



Partners Strengthening Iowa's Workforce System

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF IOWA WORKFORCE PARTNERS

ABOUT AIWP

The Association of Iowa Workforce Partners (AIWP) is a statewide organization of regional Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partners that provide specialized workforce services to Iowans, including hard-to-place, at-risk, low-income adults, low-income youth, and dislocated and unemployed individuals. The mission of AIWP is to advance the quality and availability of workforce services in Iowa through education, advocacy, and professional development. AIWP members efficiently serve both jobseekers and employers through a regional system, matching Iowans with training and skills to meet the unique needs of local employers.

WHO WE SERVE

With the authorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in 2014, Iowa Works offices have become a much more critical service provider. While a large proportion of individuals served are receiving unemployment benefits, many others fit into categories of workers traditionally overlooked in labor force rates, including dislocated workers, underemployed individuals, and individuals seeking to up-skill or earn a credential. With an improving economy, workforce offices are serving more of the Iowans with significant barriers to employment.

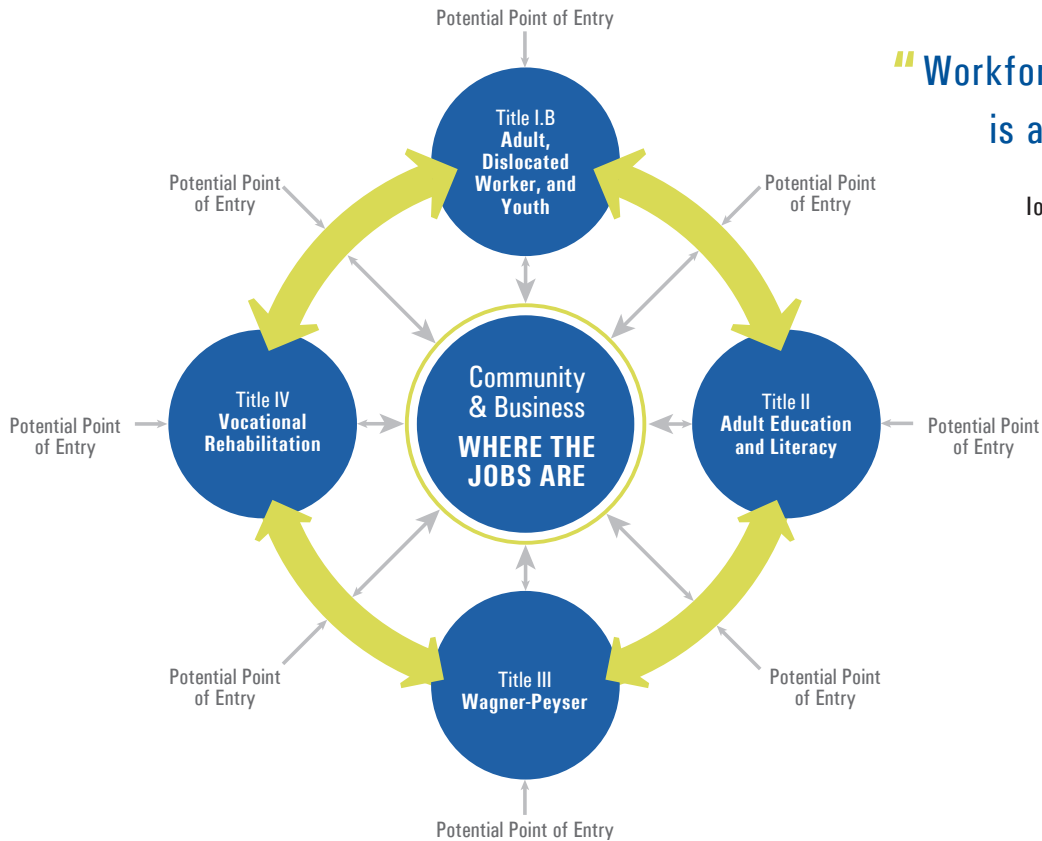
Iowa businesses are also customers of the Iowa Works office. Workforce partners must consult closely with regional businesses to ensure individuals seeking employment know and are able to learn the skills necessary to fill available and/or anticipated positions. In many cases, there are large gaps between the skills needed by employers and the current skills of the workforce. Closing this gap is a key role of the Iowa Works office and its partners.

HISTORY OF AIWP

AIWP was formed in 2001 as a nonprofit organization with a goal of working together to promote and advocate for Iowa's workforce development systems and services. There was a recognition that workforce organizations need to represent the interests of communities throughout the entire state and give a voice to jobseekers and employers regarding regulatory and policy issues at the state and federal levels. Over the years, AIWP has worked closely with Iowa Workforce Development, as well as other state agencies, Iowa community colleges, and the Iowa General Assembly.



THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM



"Workforce development is a team issue."

Director Beth Townsend,
Iowa Workforce Development

Changing expectations under the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) have impacted how AIWP responds to needs within the system. These activities include:

- » Supporting the integration of services and supports to businesses and lowans seeking employment.
- » Facilitating the growth of collaborations across the system.
- » Preparing the people within the system to respond to new challenges.
- » Empowering local board transitions to more business-focused decision-making.
- » Aligning workforce system efforts with Future Ready Iowa in order to meet projected business and individual needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENSURING A ROBUST JOBS-DRIVEN SYSTEM THAT IS EFFECTIVE IN BUILDING LOCAL ECONOMIC VITALITY:

1. Recognize the critical importance of local decision-making through the state's system of Regional Workforce Development Boards and the expanding role of these boards necessitated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
2. Continue to fund Pathways for Academic Career Employment (PACE), Gap Tuition Assistance, and Adult Basic Education (ABE).
3. Raise the family income eligibility rate for child care assistance up from 145% to 185% of the poverty level to increase access to this critical workforce and educational support for working families.
4. Maintain state investment in workforce and regional workforce partnerships that ensure access to high-quality, low-cost training that meets local workforce and industry needs.
5. Invest in infrastructure and professional development for the one-stop system to develop a better integrated system, resulting in attainment of Future Ready Iowa goals.

Workforce Development Regions

