. Hoosier Hills Career Center and Mitchell High School JAG students are seen below preparing for the competition.



- Mitchell High School JAG students recently enjoyed an informational presentation from the local fire department, and have completed their JAG model services by assisting the elementary school students with glove painting activities.



- Mitchell High School JAG Specialist, Kim Allen, became ill with COVID on September 4th. Kim's has had a rocky road but she has come off the ventilator after 129 days. Please keep Kim in your thoughts during this time.