



While the Workforce System is complex, the following are our top Federal Priorities:

1. Stabilize and Enhance Funding for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Programs
2. Support reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). *See separate document with recommendations to strengthen our public workforce system and enhance outcomes for jobseekers and businesses.*

Program Funding

The uncertainty of funding and short-term, sporadic decision making is making it difficult to plan at the local level.

- Stability is needed so that local elected officials, Minnesota's 16 private industry-led workforce boards, and CareerForce partners across the state can ensure that there is a system in place; that our services continue to be among the highest performing in the country; and that innovative approaches to emerging employer and community needs can evolve.
- A significant investment in workforce is needed to support COVID-19 pandemic recovery. A history of underinvestment in the system has put us at a disadvantage to serve the significant numbers of laid off individuals along with youth and adults with barriers to employment. We support the \$100 billion investment in President Biden's Build Back Better plan. Discuss example(s) of what your local area could do with increased investment.
- In addition to WIOA, many of Minnesota's Workforce Development Boards deliver employment and training services through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program as well as the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP). We all partner closely with Adult Basic Education and Higher Education. Support for these programs is critical to our abilities to provide a pipeline of workers for employers and a career pathway approach for jobseekers. Furthermore, program requirements and outcomes should be as closely aligned as possible.

WIOA Reauthorization

MAWB recommends updates to reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which reflect the priorities of local workforce development boards in Minnesota. Through both the opportunities and challenges faced in implementing WIOA since its passage in 2014, coupled with lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, these recommendations will result in a stronger and more agile public workforce system that better meets the needs of local economies and communities.

- **Locally Driven, Flexible Solutions:** A pillar of the public workforce system is its emphasis on locally driven solutions to meet the needs of local economies. WIOA creates a federal workforce system based on federal, state, and local partnerships that identify and respond to market demand. Local communities will experience periods of economic boom and distress in different ways. We feel strongly that those situations are best addressed at the local level.
- **Strengthen the One-Stop System:** The door to the public workforce system is through the one-stop centers. We must ensure staff and partners have the skills and tools necessary to be the most effective and that service design is centered with the customer in mind.

- Program Integration/Alignment: WIOA-required partners include a multitude of programs and funding streams. Ensuring federal law allows for better integration between programs will be beneficial for participants and save crucial time and resources.
- Managing Performance: The current methods for managing the program performance for the public workforce system need to be significantly streamlined, using modern capabilities and methods. Doing so will enhance our collective learning curve and ensure continuous improvement for programming, benefiting jobseekers and employers.
- Full Funding: Workforce programming needs to be fully funded if we are to truly make the impact necessary to achieve economic recovery. Basing funding on unemployment rates is short-sighted and does not consider a major customer we are here to serve—the employer.