

CHAPTER 1. Economic and Workforce Analysis

Introduction to Chapter 1

The Great Northwest Region of Illinois, or Economic Development Region – 6, consists of the following ten counties: Bureau, Carroll, Henry, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Mercer, Putnam, Rock Island, and Whiteside.

The Economy and Workforce in the Great Northwest Region of Illinois is embedded with a mixture of industry and occupation sectors separated by those with predominantly high locations quotients (LQ), those with favorable projected growth patterns, and those where the need to replace retiring or leaving workers indicates a need for focus.

The economic and workforce analysis below is a depiction of the diversity held within Economic Development Region 6's 10-county region.

A. Provide an analysis of the following factors listed below:

1. Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

a. What are the targeted industries, high impact industry clusters, and in-demand occupations in the region?

Targeted Industries:

Manufacturing, Transportation/Distribution/Logistics, Agriculture, Health, Professional and Business Services, Construction, IT, Self-Employed, and Leisure/Hospitality.

High Impact Industries:

Manufacturing, Health, Professional and Business Services (including IT), and Construction.

Demand Occupations Requiring a Certificate of License:

Nursing Assistants, Automotive Service Techs/Mechanics, Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors, Preschool Teachers (Ex. Special Education), Hairdressers/Hairstylists/Cosmetologists, Licensed Practical & Vocational Nurses, Medical Secretaries, Bus/Truck/Diesel Engine Mechanics, Emergency Medical Techs & Paramedics, and Library Technicians.

Demand Occupations Requiring an Associate’s Degree:

Registered Nurses, Computer Occupations (All Other), Paralegals & Legal Assistants, Computer User Support Specialists, Radiologic Technologists, Calibration & Engineering Techs (Except Drafter, All Others), Dental Hygienists, Physical Therapy Assistants, and Health Info Techs/Registrars/Surgical Assistants, AO.

Demand Occupations Requiring a Bachelor’s Degree:

Project Managers & Business Operations Specialist (All Other), Elementary School Teachers (Except Special Ed.), Accountants & Editors, Software Developers & Quality Assurance Analysts/Testers, Market Research Analysts & Specialists, Secondary Teachers (Except Special/Vocational Educators), Human Resource Specialists, Insurance Sales Agents, and Computer Systems Analysts.

Demand Occupations Requiring Education Beyond a Bachelor’s Degree:

General & Operations Managers, Financial Managers, Management Analysts, Clergy, Sales Managers, Marketing Managers, Administrative Services & Facilities Managers, Medical & Health Services Managers, Lawyers, and Computer & Information Systems Managers.

Short-Term On-the Job Training Required:

Cashiers, Food Preparation & Serving Workers, Retail Salespersons, Laborers/Freight/Stock & Material Movers, Waiters & Waitresses, Stock Clerks & Order Fillers, General Office Clerks, Janitors/Cleaners, Light or Delivery Services Drivers, and Hand Packers & Packagers.

Moderate-Term On-the Job Training Required:

Customer Service Representatives, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, Wholesale & Manufacturing Sales Representatives, Secretaries, Production Workers, Bookkeeping/Accounting/Auditing Clerks, Construction Laborers, Services Sales Representatives, Correctional Officers & Jailers, and Inspectors/Testers/Sorters/Weighers.

Long-Term On-the Job Training Required:

Farmers/Ranchers & Other Agricultural Managers, Restaurant Cooks, General Maintenance & Repair Workers, Machinists, Carpenters, Police & Sheriff’s Patrol Officers, Electricians, Welders/Cutters/Solderers/Brazers, Plumbers/Pipefitters/Steamfitters, and Industrial Machinery Mechanics.

Current Regional Industry and Occupation Mix

EDR 6/Great Northwest Illinois Regional Industry Mix, 3rd Quarter 2023 – Top Industries:

NAICS	Industry	Employment	Average Annual Wages	LQ
611110	Elementary and Secondary Schools	14,045	\$44,558	1.39
622110	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	6,946	\$65,801	0.92

722513	Limited-Service Restaurants	6,172	\$18,767	1.10
921110	Executive Offices	5,629	\$48,737	22.84
722511	Full-Service Restaurants	4,987	\$20,348	0.77
423820	Farm and Garden Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers	4,523	\$147,300	31.83
333111	Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing	4,370	\$76,673	51.79
445110	Supermarkets and Other Grocery Retailers (except Convenience Retailers)	3,420	\$25,612	1.07
493110	General Warehousing and Storage	3,359	\$43,377	1.59
455211	Warehouse Clubs and Supercenters	3,132	\$30,522	1.56
623110	Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	3,111	\$38,545	1.75
561320	Temporary Help Services	2,715	\$33,815	0.76
311612	Meat Processed from Carcasses	2,330	\$50,950	12.63
332994	Small Arms, Ordnance, and Ordnance Accessories Manufacturing	2,320	\$87,209	69.33
522110	Commercial Banking	2,260	\$70,029	1.33
457110	Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores	2,244	\$26,893	2.07
922140	Correctional Institutions	2,239	\$76,772	4.10
621111	Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	2,201	\$101,737	0.61
813110	Religious Organizations	2,086	\$19,284	1.02
721110	Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels	1,850	\$26,589	0.99
441110	New Car Dealers	1,846	\$70,342	1.37
111000	Crop Production (Proprietors)	1,760	\$88,887	4.98
928110	National Security	1,717	\$89,858	2.47
722410	Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages)	1,683	\$16,884	3.21
551114	Corporate, Subsidiary, and Regional Managing Offices	1,589	\$287,658	0.53
561910	Packaging and Labeling Services	1,569	\$58,688	18.91
	Total - All Industries	200,927	\$57,484	1.00

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

The table above displays the top industries for the Great Northwest Illinois Region as of third quarter, 2023. Total employment within the region is 200,927 and the average annual wage is \$57,484. The region's major industrial mix includes the traditional employment-heavy sectors that tend to predominate across Illinois and the US. These include Elementary and Secondary Schools; General Medical and Surgical Offices; Limited-Service and Full-Service Restaurants; Supermarkets and Other Grocery Stores (except Convenience Stores); General Warehousing and Storage; Warehouse Clubs and Supercenters; and Skilled Nursing Facilities.

However, there are also some unique sectors that make up part of the region’s major industries. These include Executive Offices (government offices serving as offices of chief executives and their advisory committees and commissions – includes County and City Administrators, Executive Federal/State Offices, Mayor Offices); Farm and Garden Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers; Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing Corporate, Subsidiary, and Regional Managing Offices; Small Arms, Ordnance, and Ordnance Accessories Manufacturing; Meat Processed from Carcasses; Crop Production; and National Security (i.e. Rock Island Arsenal/Department of Defense). Other significant industries include Temporary Help Services; Commercial Banking; Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores; Correctional Institutions; Offices of Physicians; Religious Organizations; Hotels; New Car Dealers; and Packaging and Labeling Services.

According to information from JobsEQ, there are 11,919 self-employed workers in the region (3rd Quarter 2023) with an annual average wage of \$45,825. This information would indicate that the “Self Employed Industry” is the second largest contributor to the region’s industry mix, with only the Elementary and Secondary Schools sector with greater numbers of employees.

EDR 6/Great Northwest Illinois Regional Occupational Mix, 3rd Quarter 2023 – Top Occupations:

SOC	Occupation	Employment	Average Annual wages	LQ
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	6,586	\$39,100	1.82
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	5,516	\$102,600	1.28
41-2011	Cashiers	5,026	\$29,400	1.21
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	4,326	\$35,600	0.94
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	4,216	\$55,900	1.56
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	4,198	\$29,200	0.99
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	3,838	\$41,500	1.18
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	3,801	\$36,900	1.08
29-1141	Registered Nurses	3,445	\$76,200	0.87
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	2,974	\$42,100	0.82
51-2092	Team Assemblers	2,970	\$40,400	1.94
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	2,557	\$76,400	2.68
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2,543	\$36,300	0.86
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	2,419	\$73,900	1.47
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	2,382	\$61,800	1.40
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	2,343	\$30,900	0.85
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	2,332	\$50,800	1.18
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	2,330	\$43,200	0.95
25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	2,077	\$32,900	1.34

43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	2,065	\$46,900	0.96
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	2,035	\$36,100	1.20
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	1,818	\$47,800	1.05
31-1122	Personal Care Aides	1,812	\$32,500	0.52
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	1,760	\$69,400	1.37
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	1,602	\$73,700	1.90
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	1,544	\$33,000	0.90
00-0000	Total - All Occupations	200,927	\$57,600	1.00

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

The table above displays the top occupations, in real numbers, for EDR 6/Great Northwest Illinois Region as of third quarter, 2023. As mentioned above, total employment within the region is 200,927 but when calculating annual average wages using occupational information, results in an annual average wage of \$57,600 for the region. The region's major occupational mix is typical of a region with significant manufacturing, retail, and health sector representations. These occupations include Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand; Cashiers; Retail Salespersons; Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Fast Food and Counter Workers; General Office Clerks; Stockers and Order Fillers; Registered Nurses; Customer Service Representatives; and Team Assemblers.

Other top occupations rounding out the top 20 in the region include those from Financial Activities, Professional & Business Services, Agriculture and Education sectors. These occupations include General and Operations Managers; General Office Clerks; Farmers, Ranchers, and other Agricultural Managers; Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing (except Technical and Scientific Products); Elementary School Teachers (except Special Education); and Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (except Legal, Medical, and Executive).

b. What industries and occupations have favorable location quotients?

Industries with Favorable Location Quotients

NAICS	Industry	Employment	LQ
335210	Small Electrical Appliance Manufacturing	1,177	80.00
212322	Industrial Sand Mining	678	75.73
332994	Small Arms, Ordnance, and Ordnance Accessories Manufacturing	2,320	69.33
333111	Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing	4,370	51.79
423820	Farm and Garden Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers	4,523	31.83
311930	Flavoring Syrup and Concentrate Manufacturing	353	29.59
221113	Nuclear Electric Power Generation	1,442	29.34

334512	Automatic Environmental Control Manufacturing for Residential, Commercial, and Appliance Use	430	25.94
327211	Flat Glass Manufacturing	372	25.44
333613	Mechanical Power Transmission Equipment Manufacturing	384	23.08
921110	Executive Offices	5,629	22.84
325992	Photographic Film, Paper, Plate, Chemical, and Copy Toner Manufacturing	176	21.22
111150	Corn Farming	461	19.99
332111	Iron and Steel Forging	480	19.15
561910	Packaging and Labeling Services	1,569	18.91
111411	Mushroom Production	186	15.94
562212	Solid Waste Landfill	957	15.00
325311	Nitrogenous Fertilizer Manufacturing	152	13.68
336212	Truck Trailer Manufacturing	672	12.72
311612	Meat Processed from Carcasses	2,330	12.63
311514	Dry, Condensed, and Evaporated Dairy Product Manufacturing	281	11.67
327390	Other Concrete Product Manufacturing	802	11.37
424510	Grain and Field Bean Merchant Wholesalers	545	11.02
327910	Abrasive Product Manufacturing	133	10.81
333912	Air and Gas Compressor Manufacturing	229	9.61
325193	Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing	119	9.53

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

The table above displays the industries located in EDR 6/Great Northwest Region that have the most favorable location quotients among all industries. Many of the industries with the most significant presence in the region are within the manufacturing sector. These include Small Electrical Appliance Manufacturing; Small Arms, Ordnance, and Ordnance Accessories Manufacturing; Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing; Farm and Garden Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers; Automatic Environmental Control Manufacturing for Residential, Commercial, and Appliance Use; Flat Glass Manufacturing; Mechanical Power Transmission Equipment Manufacturing; Photographic Film, Paper, Plate, Chemical, Copy Toner Manufacturing; and Iron and Steel Forging. Additionally, and specific to manufacturing, the area has a significant presence of industries associated with food production and processing including Flavoring Syrup and Concentrate Manufacturing; Mushroom Production; Meat Processed from Carcasses; Dry, Condensed, and Evaporated Dairy Product Manufacturing; and Grain and Field Bean Merchant Wholesalers. Industrial Sand Mining, an extractive industry, has the second highest location quotient in the region. Other industries with extremely favorable location quotients in the region include Nuclear Electric Power Generation; Executive Offices; Corn Farming; and Solid Waste Landfills.

Occupations with Favorable Location Quotients

SOC	Occupation	Employment	LQ
51-8011	Nuclear Power Reactor Operators	170	22.57
19-4051	Nuclear Technicians	136	16.59
49-3041	Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians	877	15.59
17-2161	Nuclear Engineers	134	7.88
47-5051	Rock Splitters, Quarry	37	6.87
33-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers	255	3.72
51-4034	Lathe and Turning Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	81	3.42
51-4033	Grinding, Lapping, Polishing, and Buffing Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	303	3.27
51-4032	Drilling and Boring Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	27	3.25
51-4111	Tool and Die Makers	222	2.97
53-7031	Dredge Operators	4	2.96
51-2041	Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters	215	2.94
51-4031	Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	675	2.93
11-1031	Legislators	146	2.85
51-2021	Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers	41	2.83
53-6011	Bridge and Lock Tenders	14	2.81
51-4041	Machinists	1,122	2.77
51-3023	Slaughterers and Meat Packers	273	2.77
51-9161	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators	625	2.76
33-3012	Correctional Officers and Jailers	1,196	2.73
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	2,557	2.68
51-9162	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Programmers	93	2.63
15-2099	Mathematical Science Occupations, All Other	15	2.63
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	1,401	2.60
47-5022	Excavating and Loading Machine and Dragline Operators, Surface Mining	116	2.58
49-9044	Millwrights	131	2.56

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

The table above displays the occupations in the region with the most favorable location quotients. As to be expected and since Nuclear Electric Power Generation has such a presence in the region, three out of four of the top occupations are in that industry: Nuclear Power Reactor Operators, Nuclear Technicians, and Nuclear Engineers. Similarly, due to the outsized presence of the manufacturing industry in the region, a number of the occupations with favorable location quotients are from that industry. Those occupations include Rock Splitters, Quarry; Lathe and Turning Machine Tool Setter, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic; Grinding, Lapping, Polishing, and Buffing Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic; Drilling and Boring Machine Tool Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic; Tool and Die Makers; Structural Metal Fabricators and Fitters; Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic; ; Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers; Machinists; and Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators. Additionally, owing to the region’s agricultural focus, occupations with significant location quotients include Farm Equipment Mechanics and Service Technicians; Slaughterer’s and Meat Packers; and Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers.

Other top occupations based on location quotients include First-Line Supervisors of Correctional Officers; Dredge Operators; Legislators; Bridge and Lock Tenders; Correctional Officers and Jailers; and Mathematical Science Occupations, All Other.

c. What industries and occupations have favorable demand projections based on growth?

Industries with Favorable Demand Projections Based on Growth

NAICS	Industry	Employment	Annual % Growth - 5 Year Forecast
488991	Packing and Crating	0	4.4%
221115	Wind Electric Power Generation	3	3.9%
221114	Solar Electric Power Generation	29	3.8%
335921	Fiber Optic Cable Manufacturing	4	2.0%
335910	Battery Manufacturing	8	2.0%
335999	All Other Miscellaneous Electrical Equipment and Component Manufacturing	10	1.8%
624120	Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	609	1.5%
621340	Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists	251	1.4%
624190	Other Individual and Family Services	623	1.1%
624110	Child and Youth Services	161	1.1%
621492	Kidney Dialysis Centers	94	0.9%
311930	Flavoring Syrup and Concentrate Manufacturing	353	0.8%
311991	Perishable Prepared Food Manufacturing	133	0.8%
621420	Outpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers	350	0.8%

311920	Coffee and Tea Manufacturing	23	0.8%
621493	Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical and Emergency Centers	20	0.8%
621610	Home Health Care Services	1,340	0.7%
621410	Family Planning Centers	2	0.7%
519210	Libraries and Archives	339	0.6%
541940	Veterinary Services	541	0.6%
621330	Offices of Mental Health Practitioners (except Physicians)	74	0.6%
621498	All Other Outpatient Care Centers	5	0.6%
621999	All Other Miscellaneous Ambulatory Health Care Services	154	0.5%
311999	All Other Miscellaneous Food Manufacturing	52	0.5%
311911	Roasted Nuts and Peanut Butter Manufacturing	15	0.5%
525920	Trusts, Estates, and Agency Accounts	3	0.5%
621991	Blood and Organ Banks	55	0.5%
541513	Computer Facilities Management Services	36	0.5%
541511	Custom Computer Programming Services	472	0.5%

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

Based on industries with the most favorable annual growth forecasts over the next five years, the top industries in EDR 6/Great Northwest Region include the following: Packing and Crating (despite no local employees, this industry is expected to grow 4.4% annually over the next 5 years); Wind Electric Power Generation; Solar Electric Power Generation Sector; Fiber Optic Cable Manufacturing; Battery Manufacturing; and All Other Miscellaneous Electrical Equipment and Component Manufacturing. Industries focused on Health Care and Social Assistance are also expected to grow include Services for Elderly and Persons with Disabilities; Offices of Physical, Occupational and Speech Therapists, and Audiologists; Other Individual and Family Services; Child and Youth Services; Kidney Dialysis Centers; and Home Health Care Services.

Occupations with Favorable Demand Projections Based on Growth

SOC	Occupation	Employment	Annual % Growth - 5 Year Forecast
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	207	2.3%
49-9081	Wind Turbine Service Technicians	18	1.9%
15-2051	Data Scientists	104	1.5%
47-2231	Solar Photovoltaic Installers	12	1.3%
15-2041	Statisticians	9	1.2%

11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	467	1.1%
29-1071	Physician Assistants	67	1.1%
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	85	1.0%
39-9099	Personal Care and Service Workers, All Other	54	0.9%
19-1041	Epidemiologists	4	0.9%
29-2056	Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	140	0.8%
31-9096	Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	121	0.8%
15-2011	Actuaries	19	0.8%
53-3054	Taxi Drivers	60	0.8%
29-1131	Veterinarians	101	0.7%
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	1,544	0.7%
21-1013	Marriage and Family Therapists	47	0.7%
15-1252	Software Developers	854	0.7%
39-2011	Animal Trainers	54	0.6%
31-2021	Physical Therapist Assistants	95	0.6%
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	331	0.6%
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	81	0.6%
13-2061	Financial Examiners	82	0.5%
27-2021	Athletes and Sports Competitors	5	0.5%
21-1019	Counselors, All Other	52	0.4%
31-1122	Personal Care Aides	1,812	0.4%
31-1121	Home Health Aides	637	0.4%
15-1221	Computer and Information Research Scientists	12	0.4%

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

In the table above, the five-year forecasts for annual growth, favor occupations in health with growth projected for Nurse Practitioners; Medical and Health Services Managers; Physician Assistants; Personal Care and Service Workers, All Other; and Epidemiologists. Jobs associated with alternative energies including both solar and wind have the highest projected growth rates as forecast for the coming five years. Significant growth is also expected for Veterinary Technologists and Technicians; Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers; and Veterinarians.

Additionally, other occupations showing growth include those associated with professional and business services and information technology including Data Scientists; Statisticians; Information Security Analysts; Actuaries; Software Developers; Operations Research Analysts; and Financial Examiners.

d. What industries and occupations have favorable demand projections based on replacements?

Industries with Favorable Demand Projections Based on Replacements

NAICS	Industry	Employment	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Replacements	Employment Growth
611110	Elementary and Secondary Schools	14,045	5,295	3,136	3,177	6,313	-1,018
722513	Limited-Service Restaurants	6,172	5,313	2,618	3,047	5,665	-351
722511	Full-Service Restaurants	4,987	4,052	1,927	2,420	4,347	-294
622110	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	6,946	2,382	1,341	1,366	2,707	-325
921110	Executive Offices	5,629	2,331	1,198	1,462	2,660	-330
445110	Supermarkets and Other Grocery Retailers (except Convenience Retailers)	3,420	2,269	1,142	1,404	2,546	-277
455211	Warehouse Clubs and Supercenters	3,132	1,954	966	1,250	2,216	-262
423820	Farm and Garden Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers	4,523	1,723	877	1,242	2,119	-396
493110	General Warehousing and Storage	3,359	2,019	790	1,248	2,038	-20
333111	Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing	4,370	1,804	781	1,249	2,030	-226
457110	Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores	2,244	1,597	875	951	1,826	-228
623110	Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	3,111	1,500	826	926	1,752	-252
561320	Temporary Help Services	2,715	1,280	600	858	1,458	-177
722410	Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages)	1,683	1,248	517	831	1,348	-100
311612	Meat Processed from Carcasses	2,330	1,200	549	772	1,321	-121
721110	Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels	1,850	1,166	580	695	1,275	-108
332994	Small Arms, Ordnance, and Ordnance Accessories Manufacturing	2,320	922	425	675	1,100	-178
813110	Religious Organizations	2,086	922	506	559	1,065	-143
441110	New Car Dealers	1,846	885	437	562	999	-114
922140	Correctional Institutions	2,239	801	401	545	946	-145
522110	Commercial Banking	2,260	783	386	547	933	-150
561910	Packaging and Labeling Services	1,569	826	430	469	899	-72
621111	Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	2,201	831	420	474	894	-63
455219	All Other General Merchandise Retailers	1,234	752	375	486	861	-109
455110	Department Stores	1,213	761	375	485	860	-99
111000	Crop Production (Proprietors)	1,760	649	512	322	834	-185

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

Much of the growth in industries in the Great Northwest Region is based on replacing retiring or transferring employees. The region has recognized for years that interventions would be needed to replace its older workforce and supply current employers with the labor they need to foment economic growth. Industries in the region with the most favorable demand projections based on replacements include Elementary and Secondary Schools; Limited-Service Restaurants; Full-Service Restaurants, General Medical and Surgical Hospitals, Executive Offices; Supermarkets and Other Grocery Stores (except Convenience Stores); Warehouse Clubs and Supercenters; Farm and Garden Machinery and Equipment Merchant Wholesalers; General Warehousing and Storage; and Farm Machinery and Equipment Manufacturing.

Other industries with favorable demand projections due to replacements include Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores; Skilled Nursing Care Facilities; Temporary Help Services; Drinking Places; Meat Process from Carcasses; Hotels and Motels (except Casino Hotels); Small Arms Ordnance, and Ordnance Accessories Manufacturing; Religious Organizations; New Car Dealers; Commercial Banking; Packaging and Labelin Services; and Offices of Physicians.

Occupations with Favorable Demand Projections Based on Replacements

SOC	Occupation	Employment	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Replacements	Employment Growth
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	4,198	4,255	2,176	2,334	4,510	-255
41-2011	Cashiers	5,026	3,779	2,164	2,187	4,351	-573
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	6,586	3,786	1,514	2,555	4,069	-283
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	3,801	2,777	1,133	1,791	2,924	-147
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	4,326	2,561	1,322	1,583	2,905	-344
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	2,343	2,064	934	1,314	2,248	-185
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	4,216	1,868	902	1,182	2,084	-215
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	3,838	1,683	1,045	1,027	2,072	-389
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	5,516	1,775	654	1,413	2,067	-292
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	2,974	1,511	756	1,053	1,809	-298
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2,543	1,515	837	837	1,674	-160
51-2092	Team Assemblers	2,970	1,288	555	1,029	1,584	-295
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	2,035	1,244	606	751	1,357	-113
31-1122	Personal Care Aides	1,812	1,301	675	592	1,267	34
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	2,557	919	808	381	1,189	-270
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	1,544	1,241	538	649	1,187	53
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	2,330	853	599	547	1,146	-293

25-9045	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	2,077	982	553	573	1,126	-144
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	2,065	880	609	478	1,087	-208
35-3011	Bartenders	1,261	938	320	694	1,014	-77
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	1,441	939	344	661	1,005	-66
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	2,332	874	487	509	996	-122
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	2,419	823	373	621	994	-171
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	1,145	824	466	466	932	-107
29-1141	Registered Nurses	3,445	735	543	346	889	-154
39-9011	Childcare Workers	1,079	757	363	469	832	-75

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

As noted above, the region has recognized for years that much of the occupational demand in the region is based on replacing retiring or departing workers. Occupations with the most favorable demand projections based on replacements are also the occupations facing the greatest worker shortages at this time. These occupations include Fast Food and Counter Workers; Cashiers; Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers (Hand); Stockers and Order Fillers; Retail Salesperson; Waiters and Waitresses; Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; General Office Clerks; Customer Service Representatives; and Janitors and Cleaners (except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners). These are all the same occupations from the 2022 regional plan and are high turnover positions.

Other occupations in the region that are facing elevated demand due to the need for replacement workers include Team Assemblers; Personal Care Aides; Farmers, Ranchers, and other Agricultural Managers; Restaurant Cooks; Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (except Legal, Medical, and Executive); Teaching Assistants (except Postsecondary); and Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks.

e. What industries and occupations are considered mature but still important to the economy?

Industries that are considered mature but important to the economy:

- Natural Resources and Mining
- Retail trade
- Other services
- Government

Occupations that are considered mature but important to the economy:

- Nuclear Power Reactor Operators
- Nuclear Technicians
- Nuclear Engineers
- Rock Splitters (Quarry)
- Cashiers
- Retail Salespersons

f. What industries are considered emerging in the regional economy?

Industries that are considered emerging in the regional economy:

- Self-Employed Workers
- Construction
- Financial Activities
- Professional & Business Services
- Health Care & Social Assistance

g. What is the projected regional key in-demand occupations?

Occupations that are considered emerging in the regional economy:

- General & Operations Managers
- Financial Managers
- Management Analysts

- Registered Nurses
- Business Operations Specialists
- Elementary School Teachers (except Special Education)
- Computer User Support Specialists
- Computer Occupations, All Other
- Paralegals & Legal Assistants
- Nursing Assistants
- Automotive Technicians/Mechanics
- Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors

h. What sources of supply and demand were used to determine the targeted industries occupations and skills?

JobsEQ 2nd Quarter 2023; EMSI 4th Quarter 2023; 2023 Regional Plan Data Packet – EDR 6 Northwest.

2. Employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations;

Leading industries in the region are Manufacturing, Transportation & Warehousing, Wholesale Trade, and Retail Trade. Within the leading industries the number of qualified workers does not meet employer demand in the following occupations:

- Engineering Technicians
- Industrial Machinery Mechanics
- Machinists
- Welders
- Diesel Engine Mechanics

- Light Truck or Delivery Service Drivers
- Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers

Emerging industries include Construction, Professional & Business Services, Health Care & Social Assistance, Solar Energy (especially in LaSalle County) and Leisure & Hospitality. Among emerging industries, demand gap was found in the following occupations:

- Registered Nurses
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Certified Medical Assistant
- Solar Energy Technicians
- Nurse Assistants
- Physical Therapy Assistants
- Medical Records/Health Information Technicians
- Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics
- Pre-school Teachers
- First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades
- Carpenters
- Electricians
- Plumbers, Pipefitters & Steamfitters
- Paralegals and Legal Assistants
- Bookkeeping, Accounting and Auditing Clerks
- First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers
- Secretaries and Administrative Assistants
- Medical Secretaries

Demand gaps were also found in Information Technology occupations such as Computer User Support Specialists, Computer Network Support Specialists, Software Application Developers, and Computer Systems Analysts. Workers are employed in all sectors in Information Technology occupations.

3. Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region,

a. What are the targeted career pathway clusters in the region?

As noted in the introduction of Chapter one, the regional planning team has developed two tiers of industry in which a focus will be drawn to. Chapter 1.a states that high impact industries include: Manufacturing, Health, Professional and Business Services (including IT), and Construction.

Career pathway clusters within these industries are included in the following career clusters: Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; Architecture and Construction; Business, Management, and Administration; Information Technology; and Health Sciences. The following chart illustrates these career clusters’ career pathways according to projected occupational gaps in Region 6.

Career Cluster	Career Pathway	Gap	Projected annual Income
Health Science	Registered Nurse	-36	\$70,240
Business, Management, and Administration	General and Operations Managers	-11	\$97,300
Finance	Financial Managers	-10	\$101,870
Information Technology	Software developers	-9	\$89,880
Business, Management, and Administration	Management Analyst	-6	\$102,310
Business, Management, and Administration	Managers (all)	-5	\$93,540
Marketing	Market Research analysts and Marketing Specialists	-5	\$68,820
Finance	Accountants and Auditors	-4	\$75,800
Architecture and Construction	Construction Managers	-4	\$103,830
Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources	Farmers, Ranchers, and other Agricultural Managers	-4	\$79,700
Health Science	Medical and Health Services Managers	-3	\$105,940

JobsEQ, data as of 2023 Q3, except wages which are as of 2022

b. What are the skills that are in demand in the region?

In demand skills in the region are largely Middle Skills that require some post-secondary training or education, but not a four-year degree. Illustrated in the following chart are Skill Gaps of all occupations, of which the majority would be considered Middle Skill.

Tier	Industry	Skill	Gap
Two	Professional Business services/ financial activities	Microsoft Office	-115
Two	Education	Teaching/Training	-90
One and Two	Multiple	Bilingual	-75
One	Transportation	Merchandising	-72
Two	Professional Business services/ financial activities	Microsoft Excel	-58
One and Two	Multiple	Mathematics	-49
One	Healthcare	Medical Terminology	-46
Two	Professional Business services/ financial activities	Typing 31-40 wpm	-40
One and Two	Multiple	Change Management	-32

JobsEq, Data as of 2023 Q3

c. **How well do the existing skills of job seekers match the demands of local businesses?**

Middle Skills are in demand in all occupations. According to National Skills Coalition, In Illinois Middle Skill jobs account for 52% of Illinois’ labor market, yet only 43% of the state’s workers are trained with middle-skill level skills.

4. Regional workforce considering current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment⁶ (§ 679.510(a)(1)(iv) and § 679.560(a)(3)).

a. How is the region changing in terms of demographics, labor supply and occupational demand?

Population Demographics – Change, Age, Race/Ethnicity/Educational Attainment

Population by Largest Cities in Region	
<i>City</i>	<i>Population</i>
Moline	42,028
Rock Island	36,256
East Moline	20,874
Ottawa	18,668
Dixon	15,177
Sterling	14,566
Kewanee	12,229
Peru	9,771
LaSalle	9,423
Rock Falls	8,620

Source: 2024 Regional Plan Data Packet – EDR 6 Northwest

In general, the largest cities in the region form two groups. The first consists of those in the Quad Cities region, including Moline, Rock Island and East Moline. The second group consists of the cities along the Illinois river closer to the Chicago suburbs, in the west of the region such as Peru, LaSalle, and Ottawa. Three cities - Dixon, Rock Falls, and Sterling - hug the Rock River, and Kewanee is to the south, between the Peru-LaSalle area and the Quad Cities. This indicates that the center of economic activity is split between these two regions, with workers migrating to the outer Chicago suburbs or working in the Quad Cities area. While these larger population centers do have a manufacturing base along with more diverse economic mixes, a significant portion of the region is focused on agriculture and industries that support that sector.

Overall Population Change 2011-2021

	Population (2021)	Population (2011)	Population Change (2011-2021)	Population Percent Change (2011-2021)
Bureau County, IL	33,338	34,963	-1,625	-4.87%

Carroll County, IL	15,586	15,474	112	0.72%
Henry County, IL	49,412	50,465	-1,053	-2.13%
Jo Daviess County, IL	21,995	22,709	-714	-3.25%
LaSalle County, IL	109,986	113,865	-3,879	-3.53%
Lee County, IL	34,373	36,012	-1,639	-4.77%
Mercer County, IL	15,779	16,497	-718	-4.55%
Putnam County, IL	5,638	5,989	-351	-6.23%
Rock Island County, IL	144,694	147,625	-2,931	-2.03%
Whiteside County, IL	55,932	58,622	-2,690	-4.81%
Northwest IL Region Total	486,733	502,221	-15,488	-3.18%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2024 Regional Plan Data Packet – EDR 6 Northwest.

From 2011 to 2021 the population of the region dropped evenly. Although Carroll County saw a minor .72% increase in population, most of the counties saw a drop in population between 3 and 6 percent. Rural Putnam County saw the steepest decline, losing 6.23% of its population in the timespan, followed by Bureau, Whiteside, and Lee Counties with declines of 4.87, 4.81, and 4.77 percent respectively. Overall, the region lost 3.18% of its 2010 population by 2021.

Regional Demographics

EDR 6/Great Northwest Region Population/Households/Median Age: 2023-2028

Summary	Census 2010	2023	2028	2023-2028 Change	2023-2028 Annual Rate
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Population	501,968	479,299	471,690	-7,609	-0.32%
Households	204,401	202,285	202,186	-99	-0.01%
Median Age	41.6	43.6	44.3	0.7	0.32%
Median Male Age	40.2	42.3	43.0	0.7	0.33%
Median Female Age	43.1	45.1	45.8	0.7	0.31%

Source: ESRI, 2024

EDR 6/Great Northwest Region Age by Race: 2023 - 2028

The following tables show the regional population's projected growth between 2023 and 2028 by age cohort and race. The source for this data is ESRI.

White	2023 Population	2028 Population	2023-2028 Numeric Change	2023-2028 % Increase (Projected)
Total	392,867	380,168	-12,699	-3.2%
0 - 4	16,794	15,999	-795	-4.7%
5 - 9	18,647	17,687	-960	-5.1%
10 - 14	19,634	19,549	-85	-0.4%
15 - 19	20,388	19,197	-1,191	-5.8%
20 - 24	18,863	17,012	-1,851	-9.8%
25 - 29	22,196	18,397	-3,799	-17.1%
30 - 34	23,002	21,509	-1,493	-6.5%
35 - 39	23,222	23,055	-167	-0.7%
40 - 44	23,421	23,588	167	0.7%
45 - 49	22,704	23,992	1,288	5.7%
50 - 54	25,571	22,390	-3,181	-12.4%
55 - 59	28,602	24,854	-3,748	-13.1%
60 - 64	32,116	27,212	-4,904	-15.3%
65 - 69	30,181	30,040	-141	-0.5%

70 - 74	25,103	26,754	1,651	6.6%
75 - 79	18,340	21,172	2,832	15.4%
80 - 84	12,059	14,685	2,626	21.8%
85+	12,024	13,076	1,052	8.7%
Median Age	47.3	47.9		

The White population in EDR 6/Great Northwest region is projected to decrease by 3.2% or nearly 13,000 by 2028. The most significant decreases come from those 25-29 years of age (17.1% decrease) and for the 60-64 cohort (15.3% decrease). Age cohorts over 70 will increase in numbers with the largest increase coming from those 80-84 years of age (21.8% increase).

The median age for the White population is projected to increase from 47.3 in 2023 to 47.9 in 2028.

Black or African American	2023 Population	2028 Population	2023-2028 Numeric Change	2023-2028 % Increase (Projected)
Total	24,245	24,820	575	2.4%
0 - 4	1,594	1,608	14	0.9%
5 - 9	1,598	1,577	-21	-1.3%
10 - 14	1,670	1,717	47	2.8%
15 - 19	1,692	1,737	45	2.7%
20 - 24	1,858	1,916	58	3.1%
25 - 29	2,093	2,013	-80	-3.8%
30 - 34	2,186	2,078	-108	-4.9%
35 - 39	2,000	2,047	47	2.4%
40 - 44	1,784	1,890	106	5.9%
45 - 49	1,525	1,781	256	16.8%
50 - 54	1,336	1,272	-64	-4.8%
55 - 59	1,244	1,211	-33	-2.7%
60 - 64	1,100	1,043	-57	-5.2%
65 - 69	937	986	49	5.2%

70 - 74	730	851	121	16.6%
75 - 79	455	539	84	18.5%
80 - 84	242	317	75	31.0%
85+	201	237	36	17.9%
Median Age	33.7	34.4		

The Black or African America population in EDR 6/Great Northwest region is projected to increase by 2.4% by 2028. The most significant decreases come from those 60-64 years of age (5.2 decrease) and for the 30-343 cohort (4.9% decrease). Age cohorts 45-49 and those over 65 will increase in numbers with the largest increase coming from those 80-84 years of age (31% increase).

The median age for the Black and African American population is projected to increase from 33.7 in 2023 to 34.4 in 2028.

American Indian/Native American	2023 Population	2028 Population	2023-2028 Numeric Change	2023-2028 % Increase (Projected)
Total	1,975	2,044	69	3.5%
0 - 4	51	49	-2	-3.9%
5 - 9	77	67	-10	-13.0%
10 - 14	106	105	-1	-0.9%
15 - 19	85	83	-2	-2.4%
20 - 24	91	91	0	0.0%
25 - 29	135	123	-12	-8.9%
30 - 34	138	143	5	3.6%
35 - 39	120	128	8	6.7%
40 - 44	109	122	13	11.9%
45 - 49	136	149	13	9.6%
50 - 54	153	136	-17	-11.1%
55 - 59	164	151	-13	-7.9%
60 - 64	216	190	-26	-12.0%
65 - 69	160	203	43	26.9%

70 - 74	116	157	41	35.3%
75 - 79	61	82	21	34.4%
80 - 84	33	34	1	3.0%
85+	24	31	7	29.2%
Median Age	47.8	48.7		

The American Indian/Native American population in EDR 6/Great Northwest region is projected to increase by 3.5% by 2028. The most significant population decrease is projected to be in the 5-9 years of age cohort (13% decrease) followed by those 60-64 years of age (12% decrease). Age cohorts over 65 will increase in numbers with the largest increase coming from those 70-74 years of age (35.3% increase).

The median age for the American Indian/Native American population is projected to increase from 47.8 in 2023 to 48.7 in 2028.

Asian	2023 Population	2028 Population	2023-2028 Numeric Change	2023-2028 % Increase (Projected)
Total	6,410	6,952	542	8.5%
0 - 4	306	322	16	5.2%
5 - 9	321	328	7	2.2%
10 - 14	336	364	28	8.3%
15 - 19	419	435	16	3.8%
20 - 24	355	390	35	9.9%
25 - 29	496	475	-21	-4.2%
30 - 34	583	579	-4	-0.7%
35 - 39	592	645	53	9.0%
40 - 44	473	571	98	20.7%
45 - 49	334	406	72	21.6%
50 - 54	339	332	-7	-2.1%
55 - 59	392	399	7	1.8%
60 - 64	427	425	-2	-0.5%
65 - 69	432	488	56	13.0%

70 - 74	291	368	77	26.5%
75 - 79	166	220	54	32.5%
80 - 84	75	109	34	45.3%
85+	73	96	23	31.5%
Median Age	38.3	39.5		

The Asian population in EDR 6/Great Northwest region is projected to increase by 8.5% by 2028, the largest increase for any of the race/ethnic groups listed here. The most significant decrease in population for this group comes in the 25-29 age cohort (4.2% decrease). The Asian population between the ages of 40-49 is expected to grow over 20% by 2028. Age cohorts over 65 will increase in numbers with the largest increase coming from those 80-84 years of age (45.3% increase).

The median age for the Asian population is projected to increase from 38.3 in 2023 to 39.5 in 2028.

Pacific Islander	2023 Population	2028 Population	2023-2028 Numeric Change	2023-2028 % Increase (Projected)
Total	144	151	7	4.9%
0 - 4	5	2	-3	-60.0%
5 - 9	3	4	1	33.3%
10 - 14	8	6	-2	-25.0%
15 - 19	5	8	3	60.0%
20 - 24	3	3	0	0.0%
25 - 29	14	5	-9	-64.3%
30 - 34	10	15	5	50.0%
35 - 39	8	11	3	37.5%
40 - 44	8	9	1	12.5%
45 - 49	5	6	1	20.0%
50 - 54	11	6	-5	-45.5%
55 - 59	7	12	5	71.4%
60 - 64	20	8	-12	-60.0%

65 - 69	19	21	2	10.5%
70 - 74	10	20	10	100.0%
75 - 79	6	9	3	50.0%
80 - 84	2	5	3	150.0%
85+	0	1	1	100.0%
Median Age	51.4	55.2		

The Pacific Island population in EDR 6/Great Northwest region is small and projected to increase by 4.9% by 2028 which represents an increase of 7 individuals. As such, it is an outlier. The most significant decrease in population for this group comes in the 25-29 age cohort (64.3% decrease) followed by the 0-4 and 60-64 cohorts (60% projected decrease each). The Pacific Islander between the ages of 40-49 is expected to grow over 20% by 2028. Age cohorts over 65 will increase in numbers with the largest increase coming from those 80-84 years of age (150% increase).

The median age for the Pacific Island population is projected to increase from 51.4 in 2023 to 55.2 in 2028, the oldest median age for all of the race/ethnic groups listed here.

Some Other Race	2023 Population	2028 Population	2023-2028 Numeric Change	2023-2028 % Increase (Projected)
Total	18,379	19,600	1,221	6.6%
0 - 4	1,350	1,397	47	3.5%
5 - 9	1,417	1,467	50	3.5%
10 - 14	1,449	1,569	120	8.3%
15 - 19	1,544	1,614	70	4.5%
20 - 24	1,457	1,491	34	2.3%
25 - 29	1,589	1,584	-5	-0.3%
30 - 34	1,678	1,732	54	3.2%
35 - 39	1,774	1,904	130	7.3%
40 - 44	1,427	1,596	169	11.8%
45 - 49	865	1,076	211	24.4%

50 - 54	897	901	4	0.4%
55 - 59	848	860	12	1.4%
60 - 64	702	711	9	1.3%
65 - 69	512	600	88	17.2%
70 - 74	408	495	87	21.3%
75 - 79	244	316	72	29.5%
80 - 84	104	148	44	42.3%
85+	114	139	25	21.9%
Median Age	31.1	32.0		

The population categorized as Some Other Race in EDR 6/Great Northwest region is projected to increase by 6.6% by 2028. The only age cohort that is projected to decrease in this group by 2028 is the 25-29 one. All other age cohorts are projected to grow with the largest increase coming from those 80-84 years of age (42.3% increase).

The median age for the Asian population is projected to increase from 31.1 in 2023 to 32 in 2028.

Multiple Races	2023 Population	2028 Population	2023-2028 Numeric Change	2023-2028 % Increase (Projected)
Total	35,279	37,955	2,676	7.6%
0 - 4	4,732	5,025	293	6.2%
5 - 9	4,587	4,821	234	5.1%
10 - 14	4,151	4,597	446	10.7%
15 - 19	3,134	3,325	191	6.1%
20 - 24	2,465	2,536	71	2.9%
25 - 29	2,129	2,065	-64	-3.0%
30 - 34	1,973	2,050	77	3.9%
35 - 39	1,672	1,850	178	10.6%
40 - 44	1,429	1,625	196	13.7%
45 - 49	1,022	1,205	183	17.9%

50 - 54	1,245	1,248	3	0.2%
55 - 59	1,148	1,132	-16	-1.4%
60 - 64	1,314	1,297	-17	-1.3%
65 - 69	1,167	1,272	105	9.0%
70 - 74	1,146	1,324	178	15.5%
75 - 79	824	1,062	238	28.9%
80 - 84	587	820	233	39.7%
85+	554	701	147	26.5%
Median Age	22.1	22.4		

The population categorized as Multiple Races in EDR 6/Great Northwest region is projected to increase by 7.6% by 2028. The only cohorts projected to decrease by 2028 is the 25-29 age cohort (3% decrease), the 55-59 cohort (1.4% decrease), and the 60-64 cohort (1.3 decrease). The Multiple Races population between the ages of 40-49 is expected to grow over 20% by 2028. Age cohorts over 60 will increase in numbers with the largest increase coming from those 80-84 years of age (39.7% increase).

The median age for this population is projected to increase from 22.1 in 2023 to 22.5 in 2028, the youngest median age of all groups.

Hispanic or Latino	2023 Population	2028 Population	2023-2028 Numeric Change	2023-2028 % Increase (Projected)
Total	51,383	53,964	2,581	5.0%
0 - 4	5,383	5,667	284	5.3%
5 - 9	5,254	5,477	223	4.2%
10 - 14	4,910	5,350	440	9.0%
15 - 19	4,403	4,553	150	3.4%
20 - 24	3,811	3,895	84	2.2%
25 - 29	4,164	4,035	-129	-3.1%
30 - 34	4,178	4,258	80	1.9%
35 - 39	4,139	4,392	253	6.1%

40 - 44	3,199	3,545	346	10.8%
45 - 49	2,066	2,452	386	18.7%
50 - 54	2,012	1,957	-55	-2.7%
55 - 59	1,921	1,865	-56	-2.9%
60 - 64	1,739	1,654	-85	-4.9%
65 - 69	1,469	1,610	141	9.6%
70 - 74	1,167	1,337	170	14.6%
75 - 79	807	972	165	20.4%
80 - 84	417	550	133	31.9%
85+	344	395	51	14.8%
Median Age	27.3	27.5		

The Hispanic or Latino population in EDR 6/Great Northwest region is projected to increase by 5% by 2028. The only cohorts projected to decrease in this population by 2028 are the 25-29 age cohort (3.1% decrease), the 50-54 cohort (2.7% decrease), the 55-59 cohort (2.9% decrease), and the 60-64 cohort (4.9% decrease). Age cohorts over 65 will increase in numbers with the largest increase coming from those 80-84 years of age (31.9% increase).

The median age for the Hispanic or Latino population is projected to increase from 27.3 in 2023 to 27.5 in 2028, the second youngest median age for all the race/ethnic groups listed here.

Educational Attainment

	Percent			Value		
	Great Northwest Illinois Region	Illinois	USA	Great Northwest Illinois Region	Illinois	USA

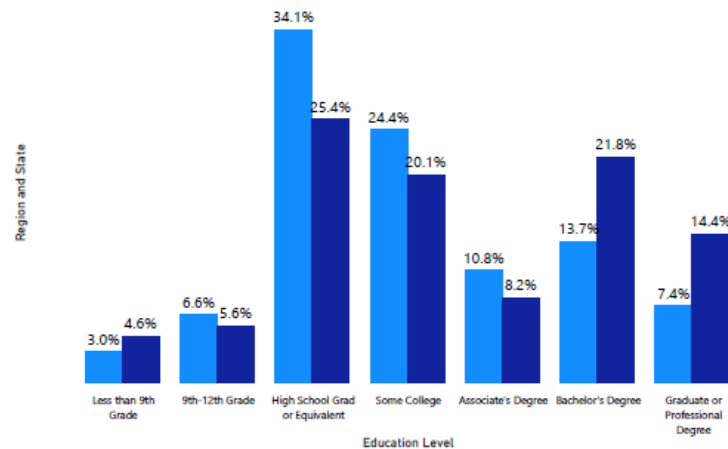
Educational Attainment, Age 25-64						
No High School Diploma	9.10%	9.20%	10.30%	22,218	620,325	17,756,046
High School Graduate	31.90%	23.50%	25.30%	77,965	1,586,046	43,535,564
Some College, No Degree	24.90%	20.00%	20.10%	60,897	1,350,693	34,637,141
Associate's Degree	12.00%	8.80%	9.30%	29,344	597,481	15,944,395
Bachelor's Degree	14.90%	23.70%	22.00%	36,310	1,597,176	37,890,674
Postgraduate Degree	7.20%	14.80%	13.10%	17,676	1,000,422	22,499,876

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter, 2023

Educational Attainment of Population 25 & Over, EDR 6

Share of Population Age 25+ by Education Level

● Region ● State



Group	Count Ages 25+
Less than 9th Grade	10,368
9th-12th Grade	22,587
High School Grad or Equivalent	117,000
Some College	83,767
Associate's Degree	37,255
Bachelor's Degree	46,925
Graduate or Professional Degree	25,499
Total	343,401

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey, Table S1501.

Bachelor's Degree by Field

Science and Engineering	27.8%
Arts, Humanities, and Others	22.3%
Education	21.2%
Business	18.0%
Science and Engineering Related Fields (e.g. Pre-Med, Engineering Technology)	10.7%

Source: 2024 Regional Plan Data Packet, American Community Survey 2017-2021, Table S1502

The educational levels in the area are broadly the same as the national average, with nearly 32% of the region’s population holding an associate’s degree or higher. The region may be able to leverage this workforce into entry-level positions requiring associate’s and bachelor’s degrees. However, the region does have a lower percentage of its population holding bachelor’s degrees than national averages which indicates the economy is less diverse than other regions and there will be pressure on the economy to attract investment in these higher-paying industries and jobs unless interventions, both in economic development and workforce development can be determined.

Additionally, nearly 44% of the region’s population hold a high school diploma, a GED, or have not completed their high school education. With most jobs requiring at least some post-secondary training or certificates for entry-level jobs, the region has a significantly large population that is less than ready to take on the new opportunities that are expanding in the region.

Among those residents who hold Bachelor’s degrees in the region, 27.8% hold degrees in Science and Engineering; 22.3% hold degrees in Arts, Humanities, and Others; 21.2% hold degrees in Education; 18.0% hold degrees in Business; and 10.7% hold degrees in Science and Engineering Related Fields (e.g. Pre-Med, Engineering Technology).

Income – Household Income, Unemployment, Poverty

ACS 5-Year Estimates - Household Income

	Percent		Value	
	2011	2021	2011	2021
Total Households			203,848	201,108
Less than \$10,000	6.2%	5.6%	12,623	11,260
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5.3%	4.2%	10,814	8,395
\$15,000 to \$24,999	11.9%	8.7%	24,319	17,585
\$25,000 to \$34,999	11.5%	9.5%	23,418	19,062
\$35,000 to \$49,999	15.7%	13.2%	32,105	26,570
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20.8%	19.1%	42,359	38,339
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13.4%	13.8%	27,252	27,807
\$100,000 to \$149,999	10.4%	16.1%	21,253	32,357

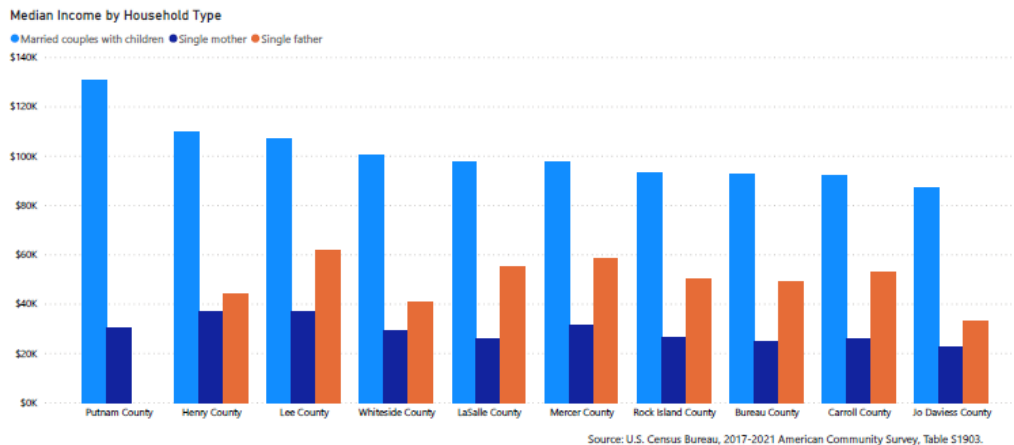
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2.7%	5.9%	5,406	11,794
\$200,000 or more	2.1%	3.9%	4,299	7,939
Median Income (dollars)			\$49,093	\$60,609
Mean Income (dollars)			\$61,841	\$76,772

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

Almost 28% of the households in the region have annual household incomes that are less than \$35,000, with almost 10% making less than \$15,000 per year. On the other side of the spectrum, 26% of households in the region have annual incomes exceeding \$100,000 per year. The largest percentage of households in the region, 19.1%, are estimated to make between \$50,000 to \$74,999 per year. The median household income for the region is \$60,609 and mean household income is \$76,772.

Median Income by County – Households with Children

The statewide median income for all households was \$72,563, which is 5% higher than the national level of \$69,021. In Illinois, the median income was \$110,026 for married couples with children, \$32,586 for single mother households, and \$50,942 for single father households.



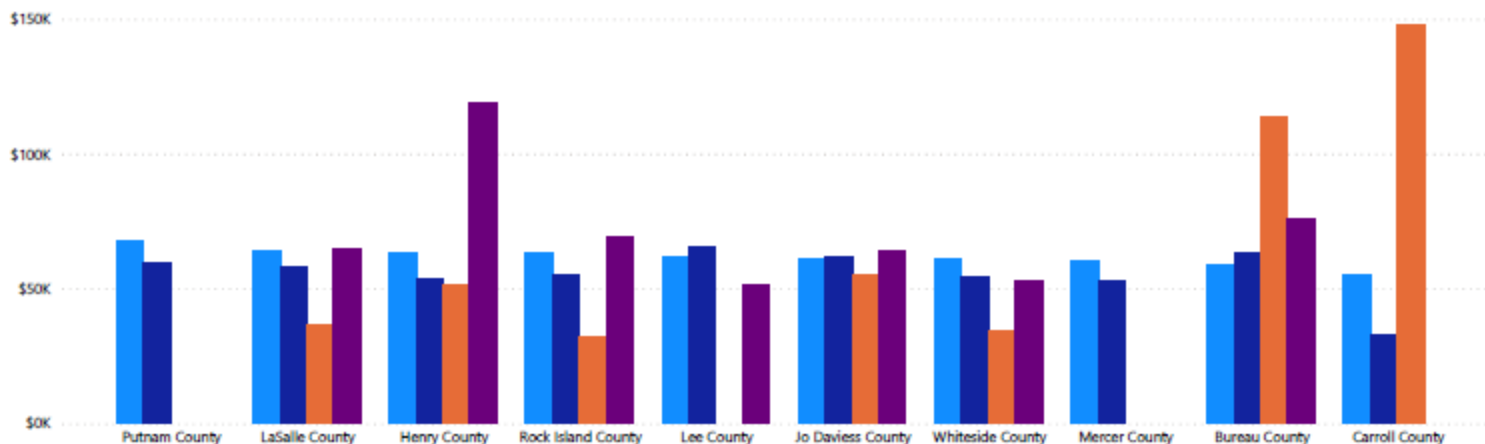
Not surprisingly, married couple households with children present have the highest median household income levels by significant levels. In the region. Putnam County has the highest median household income for this category with Jo Daviess County having the lowest. Generally, households with a single father and children have higher incomes than households headed by a single mother.

Median Income by County and Race

Statewide, the median income for African American households is \$46,401, Asian households is \$98,367, Hispanic households is \$58,791, and White households is \$73,533. Below are the American Community Survey responses for household income by race in each county of the region. *Care must be taken when comparing income, as some counties do not have sufficient American Community Survey responses regarding income for some racial and ethnic groups. It is not possible to compute a region-wide median income in the American Community Survey data provided.*

Median Household Income by Race

● White Non-Hispanic ● Hispanic or Latino ● Black or African American ● Asian



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017-2021 American Community Survey, Table S1903.

When considering median income by race, there are some interesting differences between counties in the region. In Bureau County, Hispanic/Latino, Black or African American, and Asian households all have higher median incomes than the White population, with Black or African Americans households in Bureau County having the highest. In Carroll County, the Black or African American population has a median household income that is higher than all of the other groups and is in fact, nearly at \$150,000 per year. The Asian population’s household median income is higher than all other racial or ethnic groups in LaSalle, Henry, Rock Island, and Jo Daviess Counties. The Hispanic or Latino population has higher median household incomes than Whites in Lee County, Jo Daviess County, and Bureau County and exceeds the household income levels of all other racial or ethnic groups in Lee County. Only Asians in Henry County and Black or African Americans in Bureau and Carroll Counties have median household incomes that exceed \$100,000 per year.

Unemployment

ACS 5-Year Estimates - Unemployed

	Percent		Value	
	2011	2021	2011	2021
Total Unemployed				
Total	8.0%	5.3%	20,687	12,865
Unemployed by Age				
16 to 19 years	22.1%	14.2%	3,167	1,823
20 to 21 years	16.3%	11.3%	1,652	1,016
22 to 24 years	12.5%	7.6%	1,679	997
25 to 29 years	10.5%	6.5%	2,588	1,540
30 to 34 years	7.8%	5.6%	1,841	1,277
35 to 44 years	5.7%	4.6%	3,034	2,210
45 to 54 years	6.5%	3.9%	4,166	1,939
55 to 59 years	5.7%	3.7%	1,510	962
60 to 61 years	5.3%	3.0%	450	276
62 to 64 years	3.4%	3.0%	272	304
65 to 69 years	2.9%	3.8%	192	352
70 to 74 years	2.5%	1.9%	76	82
75 year and over	2.5%	3.2%	60	87
Unemployed by Gender, 16 to 64 Years				
Male	9.1%	5.7%	11,869	6,774
Female	7.3%	5.2%	8,490	5,570
Unemployed by Race and Ethnicity, 16 to 64 Years				
White	7.6%	4.8%	17,118	9,588
Black or African American	19.9%	16.1%	1,517	1,427
American Indian and Alaska Native	27.7%	4.2%	185	17
Asian	6.5%	6.1%	143	173
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	2.3%	0	4
Some Other Race	10.6%	6.0%	779	374

Two or More Races	21.5%	9.6%	617	761
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	10.9%	7.0%	1,937	1,559
Unemployed by Veterans Status Age 18 to 64 Years				
Total	8.8%	3.1%	1,595	322
Unemployed by Educational Attainment, Age 25 to 64 Years				
No High School Diploma	14.8%	12.5%	2,302	1,556
High School Graduate	8.0%	5.8%	5,569	3,339
Some College or Associate's Degree	5.8%	3.7%	4,520	2,648
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	3.2%	2.1%	1,470	965

Source: JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

Using figures from JobsEQ focused on unemployment rate changes for EDR 6 between 2011 and 2021, the regional unemployment rate plummeted from 8.0% in 2011 to 5.3% in 2021. According to IDES' Labor Market Information Monthly Labor Force Statistics for Economic Development Regions, the EDR 6/Great Northwest Region's December 2023 unemployment rate for the region is estimated to be 4.2% (not seasonally adjusted).

As a result, unemployment rates in the region also decreased by age cohorts, with significance decreases among those under the age of 24. However, the unemployment rates increased for those between the ages of 65 and 69 and for those 75 years of age and older.

In regard to differences between genders, the unemployment rate for males decreased by 3.4% between 2011 and 2021 and decreased 2.1% for females.

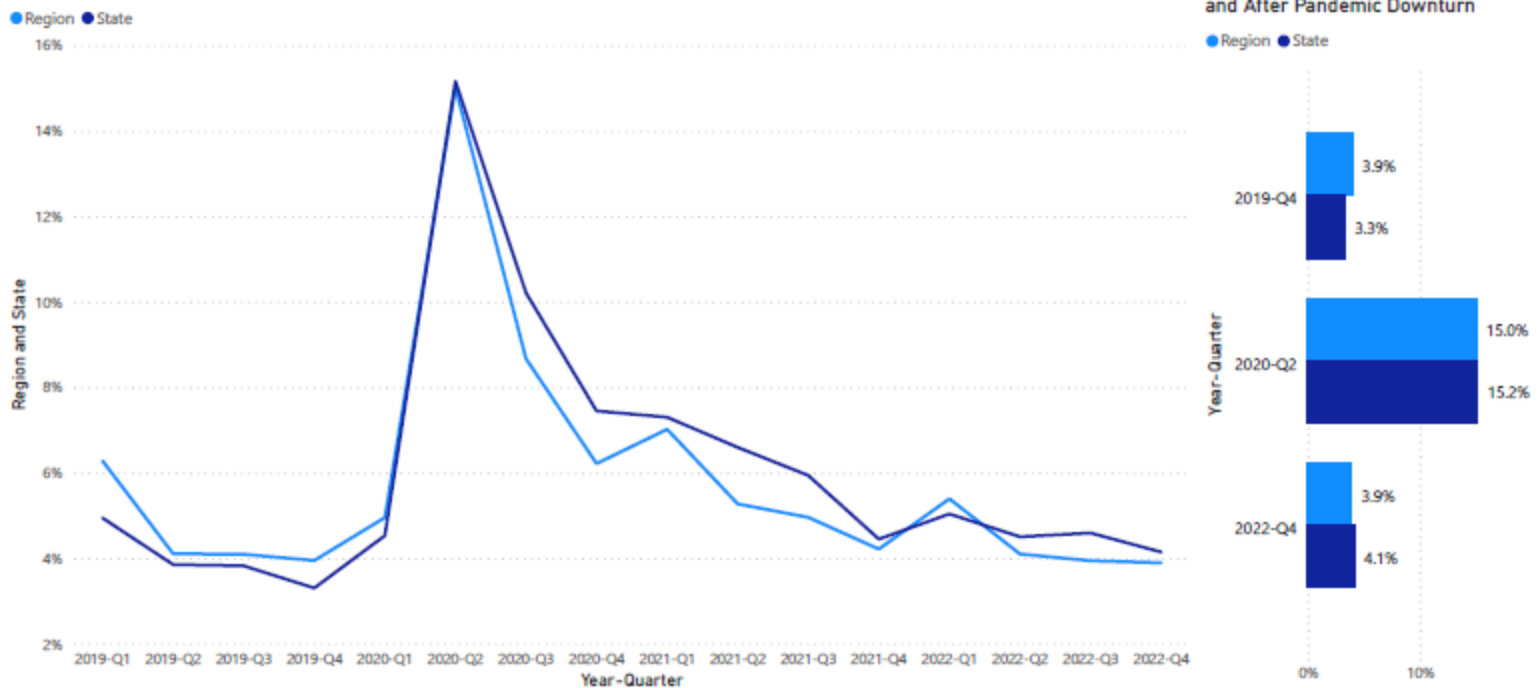
As of 2021, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders had the lowest unemployment rate of all race and ethnic groups at 2.3% followed by Whites at 4.8%. The Black or African American population has the highest unemployment rate at 16.1%. When looking at the changes in unemployment rates between 2011 and 2021, there was a significant decrease in unemployment rates for American Indians and Alaska Natives (from 27.7% in 2011 to 4.2% in 2021) and individuals categorized as Two or More Races (21.5% in 2011 to 9.6% in 2021). For Veterans, Age 18-64 years of age, the unemployment rate decreased from 8.8% in 2011 to 3.1% in 2021.

Unemployed rates by Educational Attainment indicate that all rates have decreased across all levels. The more education a person has, the more likely they are employed. Individuals with no high school diploma still have high rates of unemployment at 12.5%. A high school diploma brings the rate down to 5.8%.

Unemployment Rates Over Time, 2019 – 2022, for EDR 6

Unemployment Rates Over Time, 2019-2022

Below are the quarterly unemployment rates over time for the region and the state. On the right are unemployment rates for selected time frames before, during, and after the pandemic downturn.



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, respective years.

The chart above shows how unemployment rates have changed between 2019 and fourth quarter, 2022, including during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The 2022 figures indicate that regional unemployment rates decreased to pre-Pandemic levels, after increasing to 15% in the second quarter of 2020.

Poverty - Population below Poverty by Education, Sex, Race, and Age Group

Social Characteristics

	Percent			Value		
	Great Northwest Illinois Region	Illinois	USA	Great Northwest Illinois Region	Illinois	USA
Poverty Level (of all people)	12.80%	11.80%	12.60%	60,101	1,483,378	40,661,636
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	13.20%	12.60%	11.40%	26,552	620,895	14,105,231
Enrolled in Grade 12 (% of total population)	1.30%	1.40%	1.30%	6,235	179,401	4,425,322
Disconnected Youth	3.10%	2.30%	2.50%	751	15,811	432,389
Children in Single Parent Families (% of all children)	37.80%	33.50%	34.00%	38,131	926,189	23,909,672
Uninsured	5.20%	7.00%	8.80%	24,827	885,820	28,489,142
With a Disability, Age 18-64	11.20%	9.00%	10.30%	30,687	700,483	20,537,729
With a Disability, Age 18-64, Labor Force Participation Rate and Size	44.90%	46.30%	44.20%	13,791	324,273	9,068,973
Foreign Born	4.40%	14.10%	13.60%	21,236	1,803,334	44,844,808
Speak English Less Than Very Well (population 5 yrs and over)	2.90%	8.50%	8.20%	13,377	1,026,708	25,535,259

Source: Jobs EQ, 3rd Quarter 2023

When looking at the region’s social characteristics and comparing them to Illinois and US statistics, it is clear that the region has a higher percentage of residents living in poverty (12.80%), a higher percentage of households receiving Food Stamps/SNAP benefits (13.20%), a higher percentage of children living in single parent households (37.80%), and higher percentage of individuals living with a disability (11.20%). Additionally, the region has a higher percentage of disconnected youth (5.2%) in comparison to state and national figures (Note: Disconnected Youth as defined by JobsEQ are 16–19-year-olds who are not in school, not high school graduates, and either unemployed or not in the labor force).

The region has more favorable rates of Uninsured (5.20%) than state and national levels. It also has a much lower percentage of residents who are Foreign Born (4.40%) and Speak English Less Than Very Well (2.90%).

Poverty by Age

	Count	%
Under 5 Years of Age	6,547	25.1%
5 -17 Years of Age	14,135	18.3%

18-34 Years of Age	14,032	15.9%
35-64 Years of Age	18,643	10.1%
65 Years of Age +	6,744	7.1%

Source: 2024 Regional Plan Data Packet – EDR 6 Northwest

Over one-quarter of children under the age of five in the region are characterized as living in poverty. Poverty rates decrease as ages decrease with only 10.1% of residents between the ages of 35-64 and only 7.1% of residents living in poverty.

Poverty by Race/Ethnicity

	Count	%
White/Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino	42,350	10.8%
Black or African American	6,160	32.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	105	15.4%
Asian	1,121	19.1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	54	16.8%
Other Race	2,117	17.4%
Multiracial	4,242	22.0%
Hispanic or Latino	8,243	17.9%

Source: 2024 Regional Plan Data Packet – EDR 6 Northwest

Poverty in the region is highest among Black or African Americans (32.4%), Multiracial individuals (22.0%), and Asians (19.1%). Only 10.8% of Whites are categorized as living in poverty.

Poverty By Gender

	Count	%
Total	60,101	12.8%
Female	33,161	14.0%
Male	26,940	11.5%

Source: 2024 Regional Plan Data Packet – EDR 6 Northwest

While 12.80% of the region’s total population is categorized as living in poverty, more females (14.0%) in the region live in poverty and fewer males (11.5%) do so.

Poverty By Educational Attainment

	Count	%
Less than HS	6,904	23.3%
HS or GED	13,487	11.9%
Some College or Associate's Degree	10,406	8.8%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	2,769	3.9%

Source: 2024 Regional Plan Data Packet – EDR 6 Northwest

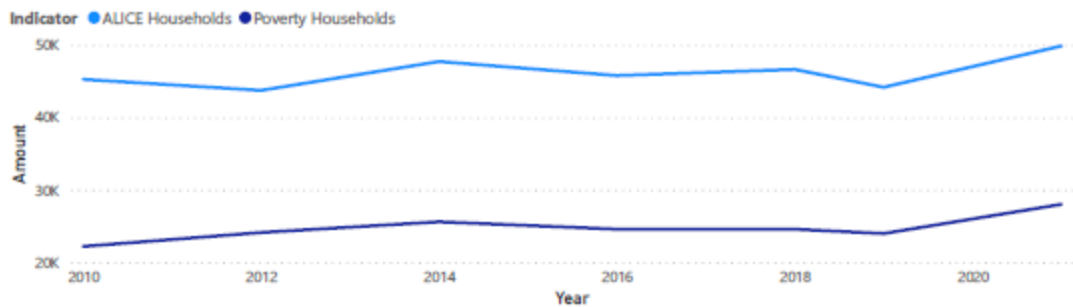
Some 23.3% of those with less than a high school diploma or GED are under the poverty line, and general trend implies that higher levels of education reduce the likelihood of being in poverty. This indicates that stronger adult education programs and more high school retention programs are needed to target this population and integrate them into the regional workforce pipeline.

ALICE (Asset Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed Persons – EDR 6

Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed persons

The United Way identified an ALICE threshold for persons with income above poverty level, but who nonetheless cannot meet basic costs of living in their counties. The ALICE threshold is based on a household survival budget that includes housing, childcare, food, transportation, healthcare, a smartphone plan, taxes, and a modest reserve for unanticipated one-time costs. Below is a summary of the ALICE population in the region over time and by county.

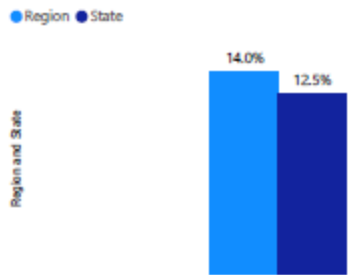
Count of ALICE & Poverty Households



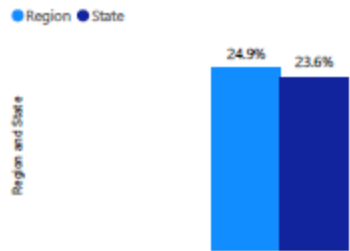
ALICE Threshold by County, 2021

County	ALICE Households	Threshold - Under 65	Threshold - Over 65
Bureau	3,647	\$50,000	\$40,000
Carroll	1,827	\$50,000	\$40,000
Henry	5,513	\$50,000	\$45,000
Jo Daviess	2,568	\$45,000	\$40,000
LaSalle	10,033	\$50,000	\$45,000
Lee	2,980	\$50,000	\$40,000
Mercer	1,832	\$50,000	\$45,000
Putnam	571	\$50,000	\$45,000
Rock Island	15,091	\$50,000	\$40,000
Whiteside	5,822	\$45,000	\$40,000

Share of Households Below Poverty Level, 2021



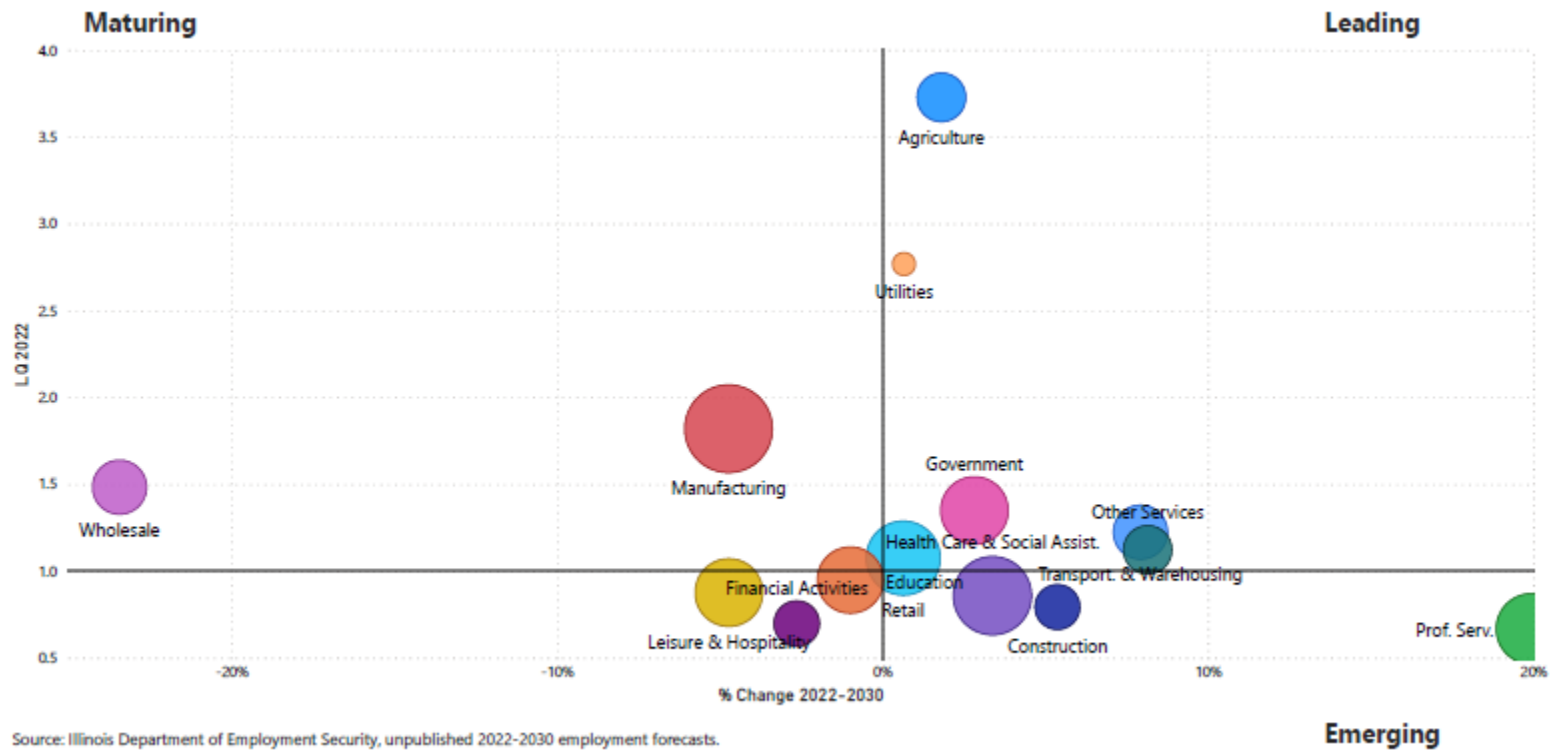
Share of Households Above Poverty Level but Below ALICE Threshold, 2021



Source: United Way of Illinois, 2021 ALICE Dataset.

Change in Industry and Occupation 2020-2030

Employment and Location Quotients by Sector in EDR 6 (by 2022 Employment Totals)



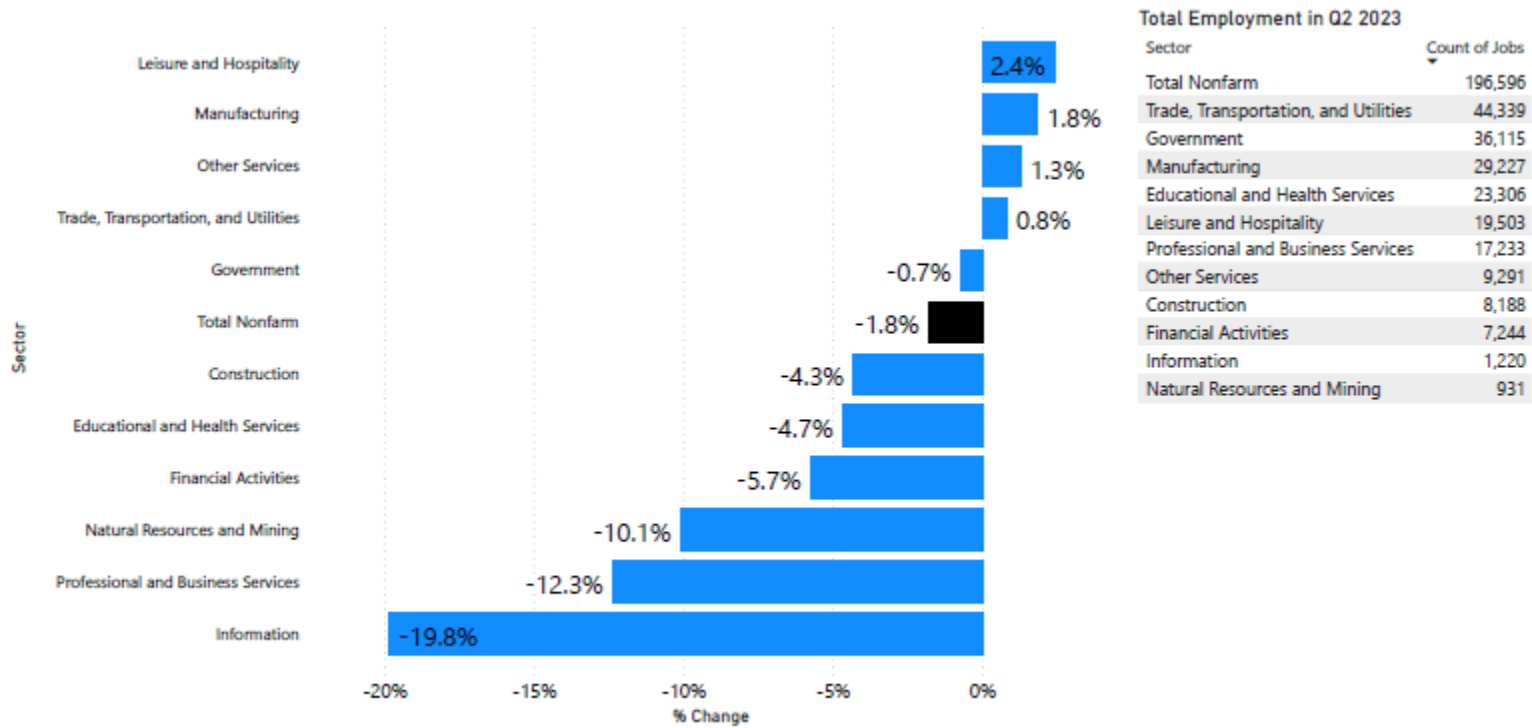
Leading Sectors (Upper Right Quadrant) – sectors with location quotients greater than 1 and projected employment growth: Agriculture, Utilities, Government, Health Care & Social Assistance, Other Service, Transportation & Warehousing.

Maturing Sectors (Upper Left Quadrant) – sectors with high location quotients, but projected employment declines: Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade.

Emerging Sectors (Lower Right Quadrant) – sectors with location quotients lower than 1, but with growing employment: Education, Construction, Professional Services

Declining sectors (Lower Left Quadrant) – sectors with low location quotients and declining employment: Financial Activities, Retail, Leisure Hospitality.

% Change in Regional Sector Employment, Q2 2019 – Q2 2023 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



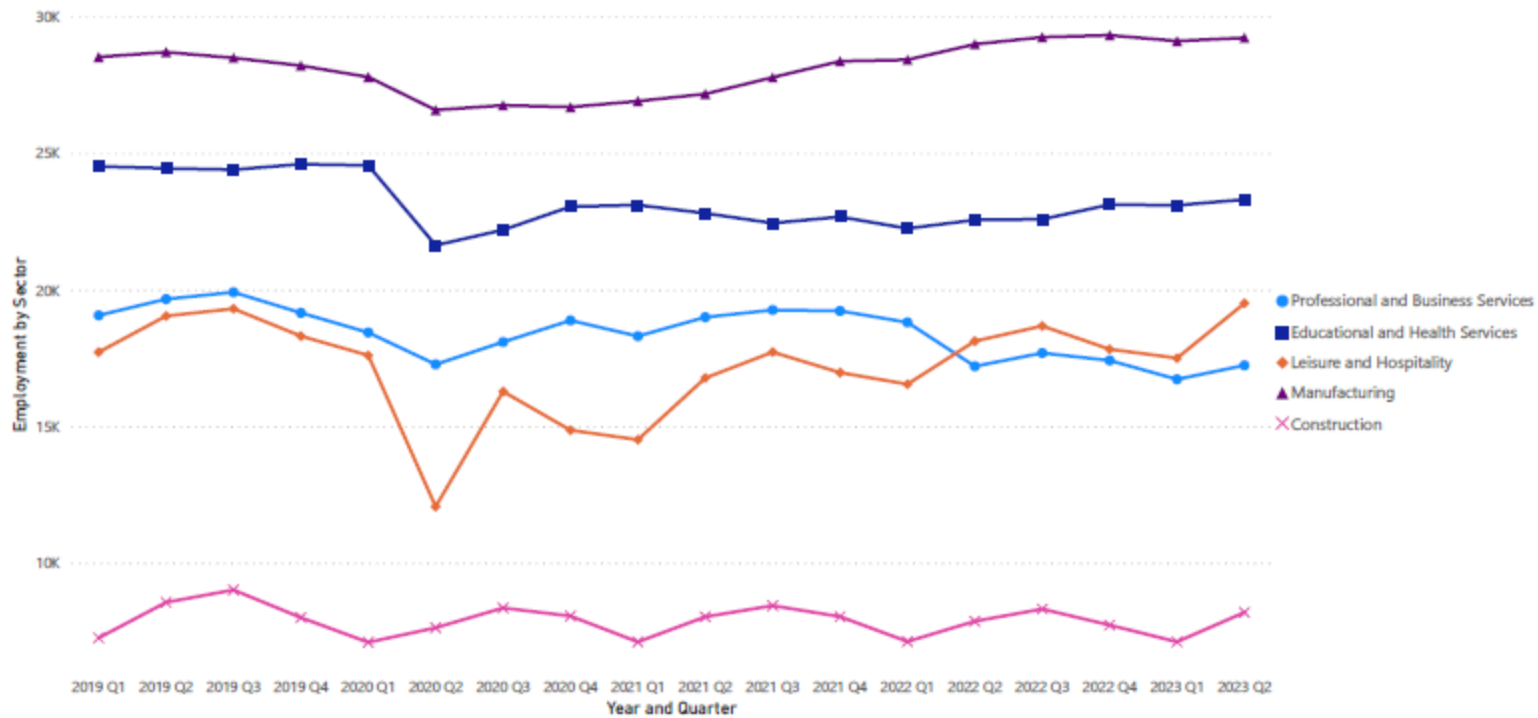
Total Employment in Q2 2023

Sector	Count of Jobs
Total Nonfarm	196,596
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	44,339
Government	36,115
Manufacturing	29,227
Educational and Health Services	23,306
Leisure and Hospitality	19,503
Professional and Business Services	17,233
Other Services	9,291
Construction	8,188
Financial Activities	7,244
Information	1,220
Natural Resources and Mining	931

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, Current Employment Statistics, respective years.

Between the **second** quarter of 2019 and second quarter of 2023, regional employment increased in only four sectors: Leisure and Hospitality (2.4%), Manufacturing (1.8%), Other Services (1.3%), and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (0.8%). Significant decreases were recorded for Information (-19.8%). Professional and Business Services (-12.3%), Natural Resources and Mining (-10.1%), and Financial Activities (-5.7%).

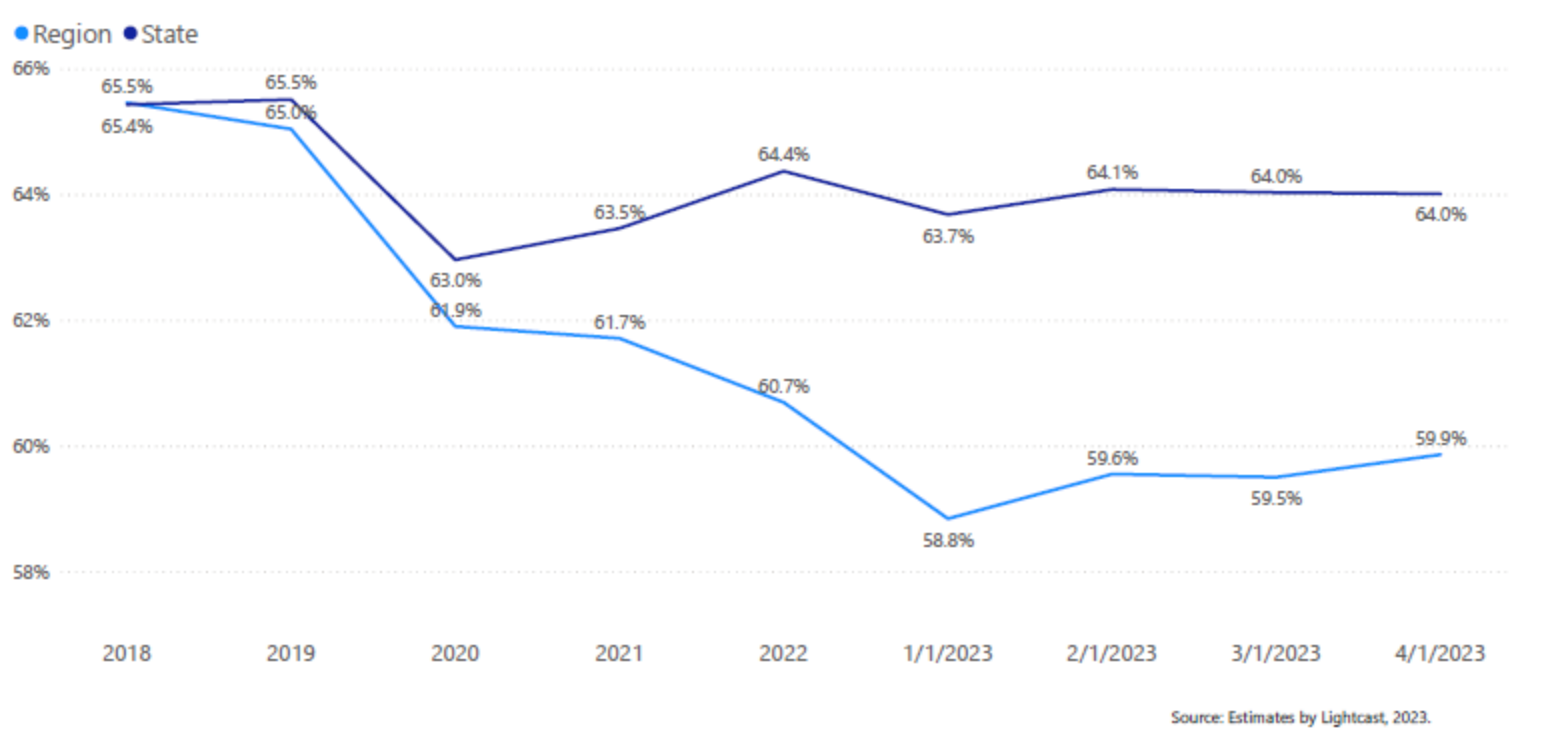
Sector Employment by Quarter, EDR 6, 2019-2023 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, Current Employment Statistics, respective years.

The visual representation of the change in sector employment shows that there was a significant drop in employment between the first and second quarters of 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic crisis expanded across the US. Educational and Health Services and Professional and Business Services sectors have still not returned to pre-pandemic levels in the region. However, the latest data shown above (second quarter 2023) shows that all sectors increased employment levels over the previous quarter.

Labor Force Participation Rates Over Time, 2018 – April 2023, EDR 6



Labor force participation levels in the region are significantly lower than before the pandemic and lower than the current state levels. In fact, when state levels began increasing 2021, the region’s labor participation level continued to decrease and bottomed out at 58.8% in January 2023 before increasing to 59.9% in April 2023. The last iteration of this regional plan noted that the region was facing a serious work shortage but at the same time, a significant number of regional residents were exiting the workforce.

EDR 6 (Great Northwest Illinois Region) Industry Projections: 2020-2030 (Sorted by Projected Year Employment in 2030)

NAICS		Base Year Employment	Projected Year Employment	Change	Annual Compound Growth Rate
Code	Title	2020	2030	2020-2030	
000000	TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES	206,390	216,034	9,644	0.46
611000	Educational Services	15,871	16,632	761	0.47
722000	Food Services and Drinking Places	11,789	13,987	2,198	1.72
930000	Local Government, exc. Educ. & Hosp.	9,121	9,512	391	0.42
622000	Hospitals	8,682	9,129	447	0.50
541000	Professional, Scientific & Tech. Services	6,603	7,121	518	0.76
621000	Ambulatory Health Care Services	6,196	6,489	293	0.46
333000	Machinery Mfg.	5,466	5,660	194	0.35
623000	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	5,760	5,639	-121	-0.21
910000	Federal Government, exc. US Post Office	5,588	5,550	-38	-0.07
813000	Religious, Civic & Professional Orgs.	5,009	5,501	492	0.94
551000	Management of Companies and Enterprises	4,846	5,360	514	1.01
332000	Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	4,754	5,124	370	0.75
238000	Specialty Trade Contractors	4,788	5,038	250	0.51
452000	General Merchandise Stores	4,938	4,997	59	0.12
423000	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	4,613	4,880	267	0.56
484000	Truck Transportation	4,023	4,469	446	1.06
445000	Food and Beverage Stores	4,288	4,361	73	0.17
441000	Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	3,295	3,765	470	1.34
493000	Warehousing and Storage	3,493	3,736	243	0.67
522000	Credit Intermediation & Related Activities	3,752	3,421	-331	-0.92
424000	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	3,334	3,282	-52	-0.16
624000	Social Assistance	2,783	2,989	206	0.72
920000	State Government, exc. Educ. & Hosp.	2,720	2,884	164	0.59
524000	Insurance Carriers & Related Activities	2,874	2,612	-262	-0.95

447000	Gasoline Stations	2,224	2,224	0	0.00
811000	Repair and Maintenance	2,003	2,200	197	0.94
721000	Accommodation	1,550	2,054	504	2.86
221000	Utilities	1,964	1,987	23	0.12
237000	Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	1,531	1,877	346	2.06
444000	Building Material & Garden Equip. Stores	1,737	1,782	45	0.26
327000	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Mfg.	1,748	1,637	-111	-0.65
336000	Transportation Equipment Mfg.	1,464	1,379	-85	-0.60
326000	Plastics and Rubber Products Mfg.	1,296	1,320	24	0.18
236000	Construction of Buildings	1,267	1,261	-6	-0.05
446000	Health and Personal Care Stores	1,146	1,209	63	0.54
453000	Miscellaneous Store Retailers	1,184	1,121	-63	-0.55
492000	Couriers and Messengers	835	1,041	206	2.23
812000	Personal and Laundry Services	1,148	1,035	-113	-1.03
814000	Private Households	909	1,019	110	1.15
531000	Real Estate	744	740	-4	-0.05
482000	Rail Transportation	641	678	37	0.56
321000	Wood Product Manufacturing	593	657	64	1.03
532000	Rental and Leasing Services	621	633	12	0.19
448000	Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	628	601	-27	-0.44
339000	Misc. Manufacturing	608	567	-41	-0.70
331000	Primary Metal Mfg.	491	538	47	0.92
485000	Transit & Ground Passenger Transportation	427	504	77	1.67
713000	Amusements, Gambling & Recreation Ind.	1,082	472	-610	-7.96
323000	Printing & Related Support Activities	500	469	-31	-0.64
517000	Telecommunications	702	450	-252	-4.35
334000	Computer and Electronic Product Mfg.	510	439	-71	-1.49

Source: IDES, Labor Market Information, Employment Projections (Downloaded January 31, 2024)

The table above is based on NAICS codes and is sorted based on the regional industry projections for 2020 and 2030. It is included here to illustrate the projected change in jobs by industry between 2020 and 2030.

Total 2030 Jobs by Industry

Jobs in the region are expected to increase from 206,390 in 2022 to 216,034 jobs in 2030, a 4.7% increase.

The regional industries with the largest total number of employees in 2030 are projected to be Educational Services (16,632); Food Services and Drinking Places (13,987); Local Government (9,512), Hospitals (9,129), Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (7,121); Ambulatory Health Care Services (6,489); Machinery Manufacturing (5,660); Nursing and Residential Care Facilities (5,639); Federal Government (5,550); and Religious, Civic & Professional Organizations (5,501).

EDR 6 (Great Northwest Illinois Region) Industry Projections: 2020-2030 (Sorted by Numeric Employment Change 2020-2030)

NAICS		Base Year Employment	Projected Year Employment	Change	Annual Compound Growth Rate
Code	Title	2020	2030	2020-2030	
000000	TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES	206,390	216,034	9,644	0.46
722000	Food Services and Drinking Places	11,789	13,987	2,198	1.72
611000	Educational Services	15,871	16,632	761	0.47
541000	Professional, Scientific & Tech. Services	6,603	7,121	518	0.76
551000	Management of Companies and Enterprises	4,846	5,360	514	1.01
721000	Accommodation	1,550	2,054	504	2.86
813000	Religious, Civic & Professional Orgs.	5,009	5,501	492	0.94
441000	Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	3,295	3,765	470	1.34
622000	Hospitals	8,682	9,129	447	0.50
484000	Truck Transportation	4,023	4,469	446	1.06
930000	Local Government, exc. Educ. & Hosp.	9,121	9,512	391	0.42
332000	Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	4,754	5,124	370	0.75
237000	Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	1,531	1,877	346	2.06
621000	Ambulatory Health Care Services	6,196	6,489	293	0.46
423000	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	4,613	4,880	267	0.56

238000	Specialty Trade Contractors	4,788	5,038	250	0.51
493000	Warehousing and Storage	3,493	3,736	243	0.67
624000	Social Assistance	2,783	2,989	206	0.72
492000	Couriers and Messengers	835	1,041	206	2.23
811000	Repair and Maintenance	2,003	2,200	197	0.94
333000	Machinery Mfg.	5,466	5,660	194	0.35
920000	State Government, exc. Educ. & Hosp.	2,720	2,884	164	0.59

Source: IDES, Labor Market Information, Employment Projections (Downloaded January 31, 2024)

Regional industries that will have the greatest numerical change in jobs between 2020 and 2030 are Food Services and Drinking Places (2,198); Educational Services (761); Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (518); Management of Companies and Enterprises (514); Accommodations (504); Religious, Civic & Professional Organizations (492); Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers (470); Hospitals (447); Truck Transportation (446); Local Government (391); Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing (370); Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction (346); Ambulatory Health Care Services (293); Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods (267); and Specialty Trade Contractors (250).

EDR 6 (Great Northwest Illinois Region) Occupational Projections: 2020-2030 (Sorted by 2030 Employment Count)

Code	Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Title	Base Year	Year	Employment Change		Annual
		Employment	Employment	2020-2030		Compound
		2020	2030	Number	Percent	Growth
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	206,390	216,034	9,644	4.67	0.46
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers & Other Ag Managers	7,243	7,372	129	1.78	0.18
53-7062	Laborers/Freight/Stock & Material Movers	5,422	6,063	641	11.82	1.12
41-2011	Cashiers	5,301	5,072	-229	-4.32	-0.44
35-3023	Fast Food & Counter Workers	4,239	4,750	511	12.05	1.14
29-1141	Registered Nurses	4,538	4,698	160	3.53	0.35
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	4,370	4,510	140	3.20	0.32
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	4,482	4,315	-167	-3.73	-0.38
11-1021	General & Operations Managers	4,005	4,274	269	6.72	0.65
53-3032	Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	3,874	4,238	364	9.40	0.90
53-7065	Stockers & Order Fillers	2,995	3,322	327	10.92	1.04
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	3,446	3,284	-162	-4.70	-0.48

31-1120	Home Health & Personal Care Aides	2,563	2,898	335	13.07	1.24
37-2011	Janitors/Cleaners, (Except Maids/Housekeepers)	2,773	2,879	106	3.82	0.38
13-1198	Project Mgt & Bus Op Spec., All Other	2,373	2,444	71	2.99	0.30
35-3031	Waiters & Waitresses	2,122	2,443	321	15.13	1.42
51-2090	Misc. Assemblers & Fabricators	2,609	2,363	-246	-9.43	-0.99
41-4012	Sales Reps/Wholesale/Mfg. Ex, Tech/Scientific	2,216	2,341	125	5.64	0.55
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	2,189	2,327	138	6.30	0.61
53-3033	Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services	2,088	2,322	234	11.21	1.07
25-2021	Elem. School Teachers, Ex. Special Ed.	2,138	2,212	74	3.46	0.34
25-9045	Teacher Assistants, Ex. Postsecondary	2,106	2,184	78	3.70	0.36
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	2,197	2,170	-27	-1.23	-0.12
43-3031	Bookkeeping/Accounting/Auditing Clerks	1,919	1,843	-76	-3.96	-0.40
47-2061	Construction Laborers	1,642	1,803	161	9.81	0.94
43-6014	Secretaries & Admin. Assts., Ex. Legal/Medical/Exec.	1,972	1,783	-189	-9.58	-1.00
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	1,229	1,771	542	44.10	3.72
41-1011	1st-LineSpvrs/Mgrs. Retail Sales	1,690	1,637	-53	-3.14	-0.32
51-4041	Machinists	1,510	1,632	122	8.08	0.78
25-2031	Secondary Teachers, Ex. Spec/Voc. Ed.	1,569	1,631	62	3.95	0.39
37-2012	Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	1,487	1,614	127	8.54	0.82
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	1,382	1,524	142	10.27	0.98
15-1256	Software Developers & QA Analysts/Testers	1,311	1,478	167	12.74	1.21
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	1,354	1,448	94	6.94	0.67
11-3031	Financial Managers	1,245	1,439	194	15.58	1.46
43-1011	1st-LineSpvrs/Mgrs. Office/Adm.Support Workers	1,511	1,437	-74	-4.90	-0.50
33-3012	Correctional Officers & Jailers	1,384	1,413	29	2.10	0.21
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving & Traffic Clerks	1,431	1,382	-49	-3.42	-0.35
51-1011	1st-LineSpvrs/Mgrs. Prod/Operating Workers	1,245	1,341	96	7.71	0.75
49-3023	Automotive Service Techs/Mechanics	1,259	1,316	57	4.53	0.44
33-3051	Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	1,214	1,299	85	7.00	0.68
53-7064	Packers & Packagers, Hand	1,046	1,193	147	14.05	1.32

35-1012	1st-Line Spvrs/Mgrs. Food Prep/Serving Workers	1,013	1,191	178	17.57	1.63
41-3091	Sales Reps, Services, Ex. Adv/Ins/Fin/Travel	1,154	1,190	36	3.12	0.31
13-1111	Management Analysts	1,014	1,120	106	10.45	1.00
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	1,031	1,111	80	7.76	0.75
13-1161	Market Research Analysts & Specialists	951	1,110	159	16.72	1.56
47-2031	Carpenters	1,090	1,098	8	0.73	0.07
37-3011	Landscaping & Groundskeeping Workers	1,025	1,047	22	2.15	0.21
51-9061	Inspect/Testers/Sorters/Samplers/Weighers	1,148	1,037	-111	-9.67	-1.01
39-9011	Childcare Workers	1,012	1,024	12	1.19	0.12
51-9111	Packaging/Filling Mach Operators/Tenders	923	1,019	96	10.40	0.99

Source: IDES, Labor Market Information, Employment Projections (Downloaded January 31, 2024)

Total 2030 Jobs by Occupational Category

As mentioned above, jobs in the region are projected to increase from 206,390 in 2022 to 216,034 jobs in 2030, a 4.7% increase.

The largest occupations projected for 2030 in the region include the following: Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Ag Manager (7,372 jobs); Laborers/Freight/Stock & Material Movers (6,063); Cashiers (5,072 jobs); Fast Food & Counter Workers (4,750 jobs); Registered Nurses (4,698 jobs); Retail Salespersons (4,510 jobs); General Office Clerks (4,315 jobs); General & Operations Managers (4,274 jobs); Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (4,238 jobs); and Stockers & Order Fillers (3,322 jobs).

Other occupations with significant numbers in the region include Customer Service Representatives, Home Health & Personal Care Aides, Janitors/Cleaners, Project Managers & Business Operations Specialists, Waiters/Waitresses, Assemblers & Fabricators, and Sales Representatives in Wholesale and Manufacturing fields.

EDR 6 (Great Northwest Illinois Region) Occupational Projections: 2020-2030 (Sorted by % Employment Change 2020-2030)

		Base Year	Year	Employment Change		Annual
Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)		Employment	Employment	2020-2030		Compound
Code	Title	2020	2030	Number	Percent	Growth
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	206,390	216,034	9,644	4.67	0.46
39-3011	Gaming Dealers	30	55	25	83.33	6.25
39-1013	1st Line Supervisors of Gaming Workers	10	18	8	80.00	6.05
43-3041	Gaming Cage Workers	5	9	4	80.00	6.05

41-2012	Gaming Change Persons/Booth Cashiers	7	12	5	71.43	5.54
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	1,229	1,771	542	44.10	3.72
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	225	315	90	40.00	3.42
15-2041	Statisticians	44	59	15	34.09	2.98
27-2090	Misc. Entertain/Perform/Sport Workers	6	8	2	33.33	2.92
39-6011	Baggage Porters & Bellhops	32	42	10	31.25	2.76
25-1072	Nursing Instructors & Teachers, College	58	75	17	29.31	2.60
51-9162	Numerical Tool/Process Control Programmers	63	81	18	28.57	2.55
15-1221	Computer & Information Research Scientists	7	9	2	28.57	2.55
15-2098	Data Scientists & Math. Science Occupations	74	95	21	28.38	2.53
25-1071	Health Specialties Teachers, College	148	189	41	27.70	2.48
35-3011	Bartenders	717	914	197	27.48	2.46
19-5012	Occupational Health & Safety Technicians	23	29	6	26.09	2.35
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	620	781	161	25.97	2.34
53-2031	Flight Attendants	24	30	6	25.00	2.26
25-1111	Criminal Just/Law Enforcement Teachers, College	8	10	2	25.00	2.26
13-1081	Logisticians	386	478	92	23.83	2.16
11-9111	Medical & Health Services Managers	478	590	112	23.43	2.13
25-1067	Sociology Teachers, College	13	16	3	23.08	2.10
23-1012	Judicial Law Clerks	9	11	2	22.22	2.03
25-1125	History Teachers, College	9	11	2	22.22	2.03
49-9011	Mechanical Door Repairers	9	11	2	22.22	2.03
43-4081	Hotel, Motel & Resort Desk Clerks	266	325	59	22.18	2.02
15-1212	Information Security Analysts	100	122	22	22.00	2.01
25-1069	Social Sciences Teachers, College, All Other	23	28	5	21.74	1.99
47-5012	Rotary Drill Operators, Oil & Gas	14	17	3	21.43	1.96
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	127	154	27	21.26	1.95
25-1022	Mathematical Science Teachers, College	48	58	10	20.83	1.91
25-1042	Biological Science Teachers, College	34	41	7	20.59	1.89
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	142	171	29	20.42	1.88

19-1032	Foresters	10	12	2	20.00	1.84
25-1051	Atmospheric/Marine/Space Teachers, College	10	12	2	20.00	1.84
17-2171	Petroleum Engineers	5	6	1	20.00	1.84
25-1113	Social Work Teachers, College	5	6	1	20.00	1.84
25-4011	Archivists	5	6	1	20.00	1.84
29-9092	Genetic Counselors	5	6	1	20.00	1.84
47-4090	Misc. Construction & Related Workers	5	6	1	20.00	1.84
49-3091	Bicycle Repairers	5	6	1	20.00	1.84
35-9031	Host/Hostess, Restaurant /Lounge/Coffee Shop	356	426	70	19.66	1.81
35-1011	Chefs & Head Cooks	119	142	23	19.33	1.78
35-9011	Dining Room/Café Attendants/Bartender Helpers	478	570	92	19.25	1.78
39-2011	Animal Trainers	52	62	10	19.23	1.77
29-1071	Physician Assistants	120	143	23	19.17	1.77
49-3052	Motorcycle Mechanics	21	25	4	19.05	1.76
51-9195	Molders/Shapers/Casters, Ex Metal/Plastic	49	58	9	18.37	1.70
49-2098	Security/Fire Alarm Systems Installers	11	13	2	18.18	1.68
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	17	20	3	17.65	1.64
19-4042	Environmental Science & Protection Techs, In. Health	17	20	3	17.65	1.64

Source: IDES, Labor Market Information, Employment Projections (Downloaded January 31, 2024)

Projected Increase in Jobs by Occupational Category 2020-2030

The table above shows the regional occupations with the great percentage increase and the first four occupations are occupations associated with the Casino industry: Gaming dealers; First Line Supervisors of Gaming Workers, Gaming Cage Workers, and Gaming Change Persons/Booth Cashiers. Other occupations with significant projected growth include Nurse Practitioners (40%), Statisticians (34.09%), Entertainment/Performer/Sport Workers (33.33%), Baggage Porters/Bellhops (31.25%), College Nursing Instructors & Teachers, 29.31%), Numerical Tool/Process Control Programmers (28.57%), Computer & Information Research Scientists (28.57%), and Data Scientists & Math Sciences Occupations (28.38%).

EDR 6 (Great Northwest Illinois Region) Occupational Projections: 2020-2030 (Sorted by 2030 Size and % Employment Change 2020-2030)

		Base Year	Year	Employment Change		Annual
Standard Occupational Classification (SOC)		Employment	Employment	2020-2030		Compound
Code	Title	2020	2030	Number	Percent	Growth
00-0000	Total, All Occupations	206,390	216,034	9,644	4.67	0.46
53-7062	Laborers/Freight/Stock & Material Movers	5,422	6,063	641	11.82	1.12
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	1,229	1,771	542	44.10	3.72
35-3023	Fast Food & Counter Workers	4,239	4,750	511	12.05	1.14
53-3032	Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	3,874	4,238	364	9.40	0.90
31-1120	Home Health & Personal Care Aides	2,563	2,898	335	13.07	1.24
53-7065	Stockers & Order Fillers	2,995	3,322	327	10.92	1.04
35-3031	Waiters & Waitresses	2,122	2,443	321	15.13	1.42
11-1021	General & Operations Managers	4,005	4,274	269	6.72	0.65
53-3033	Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services	2,088	2,322	234	11.21	1.07
35-3011	Bartenders	717	914	197	27.48	2.46
11-3031	Financial Managers	1,245	1,439	194	15.58	1.46
35-1012	1st-Line Spvrs/Mgrs. Food Prep/Serving Workers	1,013	1,191	178	17.57	1.63
15-1256	Software Developers & QA Analysts/Testers	1,311	1,478	167	12.74	1.21
47-2061	Construction Laborers	1,642	1,803	161	9.81	0.94
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	620	781	161	25.97	2.34
29-1141	Registered Nurses	4,538	4,698	160	3.53	0.35
13-1161	Market Research Analysts & Specialists	951	1,110	159	16.72	1.56
53-7064	Packers & Packagers, Hand	1,046	1,193	147	14.05	1.32
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	1,382	1,524	142	10.27	0.98
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	4,370	4,510	140	3.20	0.32
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	2,189	2,327	138	6.30	0.61

Source: IDES, Labor Market Information, Employment Projections (Downloaded January 31, 2024)

When looking at the same table but controlling for the Occupational projection for 2030 and the percentage increase, the story is a little bit different. Occupations with a significant size and favorable percentage increase through 2030 include the following: Laborers/Freight Stock & Materials Movers; Restaurant Cooks; Fast Food & Counter Workers; Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Home Health & Personal Care

Aides; Stockers & Order Fillers; Waiters/Waitresses; General & Operations Managers; Light or Delivery Service Truck Drivers; Bartenders; Financial Managers; First Line Supervisors/Managers Food Prep/Serving Workers; and Software Developer & Quality Assurance Analysts/Testers.

Occupations projected to face decreases include Parking Enforcement Workers (37.50% decrease); Locker, Coat & Dressing Room Attendants (35.71% decrease); Telemarketers (31.94% decrease); Nuclear Power Reactor Operators (30.43% decrease); Data Entry Keyers (27.66 decrease); Funeral Home Managers (25.00% decrease); Funeral Home Attendants (25.00% decrease); Switchboard Operators (25.00% decrease); Nuclear Technicians (23.29% decrease); Tellers (22.94% decrease); and New Accounts Clerks (22.22% decrease).

- b. What special populations exist in the region, what is their magnitude, and what are the policy and service implications to meet the needs of these individuals?

The region recognizes that special populations may endure an increased volume of barriers when seeking advanced employment and/or training that leads to a sustainable income. Leadership team and Staff of regional One Stop Centers agree that every individual will have unique barriers, that no situation will be matched and that our team is determined to assist clients to the best of our ability. Through collaboration and cross training, partners continue to learn what agency to turn to for client assistance. Although we do have a list of supportive services which we can provide, we recognize additional services may be needed. All clients, whether defined as having barriers or not, will have access to supportive services as listed in TEGL 19-16. In addition, all clients will have access to ADA compliant accessibility tools and equipment. All public funding will be awarded on a nondiscriminatory basis.

Below is an introduction to the magnitude and resulting programing in place to serve these special populations throughout the region:

For Individuals with a disability

According to the 2024 Regional Plan Data Packet, eleven percent of Illinoisans are deemed disabled. In Great Northwest Region 67,175 individuals are categorized as disabled.

To serve this population, the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), through Illinois Department of Human Services, provides individuals with a physical or mental impairment the opportunity to achieve employment outcome by use of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. VR services assist clients prepare for, find, and maintain quality employment that pays a living wage and offers opportunities for advancement.

To qualify for services through DRS, staff have 60 days to determine eligibility by review of existing (medical, psychological, and educational) records, interaction with client and (if necessary) arrange for assessments. A financial analysis process will be conducted to set an amount that must be paid prior to DRS providing any financial contribution.

The Arc of the Quad Cities is a non-for-profit agency partner that provides Work Services programs designed for individuals who may require more direct supervision than one might get in a community position. The Arc provides paid work opportunities in sheltered workshop settings

where individuals concentrate on developing a strong work ethic, good work habits, and proficient skills. Workers are trained in performing service contracts, light assembly work, textile recycling, secure document destruction, and product packaging.

The Arc offers training and paid employment opportunities which help individuals develop transferable work skills.

Youth with Disabilities

Secondary Transitional Experience Program (STEP) is a part of DRS continuum of coordinated transition services for youth with disabilities. STEP is a training/placement program that helps students with disabilities prepare to transition to employment and community participation during and after high school. With STEP, students have the opportunity to learn to become productive, self-sufficient adults through a variety of experiences.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (PTS) are provided to students with disabilities to improve their chances to enter employment or post-secondary education upon leaving school. Some services provided include the following: job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for postsecondary education, workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living, and instruction on self-advocacy, including peer mentoring.

DRS identifies a student with a disability as an individual aged 14 to 21 who has a disability and is enrolled in an educational program.

In addition to agency partnerships, the region has a Targeted Populations Committee that considers individuals with Disabilities as one of its local priorities and has been working on an initiative to develop a workshop to help them better market themselves to employers, and to educate employers about the advantages of hiring individuals with Disabilities.

The table below depicts disability by type and then by age:

Disability type

Disability	Percentage of EDR 6 Disabled population
Ambulatory	49.4%
Cognitive	35.9%
Hearing	30.6%
Independent Living	34.1%
Self-care	16.4%
Vision	15.1%

American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table S1810

Disabled Population by Age

Age	Disabled population percentage
Under 5	0.2%
5-17	7.6%
18-34	9.8%
35-64	35.9%
65-74	19.6%
75 and over	26.9%

American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table S1810

Older Adults aged 55 and older

According to statistical analysis conducted using JobsEQ, approximately 14.6% of the region's population is between the ages of 55 to 64. It is recognized that a majority of these adults continue to seek employment. Older Adults in the region can receive services through National Able Network's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). SCSEP is designed to provide low-income job seekers age 55 or older with personalized career supports that integrate career coaching, specialized training, and direct connections to the job.

Age	Regional Population Percentage
55 to 64	14.6%
65 to 74	11.7%
75 and older	8.7%

JobsEQ, 3rd Quarter, 2023

Farm Workers/Migrant Workers

Through United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS) services are provided to farm, migrant and other economically disadvantaged families to be sure they live and work in a healthy and safe environment; earn a living wage that is inducive of economic security and increase their access to educational opportunities. IMC provided services and guidance include: program initial skills assessment, education in regards to program eligibility for training programs at IMC and the nearest One-Stop Center, coordination with one-stop delivery providers and partners, outreach, intake, eligibility determination and enrollment in National Farmworkers Job Program (NFJP), labor market information, job search, identification of employment barriers, individualized employment development planning, career pathways counseling, short term services to prepare for training or employment, job placement assistance, adult education services and referrals, supportive services including life skills and services for youth ages 14 to 24, follow-up services include counseling for job placed, emergency assistance referrals, and work related health education.

The regional One Stop Center IDES team uses IllinoisJobLink.com, the state’s labor exchange system, for the creation of a job order for Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) clients. These job orders are then handled by local One Stop IDES staff who will refer the client to the appropriate One Stop partner. IDES service plan for Farm and Migrant workers includes aiding obtaining employment, housing, medical care, and other vital necessities by referring to partner agencies that are specialized in the area of need. IDES inputs specific job orders into IllinoisJobLink.com

Veterans/Disabled Veterans

Statewide Illinois is home to 537,552 honorable Veterans, nearly 5% of our state’s population. Within the Great Northwest Region, there are 30,743 Veterans making up 8.1% of the total population. Of these Veterans, 44.3% are of working age (18-64). To serve this population effectively, IDES executes Veteran Services programs designed to assist veterans in finding gainful employment. Wagner-Peyser staff members are trained to begin services by conducting the Veteran Intake Form (VIF), which is a client centered data and assessment procedure that results in the determination of need for employment services, including significant barriers to employment (SBE). Wagner-Peyser staff will provide clients with all available basic career services, including referral to supportive services, as needed. Upon completion of this Initial Assessment, Wagner-Peyser staff will immediately refer any Veteran who has reported any SBE to a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist for Individualized Career Services. Once the client is ready for the job, the DVOP will work with the Local Veteran’s Employment Representative (LVER) and the client to assist with finding sustainable employment. A forty-eight-hour priority is given to Veterans when new job orders are entered into IllinoisJobLink.com.

Regional IDES One Stop staff conduct numerous hiring events that allow Veteran to connect and collaborate with local employers. In addition, One Stop Center staff that specialize in Veteran services continuously seek out and volunteer for community events that enrich the lives of our Nations Veterans.

Age	Percent of Veteran Population
18-34	7.0%
35-54	19.2%
55-64	18.1%
65-74	29.6%
75 and over	26.1%

American Community Survey, 2017-2021, Table S2101

Displaced Homemaker

One Stop Centers in the region follow WIOA guidelines to classify an individual as a Displaced Homemaker. Once deemed qualifying, a Displaced Homemaker will receive services under guidelines for “Dislocated Worker”. This population will receive guidance and funding for training and/or employment services through One Stop Center Career Planners. Career Planners will refer the individual to other relevant partner services on an as needed basis. It is probable that a client in this situation will need intense case management in order to successfully achieve training or employment.

Individuals needing assistance with English Language Learning, Low Literacy, Substance Abuse

English Language Learner: Adult Education programs provide English as a Second Language programs for more than 19 different languages within the region. This program has experienced an influx of enrollment due to the increase of migration.

Below is an example of the diversity of language spoken by regional residents:

Population Ages 5+ by Language Spoken at Home

	%	Count, Ages 5+
English Only	91.8%	422,288
Spanish	5.3%	24,325
Other Indo-European	1.4%	6,488
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.9%	4,176
Other	0.6%	2,741
Total	100%	460,018

Source: 2024 Regional Plan Data Packet, American Community Survey 2017-2021, Table S1601

Low Literacy: Adult educational centers have programs available to assist adults and youth with literacy attainment.

Substance Abuse: Clients will be referred to organizations specializing in Behavioral Health and Addiction. Substance abuse may have a negative impact on the successful completion of training/education course work. It is also agreed that substance abuse is a serious mental health condition that deserves treatment. Any acknowledging client will be assisted with a referral to or assistance with contacting an organization that can assist with remission.

Incarcerated Offenders / Returning Citizens

2024 regional data packet reports that Great Northwestern Region has 1,119 incarcerated adults and 695 adult parolees. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (WDB) Innovation Project for Returning Citizens (IPRC) established an **American Job Center**® Specialized One-Stop Career Center inside Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center. Partner organizations include WDB / IPRC, Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC), Rock Island Tri-County Consortium, Lake Land College, Black Hawk College, University of Illinois Extension, Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS), and Project NOW, Inc. Supporting organizations include Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB), Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Illinois Community College Board (ICCB), Southern Illinois University Carbondale Center for Workforce Development (SIUC CWD), First Institute Training & Management Corporation, and Midwest Trailer Manufacturing, LLC. The objective is to build valuable life skills and prepare offenders for Re-Entry into society while maintaining safety and security. There is a focus

on offenders who are ready to make needed changes in order to successfully reintegrate into their communities, by offering educational, job readiness, and cognitive behavior therapy courses. Business-driven career, education, training, and supportive services are provided. Customers being served are (1) businesses / employers, (2) State of Illinois / IDOC, and (3) incarcerated offenders / returning citizens. Workforce professionals meet routinely with all three types of customers to ensure that focus and programs are customer driven. Outreach has been improved using digital newsletters and videos produced by incarcerated offenders.

Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, **American Job Center**® Specialized One-Stop Career Center inside Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center has not been able to operate in person. However, career planner has continued with resume writing assistance.

The region's Targeted Populations Committee considers this expanded targeted population as one of its local priorities and has been working on an initiative to develop a workshop to help them better market themselves to employers, and to educate employers about the advantages of hiring individuals with any kind of background issue, whether incarcerated at any time or not.

Youth in Foster care or aged out of foster care

A total of 858 youth in the Great Northwest Region are in some type of Foster Care setting. Regional leadership teams will report to the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) to provide information on WIOA and the One Stop Center services available within the area. This population of youth are recognized to have a multitude of barriers due to the environmental conditions which lead to placement in Foster Care. It is with great prudence that One Stop Center staff collaborate with partners and co-workers to develop an intensive IEP that meets the critical needs of the client. In addition, our team collaborates with Superintendents throughout the region by attending Board of Control committee meetings. Attendance at these meetings offers program education to area professionals that work directly with at risk youth, including youth involved in Foster Care.

Homeless and/or Homeless Youth

Regional leadership teams will apply similar outreach as described under the previous bullet "Youth in Foster Care or aged out of Foster Care". In addition, outreach will be promoted to area community-based organization and/or community resources.

Indians, Alaskan Natives and/or Native Hawaiians

This special population represents .3% of the Great Northwest Region’s population. The leadership team will provide outreach to community-based organizations.

Table is a depiction of Indian, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian population residing in EDR 6.

Race	Population by percentage	Population by number
Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander	.10%	324
American Indian and Alaska Native	.20%	731

Single Parents

According to JobsEQ, in the Great Northwest Region 35,161 families are made up of Single Parent households. Because single parent households typically have less annual income and more responsibilities than dual parent households, many stress inducing barriers may exist. This population will be referred to appropriate partner organizations by all partners. Communication with community-based organizations and schools may also provide a strong source of outreach. Single Parents will receive support and funding for training and/or employment services through One Stop Center Career Planners. Career Planners will refer the individual to other relevant partner services on an as needed basis. It is probable that a client in this situation will need intense case management in order to successfully achieve training or employment.

The table below compares annual income of varying household member types.

County	Married Households	Male Household	Female Households
Bureau	\$81,688	\$47,417	\$19,087
Carroll	\$79,000	\$50,350	\$21,094
Henry	\$90,417	\$40,172	\$22,952
Jo Daviess	\$78,763	\$34,545	\$27,708

LaSalle	\$82,571	\$48,450	\$20,717
Lee	\$82,547	\$46,700	\$24,500
Mercer	\$80,095	\$47,500	\$16,214
Putnam	\$91,118	\$63,333	\$27,813
Rock Island	\$77,289	\$41,879	\$24,594
Whiteside	\$82,087	\$40,938	\$25,139

American Community Survey, 2017, Table S1903

Chronically Unemployed

Reports from the Illinois Department of Employment Security show that Illinois unemployment was at 4.2% in December 2023. For the Great Northwest Region, the unemployment rate for December 2023 was 4.9%. It is a regional understanding that the unemployed population may have additional barriers related to chronic unemployment. For this reason, IDES, as the primary contact for the unemployed, will refer clients to partner and community-based organizations as needed. If IDES is not the primary contact for clients, any partner will have the knowledge and ability to properly seek out assistance for this population.

B. Describe how the Local Workforce Innovation Board and WIOA partners support the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region. Plans must answer the following questions:

1) How will the workforce partners convene or support the convening of regional employers, foundations and institutions and other stakeholders to create or maintain sector partnerships?

Seven counties within EDR 6 recently completed a rapid talent pipeline pilot project (RTPI) to more actively engage the business community. The RTPI team is comprised of members from Illinois Valley Community College, IDES, BEST, Inc. (workforce Title I), Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, and Blackhawk Hills Regional Council. The team's purpose is to engage the business community to ascertain their current and projected needs, create a plan of action to help address those needs, and follow through with the company on implementing that plan of action. At times the need to convene a larger group of a specific industry may be necessary to assess the pervasive identified need is. Members of NCI Works (LWIA 4) are in a position to convene such summits. In the Illinois Valley Community College district, a healthcare networking group has been established as the result of a healthcare summit held in 2017. This networking group's purpose is to keep all stakeholders apprised of the needs and trends within the healthcare industry so that the workforce and education can respond to those needs in a timely fashion. As a result of this networking group, Illinois Valley Community College recently began a Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) program. This CMA program has also recently become an apprenticeship program with NCI Works serving as the sponsor and St. Margaret's Health in Spring Valley as its first participating employer. Replicating such efforts across the region would not be difficult.

BEST, Inc., on behalf of both local workforce areas within EDR 6, received an apprenticeship expansion grant. The BEST Navigator will work with area chambers, economic development, community colleges, region 6 career centers, and LWIA 13 staff to engage businesses on a regional basis to recruit current apprenticeship program companies and new ones to the project of expanding registered apprenticeship participants. Additionally, LWIA 13 applied for an received apprenticeship navigator funding in PY23 to continue the expansion of apprenticeship programs.

Community college advisory committees also work to engage area businesses across industry sectors to contribute to the development and improvement of certificate and degreed programs. In addition, community college business training offices are able to work with workforce

development entities to offer training to the incumbent workforce along with Title I incumbent worker training funding for most occupational training and upgrades.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (WDB) Innovation Project for Returning Citizens (IPRC) established an **American Job Center**® Specialized One-Stop Career Center inside Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center. Supporting organizations include business-led Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB), as well as businesses such as First Institute Training & Management Corporation and Midwest Trailer Manufacturing, LLC. The objective is to build valuable life skills and prepare offenders for Re-Entry into society while maintaining safety and security. Business-driven career, education, training, and supportive services are provided. Customers being served are (1) businesses / employers, (2) State of Illinois / IDOC, and (3) incarcerated offenders / returning citizens. Workforce professionals meet routinely with all three types of customers to ensure that focus and programs are customer driven.

2. Identify the established and active industry sector partnerships in the region (as defined in Illinois’ Next Generation Sector Strategies Guide). If any exist, are they business-led and what is their role in WIOA planning?

All partners participated in a series of meetings, telephone conference calls, and the summit to compile and review data, evaluate resources, and identify the key regional targeted sectors. Since four community colleges have significant portions of their districts housed within the Northwest Region, many initial planning discussions tended to revolve around data compiled by the respective colleges. This data was combined with the on-the-ground experiences of partners. This method also ensured that the varying needs of the large region were considered.

Black Hawk College

The Black Hawk College District covers most or all of Rock Island, Mercer, and Henry counties and combines both rural and urban areas. This district is also impacted significantly by proximity to the Iowa counties of Scott and Muscatine. As a result, much of the data used to determine sector initiatives in this portion of the Northwest Region is specific to the Davenport-Moline-Rock Island, IA-IL Metropolitan Statistical Area. Economic Modeling Software, Inc. (EMSI) projects strong growth between 2015 and 2023 in:

Healthcare – Registered Nurses, Nursing Assistants, Personal Care Aides, Home Health Aides, Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses, Medical Assistants

Logistics – Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers, Heavy and Tractor Trailer Drivers, Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers

Manufacturing/Trades – Industrial Machinery Mechanics, Machinists, Maintenance and Repair Workers, Team Assemblers, Electricians, Plumbers, Pipefitter, Steamfitters

Agriculture – Farmers, Ranchers, Other Agricultural Managers, Landscaping and Groundskeeping

IT – Computer Systems Analysts, Software Developers, Applications, Computer User Support Specialists (combined with IT requirements in many of the other fields)

In addition to the EMSI data, we reviewed the five key industries identified for each county in the Bi-State Region based on Location Quotient (LQ) and total jobs. (LQ is a measure of the concentration of a certain industry sector in an area relative to the concentration of that industry sector in the U.S.) Key industries for each county are:

Rock Island – Agricultural and Construction Machinery Manufacturing, Military Manufacturing and Logistics, Packaging and Labeling Services, Animal Slaughtering, Nuclear Electric Power Generation

Henry County – Small Arms Manufacturing, Truck Trailer Manufacturing, Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing, Elevator and Moving Stairway Manufacturing, Prefabricated Wood building Manufacturing

Mercer County – Machined Parts Manufacturing, Crop and Animal Production (Farming), Farm Supply Commodities & Farm Support Activities, Paperboard Container Manufacturing, Plate work and Metal Finishing

Scott County – Aluminum Manufacturing, Construction Agricultural & Other Industrial Machinery Manufacturing, Animal-based Rood Processing, Steel Foundries, Lime Cement & Concrete Manufacturing

Muscatine County – Office Furniture and Fixtures Manufacturing, Lighting Fixture Manufacturing, Plant- and Animal-based Food Manufacturing, Pesticide and Agricultural Chemical Manufacturing, Iron & Steel Mills Ferro and Non-Ferro alloy Manufacturing

Illinois Valley Community College, Sauk Valley Community College, Highland Community College

These colleges serve the remaining seven counties (Bureau, Carroll, Jo Daviess, LaSalle, Lee, Whiteside, and Putnam Counties). Regional priorities were determined by reviewing the following:

LMI data from the State of Illinois

Jobs EQ Reports

EMSI Reports

Advisory Committee feedback (Truck driver training, Nursing, Manufacturing/Maintenance/Welding, Agriculture)

Northern Illinois University P-20 Workforce Needs Report

Northern Illinois University P-20 Emerging Jobs Report

Advisory committee work, job data, and a regional survey completed by area Economic Development groups

The community colleges listed above find growth in the educational programs in the fields of:

Manufacturing, production workers, industrial maintenance, CNC

Healthcare: nursing, ambulatory care, radiologic technology, certified medical assistant

Criminal Justice: law enforcement and corrections

Precision Agriculture and “value-added” agriculture (Agri-Business)

Northwest Illinois Economic Development:

Manufacturing & Industrial Maintenance

Food manufacturing – emerging

Chemical manufacturing – maturing/growing

Machinery manufacturing – leading/growing

Fabricated metal manufacturing – leading/growing

Healthcare

- Nursing and Skilled Nursing Facilities - Leading
- Ambulatory Care - emerging
- Hospitals – maturing

- Social assistance - emerging

Transportation/Logistics

- Merchant Wholesalers – Durable Goods – Leading
- Merchant Wholesalers – Nondurable Goods – Leading
- Truck Transportation – Leading
- Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation – Emerging
- Support Activities for Transportation – Emerging
- Warehousing and Storage – Leading

IT –as a subfield of Mfg., Healthcare, and Transportation/Logistics Regional priorities were determined by reviewing the following:

- NWILED surveyed 225 regional companies in Jo Daviess, Carroll, and Stephenson Counties regarding manufacturing skills and occupational demands in October 2014.
- Other data is from LMI information distributed through IDES to local workforce investment boards.

Based on the data gathered by all partners in Great Northwest Region, the Regional Priorities are:

Manufacturing and Industrial Maintenance

- Food Manufacturing – emerging
- Chemical Manufacturing – maturing/growing
- Machinery Manufacturing – leading/growing
- Fabricated Metal Manufacturing – leading/growing

Healthcare

- Nursing and Skilled Nursing Facilities – leading
- Ambulatory Care – emerging
- Hospitals – maturing
- Social Assistance – emerging

Transportation/Logistics

- Merchant Wholesalers – Durable Goods – leading
- Merchant Wholesalers – Non-Durable Goods – leading
- Truck Transportation – leading
- Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation – emerging
- Support Activities for Transportation – emerging
- Warehousing and Storage – leading

Energy

- Ethanol – emerging
- Wind – growing
- Solar – emerging

IT- as a subfield of Manufacturing, Healthcare, Energy, and Transportation/Logistics

In addition to the key industries listed above, this area has historically had a strong Agriculture and Logistics presence. The agriculture sector includes occupations in farm labor, crop production, animal production, and commercial mushroom production along with postharvest crop activities. With three major interstates running through these counties (I-80, I-39, and I-88) logistics has grown over the years especially in the area of large-scale warehousing. Along with the growth in warehousing, an increase in demand for truck drivers and diesel mechanics was realized. Replacement demand in these two industry sectors will continue to grow.

3. What public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies, and what is their role in planning?

Additional sector-based partnerships that exist within the region are listed below with a note as to whether they are business- led. These business-led partners did not participate in the planning of the regional planning directly, unless otherwise noted. However, their partnership and collaboration is used throughout the regional plan and is based off of past collaboration.

Healthcare Networking Group - local healthcare facilities and institutions, NCI Works and Illinois Valley Community College; business led;; meet to address issues and challenges affecting the healthcare industry

Community colleges have active Advisory groups used in planning healthcare offerings and curricula – community college led (separate bullet point). For example, Black Hawk College and others within the region participated directly

Manufacturing- American Nickeloid, not business led, participate in bridge class as a guest speaker

The Quad Cities was recently named one of 12 federally designated manufacturing communities as part of the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership grant.

Chief Manufacturing Executives meet quarterly at IVCC staff supported by NCI Works and IVCC; business led

Other Advisory committees meeting annually or biannually (Truck driver training, Nursing, Manufacturing/Maintenance/Welding, Agriculture, Criminal Justice, Fire Science, Rad Tech, and Office and Administrative Service) – community college led

Northern Illinois Discover Manufacturing Expo – business led

Public Safety Career Fair – community college led

Workforce Readiness Coalition (manufacturing) – community college led

National Manufacturing Day Planning Committee (K-12, College, and Industry)

Highland Community College has annual advisory meetings, meets monthly with NIDA (Northern Illinois Development Alliance) and TCEDA (Tri- County Economic Development Alliance and with the Workforce Development Coalition. Participated directly

Pathways to Academic, Career, and Employment (PACE). Eastern Iowa Community Colleges received funds from the Iowa State Legislature for the Pathways to Academic, Career, and Employment (PACE) Program in 2013. PACE strives to create a strong pipeline of individuals entering and completing training in high skill / high demand career areas in Advanced Manufacturing, Allied Health, Information Technology and Transportation / Logistics.

The LaSalle, Marshall, & Putnam County Regional Office of Education (ROE) in partnership with Illinois Valley Community College sponsored a PACE (Post-Secondary Career Expectations) Framework event for regional middle and high school administrators and teachers. The purpose of the event was to develop a PACE framework for the region to ensure that each student in 8th – 12th grade would have an individualized learning plan to help guide decisions about career and post-secondary education or training. The program, facilitated by the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), walked implementation teams from nine area schools through the development of a PACE model. In addition to educators, workforce and industry representatives contributed to the discussion. As a result, Regional Office of Education, #35, was the first cohort in the State of Illinois to develop a regional PACE model. The PACE model is now being implemented in area high and middle schools with the college assisting as needed.

To support the process, PACE incorporates the use of sector boards. Sector boards are partnerships of employers within one industry who come together to focus on the workforce needs of the industry within the regional labor market. The Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce could see that having both the Iowa and Illinois community colleges participate would be preferable to establishing duplicative boards. With Chamber encouragement, Black Hawk College representatives were invited to join.

Sector Boards are different from the traditional Advisory Councils that the colleges have had in place for many years and that continue to work with college career programs advising faculty on the types of training students need today in each of those specific career fields. Sector Boards work on a much broader basis and are focused on long-range planning, considering new technology and factors expected to impact the industry. They are focused on the future workforce and work to identify resources and solutions to anticipated staffing and competitiveness needs.

The four sector boards established are:

1. Advanced Manufacturing
2. Allied Health (includes mental and dental as well as broad range of medical)
3. Information Technology (IT)

4. Transportation and Logistics

Additional public-private partnerships that exist within the region that could support sector strategies are listed below. These partners did not participate in the planning of the regional planning directly, unless otherwise noted. However, their partnership and collaboration **are** used throughout the regional plan and is based off of past collaboration.

CPT- Certified Production Technician – Certificate endorsed by several CME participants

Community and Economic Development, University of Illinois Extension- Rock Island, Henry, and Mercer Counties. Participated directly
Truck Driver Training works with trucking companies for student placement

Healthcare Executives Group, IVCC nursing department works with area hospitals and nursing homes

Starved Rock Advantage – nonprofit collaboration of employers, educators, workforce board and others in the Starved Rock area to develop a work-ready community and talent pipeline for area businesses.

Workforce Development Coalition – Highland

Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Corporations or Organizations

SET – Stronger Economies Together – multi-county regional economic development planning initiative through USDA and University of Illinois Extension – Putnam County (along with Marshall and Stark Counties)

LEAD – Leader in Economic Alliance Development – Lee, Carroll, and Whiteside Counties (initially – looking to add Jo Daviess and Ogle Counties) – regional economic development planning initiative through USDA and University of Illinois Extension to develop leadership capacity to promote regional economic collaboration.

NCI Works Certified Medical Assistant Apprenticeship program – St. Margaret’s Health is participating provider and was a partner in planning the apprenticeship standards. Participated directly

4. What neutral conveners with the capacity to help establish sector partnerships exist in the region and what is their role in planning?

Neutral conveners with the capacity to help establish sector partnerships below did not participate directly with the planning of this regional plan, unless otherwise noted. However, ongoing collaboration with these partners has influenced the planning of this regional plan.

Chambers of Commerce – represent needs of local employers, advocate for educational programming and resources to meet those needs

Examples: Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce, Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, Illinois River Area Chamber of Commerce.

Economic Development Organizations – North Central Illinois Economic Development Corporation (NCI EDC), NIDA, NW IL Economic Development, I-88 West Corridor Association, Greater Sterling Development Corp., Henry County Economic Development Partnership, Kewanee Economic Development Corporation, La Salle County EDC

Local Workforce Boards – provide linkages between employers, prospective employees, training providers and fund training programs. Participated directly

Adult Education Area Planning Councils – assure that those in need of ABE, ASE, ESL, and High School Equivalency educational programming prepares students for the workforce. Participated directly

Bi-State Regional Commission – Research and assess opportunities and threats and articulate broad economic development strategies for the region

North Central Illinois Council of Governments - Research and assess opportunities and threats and articulate broad economic development strategies for the region

Blackhawk Hills Regional Council - Research and assess opportunities and threats and articulate broad economic development strategies for the region

North Central Regional Betterment Coalition

United Way Education and Income Councils – support agencies offering supportive services needed for workforce development

Sauk Valley Center for Small Business Development

Starved Rock Startups

Starved Rock Country Alliance

Streator Incubator

Community Colleges: Black Hawk College, Illinois Valley Community College, Highland Community College, Sauk Valley Community College. Participated directly

Western Illinois University

Augustana College

University of Illinois and University of Illinois Extension. Participated directly

USDA

BEST, Inc. Participated directly

Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC)

C. If any employer collaboratives are engaged in the US Chamber’s Talent Pipeline Management initiative, describe the following:

- a. What is the focus of the collaborative(s)?**
- b. How is the workforce system supporting the needs of these employers.**

D. Describe any board economic development opportunities in the region within the context of the workforce, education and economic development plans.

E. Describe any broad economic challenges in the region workforce, education, and economic development plans.

Ongoing challenges continue to be the availability of

- affordable housing
- transportation needs particularly in the more rural areas
- lack of adequate and affordable child care.

F. Describe how a workforce equity lens is incorporated into the local planning requirements for collecting and analyzing labor market information.

Through continued collaboration, Great Northwest Region is committed to working towards closing the equity gap by making resources well known when collaborating with partners, community agencies, businesses, and community members. With a history of working towards providing resources to such underserved individuals, With the increased focus on equity throughout the Unified State Plan, the region will continue alignment in order to collect data that reflects regional equity gaps. Equity will continue to be at the forefront of our planning as it is believed that the purpose of WIOA is to provide access to sustainable income to individuals with barriers, including equity gaps.

Chapter 2: Strategies for Service Integration

- A. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers (§679.560 (a)(4)). Plans must respond to the following:**

Great Northwest Region workforce development activities include classroom training, job search assistance, on-the-job training, essential skills training, customized training, business services, work experience, incumbent worker training, apprenticeship programs, and job shadowing. Employment and Training (Title D)I is provided in two Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAS) with Local Workforce Development Boards. There are two Comprehensive One-Stop Centers, as well as other access sites. Training providers include all of the major institutions – public, private, and proprietary- as well as businesses engaged in work-based learning. Other core partners include Adult Education (Title II), Wagner-Peyser (Title III), and Vocational Rehabilitation (Title IV), which are co-located or available through technology. Great Northwest Region is very large in geographic size, economically diverse, and quite varied in the needs of businesses and individuals. Therefore, the types of workforce development services vary by local area, with each having used different strategies and areas of focus. Many common activities and services, with good return on investment (ROI), will continue.

- 1. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in the region.**

Strengths:

1. Several local community colleges offering training of in-demand occupations with frequent enrollment windows in varies Adult Education courses.
2. Availability of customized training options through the community college's business training center.
3. Strong area involvement with multiple partners for client strategies.
4. Essential Skills Training.
5. Workforce partner customized labor market information guides Great Northwest Region to better decision making for workforce area.
6. Area business buy in with Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), and Work Based Learning activities
7. Great Northwest Region is comprised of a team with strong local and regional partnership among WIOA workforce partners. Specifically, the regions collaboration/relationship with Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) for Business Services continues to strengthen in the region.
8. Great Northwest Region has a team with years of workforce experience and a long history of engaged workforce board members.
9. Development of stackable credentials that allow for multiple exit and entry points that lead toward attaining a credential.
10. Community College partners provide opportunities for high school students within the district to take college-level courses prior to graduating from high school.

Weaknesses:

1. To increase accessibility, colleges have begun to incorporate flexible class formats, locations, and times. However, more work in this area needs to be done.
2. Silo funded activities.
3. Aging workforce and the inability to retain younger generation to replace aging workforce.
4. Referral Process needs strengthening with proper follow up and documentation n and there is no integrated shared information system for workforce partners.
5. Business owners seeking assistance through Incumbent Workers program are burdened by the limitations set by DOL's regulations in the area of training approval and qualifying employee selection.
6. A state system that requires federal funds to flow into the state budget and be appropriated to the local areas.
7. Great Northwest Region has identified transportation deficits that pose problems for employees to obtain and sustain employment. Public Transportation does not cross into surrounding communities. Hours of operation are limited, leaving 2nd and 3rd shift workers without reliable transportation to and/or from the job site.
8. Difficulty for community college partners in finding qualified instructors in CTE fields. Particularly for in-demand sectors, such as health care and IT.

2. Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce including individuals with barriers to employment.

Great Northwest Region provides workforce development activities that address educational and skill needs to the public by use of two avenues. With a strong workforce partnership, Great Northwest Region's One Stop Centers allow for successful implementation of electronic referral intake system. This model allows for proper referral of services, which results in accurate obtainment of WIOA services. The execution of Business Services teams, including Apprenticeship Liason and Rapid Talent Pipeline Initiative, will build workforce capacity by developing and strengthening the knowledge, skills, abilities, processes, and resources that businesses, educational institutions, local workforce areas and community partners need to create new or expand existing employment opportunities. Similar to Program Service Team, Business Services teams will survey businesses in order to capture business needs and allow for development of business service action plans that contribute to a successful workforce.

3. Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide activities to address the needs of employers.

The execution of Business Services teams, including Apprenticeship Grant and Rapid Talent Pipeline Initiative, has built workforce capacity by developing and strengthening the knowledge, skills, abilities, processes, and resources that businesses, educational institutions, local workforce areas and community partners need to create new or expand existing employment opportunities. Such surveying allows for the development of business service action plans that are implemented by workforce partners.

4. How well do existing training programs in the region and local areas prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses?

Creating training programs is a multifaceted process. Data collections from Labor Market programs are useful tools to pinpoint labor market trends. This information is used to narrow down specific Industries and Occupations within an industry that are in-demand. Data collected from post-graduate students offer educational leaders a synopsis of employment success, including length of time from training completion to employment, wages, acquired occupation and employment retainment. This data tool is used to analyze the success of offered programs. Business advisory committees meet to share insight on offered and needed training programs. In these meetings businesses have an opportunity to share workforce needs with educational leaders.

It's the combination of these processes that allows Great Northwest Region's educational partners to successfully create educational and training programs that properly prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses. The process is additionally used to prevent

over training in occupations that are not in demand. These processes insure that employee and business needs are being met simultaneously. It's important for any workforce to carefully create trainings based off in-demand occupations.

5. Summarize the commitments of each program partner to implement the selected strategies described in the “Action Plan for Improving Service Integration in the Region.”

1. Business Services

To deliver business services Local Workforce Development Board and its business committee will guide strategic plans to create quarterly meetings, create a functioning business service team, develop defined goals of the business services team, put business service team's action plan into effect and move from low isolation to low coordination.

Educational partners will continue to share information from Business Advisory Committee meetings and Community Needs Assessments so that partners better understand the business needs and expectations in the community.

Share Integrated Education and Training (IET) opportunities with the Business Service Team

Use Business Service Team input to focus refinement of existing IET's and inform the development of additional options

2. Communication occurs across One Stop Partners:

- The Chair will lead Joint Services Committee meetings. All partners are responsible to provide information during meetings that will then be passed on to WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (WDB) by the Chairperson.
- Provide Adult Education information for inclusion on WDB meetings including the Area Plan and annual Application for Adult Education funding

Front-line staff meetings continue to be held by partner agencies.

Work Force Development Board members are invited to **American Job Center**®.

Partners will inform staff of WDB meetings and encourage attendance.

During website development, all partners will provide content for public viewing.

Program Service Team was created that consists of Front-line staff that will increase knowledge of service and increase communication along System Partners.

Partners will begin touring partner agency sites, increasing awareness of opportunities for integration.

Workforce Development Board to educate front-line staff of NCI Works and NCI Works website to increase knowledge of NCI Works activities and getting to work podcases.

Program Service Team (PST) reports to One Stop Operator and Leadership team is an ongoing goal that give accountability to WDB to assure progress is made on the goal.

3. Cross-Training Provided to Staff

Partners will collaborate for the planning and implementation of tours and braided training activities

Partners continue to assign staff members to attend weekly front-line staff meetings

4. Customer input used to design and deliver services

Receptionist briefs clients of needed documents and forms of ID prior to seeing program staff.

Continue with regular orientations coordinated with partners.

Client/student focus groups continue. This will encourage feedback that will drive improvements to service delivery.

Development of customer/student satisfaction surveys conducted by educational partners. This feedback will drive improvements to service delivery.

Educational partners create informative flyers that summarizing One-Stop services

5. **Staff collaboration on customer assessment**

Program Services Team meetings to share assessment information.

Program Services team meetings aid in preventing duplication of services.

6. **Processes are streamlined and aligned.**

One Stop Operator will approve Program Service Team's creation of uniform policies and procedures on referral and follow-up.

One Stop Operator will train partner staff on the implementation of referral and follow-up policies and procedures.

Program Services team and Leadership team to develop evaluation tool to show effectiveness of referral and follow-up processes and procedures.

7. **Customer Information Shared**

Continue to update the One Stop system manual with all partner services included.

Provide Training on Policies and procedures to all system partners.

Internal monitoring of all system partner customer files to verify consistency.

B. Describe how transportation and other supportive services are coordinated within the region

(§679.510(a)(1)(vi). Plans must respond to the following questions:

1. What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?

Individuals with Disabilities are referred to Vocational services through IDHS's DRS Rehabilitation services and The Arc of the Quad Cities

Older Adults are referred to Senior Community Service Employment program through National Able.

The Illinois Migrant Council and IDES serves migrant and seasonal farm workers.

Veterans, including disabled veterans are referred to IDES.

Title 1 career planners received referrals to assist Out of School Youth, Dislocated Workers, and individuals that qualify for assistance through Trade Adjustment Assistance.

English as a second language (ESL) individuals are helped though the regions Educational Partners.

Incarcerated Offenders/Returning Citizens receive services through IDES and Title 1 Career Planners.

IDES has specialized programs to assist individuals that are immigrants.

Individuals burdened by the lack of basic needs are referred to Project Now for assistance with utility assistance, rent and security deposit assistance, food and nutrition programs, health care assistance and referrals, clothing vouchers, transportation vouchers, household budgeting, scholarship program and financial literacy.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (**TANF**) program is run by the Illinois Department of Human Services. The program is for families with children and pregnant women who need temporary cash assistance. Those receiving TANF also receive medical assistance. One Stop center partners may refer clients to agencies that provide transportation. Some partner agency's have programs that provide free access to public transportation.

Education is given to clients on local community-based organizations that assist with the cost of childcare and dependent care

Linkages to community services will be completed by partners on a as needed bases.

Partners throughout the region have program assistance to aid with housing needs.

Needs-Related Payments (available only to individuals enrolled in training services and must be consistent with 20 CFR 680.930, 680.940, 680.950, 680.960, and 680.970)

Educational partners can help with educational testing

Each One stop center is ADA compliant and has reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Referrals to health care can be conducted by any partner agency.

Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear

Title 1 and/or Perkins may offer assistance with books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in post-secondary education classes

Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications may be included under Title 1 services.

Clients may be referred to community organizations that offer free legal services for low income persons

2. What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?

Through the Program Service Team/Referral Intake process, coordination of supportive services and service follow up will be done on a case by case basis. Moreover, Great Northwest Region's comradery has inspired communication among partners regarding client need of supportive services. With this, partners are comfortable contacting one another in regard to specific client needs; making the referral process a collaborate team effort.

C. Describe the coordination of services with regional economic development services and WIOA service providers (§679.510(a)(1)(v)).

Great Northwestern Region collaborates with Economic Development agencies through business service teams. This collaboration gives the region up to date happenings within the local and regional economy. Economic agencies welcome One Stop Center staff to participate in regularly scheduled meetings as well as arbitrary meeting.

- North Central Illinois Economic Development Corporation (NCI EDC)
- Northwest Illinois Economic Development
- Bi-State Regional Commission
- Henry County Economic Development
- Rock Island Economic Development
- Mercer County Better Together

1. What economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses are actively engaged in regional planning?

None. EDR 6 collaborates with economic development agencies on an ongoing basis. Therefore, economic development information related to the development of the regional plan was influenced from such ongoing collaboration. University of Illinois Extension is an economic development organization that provided statistical analysis for regional planning.

2. What economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses were invited to participate but declined?

None. EDR 6 did not have declined participation requests.

D. Describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate (§679.510(a)(1)(v)).

All required partners participating in the development of this Regional Plan have agreed that administrative cost arrangements are not required at this time. If future projects require additional administrative support, partners will identify in-kind resources, grants, and/or pool administrative costs, as needed and appropriate. The Memorandum of Understanding will continue to be used to coordinate administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs by each local area with EDR 6.

E. Describe how a workforce equity lens is or will be incorporated in the regional service integration strategies, including to job seekers and employers.

The leadership of both Local Workforce Area's understands the importance and necessity of having all aspects of how we operate viewed under an equity lens and have diligently worked to develop a consistent culture where equity is of the highest importance. Our region will work to help educate our partners and employers in our interactions. We will strive to help develop a vision with our employers, specifically, in the areas of recruitment and retention. Our region will continue to work toward initiatives and help drive conversations about equitable practices.

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals and Implementation Strategies

A. Describe the strategic vision to support state and regional economic growth. (§679.560 (a)(5))

In order to support the State's vision, Great Northwest Region (GNR), also known as Economic Development Region 6, will continue to foster a Statewide workforce development system that supports the needs of individuals and businesses to ensure Illinois has a skilled workforce that can effectively compete in the global economy by collaboration with workforce partners. Such drive to collaborate will deliver GDR's vision to promote business-driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce, and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals, and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the State of Illinois economy.

Workforce partner professionals use a coordinated workforce pipeline that responds to business needs, for key sectors, while increasing opportunity for individuals.

Achieving this vision will use these principles as guideposts for policy development and program service delivery. Each workforce partner will use its resources to support the following principles:

- Business demand-driven orientation through a sector strategy framework
- Strong partnerships with business at all levels
- Career pathways to jobs of today and tomorrow
- Integrated service delivery
- Access and opportunity for all populations
- Cross-agency collaboration and alignment for developing and/or promoting career pathways and industry recognized stackable credentials
- Clear metrics for progress and success
- Focus on continuous improvement and innovations
- Make the manufacturing sector a priority
- Make the healthcare sector a priority
- Make the transportation sector a priority
- Make information technology, across these three sectors, a priority
- Further analyze the agri-business/farm sector as a future priority
- Integrate workforce, education, and economic development
- Increase collaboration, communication, and shared resources
- Engage business owners and managers as solutions-forming partners
- Increase skill levels of individuals through career pathways
- Focus on eliminating or minimizing barriers to education and employment

Create user-friendly processes and systems, intake through exit
Improve outreach, branding, and identity

B. Describe the goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators. (§677.155 (a)(1))

Great Northwest Region workforce partners will collectively use the following goals to support Illinois’ vision to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development strategies at the state, regional and local levels to improve the economic growth and competitiveness of the state’s employers and their workforce.

- Foster improvement and expansion of employer-driven, regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.
- Expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.
- Expand career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in the educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs.
- Expand information for employers and job-seekers to access services by improving the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.

C. Performance accountability is a shared responsibility between partners. GDR’s collaboration and teamwork prepares clients for successful program completion, that includes meeting performance indicators. Provide a description of the regional and local strategies that will achieve the vision and goals. This must include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local areas:

- To facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. (§679.560(a)(5)).
- To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(3)(ii)).
- To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (§679.560 (b)(3)(iii)).

To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs (§679.560 (b)(3)(iv)).

To promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (§679.560 (b)(4)).

C.6 To implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers (§679.560(b)(3)(v)).

Great Northwest Region professionals will use a variety of strategies for the implementation of these goals with a focus on improving community prosperity through more competitive businesses and workers.

In addition to existing Incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, and customized training, Great Northwestern Region recently submitted a proposal for an apprenticeship expansion grant. If chosen to receive this grant members of the NCI Works RTPI Team as well as the BSM will work with area chambers, economic development, community colleges, one stop centers, and business services staff to engage businesses on a regional basis to recruit new and current apprenticeship program companies to the project of expanding registered apprenticeship participants.

Employer forums, focusing on manufacturing, which involved workforce partners in the presentation of partner services, an assessment of business needs, and the identification of critical skills for new hires have recently been held in various parts of the region. These events include a dialogue between workforce partners, area manufacturing representatives, and local educators. It is the intent that this dialogue will be continued after the forums to ensure that workforce partners and educators are responding to the needs of area manufacturers. The offering of additional sector forums will also be considered.

Great Northwest Region recognizes the importance of providing a wide range of employment opportunities to its job seekers. Some, especially dislocated workers, may have marketable skills and talents and simply need some assistance in developing a plan to establish themselves in any number of niche industries/businesses. In order to meet the needs of this group, both LWIAs explore existing entrepreneurial models such as NWILED's Build-It-Grow-It program, and Etsy, the online marketplace that would allow our entrepreneurs to reach a global community of shoppers. Furthermore, connections with local SBDCs will be enhanced for the purpose of providing the information and resources that will help ensure success. Where no SBDCs are located in an area, BSTs will become knowledgeable in these opportunities and will serve as the "go to" resource for assistance.

Some strategies that will be instrumental small businesses, including those with entrepreneurial interests already exist in some areas of EDR #6 and will be replicated throughout the regions 11-county area. For example, our WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, **American Job Center**[®], is a member of Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce, Inc., with workforce development professionals engaging in activities and events with entrepreneurs and business leaders. Example of promoting and connecting entrepreneurs to resources to create, collaborate, pitch, and grow ideas in our Great Northwest Region include:

Entrepreneurial meetups are free gatherings to exchange ideas and learn from seasoned entrepreneurs.

Quad Cities co-working space includes workshops, gatherings and partnerships.

TechBrew is a free monthly networking event for entrepreneurs, educators, technologists, economic developers, and business leaders.

Henry, Mercer, and Stark Counties Fast Pitch contest to test ideas in front of a panel of judges, with the chance to win prizes and resources to develop a thriving business.

Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE) program, the nonprofit association dedicated to educating entrepreneurs and helping small businesses start, grow, and succeed.

C1. To facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§679.560(a)(5)).

Great Northwest Region facilitates the engagement of employers by use of data collections that identify current and projected in-demand industry sectors and occupations within those sectors. By use of this data collection, specific positions and individual tasks that would be involved within each position are narrowed down. In addition, interaction with local, county, and regional Economic Development Agencies provides engagement of employer's needs.

C2. To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(3)(ii)).

The local workforce development system is supported by meeting the needs of businesses in the local area as follows:

- Collaborate with local, county, and regional Economic Development agencies and businesses to target business needs to enhance success and/or prevent closure.
- Utilization of a Business Services approach that leads to stronger communication and a greater understanding of the unique business needs in the communities and which serves as an educational portal of services the Local Workforce Development Board and the one-stop delivery system can provide businesses to assist with such needs.
- Secondary and Vocational education partners are an outreach source for businesses. This relationship has proven to be a wealth of knowledge for the region in terms of business needs and expectations in the community. As a partner, these educational centers advise business leaders of the services available to them throughout the Local Workforce Development Board and the one-stop delivery system.
- Business Services Committee is an active committee consisting of various partners who contact local businesses to educate business leaders on services available through the Local Workforce Development Board and the one-stop delivery system. Once service needs are identified the business services committee develops and implements a strategic service plan.
- Organization of Job Fairs.

- Rapid Talent Pipeline (RTPI) is a systematic approach that allows for businesses to work directly with the RTPI group to identify business needs, create a plan of action, and work together to implement the plan.
- Regional Apprenticeship Navigator will build capacity by developing and strengthening the knowledge, skills, abilities, processes, and resources that businesses, educational institutions, local workforce areas and community partners need to create new or expand existing apprenticeship programs.

C3. To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (§679.560 (b)(3)(iii)).

Align and integrate business and job-seeker services among the workforce partners along with local, county, and regional economic development partners.

Continue to increase coordination between workforce development and economic development practitioners and organizations.

Provide data and tools to support regional planning for aligning education, workforce and economic development.

Collaboration with economic development practitioners to identify businesses at risk for hardship allows workforce development teams to collaborate with these businesses to identify solutions. By use of the Rapid Talent Pipeline (RTPI) businesses work directly with a workforce development team to identify business needs, create a plan of action, and implement the plan.

C4. To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs (§679.560 (b)(3)(iv)).

Great Northwest Region strengthens the linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs starting at the front desk where an intake referral form is completed. This referral form is unique to each client and is given to intramural partners to eliminate overlooked services. Because of service integration’s model, Great Northwest Region has begun holding “frontline” staff meetings where partner staff members attend and discuss current happenings. This cross-training experience gives IDES the ability to properly spot a client’s need(s) and refer them to the appropriate partner. This also allows partner agencies to properly refer clients to IDES. Cross-trained partners are better equipped to determine how services can best address the need(s) of unemployment insurance recipients and get them back into the workforce.

C5. To promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (§679.560 (b)(4)).

Providing community awareness of available business services available through the Local Workforce Development Board and the one-stop delivery system serves as a progressive tool for entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. In addition, Great Northwest Region’s frontline staff are equipped to advise entrepreneurs of public and private organizations that promote and connect entrepreneurs and small business owners to resources to start, create, expand, recover, collaborate, pitch and grow ideas.

An example of an agency that frontline staff may recommend to entrepreneurs is The Illinois Small Business Development Center at the Starved Rock Country Alliance which provides FREE tools, resources, and confidential services to entrepreneurs and small businesses across Bureau, Grundy, LaSalle, and Livingston Counties.

C6. To implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers (§679.560(b)(3)(v)).

These strategies have been developed for four different areas. Those areas include Data, Workforce Partners, Business Services, and Workforce Boards. Best practice models will be identified and utilized whenever possible.

Data

- Utilize reputable public databases in order to conduct independent surveys used to fine tune operational and programmatic business activities.
- Utilize up-to-date Labor Market Information for strategic development of programs.
- Request and/or provide database reports to workforce partners and economic development practitioners as needed.

Workforce Partners

Use of referral and intake form to identify service needs and eliminate duplicated services in order to continue leveraging resources with workforce partners.

Create new pathways for success by preparing very low-skill adults for sector-based bridge programs.

Attend Rapid Response and WARN meetings.

Participate in partner employment service-related events and activities.

Promote partner re-training programs and events using Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) outreach notices.

Continue successful out-of-school youth programs.

Conduct effective Trade-related programs.

Organize front-line staff meeting on a regular basis to assist with collaboration of client services.

Share workforce trends with partners throughout the region in order to shift outreach of business and client needs to accurately reflect current workforce and economic trends.

Business Services

Continue the long history of providing incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, and work experience/internships while developing customized training.

Implement and expand work-based learning programs and strategies for all eligible customers.

Schedule employer interview appointments for job seekers, following the job development process.

Continue to share workforce intelligence and organize hiring events, through partners, local economic development agencies and businesses.

Continue expanding shared business services through combining local areas' team meetings.

Regional Apprenticeship Navigator to build capacity by developing and strengthening the knowledge, skills, abilities, processes, and resources that businesses, educational institutions, local workforce areas and community partners need to create new or expand existing apprenticeship programs.

Rapid Talent Pipeline Initiative (RTPI) will continue guiding businesses towards operating directly with the RTPI workforce partners to identify business needs, create a plan of action, and implement the plan.

Workforce Boards

Support awareness and adoption of innovative private sector models, such as the United States Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Initiative.

Implement National Emergency Grant (NEG) Sector Partnership (SP) strategies for the health care sector while exploring options to apply for grants for the regions other identified sectors.

Utilize business intermediaries, including but not limited to United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

Expand employer forums including workforce partners.

Create a pilot event in Jo Daviess County or Carroll County to feature The Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute (Chicago), along with the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center and NIU EIGERlab (Rockford).

Apply for Regional Grant opportunities to assist in the implementation of Sector Strategies.

Continue Targeted Populations Standing Committee, as used by one local area, and integrating targeted population's representatives into all committees, as used by the other local area.

D. Describe regional strategies that will increase apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities.

Through LWIA 4's and LWIA 13's Apprenticeship Grant, Great Northwest Region will have the capability to conduct structured outreach to businesses with employers and workforce professionals to expand the use of apprenticeship as a work-based learning strategy. Regional

Apprenticeship Navigator will build capacity by developing and strengthening the knowledge, skills, abilities, processes, and resources that businesses, educational institutions, local workforce areas and community partners need to create new or expand existing apprenticeship programs.

E. Describe initiatives to shorten the time from credential to employment and address how the area will work with the education system to begin putting training opportunities in place to meet this strategy.

In addition to the Regional Apprenticeship Grant; Great Northwest Region’s educational partners offer Stackable or Micro Certificates that allow clients to advance in their work and their education simultaneously. Additionally, educational partners and Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs work together to offer Integrated Career and Academic Preparation (I-CAPS). This program offers Adult Education students, including ESL students, the opportunity to complete college certificate programs in CNC Manufacturing, Patient Care Assistant, or IT Support Technician while preparing to earn their GED.

F. Describe the steps that will be taken to support the state’s efforts to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development including:

F.1 Fostering the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.

LWIA 4’s execution of a Rapid Talent Pipeline Initiative (RTPI) has a goal to develop a universal template for use by partners in the workforce area to help employers develop/improve their talent pipelines, address the challenge of engaging rural employers, and improve employer engagement in the region. The process for implementing RTPI utilizes five process steps: Identify and Recruit Employers with identified needs, Assess Skill Needs and Pipeline Options, Develop an RTPI Plan, Implement the RTPI Plan with the employer’s approval, and Review the Outcomes. The process is designed to be collaborative among partners, focused on working with smaller numbers of employers to identify specific talent needs and solutions, faster at responding to those needs by using existing programs whenever possible, and data driven so that new projects will benefit from what has been learned in previous projects.

Great Northwestern Region will work to establish a regional business service team based on the RTPI process. Representatives from both workforce areas will convene to establish a list of possible members that represent a minimum of all core partners and will work from there to identify additional members that serve the business community who can contribute to the successful expansion of the rapid talent pipeline initiative outlined previously.

To make businesses more competitive, Great Northwest Region's NCI Works launched a new initiative designed to provide labor market and career information to our businesses, job seekers, young adults and current workers through the publication of Industry Brief's designed to explain local business leader's workforce occupations, educational and training requirement, valued skill sets for potential employees, and the challenges the industry is facing today. These Industry Briefs are circulated through workforce partners, schools, libraries, elected officials, economic development organizations and local chambers to share with the community.

To help reach an even broader audience, podcasts that feature those same presenters and perhaps even guest presenters to promote further discussion on the selected industry as well as other related workforce topics are hosted. Podcasts are accessible on an on-going basis. This also supports our programmatic accessibility efforts, as well as our career pathways initiatives by providing career information.

F.2 Expanding career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.

Great Northwest Region will collaborate with existing employer sector groups to expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated training and work-based learning; leading to industry-recognized credentials that result in improved employment and earnings by focusing a Regional Apprenticeship programs with outreach to area chambers of commerce, economic development teams, and regional one-stop center partners in order to engage businesses throughout the region to become familiar with current apprenticeship program in order to strategize what training will benefit clients emerging into the workforce. Businesses will have the opportunity to troubleshoot their workforce needs with the navigator who will report to one-stop centers for strategic solutions. In addition, Rapid Talent Pipeline (RTPI) is a systematic approach that allows for businesses to work directly with the RTPI group to identify business needs, create a plan of action, and work together to implement the plan.

F.3 Expanding career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs.

- By working closely with local community college partners in bridge programs, providing work-based training and co-enrolling individuals with local partner programs, Great Northwest Region expands career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers by minimizing the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement. A One Stop Partner Committee consisting of 2-4 individuals is in place to develop a career stop curriculum that will help client's market themselves and market the advantages of hiring the client.

- Front line staff from all partnering agencies share information on what is happening within their organizations, new initiatives, common concerns, what is lacking, service delivery and with the shared client. The Program Service Team works to ensure that services are not duplicated yet the individuals is getting the services that they need to become successful. This is all connected to the service integration strategies in the area.
- WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, Innovation Project for Returning Citizens, **American Job Center**® partner organizations are reducing recidivism and improving public safety by providing returning citizens with vocational training and employment services.
- To help support our programmatic accessibility efforts, as well as our career pathways initiatives by providing career information, podcasts that feature industry leaders, business owners and guest presenters are broadcasted to promote thorough discussion on a selected industry as well as other related workforce topics. Podcasts are accessible on an on-going basis.
- NCI Works One Stop Partnership committee initiative re: integrating/re-integrating individuals with disabilities, individuals with background issues and veterans into/back into the workforce.

F.4 Expanding information for employers and job-seekers to access services by improving the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.

This state goal will be supported by:

- Participating in the region’s several workforce development initiatives of Chambers of Commerce and United Way organizations.
- Supporting Illinois Economic Development Association (IEDA) through membership.
- Creating public-private partnerships or alignments with businesses and not-for-profit agencies that serve special populations.
- Improving public/private data infrastructure by collecting regional data and investigating methods to make the data accessible.
- Requesting opportunities to make presentations to economic development practitioners and professionals, through chambers of commerce and economic development association.
- Hosting workshops for economic development practitioners and professionals.
- Connecting with entrepreneurs and those starting businesses, to assist with workforce needs.
- Participating in the region’s several Area Planning Council (APC_ Area Plan Development processes with education professionals and community college administrators.
- Participating in the region’s several Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning processes with economic development professionals.
- Assisting communities and chambers with requests for information from businesses that may relocate or expand.

F. Describe how goals established in this plan will be monitored and evaluated.

Regional workforce leaders at the local board level will continue to engage with community and program partners to further explore ways they can collaborate for the betterment of our workforce system to help meet the demand for skilled workers in our region. This will include developing new partnerships and funding opportunities that will better serve businesses and individuals in our region.

G. Describe how a workforce equity lens is or will be incorporated in the implementation of regional workforce, education, and economic development strategies.

The leadership of our regional workforce area will continue to work diligently in building consensus for a regional equity lens by which both local workforce boards to operate from. Our goal is to actively work to expand access and eliminate disparities people experience, especially from marginalized communities, by providing a human centered design approach to service delivery.

We will be working toward the development of data sharing in an effort to make more informed decisions to better serve and increase access for all populations within the region.

