



Department of
Job and Family Services

John R. Kasich, Governor
Cynthia C. Dungey, Director

DATE: March 6, 2015
TO: Chief Elected Officials
FROM: Cynthia C. Dungey, Director
RE: Designation of Workforce Development Areas under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA was signed into law on July 22, 2014 and emphasizes a broad vision of workforce development programs that responds to the needs of employers by preparing workers with the skills and resources needed to compete for in-demand jobs. The Act also stresses the importance of alignment of the workforce investment, education, and economic development systems and promotes improvement in the structure and delivery of services. To that end, WIOA provides Ohio with new opportunities to enhance the service delivery systems, enrich services to customers, and advance partner linkages.

Local workforce development areas are designated for the purpose of implementing WIOA, establishing an OhioMeansJobs service delivery system, and administering the workforce development programs. Under the federal legislation, the Governor, in consultation with the local chief elected official, is required to designate local workforce areas. The definition of chief elected official is the chief elected executive officer of a unit of general local government in a local area. In Ohio, the chief elected official(s) may be a county commissioner, a mayor, a county executive, a county council member or a combination of all. To implement WIOA, the chief elected official has the responsibility to request local workforce development area designation.

The process to determine which counties should compose a local workforce development area should be data driven and include the following activities:

- Analyze the required workforce activities under WIOA and criteria for a local workforce development area; and
- Assess the current local workforce investment area as designated under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and surrounding counties taking into account regionalization.

It should be noted that under section 106 (b)(2) of WIOA, the State shall approve a request for initial designation (also known as "automatic" designation) from the chief elected official of a local area which was designated under WIA, assuming the composition of the area has not changed, and that the area performed successfully and sustained fiscal integrity for the

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two year period preceding the enactment of WIOA. Attached is a map indicating those current WIA areas which are eligible for initial designation.

Regardless of whether a local WIA area meets the criteria for initial designation, the chief elected official(s) should still review and consider if a change in local area composition would be beneficial for job seekers, workers, and businesses being served using the criteria established under WIOA law and the accompanying data mentioned previously. Although input can be sought, this decision belongs to the chief elected official(s). When making this decision, keep in mind that WIOA provides the opportunity to rethink how workforce development is delivered in the community and how to best serve job seekers, workers, and businesses.

In addition to the previously mentioned map entitled, "WIOA Local Area Designation," a map entitled, "Considerations for Local Workforce Development Areas," and a "WIOA Responsibilities of Chief Elected Officials Guide," which includes instructions for making initial designation requests are also attached for your reference. Requests for designation are due by Friday, May 29, 2015.

Once local workforce development areas have been designated, the next set of transitional activities and responsibilities will be communicated to the chief elected officials.

Thank you in advance for your continued support and efforts as we embark on making Ohio's workforce programs more accessible and aligned to assist our greatest asset, our local business community and individuals.

If you have any questions regarding the local workforce development area designation process, including criteria, please contact John Weber at (614) 466-9494 or e-mail at John.Weber@jfs.ohio.gov.

WIOA Responsibilities of the Chief Elected Officials

Activity 1: Request Designation of the Local Workforce Development Area

Workforce Development Areas (Section 106 (b) of WIOA)

The first step in implementing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), is for chief elected officials to submit a request for local workforce development area designation to the State. Local workforce development areas are designated for the purpose of implementing WIOA, establishing an OhioMeansJobs service delivery system, and administering the workforce development programs.

Per section 106 (b) of WIOA, the Governor shall designate local workforce development areas with the State through consultation with the State Board and after consultation with chief elected officials and local boards, and after consideration of comments received through the public comment process.

There are three steps to determine which counties to include in the local workforce development area:

- Understand the criteria for a local workforce development area

Section 106 (b) (1) (B) of WIOA outlines what considerations are to be given to designate a local workforce development area. The local area should consist of counties which have the following:

- Similar labor market(s)

Labor market data for the county should be analyzed and compared with surrounding counties and regions. Information such as metropolitan statistical areas (MSA), combined statistical areas (CSA), and workforce commuting patterns provide a snapshot of the labor market. Counties who are within the same MSA and CSA or whose residents' commuting patterns are similar should be reviewed for possible inclusion as a local workforce development area.

Data to assess the labor market can be found at the following websites:

- MSA – <http://ohiolmi.com> under "Maps"
- CSA – <http://development.ohio.gov/files/research/P3004.pdf>.
- Workforce Commuting Patterns – <http://ohiolmi.com/census/commuting.htm>
- Census Information - [http://www.development.ohio/reports/reports am com survey.htm](http://www.development.ohio/reports/reports_am_com_survey.htm)

- Consistent regional economic development areas

To look at a county from a regional economic development perspective, chief elected officials should review the JobsOhio regions as well as the unemployment rate, the number and type of businesses, and the number of job openings in the county and surrounding counties. Counties with similar economies and economic development should be reviewed for possible inclusion as a local workforce development area.

Data used to assess regional economic development can be found at the following websites:

- JobsOhio Region – <http://ohiolmi.com> under "Maps"
- Unemployment Rate – <http://ohiolmi.com> under "Data"
- Number and Type of Businesses in the Area – <http://ohiolmi.com> under "Data (see Employment and Wages Tab)"
- Number of Job Openings in the Area – <http://ifs.ohio.gov/owd/omjresources/jobpostingstrends.stm>

- Available Federal and non-Federal resources

This review should include where training providers, including 2-year and 4-year schools, Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) providers, and Ohio technical centers are located. A review of resources should also include how much Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding is available currently and how this amount affects the delivery of services to adults, dislocated workers, and youth. The local workforce development area should have available services and funding to support the workforce development system and services.

Data to assess resources can be found at the following websites:

- Historical and Current WIA Funding in the Area – <https://ifs.ohio.gov/owd/WIOA/index.stm>
- Higher Education Centers in the Area – <https://www.ohiohighered.org/campuses>
- ABLE Providers in the Area – <https://www.ohiohighered.org/able/locations>
- Ohio Vocational Technical Centers in the Area – <https://www.ohiohighered.org/students/find-a-career/career-technical-professional-and-vocational-schools>

- Review the current local workforce investment area as designated under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

Although Ohio is currently divided into 20 local workforce investment areas, these local areas do not have to continue as currently structured under WIOA. The chief elected official(s) should review the current local WIA area to make a

decision to continue as currently structured, if allowed by federal law, or to realign to form a new local workforce development area, which may be better aligned with the labor market and the economic development region. Existing partnerships between neighboring WIA local areas or between counties belonging to separate areas, should be examined to determine if these partnerships could prosper and become stronger if the counties existed within the same local workforce development area.

- Request local workforce development area designation

The State has developed an application to be completed to request designation as a workforce development area. Requests for local area designation are initiated by completing the application and submitting it to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Office of Workforce Development. The State consults and reviews the applications for approval or denial.

The transition from being designated as a WIA local area to a WIOA local area may occur using two different methods.

Initial Designation

The first method a local area may be designated under WIOA is through an initial designation (also known as "automatic designation") process. Requests for designation from the local area's chief elected official(s) will be approved under the initial designation process if the current local WIA area meets the following criteria:

- Was designated under WIA within the two year period preceding July 22, 2014 and the local area's composition remains the same;
- Performed successfully (using PY 2012 and PY 2013 annual performance data); and
- Sustained fiscal integrity.

The following local WIA areas meet these criteria:

- Area 1 (Adams, Brown, Pike, and Scioto Counties)
- Area 3 (Cuyahoga County)
- Area 6 (Stark and Tuscarawas Counties)
- Area 7 (Allen, Ashland, Champaign, Clark, Clinton, Coshocton, Darke, Defiance, Delaware, Erie, Fayette, Fulton, Gallia, Greene, Guernsey, Hancock, Henry, Highland, Holmes, Huron, Knox, Jackson, Lawrence, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Miami, Montgomery, Morrow, Muskingum, Ottawa, Paulding, Preble, Putnam, Sandusky, Seneca, Shelby, Union, Wayne, Williams, Wood, and Wyandot Counties)
- Area 9 (Lucas County)

- Area 10 (Crawford and Richland Counties)
- Area 13 (Hamilton County)
- Area 15 (Monroe, Morgan Noble, and Washington Counties)
- Area 16 (Belmont, Carroll, Harrison, and Jefferson Counties)
- Area 17 (Columbiana and Mahoning Counties)
- Area 20 (Fairfield, Hocking, Pickaway, Ross, and Vinton Counties)

It must be noted that in order to request initial designation, the local area shall maintain the same area composition as designated under WIA. If just one county does not want to be included in the local area, the chief elected officials cannot request initial designation as the local area no longer meets this criteria. In this case, the chief elected official will now have to engage in conversations with other chief elected officials regarding the criteria for a local area and what composition of counties will meet the criteria to be designated under the Federal Workforce Development Area.

Regardless of whether a local WIA area meets the criteria for initial designation, the chief elected official(s) should still review and consider if a change in local area composition would be beneficial using the criteria established under WIOA law and the accompanying labor market and economic development data mentioned previously. WIOA provides Ohio, the local elected officials, and the local areas the ability to rethink how workforce development is delivered and how to best serve job seekers, workers, and businesses.

Once the Initial Designation request is received, if it is denied, the chief elected official(s) or grant recipient of the local area may submit an appeal to the State. Within 21 calendar days from the date of receipt of the notice that initial designation was denied, the chief elected official(s) may file an appeal to the State by submitting in writing all of the following information: a statement that the local elected official(s) is appealing the denial of designation; the reason why designation of the local area should be made; and the signature(s) of the local elected official(s).

If the appeal does not result in requested local area designation, the chief elected official(s) may request a review from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Designation based on Federal Workforce Development Area Criteria

The second method that a local area may be designated as a WIOA local area is through a designation request in which the State consults and reviews the application using established criteria. This designation is also known as "discretionary designation." A local area who does not meet the criteria for initial designation must request designation using this method. This includes the remaining nine local WIA areas who did not meet the performance criteria for initial designation:

- Area 2 (Medina and Summit Counties)
- Area 4 (Lorain County)
- Area 5 (Lake County)
- Area 8 (Auglaize, Hardin, Mercer, and Van Wert Counties)
- Area 11 (Franklin County)
- Area 12 (Butler, Clermont, and Warren Counties)
- Area 14 (Athens, Meigs, and Perry Counties)
- Area 18 (Trumbull County)
- Area 19 (Ashtabula, Geauga, and Portage Counties)

Under this method, the chief elected official(s) may request counties for designation as a local area, and the State will use the following criteria to approve or deny such request:

- The extent to which the local area has a similar labor market;
- The extent to which the local area has a consistent regional economic development area; and
- The extent to which the local area has available Federal and non-Federal resources necessary to effectively administer WIOA activities, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers.

WIOA does not provide any appeal rights for local areas whose application for designation under this method is denied. A denied application will be returned with an explanation as to why the local area did not meet the criteria for a local area established under WIOA.

At any point during the designation process, a chief elected official(s) may request technical assistance (e.g., assistance with collection of necessary data and/or understanding the designation process) from the Office of Workforce Development to support the designation process.

Requests for Designation as a Workforce Development Area

Requests for local workforce development area designation are initiated by completing an application and submitting it to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS), Office of Workforce Development (OWD). Below is the template for the application. Electronic fillable applications are available through the Forms Central section of the ODJFS website (<http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/inter.asp>) and on the policy page of the OWD website. The application is also available by e-mailing a request to OWDPOLICY@jfs.ohio.gov.

Step 1 – Point of Contact

The following information concerns the individual who is filling out this application on behalf of the proposed local workforce development area and will be the point of contact for future correspondence.

Name: _____
Title: _____
Address: _____
Phone: _____
E-Mail: _____
Date of Application: _____

Step 2 – Participating Counties

Please list all participating counties who will form the proposed local workforce development area.

Step 3 – Local Workforce Development Area Designation Criteria

Any governmental unit interested in receiving a local workforce development area designation must demonstrate how the proposed geographic area meets each of the following criteria:

Note: Please attach a document to address each of the specific considerations, as well as any additional evidence to support the claims.

- The geographic area is consistent with the labor market areas in the State;
- The geographic area is consistent with the regional economic development areas in the State;
- The geographic area is served by local educational agencies and intermediate

- educational agencies;
- The geographic area is served by postsecondary education institutions and area vocational education schools;
- The geographic area has available resources necessary to effectively administer workforce development activities; and
- The extent to which the proposed area will help a unit of local government or combination of local governments produce a comprehensive workforce development system consistent with the goals of Ohio's Unified State Plan.

Step 4 – Signatures of Representatives from each County in the Proposed Local Workforce Development Area

The Chief Elected Official (CEO) from each county in the proposed Workforce Development Area must sign below. If necessary, a separate signature page for each representative may be attached.

County Name	Signature	Date
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County Name	Signature	Date
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County Name	Signature	Date
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County Name	Signature	Date
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Step 6 – Approvals on Proposed Local Workforce Development Area

Have the Local County Board(s) of Commissioners or Councils of the proposed local workforce development area approved this regionalization via Board or Council resolution/vote?

If yes, please attach Board or Council resolution/vote.

If no, please explain why.

Step 7 – E-Mail Application

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
Office of Workforce Development
OWDPOLICY@jfs.ohio.gov
Attn: ODJFS Designation Team

Requests for Designation Assistance

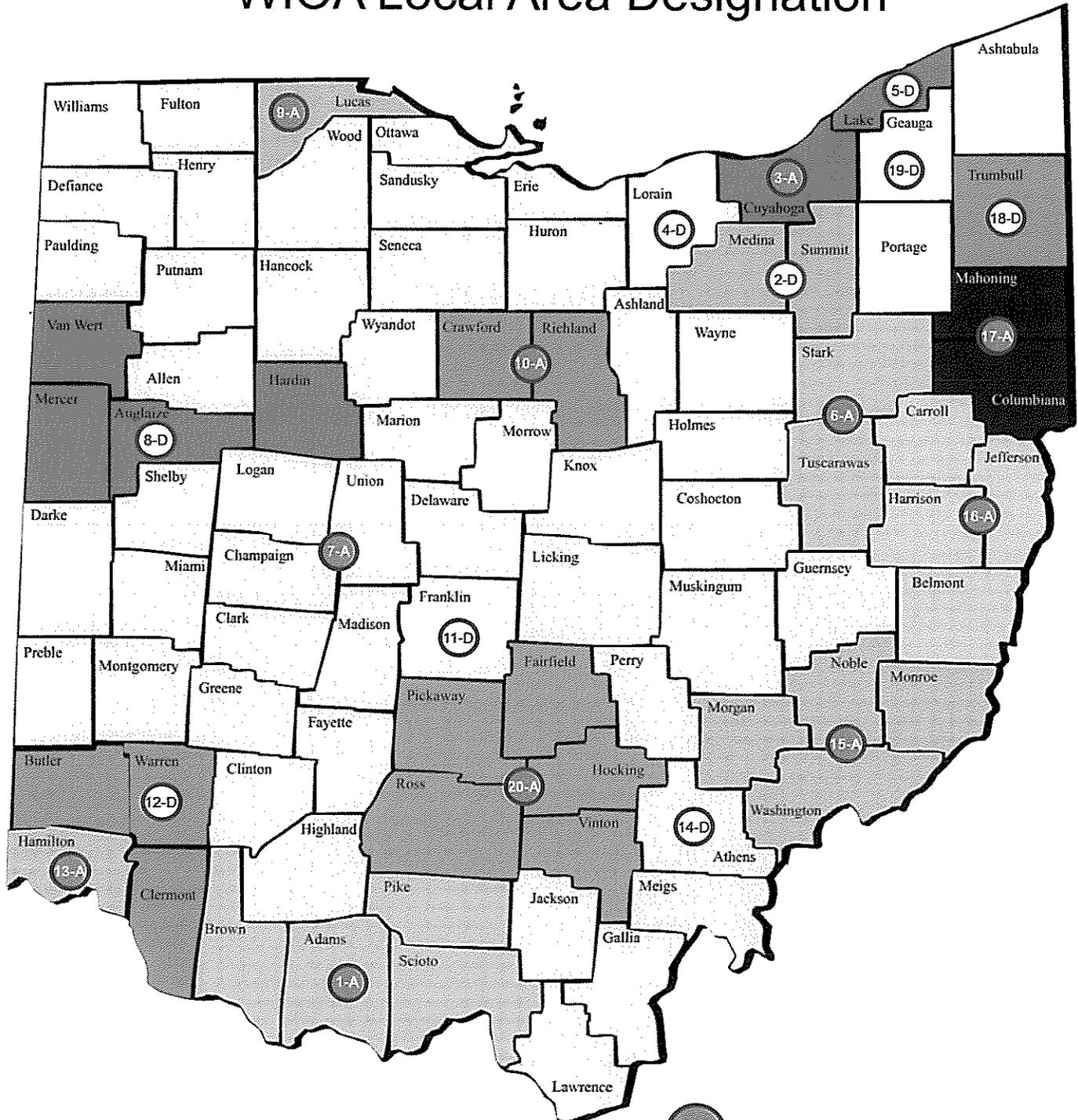
Recognizing costs will be incurred by those local workforce development areas whose composition changes under WIOA designation, assistance is available. Pursuant to section 106 (b)(6) of WIOA, upon a request of all the local workforce development areas of a planning region, the State may provide funding to assist the local areas in carrying out activities to facilitate the designation of the local workforce development areas.

Local workforce development areas designated under the initial designation method (also known as "automatic") are not eligible for designation funding assistance.

Requests for designation funding assistance may be sent to Mr. Ron Weber, Budget and Performance Coordinator at the Office of Workforce Development at Ronald.Weber@ifs.ohio.gov. The request must contain a detailed description of what designation activities will be funded.

Should you have any questions regarding the designation application and process, please feel free to contact Julie Wirt, OWD, at (614) 752-3228 or via e-mail at: Julie.Wirt@ifs.ohio.gov.

WIOA Local Area Designation

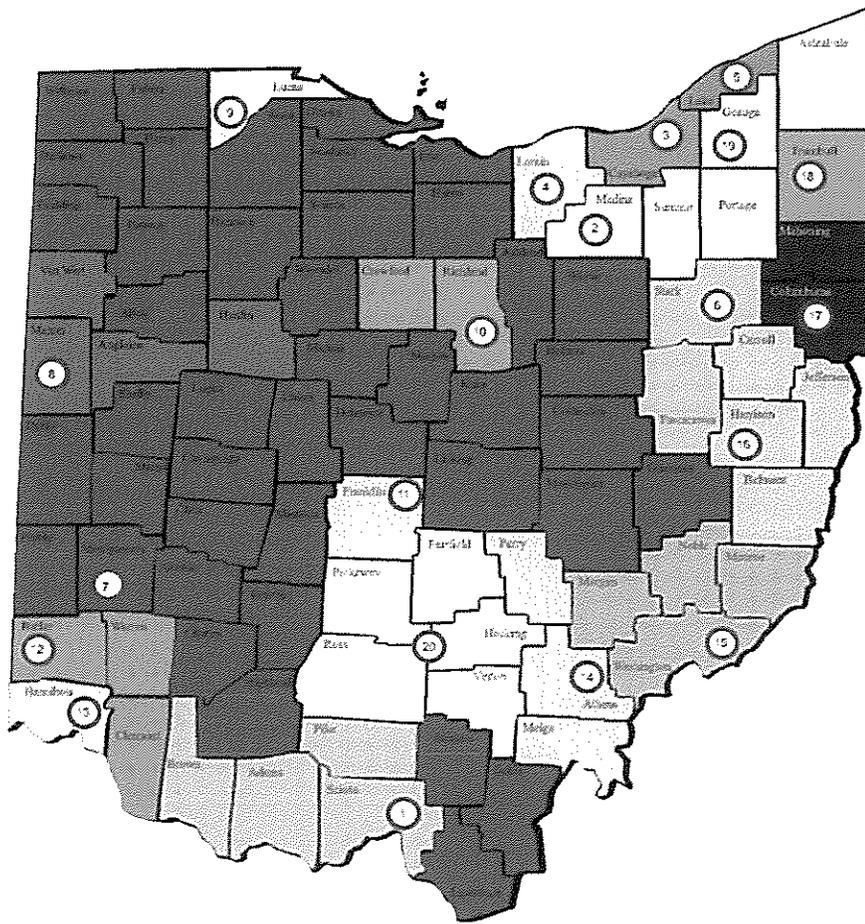


#-A May Apply for Automatic Designation

#-D May Apply for Discretionary Designation

Current Ohio Workforce Investment Areas

Workforce Investment Act - 2014



Federal Law Requirements for Designation of Local Workforce Areas (Section 106 (b) of WIOA)

- 1 **The extent to which local areas have similar labor markets**
 - Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) - <http://ohiolmi.com> under "Maps"
 - Combined Statistical Areas (CSAs) - <http://development.ohio/files/research/P3004.pdf>.
 - Workforce Commuting Patterns - <http://ohiolmi.com/census/commuting.htm>
 - Census Information - http://development.ohio.gov/reports/reports_am_com_survey.htm

- 2 **The extent to which local areas are consistent with regional economic development areas**
 - JobsOhio Regions - <http://ohiolmi.com> under "Maps"
 - Unemployment Rate - <http://ohiolmi.com> under "Data"
 - Number of Businesses in the Area - <http://ohiolmi.com> under "Data"
 - Number of Job Openings in the Area - <http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/omjresources/jobpostingstrends.stm>

- 3 **The extent to which local areas have available the federal and non-federal resources necessary to effectively administer WIOA activities, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers**
 - Historical and Current WIA Funding in the Area - <https://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/WIOA/index.stm>
 - Higher Education Centers in the Area - <https://www.ohiohighered.org/campuses>
 - Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) Providers in the Area - <https://www.ohiohighered.org/able/locations>
 - Ohio Vocational Technical Centers in the Area - <https://www.ohiohighered.org/students/find-a-career/career-technical-professional-and-vocational-schools>
 - Other Grants, Foundation Funding and Business Contributions