



VIRGINIA CAREER WORKS

NEW RIVER | MOUNT ROGERS REGION

PY 2020-2024 Strategic Plan

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Acknowledgements

New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area

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Executive Summary

Background and History

The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board (NRMRWDB) has been engaged in the business of workforce solutions since 2000. The NRMRWDB holds to its formation mission of facilitating and coordinating workforce initiatives that enable economic growth and increase the standard of living of our regional citizens. This focus has required services and partners to evolve over the years and yet, anchors our work in the heart of developing a robust workforce that supports a growing economy in the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area (NRMR WDA) as well as across southwest and the rest of Virginia. Our work locally has been guided by a vision and mission that has been revisited over the years. Following the integration of our sector initiative work, expansion of the integration of workforce system efforts, and incorporation of the state's focus, our joint Workforce Development and Consortium boards approved the revised vision and mission statements to guide our organization over the next three years. The vision represents our biggest and best thinking about how the region will look when we fully achieve our strategic mission. The goals help us build the path to that vision.

As the shift from the Workforce Investment Act to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the NRMRWDB began shifting from being a tactical board into a more strategic board. We have wholly embraced a more strategic vision by serving as leaders in the Workforce System who facilitate partnerships among agencies and organizations (who were once siloed), ensuring industry-defined connections between sector strategies and career pathways that meet regionally determined needs that are truly data-driven. In addition to understanding service to customers, we now have a strong focus on the Workforce System—ensuring that all its parts and pieces strategically operate in a comprehensive, integrated, and streamlined manner for both the business and jobseeker customer. As is demonstrated in our Strategic Plan, we connect everything we do to our vision and mission, subsequently striving to project future needs and the funding opportunities connected to them. In other words, not only do we use LMI for current programming, but also we use a full set of data to establish future goals, create our strategic plans, establish performance improvements, and ensure excellence in the entire Workforce System. While it is necessary to focus on our current conditions, it is not a place in which our leadership resides—as we also focus on the emerging economic trends and labor market patterns, understanding and allocating our resources on the current workforce needs while setting plans in motion for the future needs of our industries. Our business partners, through our Business Services Coordinator and Business Solutions Teams, are instrumental in communicating their needs so we can make more informed decisions. We have systems in place to manage processes but put energies toward building capacity, creating strong connections among the Core and all discretionary programs as well as relationships with business and industry. As we phase into collective impact, we will no longer measure our success solely by short-term performance outcomes but by the performance of the collective Workforce System using regionally defined targets pertaining to progress toward alignment with economic

development strategy, creation of career pathways, and development of innovative programming, which includes work-based learning for the long-term success of the workforce.

Direction and Results

The NRMWDB is a trusted regional convener within the workforce system and is committed to this role. The strategic direction and goals included in our Strategic Plan is the NRMWDB's response to what we understand our stakeholders desire most from the workforce system as well as opportunities and challenges for providing workforce development in the region. This plan is also designed to support the Virginia Board of Workforce Development's Strategic plan. The following statements are listed as their blueprint for the next three years:

- Align the Commonwealth's workforce system with economic development Action Items
- Ensure training programs are demand driven
- Provide Virginians with educational pathways that lead to economic independence and prosperity
- Create a best-in class delivery system for workforce services that is accessible and effective for jobseekers and employers alike

These action items are addressed in the NRMWDB's Goals and Strategies. To help us in the formation of our goals, strategies, and action, we involved partners and stakeholders in a SWOT Analysis.

Development of Goals, Strategies, and Action Items

From the SWOT analysis, we were able to determine our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, which helped us build on what we do well, address what we're lacking, strive to minimize risks, and to take the greatest possible advantage of chances for success. We then were able to develop goals to address the identified issues and build on our strengths. The goals provide a roadmap for fulfilling the strategic direction and are foundational to our work. We understand the responsibility for preparing our region's workforce and fully accept the accountability through performance measures that ensure the success as well as help us understand where to make adjustments when needed. We understand the need to strengthen service delivery by building strong partnerships that have healthy communicative relationships.

Strategic Plan

We then worked together through numerous meetings and writing sessions to fully develop our comprehensive three-year Strategic Plan. It was written with the mindset of being a dynamic document that is continually edited and updated, and it strives to be a roadmap toward the region's intended outcomes and anticipated impact. It is also a management tool that has two primary purposes:

- ❖ To present a wide-ranging compilation of the plan and its component parts. *It encapsulates the strategic planning process as well as the views and decisions of stakeholders.*
- ❖ To serve as a guidance tool for workforce development stakeholders. *Each section contains information about its component part as well as additional information about how the workforce system can use the information in the plan.*

Our plan represents efforts to align job training to integrated service delivery across programs, improve efficiency in service delivery, and ensure that our workforce system in the region is job-driven, matching businesses with skilled workers. The overall intent of our plan is to promote a shared understanding of the workforce needs within the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area and foster development of more comprehensive and integrated approaches, such as sector-based strategies, system building, and career pathways, to address the needs of businesses and workers. Our Workforce Development System is intended to help individuals in the region reach their full potential, regardless of disability, ethnicity, or barriers to employment. We are charged with helping our residents obtain and succeed in family-sustaining wage jobs while meeting business needs for a skilled workforce.

The Workforce Planning included in our Strategic Plan demonstrates a process that analyzed, forecasted, and planned the workforce supply and demand. We assessed gaps and determined strategies and actions to ensure that we can fulfill our plan.