

TITLE I OPERATIONAL AREAS

1. Collaborative Local Labor Market Plan

Describe your local economic environment, including areas of significant growth or decline, labor force characteristics and current industry needs. What strategies will be implemented to meet the demands of the local labor market, particularly industries and occupations that are high-growth and high-demand?

Located in close proximity to Washington, DC and Baltimore City, Maryland, Anne Arundel County has a labor force of 298,193. Although Anne Arundel County's unemployment rate has doubled between 2006 and 2011, the county has maintained one of the strongest economies in the state. The unemployment rate for the county is 6.2%, below the state average of 6.6% and the national average of 8.2%.

The economy is beginning to improve; the unemployment rate in Anne Arundel County has decreased slightly, from an average of 6.8% in 2010 to 6.6% in 2012. Yet, research conducted by the Urban Institute shows that while our loss of employment opportunities is improving, Maryland hovers at 18% job loss among low-skilled workers, compared to a 9.7% loss nationally. These statistics show that while our economy is growing, there remains a skills gap between our unemployed citizens and the employment opportunities available in the county. Additionally, according to the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) statistics, Anne Arundel County reported 24,828 jobseekers remained unemployed as of May 2012, while only 13,207 jobs were advertised in the county. Given this disparity, there can be few priorities higher than putting Anne Arundel County citizens back to work and ensuring county businesses have the skilled workforce needed to improve our economic recovery.

Occupational Demand Summary

High-Growth Occupational Groups	Average Hourly Wage	Growth 2008-2018
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	\$41.23	43.2%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	\$32.49	24.3%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	\$32.16	42.3%
Healthcare Support Occupations	\$13.92	39.7%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations*	\$16.89	25.0%

** High Percentage of Green Occupations*

Industry Demand Summary

In-Demand Industry Sectors	New Hires	Employment Growth 2010-2011
Administrative and Support Services*	1,470	2.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,524	6.6%
Accommodation and Food Services*	2,343	0.5%
Retail Trade*	2,814	1.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,540	3.8%

** Industry with High Turn-Over Rate*

Anne Arundel County's highest private employment concentration, identified by Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation (AAEDC), is in the following sectors: Professional/Business Services, Information Technology, Cyber Security, Leisure and Hospitality/Entertainment, Education, Health Services, Construction, Manufacturing, Financing and Trade, Transportation and Warehouse, and Utilities. In addition, Government is a major employer in the county, accounting for 15.7% of total employment.

Despite the higher unemployment rate, industries such as Healthcare, Information Technology, High-Precision Manufacturing, and Cyber Security continue to experience workforce shortages. Moreover, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) skills continue to be in short supply. It is anticipated that this shortage will grow as technical jobs continue to be generated by the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) related defense contractors and the new U.S. Cyber Command at Fort Meade. It is essential that newly emerging fields such as renewable energy and green technology also be addressed.

Current and anticipated development projects in the county, supporting these growth areas, will increase in the next five years and building construction industry hiring is growing by 16.5%. Current and future construction projects include Annapolis retail, Arundel Mills area, West County surrounding Fort Meade, and Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI) growth.

To address these demands, AAWDC has focused attention on bridging the skills gap between job seekers and job opportunities. AAWDC has also included green techniques and careers in its training plans to match the local labor market growth. To improve the customer service skills of our low-income individuals entering retail and hospitality, AAWDC is providing soft skills and customer service training to job seekers. Business service teams are also targeting high-growth and high-demand industries within our local labor market to understand employer needs and support recruitment and training efforts in the business community.

Provide information on significant shifts in the economy that have required new workforce system strategies (e.g., Base Realignment and Closure or targeted regional programs and partnerships).

Over the last several years, Anne Arundel County has experienced significant changes in the economic landscape especially as it relates to the Base Realignment and Closure initiative (BRAC), which concluded September 2011. There were five major components to Fort Meade's growth: Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), general Fort Meade growth, National Security Agency (NSA) expansion, defense contractors' expansion, and the creation of U.S. Cyber Command. These five components were projected to directly account for approximately 26,675 new jobs through 2015. BRAC agencies include the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), Defense Media Activity (DMA), and the Adjudication and the Office of Hearing and Appeals. Although BRAC agencies did relocate to the county, more individuals relocated with BRAC positions than originally anticipated, reducing direct BRAC position vacancies.

Private defense companies are also relocating to, or expanding in, Anne Arundel County as government contracts increase. Although the pace of these moves has not been as fast as expected due to the recession, job opportunities are steadily increasing among defense contractors. The migration of private jobs and companies is expected to run through 2015. The

expectation, according to AAEDC, is that there will be approximately two private defense contractor jobs for each Department of Defense position relocated to Fort Meade. Current major defense contractor expansion includes 49 defense contractors, and an additional 22 new defense contractors now have a presence in the area. This significant shift in the economy has led to substantial increase in demand for highly educated employees, in addition to individuals holding a security clearance. This workforce shift has required the county to revisit its workforce development strategies and focus on increasing the skill level of unemployed individuals, and educate job seekers on the federal application and security clearance processes.

In addition, new entertainment and retail projects in the area have increased the need for construction, food service, and retail workers. Partly due to the influx of workers on account of the BRAC-related expansion, West Anne Arundel County has seen significant growth in commercial construction in Odenton, Gambrills, Fort Meade, and Hanover. Maryland legislation surrounding the gaming industry also spurred creation of the Maryland Live! Entertainment Center at Arundel Mills Mall in Hanover. These economic shifts have required a larger focus on soft skills and customer service training, in addition to pre-apprenticeship construction training with the inclusion of green techniques.

AAWDC will continue to further refine its awareness of the specific skill gaps and business needs in the county by surveying businesses to identify anticipated hiring, the business perception of the availability of skills among the existing labor pool, and the availability of training opportunities to fill those skill gaps. This information will be the basis for training opportunities using career pathways and job matching services provided to county job seekers.

2. Local Area Governance (LWIB)

Describe how the LWIB will coordinate the following Title I activities/functions with local elected officials:

Developing the local workforce investment plan and conducting oversight of the one-stop system, youth activities and employment and training activities.
--

Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC), a quasi-public, non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization, is the direct successor to the Business and Workforce Development Center (BWDC) which qualified for grandfathered-designation as a One-Stop Operator by virtue of having operated a One-Stop Center as part of Maryland's CareerNet system prior to August 7, 1998. As BWDC's descendent, AAWDC is designated by Anne Arundel County government as the county's One-Stop Operator and serves as the administrative entity for the Anne Arundel Workforce Investment Board (LWIB). AAWDC manages the One-Stop system in partnership with the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) and other workforce organizations. *(See Attachment # 1--CEO/LWIB Agreement, affirms that AAWDC is the direct successor to BWDC.)*

The LWIB will be actively involved in developing the local workforce investment plan and conducting oversight of the One-Stop Career system, youth activities and employment and training activities within Anne Arundel County. Under the direction of the LWIB Chairperson, the LWIB will review and approve the local workforce investment plan. The public will have opportunity to comment on the plan prior to the plan's final submission to DLLR. The LWIB will meet at least quarterly as a full body; and achieve its oversight goals by operating in committees. The Youth Council is a sub-component of the LWIB and will make