



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Labor and
Workforce Development

Office of the Commissioner

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November 28, 2022

The Honorable Martin J. Walsh
United States Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Secretary Walsh,

On behalf of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, we are pleased to submit Alaska's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative for Program Year 2021. The report highlights the success of Alaska's workforce development system, the benefits received by program participants, and the vision, strategies and goals outlined in the 2020 Alaska WIOA Combined State Plan and its 2022 modification.

From the southernmost reaches of the Southeast Panhandle to the gates of the Arctic and all points between, Alaska is a vast landscape with many unique challenges – reaching job seekers living in sparsely populated areas, the seasonal nature of many of the state's primary employment sectors, and the ongoing changes brought on by COVID-19 and climate change. Alaska pivoted toward recovery in PY 2021 to maximize limited resources for Alaskans' benefit. Goals were met to better assist Alaskans in overcoming skill barriers and to obtain meaningful employment while continuing to build and maintain a resilient network of public and private, union and nonunion partnerships for training in high-demand industries. The state's WIOA programs offer many options: apprenticeships, retraining, reskilling, internships, on-the-job-training, entrepreneurship, and more which focus on connecting Alaskans to family-sustaining wage employment while meeting critical industry workforce needs.

WIOA funds are an essential contribution to our public workforce system which help us to focus on smart investments to revitalize our economy in the face of rapid change. WIOA programs help individuals and families – they bolster local economies by better equipping, educating, and training for current and future jobs.

We appreciate and value this important federal/state partnership. Thank you for your continued support to the people of Alaska.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tamika L. Ledbetter".

Dr. Tamika L. Ledbetter
Commissioner



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**



**Annual
Report
Narrative**

**State of Alaska
WORKFORCE
INNOVATION AND
OPPORTUNITY ACT**

Program Year 2021

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Assurances: The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development assures that all required elements for the Program Year 2021 WIOA Annual Report are reported uniformly. All WIOA title programs, I – IV, coordinated in the development of this report.

Alaska's Program Year 2021 WIOA Overview

During PY 2021 Alaska continued to meet challenges inherent to serving a small population spread over a vast area, those presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, and changing economic and environmental factors. By remaining flexible, maximizing technology, and leveraging Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other state and federal program resources, Alaska pivoted toward recovery to achieve its vision of providing multiple pathways to high skill, high wage jobs and careers, and access to the education, training, and support services needed to prepare for and participate in high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.

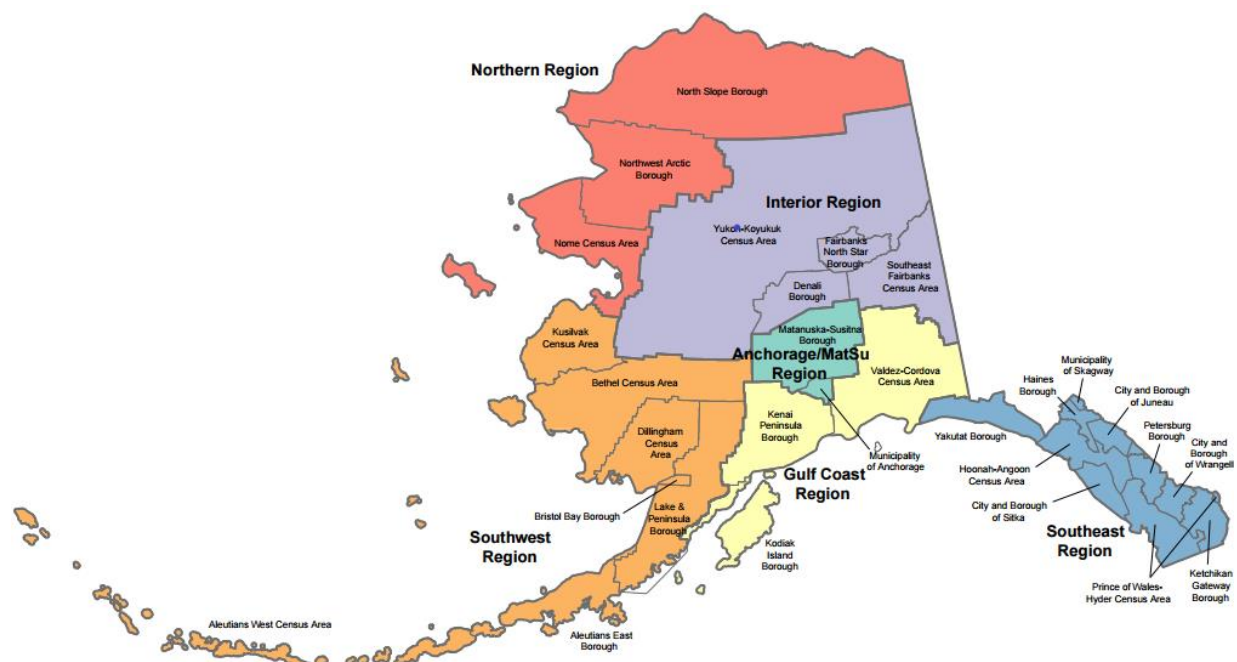
The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) implements WIOA and state training programs to build clear routes to support and grow learning opportunities for workers at all stages of life, meet the skilled workforce needs of employers, prioritize veterans and transitioning active service members and their families, and serve individuals with disabilities. With input from industry partners, Alaska provided workers for in-demand, high-growth occupations including healthcare, construction, maritime, oil and gas, alternative and renewable energy, transportation, technology, education, and mining. The department engages workforce strategies, sector partnerships, and cross-program data to expand registered apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and work-based learning approaches; demonstrates innovation in delivery of Alaska Job Center services; and prioritizes services to target at-risk populations. Information on Alaska's Strategic Vision, Goals, Sector Strategies and Career Pathways is published in the [*Alaska Combined Plan Modification for Program Years 2022 – 2023*](#).

Some PY 2021 highlights of the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) include approval of the Alaska WIOA Combined Plan Modification for 2022-23, progress growing Registered Apprenticeship Programs through leveraging federal apprenticeship grants with other state and federal funding, obtaining a grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to hire Community Health Worker apprentices to mitigate the effects of COVID-19, adding sub-recipients such as the IT multi-employer sponsorship at AVTEC under the \$3.9 million State Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity and Innovation grant, and supporting a WIOA Youth Hospitality Boot Camp at AVTEC in Seward.

Some highlights of Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) efforts have been collaboration with Alaska's Division of Public Assistance to streamline referrals of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients to Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) for WIOA Adult program enrollment. This process helped make connections for a priority population, build partnership between agencies for customer success, and decrease duplication of services. DETS strengthened its partnership with the University of Alaska system to increase Eligible Training Provider approved programs. Through this effort, 112 new programs were added to Alaska's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), offering more local education and training that can be supported with WIOA funds. Similarly, when the new Federal Motor Carriage Safety Administration updated national regulations for commercial drivers, DETS staff worked with existing ETPL providers and solicited new providers to ensure awareness and compliance with new requirements.

After Alaska’s job centers reopened to public access in June 2021, we have continued to incorporate best practices in virtual and distance delivery developed and implemented to adapt during the COVID-19 pandemic to expand access to rural areas and for the segment of the population who prefer virtual services. During PY 2021, the department continued to improve and promote [AlaskaJobs](#), its new online labor exchange and case management system, to enhance user experience, co-locate data, and provide a single sign-on between WIOA Title I, II, III programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and the Unemployment Insurance program. AlaskaJobs allows individuals to enter core information into one location when applying for multiple programs and benefits, supports common WIOA participant federal reporting, increases self-service options for external users, and allows staff the ability to provide improved services to customers.

Economic Planning Regions and Overview



Alaska has six state-defined economic regions, which are used to collect and analyze labor market information and to inform strategic planning.

- **Anchorage/Mat-Su Region** – This region is home to 55 percent of the state’s population. Anchorage headquarters many of the state’s large resource extraction companies and Alaska Native corporations, and with Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (Air Force and Army), also is home to a large military population. The Matanuska-Susitna Valley (Mat-Su) has long been the fastest growing part of the state due mostly to its relatively inexpensive housing, desirable lifestyle, and proximity to the Anchorage job market.
- **Gulf Coast Region** – South of Anchorage and part of the population corridor known as the Railbelt, the Gulf Coast Region is especially diverse considering its relatively small population of 11 percent of the state’s 734,323 people. Nearly every economic asset in the state is present

to some degree in Gulf Coast: oil and natural gas, fishing, tourism, and federal government/military (Coast Guard).

- **Southeast Region** – Historically the population center of Alaska, Southeast’s share of the state’s people has steadily diminished since World War II as most large infrastructure investments have gone to Anchorage and Fairbanks. Southeast has an older population and slower population growth. But the region’s robust economic assets, including commercial and sport fishing, tourism, military (Coast Guard) and mining, have healthy prospects.
- **Interior Region** – This part of the state has a mix of resource industries including large coal and gold mines, a prominent and growing military presence (Air Force and Army) and the state’s main research-focused university campus in Fairbanks, and is also home to Denali National Park, which generates a large volume of seasonal tourism jobs.
- **Northern Region** – This region is sparsely populated with only about four percent of the state’s people living year-round in this huge geographic area, but is home to most of the state’s large oil and gas industry including Prudhoe Bay and the spread of fields and infrastructure that have followed, as well as the world’s largest zinc mine, Red Dog.
- **Southwest Region** - Heavily dependent on the state’s rich and varied fishing industry, this region supplies a large percentage of the nation’s total commercial fish harvest by both poundage and value. Bristol Bay sockeye salmon, Bering Sea crab, and pollock caught in the region represent some of the largest salmon, crab, and whitefish fisheries in the world. In addition to massive commercial fishing activity, sport fishing is also an important economic asset.

Alaska ranks 48th among states by population — only Wyoming and Vermont have fewer people — but it is by far the largest in area. With an area of 570,641 square miles, the state accounts for 16 percent of the total land mass of the United States. Alaska has experienced negative net migration for the last nine years, by far the longest stretch of migration-related losses since statehood. Alaska’s 2021 population was 734,323 with a working-age population – ages 15 to 64 – that has shrunk by almost 30,000 in less than a decade. Those declines were due mostly to the large Baby Boomer cohort aging out of the workforce, and also to migration-related losses of people in their 30s and 40s. The working-age population is expected to stabilize but not grow significantly in the coming years, suggesting that current labor shortages are likely to persist.

The state’s largest economic drivers are the federal government, including large populations of Air Force, Army, and Coast Guard personnel, oil and gas, tourism, seafood, and mining. Excepting oil and gas, the health of those assets remained sound during PY 2021 and several are poised for potentially strong growth in the next decade.

WIOA State Board and Two Planning Area Waiver

Alaska’s waiver to WIOA Section 107(b) allows the Alaska Workforce Investment Board to carry out the roles of a Local Board. The modified role of AWIB representing two local areas consisting of Anchorage/Mat-Su and the remainder of the state is essential to offset excessive administrative costs,

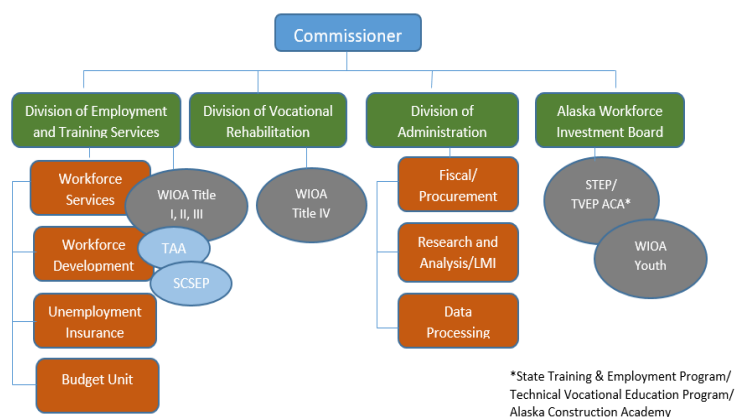
thwart inconsistencies in services, and maximize overall performance in a large state whose small population is nevertheless dispersed over a vast area of economically distinct regions.

Alaska has made significant progress towards the goals outlined in the approved waiver. Two non-voting seats consisting of local elected officials were created during PY 2021, along with a sub-committee that ensures local area priorities are represented. Functioning as a single State Board has streamlined the process and timeliness of awarding grants by the elimination of multiple layers of administrative entities, has allowed consistent eligibility standards across the state, and improved both visibility and accountability of workforce investment programs. Operating under the waiver, the AWIB draws representation from all areas of the state and from diverse interest groups such as organized labor, business and industry, state agencies, native organizations, educational institutions, individuals experiencing disabilities, and other relevant groups. Similarly, by ensuring the diversity of representation on the AWIB, the interests of a wide range of at-risk and priority populations are served, such as veterans, low-income youth and adults, dislocated workers, and rural residents.

The AWIB continues to engender local participation and points of view, consulting local elected officials from Alaska’s boroughs and cities in regional and statewide planning efforts. For example, the Workforce Readiness and Employment and Placement Committee provides oversight for training and employment programs that are delivering education and training relevant to local employer needs. AWIB has prioritized attendance at gatherings surrounding local workforce issues, as well as informational events focused on Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding opportunities for rural Alaskan communities. Additionally, the waiver allows the AWIB to foster regional collaboration among job centers, educational institutions, labor, and non-profits, and to work with employers to determine local or regional hiring needs that informs responsive training programs to ensure that sector needs are met and all geographic regions are served.

Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

As the state’s lead entity for workforce development, the department, through the Division of Employment and Training Services, administers WIOA Title IB Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, most Title ID National programs, Title II Adult Education, Title III Wagner-Peyser programs, and the Unemployment Insurance program. Title IV is administered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, while the AWIB component manages state funded employment and training programs, Apprenticeship, and the WIOA Youth program through a competitive granting process.



Alaska Workforce Investment Board

AWIB’s vision is to build connections that put Alaskans into good jobs. The board uses labor market data and regional and sector stakeholder input to guide continuous improvement of Alaska’s workforce system.

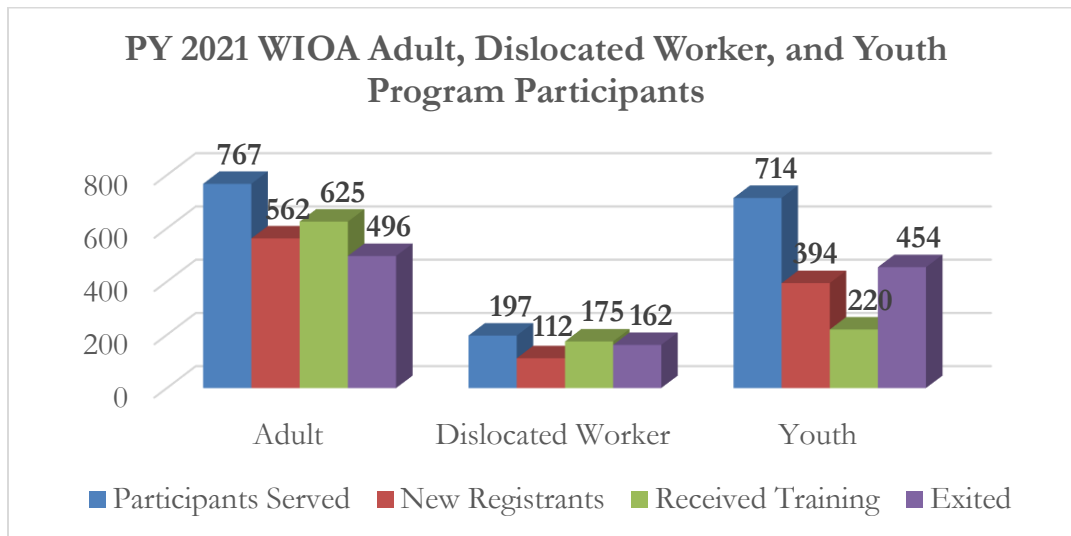
As the Governor’s lead workforce policy entity, the AWIB develops a statewide workforce investment policy framework and drives coordination and collaboration among programs and agencies to ensure that Alaska is ‘Open for Business’, with a useful, accessible workforce system for all customers. This includes businesses seeking qualified workers, unemployed Alaskans looking for jobs and career training, and incumbent workers upgrading their skills to meet the demands of a changing work environment.

Division of Employment and Training Services

The mission of the division is to provide labor exchange services, employment and training services, and unemployment insurance to Alaskans and Alaska businesses to advance opportunities for employment and provide economic stability for communities in Alaska.

The division administers WIOA formula funds through job centers and national dislocated worker grants through subawards to employment and training organizations.

WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Statewide Programs



Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) case managers in one-stop job centers provide support for Alaska’s WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and National Dislocated Worker Grant programs. CSTS staff work with participants to determine the appropriate set of goals, programs, and assistance to address individual needs via comprehensive assessments, career evaluation, and labor market analysis to develop an individual employment plan and provide referrals for any necessary additional

resources. Eligible individuals may receive pre-vocational, vocational, apprenticeship, on-the-job, and incumbent worker training, as well as supportive services to help meet costs of housing, transportation, tools, clothing, books, and supplies while participating in program services.

Across all titles, WIOA programs prioritize special populations, with special focus on supporting veterans, their eligible spouses, and other displaced homemakers; individuals with barriers to employment including, but not limited to, recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, older individuals, ex-offenders, youth in or aged out of foster care, long-term unemployed, basic skills deficient; and other groups determined by the Governor to have barriers to employment. Job center staff also collaborate with Registered Apprenticeship programs to promote and enhance the use of apprenticeships. Staff understand the value of apprenticeship as a work-based opportunity for jobseekers, how to establish new apprenticeship programs, and ways to blend and braid WIOA funds into Registered Apprenticeship opportunities.

As evidenced by meeting or exceeding most program year performance indicators, continuing to address issues with our integrated data and case management system, fostering inter-agency and external partnerships, and supporting incumbent worker training (IWT) in multiple industries to increase employers' competitiveness by developing a skilled workforce, Alaska continued to strengthen WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs in PY 2021. After developing effective strategies to allow participants better access to technology, safe transportation, program testing, secure document signature and transmission, and making more training available via online delivery in high growth sectors, CSTS continues to serve Alaskans across the state, now and in the future.

CSTS, DETS, and AWIB staff coordinate WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Rapid Response, National Dislocated Worker Grant, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and Vocational Rehabilitation programs to maximize outreach and participant funding in accordance with the department's [Co-enrollment Policy 07-505.1](#).

Adult

Throughout its one-stop job center network, providing services in accordance with [Priority Populations Policy 07-517.1](#), CSTS case managers actively worked with 767 Adult participants, of whom 435 were new registrants during the program year. Program exits increased from 341 in PY 2020 to 496 in PY 2021, as case managers continued to prioritize timely exits.

Adult		
PY 2021 Performance	Negotiated	Actual
Employment Rate (Q2)	77.5%	81.8%
Employment Rate (Q4)	76.5%	78.9%
Median Earnings	\$7,700	\$9,485
Credential Rate	63.5%	81.0%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	79%	77.1%

Most career fairs, workshops, and recruiting events were held in person during PY 2021, with some online when necessary. Alaska's WIOA Adult program served more males than females

with a majority in the 25-44 age bracket, Caucasian or of American Indian/Alaska Native descent, 65.3 percent of individuals served were low-income individuals, 7.6 percent experienced disabilities, and 8.6 percent were single parents.

Dislocated Worker

Per policy [07-524.1](#), Alaska’s WIOA Dislocated Worker program provides employment and training services to individuals who have lost their job through no fault of their own or received a layoff notice, employees who have received notice that they will lose their job unless they complete additional training or acquire additional credentials, displaced homemakers who have relied on the income of another family member and no longer receive that support, and relocated active military spouses. Self-employed individuals who have experienced income reduction or were compelled to close their business due to economic conditions in their community or natural disaster may also be dislocated workers.

Dislocated Worker PY 2021 Performance	Negotiated	Actual
Employment Rate (Q2)	81.9%	85.3%
Employment Rate (Q4)	75%	85.2%
Median Earnings	\$10,800	\$11,986
Credential Rate	63.5%	66.2%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	79%	84.7%

While layoffs slowed down considerably in PY 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to cause business closures. With most of these layoffs were temporary, with an unknown timeline, the Dislocated Worker program saw reduced enrollments from the prior year. As

with the Adult program, the Dislocated Worker program served more males than females with the majority in the 25-44 age bracket. Similarly, most individuals served were Caucasian or of American Indian/Alaska Native descent, and most individuals were low-income and single parents.

Rapid Response

Alaska’s Rapid Response Coordinator leads a team of Business Connection and CSTS specialists housed in four job centers throughout the state to provide proactive customized strategies, support, and assistance to businesses, communities, families, and individuals to avoid or minimize the impact of job loss and business closures. The Rapid Response team receives notification of potential layoffs and business closures via workers filing unemployment insurance claims, direct contact from impacted employers and workers, media announcements, fluctuations in employer tax contributions, and Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices. Worksite Rapid Response meetings are tailored to each dislocation, and may include information on unemployment insurance, job search and placement assistance, Trade program benefits, labor market information, on-the-job training, classroom training, and/or referral to basic and remedial education.

	WARN Notices	Rapid Responses
PY 2017	8	34
PY 2018	2	23
PY 2019	19	85
PY 2020	7	73
PY 2021	3	15

In PY 2021, the program provided Rapid Response services to 15 employers, and received three WARN notices totaling 356 layoffs. This substantial decrease over the prior year was primarily due to employer-adjusted business models, federal employer assistance, and a resumption of business and social activities due to normalizing of community COVID-19 restrictions.

National Dislocated Worker Grants – Trade and Economic Transition Dislocated Worker Grant (TET)

In response to statewide economic downturn due to loss of revenue from the oil and gas industry, Alaska received \$3.35 million in October 2018 to focus on expansion of dislocated worker training and employment programs in three of Alaska’s fastest growing industries - maritime, healthcare, and construction. In July 2020, Alaska received a no-cost period of performance extension for the TET program through September 30, 2021.

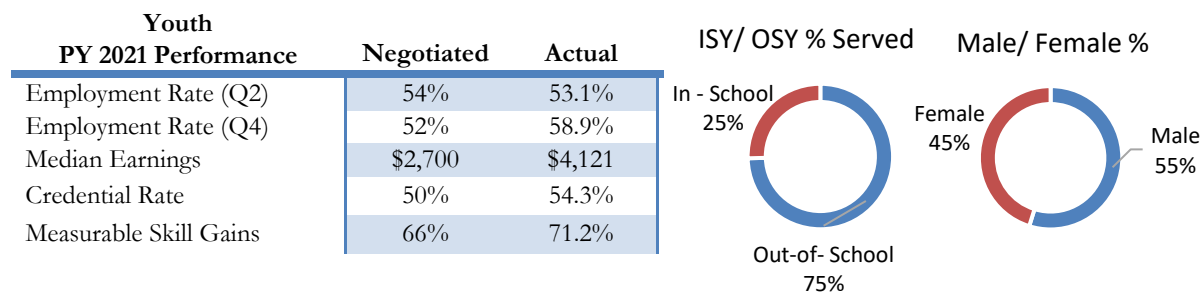
The program ultimately served 738 eligible dislocated workers to achieve 97 percent of its participant goal in spite of the extended challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, with essential training in healthcare, maritime, and construction occupations leading to nationally recognized credentials as well as development and delivery of the state’s first quality pre-apprenticeship and marine vessel repair and maintenance curricula.

Youth

The WIOA Youth program is administered by the AWIB’s Grant Unit. Youth services are delivered by a comprehensive statewide system of WIOA Youth partners funded via an annual competitive solicitation award process. These subrecipients provide industry-driven vocational, academic, and supportive services to eligible In-School (ISY) and Out-of-School Youth (OSY), with the majority of resources targeting out-of-school, homeless, foster care, and adjudicated youth demographics.

In PY 2021, the Youth program awarded \$3,582,000 to 11 subrecipients and served 714 youth. The infusion of funding into the workforce system through various federal and non-federal programs has created many opportunities for leveraging of resources and strategic partnerships. One notable youth provider, Alaska Primary Care Association (APCA), received a multimillion-dollar Good Jobs Challenge grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, a significant investment to fund a Healthcare Workforce Pipeline project that will expand job opportunities and improve care in Alaska’s healthcare sector. Partnered with WIOA Youth funding, the project will train and employ thousands of new healthcare workers through quality pre-apprenticeships and registered apprenticeship programs.

WIOA Youth PY 2021 Performance



Alaska's At-Risk Youth (ARY) Initiative

The ARY Team continued its work towards auditing resource and networking gaps in Alaska's youth workforce system. During the year, the group hosted several youth employment workshops. The team bolstered methods by adding the Center for Work Ethic Development "Bring Your 'A' Game" curriculum to their outreach strategy. The program is intended to be an engaging and interactive curriculum for building foundational workplace skills and ethics.

Statewide Activities

Statewide activity funds are a vital part of Alaska's workforce development system. These funds support all required activities outlined in WIOA Title ID and 20 CFR Part 682.200 including Alaska Workforce Investment Board oversight, disseminating the Eligible Training Provider List, providing labor market information, providing additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of eligible Youth, operating a fiscal and management accountability information system, conducting monitoring and performance evaluation projects, staff training, capacity building, and technical assistance, to support optimal operation of the one-stop delivery system. Statewide funds also offer the flexibility to increase the state's capacity to serve Alaskans through grant awards.

In PY 2021 statewide funding continued to support Alaska's Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) program provided through Alaska Works Partnership for life-changing training, skill development and employment placement assistance to military veterans, transitioning service members, and their eligible spouses. The project served 128 individuals during the program year with a \$475,000 award. APCA, a multi-agency sponsor of registered apprenticeships including Community Health Worker (CHW), Direct Support Professional, Pharmacy Tech, Medical Assistant, Medical Admin. Assistant, Billing Coding, Electronic Health Records, and Dental Assistant, received \$225,000 to serve 115 participants in healthcare career path quality pre-apprenticeship academies and apprenticeships. Alaska also continued to support an ongoing partnership with the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness and Youth Housing Development Program, leveraging housing placement activities with workforce development services. The project was extended an additional year to continue activities in PY 2021 and fully expend its \$250,000 award.

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)

There are currently 658 training programs from 77 approved providers on Alaska's ETPL. Alaska worked to better incorporate its Eligible Training Provider List into AlaskaJobs during PY 2021 and instituted new procedures requiring providers to include Social Security Numbers (SSNs) for all individuals enrolled in their training programs. While a small number of providers stated they don't obtain SSNs from their students, the majority complied. Requirements for SSNs are currently under review to find alternatives to obtain the necessary data for crucial training programs to remain on the ETPL. The COVID-19 pandemic also continued to impact student reporting as many institutions discontinued in-person programs. Most were able to implement online training, but participant numbers were significantly lower than pre-pandemic years.

Nevertheless, 69 new training programs were added to Alaska’s ETPL since PY 2020, primarily through increased collaboration with the University of Alaska, which offers 46 percent of all ETPL programs..

PY 2021 WIOA Title I Funding Snapshot

Program	Available	Expended	Percent Expended	Available Balance
<i>WIOA Youth</i>	\$4,596,951.00	\$3,960,718.09	86.16%	\$636,232.91
<i>WIOA Adult</i>	\$4,081,413.36	\$3,269,924.27	80.12%	\$811,489.09
<i>WIOA DW</i>	\$7,238,336.85	\$5,790,708.75	80.00%	\$1,447,628.10
<i>Title I Totals</i>	\$15,916,701.21	\$13,021,351.11	81.81%	\$2,895,350.10
<i>Subsets from Data Above</i>				
<i>Local Admin</i>	\$1,368,994.65	\$1,095,195.72	80.00%	\$273,798.93
<i>Rapid Response</i>	\$381,697.30	\$305,357.84	80.00%	\$76,339.46
<i>Statewide</i>	\$2,483,231.25	\$1,992,015.65	80.22%	\$491,215.60
<i>Totals</i>	\$4,233,923.20	\$3,392,569.21	80.13%	\$841,353.99

WIOA Title II – Alaska Adult Education

Housed within DETS, Alaska Adult Education (AAE) is a statewide program for adults to enhance their postsecondary education skills to transition into the labor market, collegiate level academia, or vocational training. The AAE office manages Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds to forge partnerships to provide students the educational advantages they need. AAE grantees are funded according to their capacity to conduct basic adult education, literacy, family and workplace education, English language acquisition, workforce preparation activities, civics education, and integrated education and training. In PY 2021, AAE awarded over \$2.5 million to regional adult education grantees including an integrated correctional system to deliver federally mandated adult education and literacy activities, and a grant for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE). The demands for digital literacy and those created by the COVID-19 pandemic have had a significant impact on adult education in Alaska. AAE providers have adopted synchronistic and asynchronistic learning environments and blended learning service delivery to continue to meet needs for distance delivery instruction. Some PY 2021 AAE program highlights:

- Basic skills & pre-secondary education is instruction comparable to first through eighth grade educational levels and is designed to prepare students for secondary education courses. During PY 2021, 56 percent of full-time students tested at or below eighth grade educational functional level.
- Secondary education & high school equivalency preparation provides instruction to improve students’ skills for transition into higher education, training, or employment. The curriculum is rigorously aligned with the functional level of high school ninth through twelfth grade students. Pre-testing determined only three percent of incoming students tested in the ninth through twelfth grade range.

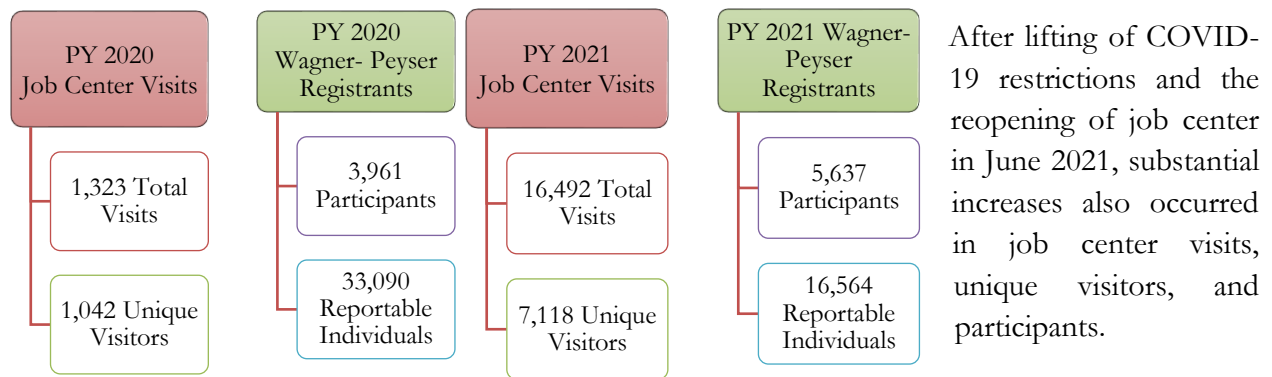
- AAE measures achievement of educational functioning level (EFL) gain from pre- to post-testing using standardized proctored testing, as well as attainment of a high school diploma or equivalent, to demonstrate measurable skill gains. In PY 2021, 78.95 percent of students achieved EFL gains in Literacy/English Language Arts, 21.05 percent achieved gains in Mathematics, and 14.7 percent achieved measurable skill gains, a decrease over the previous year’s 15.25 percent. Alaska awarded 398 high school equivalency diplomas in PY 2021, a decrease from the previous year due to the continued closure of testing centers, especially in the correctional setting.
- The Alaska English as a Second Language (ESL) program assists students to improve their reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language. In 2021, 41 percent of full-time students assessed were ESL students.

WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser

Alaska’s Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services are delivered through 14 Alaska job centers collectively known as the [Alaska Job Center Network](#) (AJCN). The AJCN collaborates with partner agencies to provide universal access and services under one roof to employers, job seekers, and workers. Comprehensive self-services are also available via [AlaskaJobs](#), Alaska’s free online labor exchange system connecting job seekers with Alaska employers.

Services for Job Seekers

Job seeker services include referrals to partner agencies, veteran’s representatives, and WIOA Title I programs for assistance with training and support, job search assistance, referral, and placement. Many job centers offer regular workshops including job seeking tips, resume writing, cover letters, interviewing skills, employment after incarceration, and annual free IRS-certified tax services provided through My Free Tax Initiative. Additionally, job center staff provide assessments of skill levels and abilities, aptitude testing, and career guidance. Job seekers may participate in the Alaska Career Ready program, which includes WorkKeys® assessment and provides job seekers opportunities to earn National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRCs). In PY 2021, 319 job seekers underwent WorkKeys assessments to earn 238 NCRCs, a fourfold increase over the prior year.



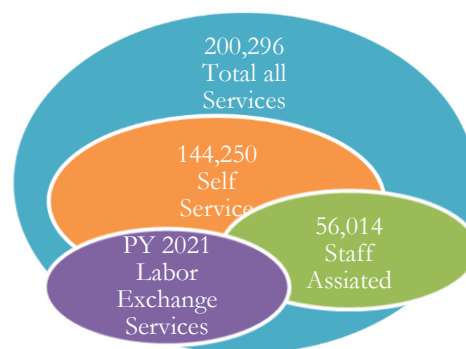
Alaska maintained options for all services not requiring in-person interaction (such as WorkKeys Curriculum online courseware and virtual job fairs) to be available telephonically or electronically during the program year as well.

Alaska continued to improve and exceed negotiated targets for Employment Rate (Q2) and Median Earnings indicators, however fell short

Wagner-Peyser		Negotiated	Actual
PY 2021 Performance			
Employment Rate (Q2)		58.8%	64.5%
Employment Rate (Q4)		57.2%	56.3%
Median Earnings		\$5,650	\$7,774

for Employment Rate (Q4) likely due to the highly seasonal nature of employment in the state from seafood processing, tourism, construction projects, and workforce dynamics during pandemic recovery.

Along with federal common performance indicators, Alaska has state-identified performance targets: connecting employers with qualified job seekers; increasing the number of job seekers receiving staff assisted services; and increasing the number of employers using the online labor exchange system. Further demonstrating job market recovery, Alaska experienced an increase in the number of job seekers who received a staff assisted service in PY 2021, with 15,410 job seekers receiving 56,014 staff assisted services. The AlaskaJobs labor exchange system saw strong use where 19,155 job seekers received 144,250 self-services, and an average of 41,910 users per quarter accessed the website for an average of 104,924 sessions per quarter. Nearly 45 percent of users accessed AlaskaJobs from a mobile phone.



Business Connection

Job center staff are also trained to serve employers, with dedicated Business Connection staff at the state’s five largest job centers. Alaska’s approach to serving employers emphasizes proactive, staff-initiated outreach designed to establish long-term relationships to meet employers’ current and future employment and training needs. Staff assist employers with special recruitments, ensure job applicant suitability, conduct job fairs, make referrals for Incumbent Worker Training, and provide information that helps ensure compliance with state and federal laws. The AJCN also houses apprenticeship specialists who support employers in sponsoring Registered Apprenticeship programs, which allow employers to establish their own standards of proficiency while developing a local and loyal workforce.

The number of employers using the online labor exchange is an indicator of the market share of all active employers in Alaska. In PY 2021, 1,865 employers used the AlaskaJobs labor exchange system. Employers placed 26,155 job orders for 52,693 job openings at 2,877 worksites and viewed 37,185 resumes in AlaskaJobs in PY 2021. These included 80 Foreign Labor Exchange job orders, primarily for seafood industry positions.

PY 2021: 1,865 employers placed 26,155 internal job orders in the online labor exchange system for 52,693 job openings!

The AJCN is often the first line for information about labor market conditions and employer activity including layoffs and business closures. Rapid Response and Trade Adjustment Assistance staff foster a statewide team approach throughout a layoff, closure or dislocation process. Job centers and AlaskaJobs are also sources of information on valuable hiring incentives such as on-the-job training wage reimbursement, Fidelity Bonding for at-risk job seekers, the Alaska Veteran Hire Tax Credit, and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program (WOTC).

By leveraging the enhanced capacity of the AlaskaJobs WOTC module and with the help of two additional non-permanent technicians, the WOTC program processed 23,087 requests and issued a record 8,745 certifications for up to \$25,737,000 in tax credits in PY 2021, while a total of \$10,000 in Fidelity Bonds were issued to employers who hired justice-involved individuals.

Veterans Services

Alaska is home to approximately 65,200 veterans who make up 12.2 percent of the state’s adult population, the highest per capita veteran population in the nation. Veterans receive priority for services in all job centers, and veterans and eligible spouses are offered specialized programs and opportunities to maximize training potential, employment, and retention. Using a team approach to providing services to veterans, all job center staff receive training on the Jobs for Veterans Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and other legislation that impacts veteran priority, preference, and employability. When job seekers indicate veteran status upon initial entry to a job center, they are also evaluated for eligible Significant Barriers to Employment (SBEs). The state follows all Special Grant Provisions, Veterans’ Program Letters, USDOL/VETS Law 107- 288, and United States Code Title 38.

Those veterans experiencing SBEs are assisted by specialized staff funded through the Jobs for Veterans Statewide Grant (JVSG). Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER) staff are housed in job centers located in areas with the highest veteran populations. JVSG staff also work with employers to recruit, hire, promote, and retain veterans in meaningful employment. Outreach is conducted in places such as U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical and veteran centers, homeless shelters, civic and service organization locations, Veteran Stand Down events, veterans’ job fairs, and military installations.

The annual Veterans and Military Spouses Job Fair was conducted in-person in November 2021. Approximately 90 employers, education, training, and apprenticeship providers attended the event, which served over 600 participants. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to present challenges to the JVSG program during PY 2021. During the program year, however, a total of 1,142 veterans received 4,947 staff assisted services. Alaska exceeded all six JVSG negotiated performance targets, with improvements over PY 2020 in five.

Veterans Services		
PY 2021 Performance	Negotiated	Actual
Wagner-Peyser Services to Veterans		
Employment Rate (Q2)	56%	64.5%
Employment Rate (Q4)	55%	56.3%
Median Earnings	\$5,697	\$7,774
JVSG Funded Services		
Employment Rate (Q2)	53%	61.8%
Employment Rate (Q4)	50%	61.9%
Median Earnings	\$7,200	\$8,246

Senior Community Service Employment Program

Alaska values mature workers for their commitment to Alaska, lifetime of transferable skills, and mentorship abilities necessary to be assets in any workplace. With program staff located in five job centers around the state, Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) assists low-income Alaskans 55 and older to prepare for and secure employment. All SCSEP participants are Wagner Peyser registrants and use employment services for self-service applications and tools, to gain customer service skills, and improve their computer, clerical, and soft skills to better prepare them to

SCSEP PY 2021 Performance	Negotiated	Actual
Employment Rate (Q2)	46.5%	52.0%
Employment Rate (Q4)	37.5%	32.4%
Median Earnings	\$4,051	\$5,424
Barriers to Employment	2.76	3.33
Service Level	145.5%	117.9%

re-enter the workforce. As an integral part of participants’ skills training, SCSEP staff work with partners to develop individual training plans which include the WorkKeys Curriculum, Customer Service, Business Communication, Working with Others, and

Work Ethics components. Many SCSEP participants are co-enrolled with WIOA Title I, II, or IV programs for further enrichment. During PY 2021, SCSEP served 145 participants. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the SCSEP program and its vulnerable cohort during PY 2021. In the face of those challenges, Alaska SCSEP exceeded four out of five negotiated performance measures.

In partnership with the Alaska Commission on Aging, the department also continued its campaign to “Strengthen Alaska Workforce by Employing the Older Worker” in PY 2021 to raise awareness of the valuable resources older workers provide. This campaign fosters innovative strategies to assist seniors to obtain employable skills and find suitable work in today’s job market.

Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment Insurance Benefits				Unemployment Insurance Collections		
Total Benefits Paid	Average Weekly Benefit	Total Number of Recipients	Average Weeks Claimed	Fraud Overpayments	Fraud Penalties	Non-Fraud Overpayments
\$102,963,116	\$207	31,751	11	\$1,249,744	\$664,784	\$2,378,593
Automated System Claims				Unemployment Claim Center Call Responses		
Weeks Filed 98%				125,374		
Initial Claims 33%						

PY 2021 Unemployment Insurance Highlights

Alaska’s Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants are required to post active resumes and conduct job searches in AlaskaJobs to maintain eligibility for benefits. During PY 2021, the UI program saw substantial reductions in unemployment benefits paid, average weekly benefit, total number of recipients, and average weeks claimed from PY 2020 levels. As COVID-19 pandemic programs came to an end in 2021, the program continued to work through a backlog of adjudications and pending appeals. With the backlog caught up, the UI program then focused on reducing staffing levels and streamlining services with the anticipation of further reduced claims filing and funding levels.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program launched in January 2016 and continues to be a priority for Alaska. Six regional job centers participate in RESEA, with the UI program as an active partner. After filing their first bi-weekly claim, claimants living in areas with full-service job centers, including recently separated veterans and those deemed most likely to exhaust their benefits, are randomly selected. The program connects participants with in-person assessments and re-employment services to reduce long-term unemployment in Alaska's workforce. In addition to resume and job search requirements, participation in a RESEA interview and receipt of a selection of staff-assisted services is mandatory for continued UI eligibility.

In PY 2021, 2,836 claimants participated in RESEA, significantly more than the 963 PY 2020 participants after waivers for most participants due to COVID-19 ended. Alaska's RESEA program is working with the AlaskaJobs developer to code a second interview requirement, which should be completed by 2023. A second interview requirement is subject to evaluation and should result in an increased number of claimants returning to work as they continue to engage with staff to find a job or enroll in necessary training.

Common Exit Policy

Per department policy [07-539](#), common exit applies to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; Wagner Peyser; and Trade Adjustment Assistance programs. Common exit occurs when a participant who is enrolled in two or more applicable programs has met the exit criteria for each program, has not received qualifying participant-level services from any of those programs for at least 90 consecutive days, and has no future qualifying participant-level services planned. The date of exit is automatically determined and applied retroactively to the participant record in AlaskaJobs based on the completion date of the last qualifying participant-level service.

Registered Apprenticeship

Registered apprenticeship (RA) programs in Alaska have enjoyed steady growth since the creation of its first trade apprenticeship in 1947. In 2015, Alaska received the first of a series of apprenticeship expansion grants which have led to an even greater increase in apprenticeship opportunities, especially in health care, aviation, and construction careers, as more employers have become aware of how apprenticeship can make their businesses more competitive. The department uses a two-tiered approach to apprenticeship expansion. Apprenticeship specialists housed in job centers work with employers to promote apprenticeship and to assist apprentices with the costs of apprenticeship, while AWIB assists sponsors and intermediaries with funding to expand the infrastructure of apprenticeship, including pre-apprenticeship and multi-employer sponsorship.

In PY 2021, the department continued work on health care apprenticeships. The \$2.9 million American Apprenticeship Initiative grant program ended September 30, 2021, resulting in over 680 new apprenticeships in healthcare in Alaska. This project increased career awareness, strengthened

existing career pathways, introduced new career pathways, and helped employers fill entry-level positions in high-demand health care sector occupations. The department also continued its work on healthcare apprenticeship with APCA. The department applied for and received a Community Health Worker (CHW) grant from the CDC to help mitigate the effects of COVID-19. In addition to its work supported with statewide funding, APCA received CHW grant funding to hire and train CHW apprentices.

In July 2019, the department received a \$1 million Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) award to promote apprenticeship in construction occupations, with an extension of the program to June 2023. Leveraged with WIOA funds, the department has used ASE funding for the costs of related instruction, tools, and other items required for construction apprenticeships. The department also added ABC of Alaska as a subrecipient during PY 2021 to use ASE funds to incentivize member employers to enroll new apprentices by subsidizing the cost of related instruction.

Alaska received a \$3.99 million State Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity, and Innovation (SAEEI) grant in June 2021 for promotion of apprenticeship in a fields such as construction, healthcare, information technology, mining, and others. The department has six SAEEI subrecipients including the Department of Corrections providing Culinary and Peer Support apprenticeships, Pacific Northwest Ironworkers adding a new Metal Fabricator apprenticeship, APCA supporting healthcare apprenticeships, and Providence Hospital, a new sponsor of healthcare apprenticeships.

Expanding Registered Apprenticeship opportunities has had significant impact on Alaskan apprentices' earnings. Those who complete an apprenticeship can earn three times more on average than they did the year before they entered apprenticeship. Those participating in an RA program had an average wage of \$52,281, 35 percent higher than all other workers. As of June 2022, Alaska had approximately 2,055 registered apprentices training in a wide variety of occupations.

PY 2021 Monitoring Activities

In PY 2021, AWIB evaluated the activities of two WIOA Youth sub-recipients. DETS evaluated four Alaska Adult Education (AAE) local providers and one Senior Community Service Employment program (SCSEP) provider, while Division of Vocational Rehabilitation monitored Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) and Assistive Technology (AT) grantees. The goal was to identify if the sub-recipients and grantees were adhering to the vision, strategies, and procedures for their programs as mandated by the US DOL Employment and Training Administration, US ED Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, and the State of Alaska.

Per [Monitoring and Single Audit Policy 07-523.2](#), comprehensive reviews ensure sub-recipients are operating in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations; the terms and conditions of their grants; the state's policies and procedures; participant program eligibility; and performance accountability. Monitor guides include questions, reviews, and observations as necessary to ensure staff are following written data validation and source documentation procedures. Appropriate corrective action is spelled out in monitor reports if data validation procedures are not being followed, and follow-up reviews are conducted to ensure corrective actions are properly implemented. Staff also

conducted work experience employer and participant interviews to help identify areas of program strength as best practices as well as those areas in need of improvement.

Organizations Evaluated in PY 2021

Program	Organization	Date
WIOA Youth	Alaska Vocational Technical Center	January 26, 2022
	Yukon Delta Fisheries Association	December 10, 2021
Alaska Adult Education	Alaska Technical Center	April 27, 2022
	Southeast Regional Resource Center	February 10, 2022
	University of Alaska Fairbanks – Bristol Bay Campus	April 13, 2022
	Yuut Elitnaurviat	May 3, 2022
Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) OIB Grant	Alaska Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired	March 29, 2022
	Access Alaska, Inc.	April 22, 2022
	Independent Living Center	March 29, 2022
	Southeast Alaska Independent Living	March 31, 2022
DVR AT Grant	Assistive Technology of Alaska	March 18, 2022
SCSEP	Southeast Regional Resource Center	May 24, 2022

Due to travel restrictions and continued COVID-19 concerns, on-site monitoring for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs did not take place during PY 2021. However, supervisory staff continued internal monitoring with spot check reviews. Monthly reports identified data entry inconsistencies and staff training ensured that monitoring efforts were successful. On-site monitoring of Adult and Dislocated worker programs is planned for PY 2022, when DETS will also finalize and plans to implement a Wagner-Peyser program monitoring policy.

Performance Accountability System

Alaska uses performance accountability measures in accordance with the strategic vision and priorities of the department to evaluate the effectiveness of the workforce investment framework and individual core programs, with the goal to ensure participants who exit our systems are work-ready and obtain and retain self-sufficient wages.

Data entry quality control is performed via the robust business rules of the AlaskaJobs case management system, which prevent the entry of inappropriate information and attempt to prevent the entry of inaccurate information.

Alaska ensures the data integrity of reported information through monitoring, quarterly data validation, logical validation, and the use of Quarterly Report Analysis (QRA) metrics provided by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) as described in the Data Validation Methodology section of this report and covered in detail in the department’s data integrity policy [07-541](#) and procedures. Alaska also analyzes the QRA metrics monthly, graphing both QRA metrics and

negotiated metrics over time to identify trends as they emerge. These analyses are proving effective, as the most recent quarterly data validation resulted in identification of no data entry errors.

PY 2021 Negotiated Performance Levels and Results	Target	Actual
Adult		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	77.5%	81.8%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	76.5%	78.9%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$7,700	\$9,458
Credential Attainment Rate	63.5%	81.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	79.0%	77.1%
Dislocated Worker		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	81.9%	85.3%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	75.0%	85.2%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$10,800	\$11,986
Credential Attainment Rate	63.5%	66.2%
Measurable Skill Gains	65.0%	84.7%
Youth		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	54.0%	53.1%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	52.0%	58.9%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$2,700	\$4,121
Credential Attainment Rate	50.0%	54.3%
Measurable Skill Gains	66.0%	71.2%
Wagner - Peysler		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	58.0%	64.5%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	57.2%	56.3%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$5,650	\$7,774
Adult Education		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	30.0%	45.08%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	30.0%	40.22%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$4,200	\$4,757
Credential Attainment Rate	30.0%	21.88%
Measurable Skill Gains	30.0%	14.70%

In addition to the participant-level metrics indicated above, Alaska has chosen the *Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit Rate* and *Employer Penetration Rate* metrics for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicator pilot. For PY 2021, those results were:

PY 2021 Effectiveness in Serving Employers Results	Actual
Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit Rate	58.5%
Employer Penetration Rate	16.1%

During PY 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact Alaska’s WIOA performance outcomes. For instance, although some training programs were able to convert to online delivery,

many programs requiring in-person attendance were cancelled or postponed. In some cases, participants withdrew from programs to attend to family issues or for their own health reasons. This will continue to impact participant completion data and potentially the overall performance of training programs.

Alaska met the majority of its negotiated levels of performance in PY 2021 but fell short in the Measurable Skills Gains for Adults, Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit for Youth, Employment 4th Quarter After Exit for Wagner-Peyser participants, and Measurable Skills Gains and Credential Attainment for Adult Education participants. The Measurable Skills Gains shortfall points to the need for additional staff training, while the Youth Employment Rate shortfall is attributed to the challenges faced by Youth participants finding work quickly in the constrained environment created by the pandemic.

Data Validation Methodology

Alaska implemented Data Integrity policy [07-541](#) in accordance with TEGL 7-18, TEGL 23-19, and Program Memorandum OCTAE 19-1 to cover joint data integrity, logical validations, standard data validation, monitoring, and the use of quarterly report analyses to ensure data is valid, accurate, reliable, and comparable across programs. The policy is supplemented with data integrity procedures.

Data validation is conducted quarterly, concluding by mid-September prior to certification of annual performance reporting, with records selected to ensure that all organizations' records are sampled and validated each year. An annual assessment of the data validation process is conducted within 90 days of the conclusion of fourth quarter data validation. Revisions to the data validation policy and procedures are considered based on error rates, trends in data accuracy, and identification of issues during monitors.

TEGL 23-19 Attachment II has been used without modification for allowable source documentation. Sample sizes are based on readily available population proportion sample size calculators using a 95 percent confidence level, a 50 percent population proportion, and a 15 percent confidence interval. The sampling frame consists of program participants enrolled during the previous 24 months and, if exited, exited during the previous 18 months. Participants are selected using stratified probability sampling, with 75 percent active and 25 percent exited participants selected.

Failure scores are assigned to each data element as follows: $DE\ Failure\ Score = \frac{Count\ of\ DE\ Failures}{Records\ including\ DE} \times \frac{Count\ of\ DE\ Failures}{Total\ Errors}$. This method prevents an element with a high failure rate but low frequency from appearing to have more impact than an element with a lower failure rate but high frequency. A threshold of 5 is set for highest scrutiny, but all failures are reviewed for process improvement. Validation worksheets identifying failed data elements are sent to case managers. All errors are corrected, and error correction documentation is returned within 30 days of receipt of the validation worksheets. The validation worksheet and error correction documentation including the result of the correction, steps taken to correct the error, a determination of why the error occurred, and the steps that will be taken to preclude the error from occurring again, are attached to the participant file. The effectiveness of the data validation process is evaluated quarterly upon the completion of interim data validation efforts through an analysis of error trends.

Case managers and staff associated with data entry or validation are provided annual refresher training that includes an overview of validation results and corrective actions from the previous program year, identification of trends, a summary of the effectiveness assessment, an explanation of any changes to the data validation policy or procedures including source documentation requirements, case manager feedback, and reinforcement of the importance of their roles in ensuring valid, reliable data. An analysis of records managed by each case manager is reviewed for trends that are unique to that case manager. Procedures are reviewed to ensure the case manager has all necessary resources. Process changes resulting from annual refresher training are shared as quickly as possible and incorporated in future training.

The following are maintained in accordance with the department's records retention schedules: electronic copies of data validation records, including frozen quarterly wage records; records of errors, missing data, and other anomalies, along with associated correction documentation; records identifying error rates and trends in common data accuracy issues; records of corrective actions taken; and records of individualized and system-wide training.

Data integrity reviews consist of monthly local QRA calculations; quarterly comparison of local results to ETA QRA results; monthly analysis of local results and QRA results by program managers for alignment with internal expectations and ETA-established targets; ongoing evaluation by data analysts and program managers of feedback provided by ETA; and routine evaluation by management and case managers of participant information for alignment with expectations.

Self-Appraisal System (SAS)

Per 20 CFR §658.601, Alaska has established a self-appraisal system for job center operations to determine success in reaching goals and to correct deficiencies in performance. The self-appraisal system includes a quarterly quantitative appraisal and an annual qualitative appraisal.

The quarterly appraisal consists of reviewing a random sample of records of Wagner-Peyser enrolled individuals who received a staff assisted service and employer records for those with job orders created in AlaskaJobs by staff during the review period. A Technical Unit (ETTU) staff member pulls the records and performs quantitative review. The overall job center accuracy rating must be 90 percent or higher, with those centers falling below 90 percent required to complete a corrective action plan.

The annual appraisal is conducted on-site by the job center managers who review records using the *Policy and Procedure Annual Self-Appraisal Checklist*. Any section of the checklist with a negative response is required to have an explanatory comment. The *Checklist* is completed and returned to the ETTU staff member within 30 days of receipt of the form.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

For PY 2021, Alaska continued to use the Retention Rate (*how many workers continue to work for the same employer in the second and fourth quarters after exit*) and Penetration Rate (*how many employers being served compared to how many employers are in the state*) as measures for determining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. Alaska includes data from the Division of Vocational rehabilitation and WIOA Titles I, II, and III to calculate these rates.

The Retention Rate is intended to indicate how well Alaska matches job seekers to employers and is determined by aligning core program data with wage information. Factors that influence the Retention Rate include Alaska’s economic climate, the high rate of seasonal and transitional workers, challenges stemming from geographical barriers, and one of the highest ratios of nonresident to resident workers in the nation.

PY 2020	PY 2021
Retention Rate	
61%	58.5%
Penetration Rate	
15%	16.1%

In PY 2021, the total number of establishments receiving recruitment services provided increased by 249 from PY 2020 as the need for workers continued to accelerate due to employers reopening after COVID-19 restrictions eased. The Retention Rate suffered a two percent decline from the previous year, however, the second consecutive yearly decline in this measure. Coupled with increased recruitment services by job center staff to match qualified applicants with hiring employers, it is unsurprising that worker mobility increased as additional employment opportunities became available to Alaska’s workers.

The Penetration Rate for PY 2021 rose slightly to 16.1 percent. When compared to previous reporting years, the Penetration Rate is still three percent lower than the pre-pandemic reporting year of PY 2019. The fact that the Penetration Rate has not risen appreciably suggests that many businesses were deeply impacted by the pandemic and could not recover or reopen. The percentage of employers who are using Alaska’s employer services offered through the job center network is expected to increase as employers reopen, continue to receive job center staff assistance recruiting skilled workers, and enjoy the full array of employer services available at job centers and via AlaskaJobs.

As in previous years, the vast majority of employer services were provided under the Wagner-Peyser program, primarily in the Workforce Recruitment Assistance and Employer Information and Support Services categories. The remainder of employer services was shared by the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, Adult Basic Education, and Vocational Rehabilitation. Alaska once again saw a decrease in employers who received Rapid Response assistance, down from 73 in PY 2020 to 15 in PY 2021. Additionally, the number of employer information and support services increased year over year by a total of 69 establishments, while the number of established pipeline activities in partnership with the public workforce system to access untapped labor pools increased from 31 to 49 in PY 2021.

Customer Satisfaction

Alaska measures participant customer satisfaction quarterly by requesting active and exited program participants to complete a survey administered through SurveyMonkey, with a series of reminders to encourage a maximum response rate. The participant survey contains eight questions broken into two parts: satisfaction with employment services, including assessments and support services; and satisfaction with training services. Participants are encouraged to submit additional feedback and provide ideas for improvements to the program. The table below reflects cumulative responses to individual survey questions to derive overall satisfaction rates.

Customer Satisfaction Survey – Individual Question Response Trends

Program Year	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Neutral	Total Response Count	Satisfied excluding neutral response	Satisfied rate with neutral response
2018	1563	85	238	1887	82.8%	95.0%
2019	651	105	110	866	75%	87.9%
2020	1157	65	87	1309	88.4%	95%
2021	1311	78	62	1451	90.4%	94.6%
Training Satisfaction Rate						
2018	928	44	161	1133	81.9%	96.1%
2019	437	61	76	574	76%	89.3%
2020	468	27	24	519	90.2%	94.8%
2021	541	46	12	599	90.3%	92.3%
Employment Services Satisfaction Rate						
2018	630	25	78	750	84.0%	94.4%
2019	292	44	44	380	76.8%	88.4%
2020	689	38	63	790	87.2%	95.2%
2021	770	32	50	852	90.4%	96.2%

Of the 1,223 participants invited to take the survey during PY 2021, 204 participants responded, a 16.7 percent response rate and an increase over PY 2020's response rate of 14.5 percent. The department saw a 2 percent increase in overall satisfaction from the previous year.

Alaska reintroduced employer satisfaction surveys during PY 2020 to establish baseline results and continued tracking employer satisfaction through PY 2021. Employer satisfaction is measured similarly to participant satisfaction, using a survey containing five questions related to job orders plus optional additional feedback. The overall employer satisfaction rate for employers who received job center staff assistance in placing job orders increased from 83.8 percent in PY 2020 to 86.9 percent in PY 2021. Of the 3,267 invited to take the survey, 657 employers responded for a 20.1 percent response rate, an increase from 17.8 percent over the prior year.

Measuring customer satisfaction allows the state to better understand the effectiveness of statewide service delivery. Survey results are presented to the AWIB, Alaska State Legislature, DETS program management, and job center staff to improve services to better meet the needs of job seekers and

employers. Due to the importance of customer satisfaction survey results, Alaska is overhauling the survey process including changes in frequency (from issuing surveys quarterly to weekly) and results tabulation. These changes will result in a new baseline established for PY 2022 that will not be comparable to PY 2021 and prior results. We expect, however, to see several benefits from this change including higher return rates and more timely identification of issues our customers are facing.

Please see [Appendix II](#) for participant and employer survey results by question.

Title IV – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Through partnering with other WIOA programs, school districts, and tribal vocational rehabilitation programs, the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides career services, training services, and other supportive services to Alaskans who experience disabilities and want to work. DVR also provides Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities who are eligible, or potentially eligible for, DVR. Division offices are collocated in four job centers throughout the state to better identify appropriate referrals and coordinate resources available for co-enrolled participants, thus creating a seamless system that allows for an individual to leverage multi-program resources. Additionally, DVR leadership continues to work closely with WIOA partners to carry out department priorities and initiatives such as At-Risk Youth, Senior Employment, and Re-entry Coalitions.

In PY 2021, 905 individuals applied for and 1,926 individuals received services under the VR program. DVR also provided Pre-ETS to 1,038 students with disabilities. The majority of individuals served by DVR experienced psychosocial impairment (35 percent) as their primary disability, followed by cognitive impairment (33 percent), physical and orthopedic impairment (22 percent), and blind/deaf/communicative impairment (10 percent). Employment continued to be impacted due to multiple economic factors stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, DVR was able to assist 281 individuals with disabilities to obtain employment, and the average hourly wage of those employed increased to \$16.87 per hour. DVR also provided 604 services to 429 different employers.

Alaska’s Evaluation Projects and Products

With a portion of statewide funds set aside by the Governor, DETS and AWIB, through its Assessment & Evaluation committee, partner with the department’s Research and Analysis unit, other Labor divisions, national, state, and local agencies, trade unions and organizations, training providers, and other non-profit and private entities around the state to evaluate WIOA program performance via a variety of products and projects. The Research and Analysis unit (R & A) collects national, state, and local data in addition to working with WIOA program leaders and partners to conduct and publish longitudinal studies regarding Alaska’s demography and economy as they relate to the workforce, to ensure that the state is on a continuous path of improvement and excellence in providing targeted training and support to the state’s employers and job seekers. R & A’s Occupational Database and other proprietary information systems providing participant data and rich labor market information create a platform for deep, long-term evaluation of workforce programs. For a list of highlights of R & A’s PY 2021 evaluation projects and products including links, see [Appendix III](#).

Quality Pre-Apprenticeship

During PY 2018, training provider Alaska Works Partnership (AWP) worked with the Federal Office of Apprenticeship, the state's apprenticeship program, the DETS TET DWG program, and construction trade unions and employers to develop the state's first [seven construction Quality Pre-Apprenticeship \(QPA\) framework courses](#), per [policy 07-525](#). After federal approval, training delivery began in PY 2019, with five more construction QPAs approved in early PY 2021. During PY 2020, DETS laid groundwork to evaluate the effectiveness of QPA training as more participants complete the courses and gain indenture or employment. During PY 2021 through 2023, DETS will combine forces with AWP and R & A, as well as consult with state and federal offices, apprenticeship providers, employers, and participants to gauge satisfaction with the QPA framework, as well as compare the rate of indenture, employment, and wage outcomes of QPA completers with other types of construction training from providers across the state including programs leading to NCCER credentials. The results of this study will inform further development and use of the QPA framework in construction and other trades in Alaska.

During PY 2021, data was collected from AWP's QPA completers through December 31, 2021 for analysis. Because Alaska gained a new healthcare PATH Academy QPA offered by a healthcare apprenticeship provider, the parameters of this evaluation project may change during PY 2022.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment

Alaska initiated RESEA evaluation according to the requirements of TEGL 06-19 to conduct evidence-based analysis to determine and deploy optimal interventions and service delivery during PY 2020. The DETS RESEA coordinator worked with the division's UI program and with R & A as the third-party evaluator.

During PY 2021, a second RESEA interview requirement was selected as the intervention subject to evaluation based on a comparison to single – interview data, where a randomly selected sample of first interview completers (75 percent) will be selected for a second interview. Our third-party evaluator will compare this group against the single interview control group (25 percent) to determine how successful an additional intervention is for individuals gaining and maintaining long-term employment based on four potential points: employment, median earnings, benefit weeks claimed, and benefit funds expended.

DETS worked with its system developer and the department's Data Processing unit to implement a second RESEA interview in AlaskaJobs, with completion anticipated by the end of 2022.

RESEA evaluation will continue through PY 2022 and beyond. See [Appendix III](#) for more information.

JOBZ Club and S'Cool Store

In PY 2018, Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and school district staff began working with DVR to [evaluate the effectiveness of JOBZ Club and S'Cool Store](#) in

increasing graduation rates and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities as identified in DEED's State Systematic Improvement Plan. PY 2018 was the first year of collecting data at the student level and this will be an on-going evaluation through 2025. DVR will also be providing data to DEED on employers who provide opportunities for high school students with disabilities. DVR has been extremely successful in providing statewide services to transition age students in urban, rural, and remote locations. This has been accomplished through partnerships with school districts, specialized Pre-Employment Transition Services Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs), and other organizations that assist with coordinating transportation and enrollment. As part of this project, DVR also increased the distribution of training materials and resources specifically those that include culturally responsive programming for rural districts with large Alaska Native students with disabilities by:

- Changing the Pathways curriculum to include subsistence and self-employment through subsistence activities
- Distributing "Picture Your Future – Exploring Your Transition Goals" which is a culturally responsive assessment tool and transition planning guide

DVR has also incorporated culturally responsive programming into statewide transition training through virtual teacher training and at the Alaska Statewide Special Education Conference that incorporates training on using Picture Your Future and implementing Pathways.

See [Appendix III](#) for more information.

Alaska did not participate in federal evaluation projects during PY 2021.

Appendices

Appendix I – Alaska’s Success Stories

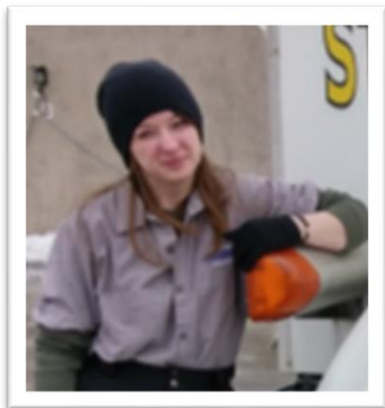
WIOA Adult Program

Helping Dreams Take Flight

Jamie is a 25-year-old woman who had been working as a commercial pilot, earning about \$2,300 per month. She had logged over 1,500 flight hours and had her Commercial Pilot's License with Single- and Multi-Engine Land, and Instrument and Single-Engine Sea ratings. To ensure success as a pilot in Alaska and earn a living wage, she needed to obtain her FAA Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) license. While there were no training facilities in Alaska offering the Certified Training Program (CTP) component of the ATP license training, CSTS was able to find a provider on Colorado’s ETPL and assisted Jamie with tuition and travel expenses. When she returned to Alaska, the Adult program also funded her completion of the ATP flight portion of her program. Once Jamie received her new FAA license, she was hired as an Airline



Transport Pilot (ATP) with Bering Air in Nome, flying a 19-passenger Beechcraft 1900C. Jamie transports people from village to village, earning \$200 a day plus per diem. As she continues to build experience and training, she can become type-rated for additional aircraft and will be eligible to work for large cargo or passenger airlines, increasing her earning potential even further. The training that CSTS funded will allow Jamie to be financially secure, earning a wage that will result in self-reliance throughout her adult life.



Licensing Leads to Success for a Non-Traditional Worker

Desiree visited the Peninsula Job Center, where resource room staff conducted an initial assessment which indicated insufficient skills to be competitive in the local labor market and assisted her with labor market information. Desiree also received a referral to CSTS, where she was assessed to need assistance with tuition, fees, Department of Transportation (DOT) drug screening, DOT physical, IDs, and licensing to attend the Entry Level Driver Training Program at Alaska Driving Academy. After successfully completing training, she worked with her CSTS case manager and

was soon hired with DOT in a temporary position which lead to her full-time permanent position as a Commercial Truck Driver at a starting wage of \$23.80 per hour, plus benefits.

Non-Traditional Worker Fills Healthcare Worker Shortage

Casey obtained full-time, year-round employment as a Registered Nurse (RN) in the Emergency Room for the Mat-Su Regional Medical Center with a starting wage of \$36.00 per hour plus benefits. Mat-Su Job Center staff performed an assessment indicating the need for Casey to obtain training in a high growth/high demand career in the health care field so that he could earn a living wage to support himself and his family. Casey was assisted with tuition & fees through the WIOA Adult program. He completed Charter College's AAS Nursing degree in September 2021, and successfully passed his NCLEX to obtain his RN license in December.



WIOA Dislocated Worker Program

Career Change Leads to Success



Joshua is a 41-year-old single father of one child. Joshua had a total of 14 years in the oilfield industry and had last worked for two years as a derrickman but was laid off due to recent instability of the local industry after receiving a Reduction in Force letter. At the time of enrollment, he was unemployed and collecting unemployment insurance.

He had already approached the Operating Engineers Local 302 for training and apprenticeship and was advised that obtaining a Class A Commercial Driver License (CDL A) would make it easier to receive dispatches for employment until their classroom training would begin in the Spring of 2022. After

applying for jobs, seeking labor market information, and discussing his goals, Peninsula Job Center resource room staff referred Joshua to CSTS. He was determined eligible and suitable for the WIOA Dislocated Worker and TET DWG programs to pay for tuition, fees, and supportive services to attend CDL A training, and successfully completed Kenai Peninsula Driving Instruction's 40-hour Commercial Truck Driver training program. Joshua first found employment as a Commercial Driver with Peterkin Distributors earning \$18 per hour but was receiving minimal hours. He continued looking for full-time employment and was hired into his current position as a Long-Haul Driver with JNS Trucking, where he is paid by the load and averages \$4,500 a pay period, or \$9,000 per month, plus benefits.

WIOA Youth Program

In June 2022, WIOA Youth subrecipient AVTEC hosted a 10-day Hospitality Career Boot Camp for 17 at-risk youth experiencing barriers to employment. The project was developed through partnerships between AVTEC, the National Restaurant Association, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, and the Alaska Job Center Network. Youths ages 18 to 21 came from several regions in Alaska to live and learn on the AVTEC campus in Seward. Participants spent each day immersed in hospitality career readiness training, culinary training with AVTEC instructors, and ServSuccess training with David Faro, Workforce Director of the National Restaurant Association.

Success Story



Hospitality Boot Camp Success: 94 percent of participants said that ServSuccess training benefited their personal and professional development. Participants in the program shared comments like “It was amazing! I learned lots of little things I did not know,” and, “I was offered a job that I never thought I could even think about applying for. I now see a lot of new pathways opening for me because of this training.”

Full Story:

[Hospitality Education in Alaska](#)

Alaska’s Veterans’ Program

Michele’s Story

Michele, a US Army veteran, was hired in June 2022 as a Secretary for the Office of Subsistence Management at the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, with a starting pay grade of GS-8. Michele was determined eligible for Jobs for JVSG services on February 10, 2022. Two DVOPs assisted her with resume writing, mock interviews, cover letters, and job search. The LVER advocated on her behalf for the position and provided interviewing techniques. JVSG staff referred Michele to the WIOA Adult program for supportive services. Michele met multiple priority of service categories and was co-



enrolled with JVSG and WIOA Adult to address barriers to allowed her to obtain her new position. Her patience, hard work and perseverance has paid off. Wishing Michele all the best with her new job and a new chapter in her life!

Noah's Story

Noah, a US Army veteran, obtained employment with ASRC Federal as a laborer with a starting pay of \$22 per hour at Eareckson Air Station in Shemya. He initially made contact with AJC staff on June 24, 2022 with the intention of obtaining information about apprenticeship opportunities. Noah was determined eligible for JVSG services. DVOP staff provided resume, labor market information, and interviewing strategies to Noah. The LVER followed up with ASRC Federal staff for Noah. Since he is a recently separated service member, Noah was also able to fulfill the requirement of providing an active security clearance necessary due to Eareckson Air Station's sensitive radar and communications equipment. His start date was be July 28, 2022.

Alaska's Apprenticeship Program



Dallas Smith



Training received: Alaska Works Telecommunications

Success: After finishing high school, Dallas jumped right into working for a local concrete pumping business, but always knew he wanted to be in the IBEW. After taking our telecommunications training, receiving "Top 5" and a glowing evaluation, Dallas was accepted into the IBEW Telcom apprenticeship and is already dispatched out to work.

Appendix II – PY 2021 Customer Satisfaction Surveys by Question

Participant Survey Questions

Survey Question	Agree	No opinion	Disagree
<i>Service related questions</i>			
Satisfied with the overall services I received	91.0%	0.5%	8.5%
The services met my expectations	88.9%	3.0%	8.0%
The services provided were ideal for my needs	91.0%	2.5%	6.5%
<i>Training related questions</i>			
Overall, the training met expectations	91.3%	4.7%	4.1%
The amount of training time was adequate	88.1%	8.3%	3.6%
I received adequate support from the training organization	89.0%	7.0%	4.1%
I'm confident the training will increase my employability	92.9%	4.1%	2.9%
Would recommend this training to others	90.6%	5.3%	4.1%

Employer Survey Questions

Survey Question	YES	NO	Agree	No opinion	Disagree
Did you receive assistance from an Alaska Job Center staff member in placing one or more job orders between 7/1/2021 and 6/30/2022?	330	327	N/A	N/A	N/A
I am satisfied with the overall support from the Alaska Job Center in assisting me with placing my job order.	N/A	N/A	85.4%	10.1%	4.5%
I am satisfied with the responsiveness of the Alaska Job Center when there is a need to post a job order for my business.	N/A	N/A	87.9%	8.8%	3.3%
Alaska Job Center staff are knowledgeable about AlaskaJobs and the process of placing job orders.	N/A	N/A	91.2%	6.2%	2.6%
Alaska Job Center staff are friendly and approachable.	N/A	N/A	94.1%	4.9%	1.0%
I am satisfied with the overall function and features of AlaskaJobs for placing job orders and reviewing applicants.	N/A	N/A	76.0%	13.3%	10.7%

Appendix III – PY 2021 Research and Analysis Evaluations Products Highlights

Research and Analysis Evaluation Products

Nonresidents Working in Alaska Report

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/reshire/nonres.pdf>

It is critical to prepare Alaska workers for occupations and specialties with high rates of nonresident hire. Published in February 2022, the Nonresidents Working in Alaska report examines the industries, occupations, and regions with high percentages of nonresident workers. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board and other policymakers use this information to identify where to develop training programs that will prepare more Alaskans for high-paying jobs.

Recidivism and Employment Outcomes Analysis

R&A produced a special analysis that examined employment outcomes for individuals who were previously incarcerated. The analysis looked at what training opportunities people took while incarcerated and how their employment outcomes in terms of wages and length of employment differed for those received training and those who did not.

Analyses of Unemployment Insurance Claimants

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/apr22art3.pdf>

During the pandemic, claims for unemployment insurance benefits in Alaska reached unprecedented heights. To better understand the impacts of the elevated claims load and educate policymakers, R&A published new analysis of claims patterns and the structure and health of the UI system in April 2022.

Training Program Performance Report

The TPPR report details the employment and earnings for participants of several WIOA training programs in Alaska. These include adult, dislocated worker, youth, and other programs. R&A uses ODB data to compare trainees' occupations and earnings the year before training to the year after. This comparison is mandated by Alaska Statute 23.15.580, which requires the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development to evaluate state employment-related training programs. The employment and wage outcomes R&A produces are delivered to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board each year, with the outcomes are intended to guide training program development and workforce needs.

Special Labor Market Topics

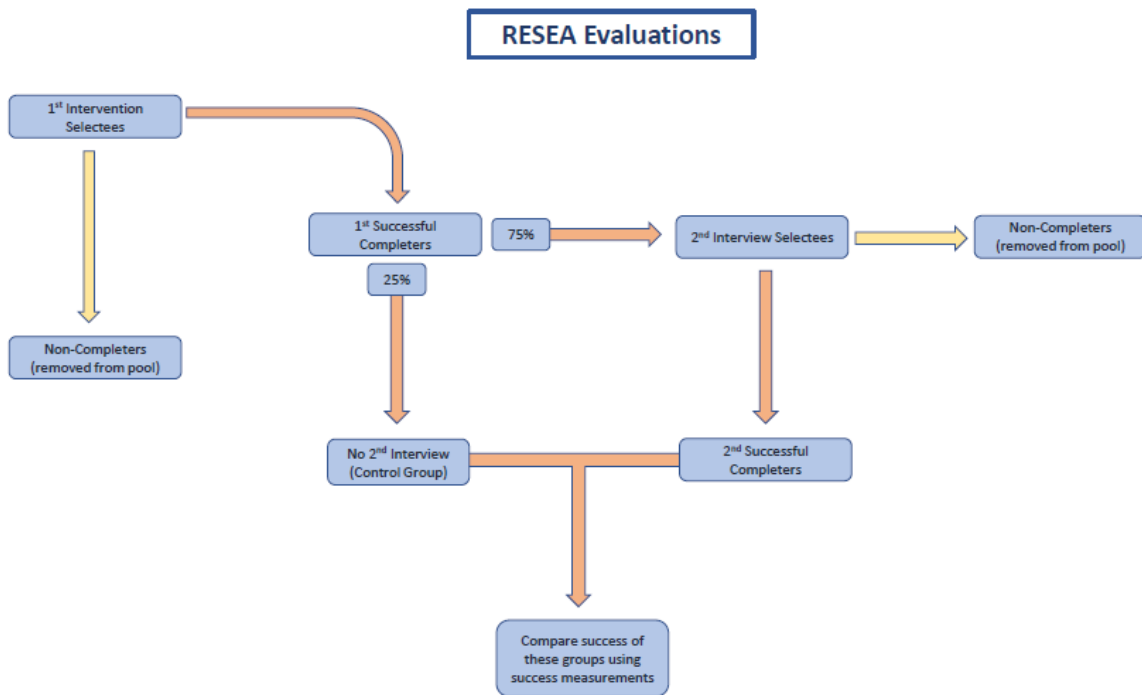
R&A published multiple articles over the past year on the pandemic and its effects on the economy and labor market, ranging from impacts on specific industries to shifts in broad employment trends.

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/aug22art3.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/apr22art2.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/sep21art3.pdf>
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RESEA Evaluation Flowchart



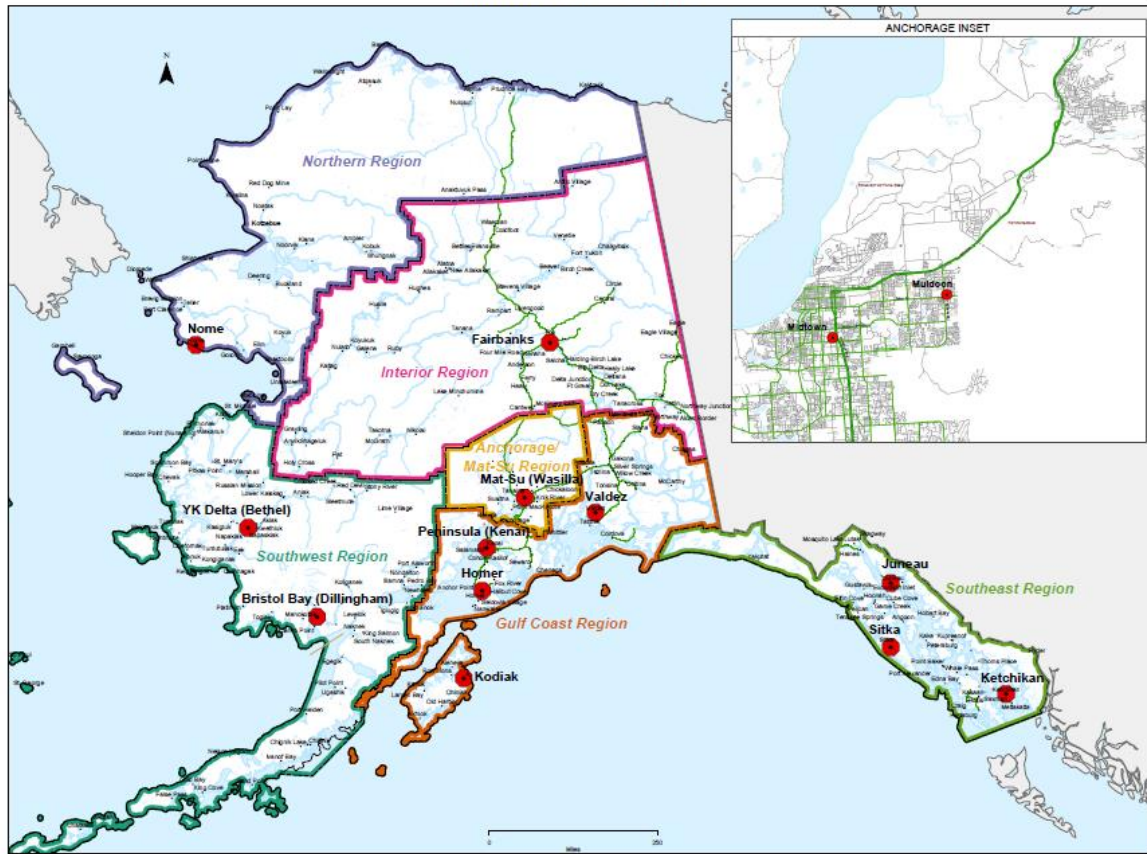
JOBZ Club and S’Cool Store Evaluation Information

Student Instruction and Intervention			
Intended Outcomes	Evaluation Questions – How Will We Know the Intended Outcome Was Achieved?	Measurement Tool/Data Collection Method	Timeline
Implement JOBZ curriculum to teach students the skills and knowledge necessary for successful transition and graduation.	Do parents, teachers, and students report that the JOBZ Club was effective? Does the JOBZ curriculum increase graduation rates and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities?	Annual evaluation of JOBZ Club including evaluation by participants, parents, teachers & administrators (conducted by DVR, analyzed by AITC)	Annual evaluation conducted in January – ongoing through 2025
Implement S’Cool Store program to teach students skills and knowledge necessary for successful transition and graduation.	Do parents, teachers, and students report that the S’Cool Store was effective? Does the S’Cool Store program increase graduation rates and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities?	Annual evaluation of S’Cool Store including evaluation by participants, parents, teachers & administrators (conducted by DVR, analyzed by AITC)	Annual evaluation conducted in January – ongoing through 2025
Implement ATOP Transition Camps to teach students skills and techniques necessary for successful transition and graduation.	Do students report that participation in ATOP transition camps were valuable? Does participation in ATOP Transition Camps increase graduation rates and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities?	Annual evaluation of ATOP Transition Camps by participants. Conducted by DVR, analyzed by AITC.	Ongoing through 2025
Implement Pathways – School to Work to teach students skills and techniques necessary for successful transition and graduation.	Do students report that participation in Pathways were valuable? Does participation in Pathways increase graduation rates and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities?	Annual evaluation of Pathways by participants. Conducted by DVR, analyzed by AITC.	Ongoing through 2025
Collect data on and categorize current job opportunities for high school special education students based on employers who participate in summer work.	What are the current job opportunities for high school special education across the state? How many special education students have access to work experience in high school? How do IEP teams make decisions about work experience?	Data report to be analyzed by DEED and AITC stakeholders.	21-22 school year
Make available, develop and/or modify curricula to incorporate culturally responsive programming.	Does the development of culturally responsive programming increase use in schools across the state? Does the increased use of culturally responsive programming improve transition planning and graduation rates for Alaska Native students with disabilities?	Number of developed or modified curricula as reported by teachers Transition Alaska resource download data	Ongoing through 2025

Year	Students with Disabilities (SWDs) total	SWD Participants
2016-17	339	12
2017-18	305	12
2018-19	335	20
2019-20	-	16
2020-21	-	29

Appendix IV – Alaska Job Center Network Map

Alaska Job Centers



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section (5/17)