



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**Alaska Workforce Investment Board
Regional Advisory Councils
Guidelines
2.17.10**

Definition

Alaska modified its workforce investment system in 2003, transforming the state and two local workforce investment boards into one overarching entity, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB). This system provides a clear, streamlined and efficient governance structure. However, the board wants to retain the most valuable elements once provided by the local board system: a strong linkage to local employers, development projects and regional workforce issues.

The regions own regional advisory councils. The regional advisory councils define and shape the way investments in their regions happen. The Department of Labor and Workforce Development will not allocate funds to the regional advisory councils; rather, they will engage with the councils to make better investment decisions at both the local and statewide levels. The state is prepared to work closely with the regional councils in support of a stronger overall system of workforce and economic development. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board will be the state's linkage to the regional councils.

Expectations

Set Priorities: Regional councils should define regional priorities for workforce development, and show how they are linked to employer demand, economic development, and education or training strategies. Specifically, each region should:

- Gather, review and assess local employment data, local skills and skill gaps;
- Set priorities to target priority industries and occupations, as well as education and training strategies that best fit the community needs;
- Provide oversight and advice on One-Stop Job Center operations to ensure they are meeting regional and local needs;
- Develop or endorse regional projects that are aligned with the identified regional priorities; and

- The regional council will establish plans for developing regional priorities, and will work together with the AWIB on information sharing and planning outcome reviews.

Share Information: Communication with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board and sharing information about the state of the region is critical, and the councils' reason for existence. Taking back information from the board, about resources, initiatives, policies for system improvement and accountability, is equally important. Specifically each region should:

- Identify a "key contact" within the council for board communications;
- Participate in AWIB outreach efforts to increase employer commitment and contributions to workforce development;
- Increase regional employers' use of the many services offered to businesses by the Job Centers;
- Promote the use of the Alaska Skills Bank within a region to identify the skills of the local workforce;
- Work together with the AWIB to ensure linkages to appropriate staff (local, state and federal), and the use of continuous improvement mechanisms;
- Provide informational reports to the AWIB on an as needed basis for strategic planning purposes; and
- Identify local economic threats such as base closures, plant closures, and massive layoffs. Proactively collaborate with employers, policy makers and community members.

What Makes a Successful Regional Advisory Council

Here are some "tools" for maintaining a successful Regional Advisory Council.

- ✚ There should be a strong connection to local employers, development projects and regional workforce issues.
- ✚ Identify a "key contact" within the council for AWIB communications and communicate with the Alaska Workforce Investment Board and sharing information about the state of the region is critical.
- ✚ Keep communication open and the community engaged and focus on items RAC can influence on a local level.
- ✚ Identify local economic threats such as base closures, plant closures, and massive layoffs. Proactively collaborate with employers, policy makers and community members.