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## County of San Luis Obispo

### Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Plan

Program Years 2025-2028

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**DRAFT 2.0**

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## Executive Summary

The Workforce Development Board of San Luis Obispo County (WDBSLO) is a division within the Department of Social Services. This WDBSLO Local Plan is submitted in accordance with EDD Workforce Services Directive (WSD) 24-09 issued on December 20, 2024, as required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and guides the Program Years 2025-28, effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029.

The Local Plan is a WIOA requirement designed to align operations with the regional plan's strategic goals, promote coordination with local partners, and outline key service delivery strategies. It focuses on braided resources, support for workforce system partners, and strategic partnerships.

The WDBSLO Local Plan reviews and updates local systems and processes based on the vision outlined in the Regional Plan. The 2021-2024 Local Plan addressed topics such as CalFresh Employment and Training services, coordination with Local Child Support Agencies (LCSAs), alignment with the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) for individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities, and support for frontline staff in digital fluency, distance learning, and cultural competencies. It also covers Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities.

A key component of the Local Plan is collaboration with local workforce partners to achieve the vision outlined in the Regional Plan. The plan was developed with input from key stakeholders to ensure alignment with local priorities and goals.

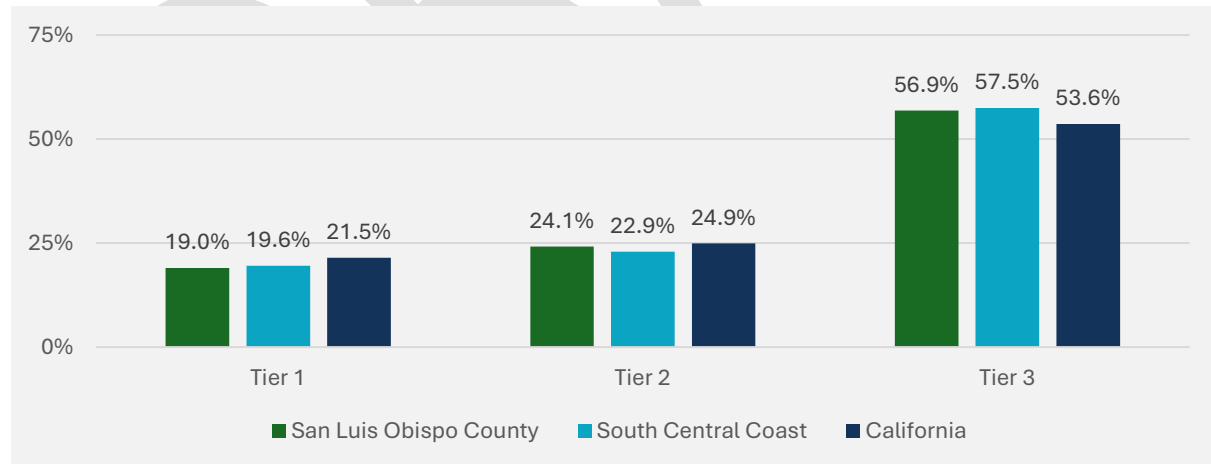
## Regional Overview

This section of the Local Plan provides a brief overview of the regional labor force and resident population of San Luis Obispo County, to further inform WDBSLO’s understanding of the key opportunities and challenges faced by the local workforce for use in its planning efforts.

San Luis Obispo County, together with Santa Barbara County, comprise the South Central Coast Regional Planning Unit (SCC RPU). The WIOA Regional Plan 2025-2028 prepared for the SCC RPU illuminated several key findings related to economic distress and job quality within the region, including:

- Slower regional recovery of employment from pandemic-induced losses as compared to California and the overall United States.<sup>1</sup>
- One in five subregions in the SCC RPU exhibiting severe economic distress, and two in five indicating more moderate levels of economic distress.<sup>2</sup>
- Continuing challenges to job quality, with nearly three in five jobs falling within the lowest wage occupational categories.<sup>3</sup> (Figure 1)

Figure 1. Job Quality by Tier in San Luis Obispo County, the South Central Coast RPU, and California (2024Q2)<sup>4</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Employment patterns in San Luis Obispo County were consistent with the South Central Coast region, with five-year job growth of 4.4 percent falling below statewide growth (7.5 percent) and national growth (9.2 percent). Employment in San Luis Obispo County also remained 5 percent below pre-pandemic levels in 2023, consistent with the SCC RPU average. Source: California EDD. Local Area Unemployment Statistics (2019 – 2024).

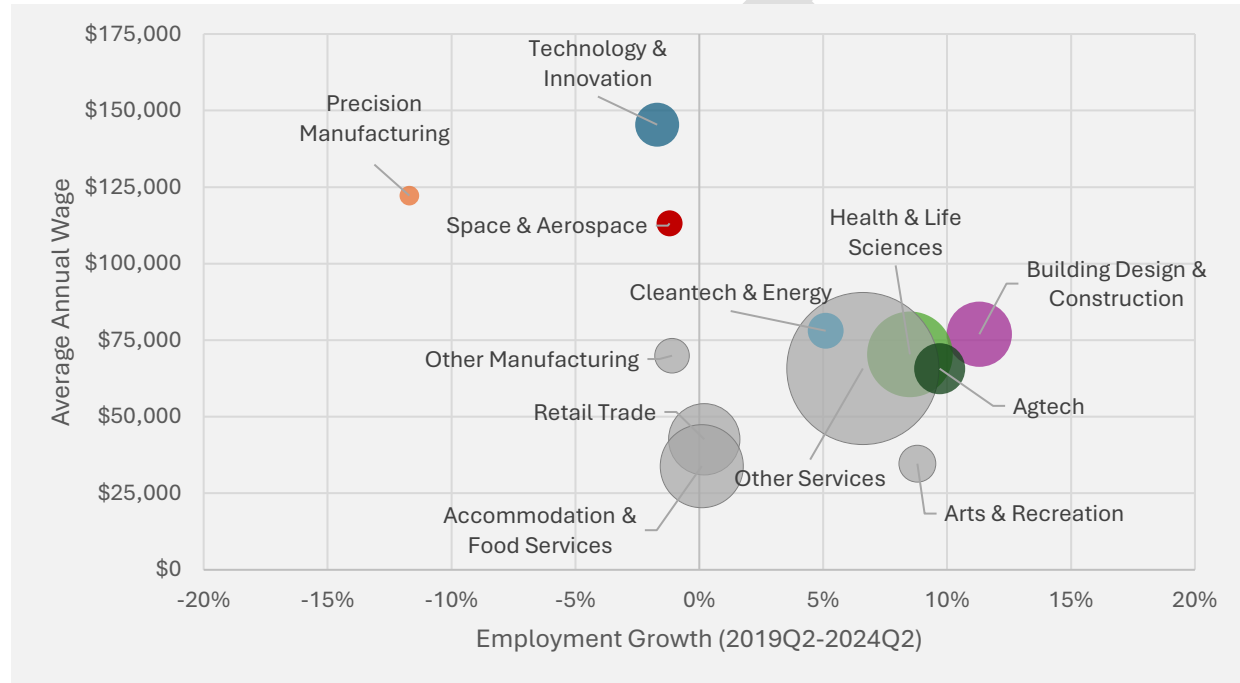
<sup>2</sup> Please see the South Central Coast Regional Planning Unit 2025-2028 Regional Plan for more information on the methodology underlying the assessment of economic distress.

<sup>3</sup> Tier 1 occupations are typically the highest-paying, highest-skilled occupations in the economy, garnering a median annual salary of \$115,600 in the SCC RPU region. Tier 2 occupations are middle-wage, middle-skill occupations commanding a median annual salary of \$70,200. Tier 3 occupations are the lowest-paying, lowest-skilled occupations, commanding a median annual salary of \$44,100.

<sup>4</sup> 2024 Q2. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2024).

- Strong employment growth and moderate to high-wage employment growth opportunities in four REACH priority clusters<sup>5 6</sup>, most notably in Building Design & Construction, Health & Life Sciences, Agtech, and Cleantech & Energy (Figure 2).

Figure 2. REACH Industry Clusters in the South Central Coast Region (2019Q2-2024Q2)<sup>78</sup>



Within San Luis Obispo County alone,

- The Building Design & Construction industry cluster accounts for over 11,500 jobs, and command average annual wages of \$74,400.
- The Agtech industry cluster accounts for nearly 7,000 jobs and command average annual wages of \$65,676.

<sup>5</sup> REACH is a Regional Economic Action Coalition uniting public, private, and civic leaders across the Central Coast of California. REACH was responsible for the South Central Coast’s [Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy \(CEDS\)](#) and the [Uplift Central Coast initiative](#) in support of the California Jobs First directive.

<sup>6</sup> The Regional Plan analysis was based on 12 industry clusters identified in the South Central Coast region, which include seven priority industry clusters identified by REACH in its “Strengthening Key Industries on California’s Central Coast – Talent Pipeline Analysis + Recommendations” report: (1) Agriculture Technology (Agtech), (2) Building Design and Construction, (3) Cleantech and Energy, (4) Health and Life Sciences, (5) Precision Manufacturing, (6) Space and Aerospace, and (7) Technology and Innovation.

<sup>7</sup> JobsEQ 2024 Q2. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2019 – 2024).

<sup>8</sup> Non-REACH priority industry clusters are semi-opaque and shown in gray, with bubble size is proportional to 2024Q2 employment levels.

- The Health & Life Sciences industry cluster accounts for nearly 17,900 jobs and command average annual wages of \$64,780.<sup>9</sup>

All REACH priority industry clusters generate average annual wages above the regional average in San Luis Obispo County, but only the Technology & Innovation industry cluster generates average annual wages above the San Luis Obispo County living wage of \$103,872.<sup>10</sup>

One of the primary objectives identified within the Regional Plan is to support growth in regional priority clusters via cross-functional partnerships with Central Coast economic and workforce development agencies. This Local Plan describes efforts being undertaken in San Luis Obispo County to advance these regional goals via deployed service delivery agreements and informal coordination efforts which are consistently delivered but may not be memorialized through a formal MOU.

Since the last Local Plan update, WDBSLO has participated in several initiatives designed to advance Regional Planning goals. These initiatives include the SLO Healthcare Workforce Partnership Working Group, two initiatives of the the SLO Chamber of Commerce; the Family Friendly Workplace Initiative; and the SLO Onboarding Assistance Resources (SOAR) Program.

The **SLO Healthcare Workforce Partnership** was launched to address the critical shortage of healthcare professionals in physical, behavioral, and oral health in San Luis Obispo County. The partnership is comprised of public, private, and nonprofit organizations representing healthcare, education, and workforce development, and is led by the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Health, with funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) through 2026.

In 2023 the partnership developed a three-year Strategic Action Plan aimed at achieving the following objectives:

1. Improving recruitment and retention of healthcare employees
2. Developing healthcare career pathways
3. Funding development and advocacy efforts
4. Ensuring sustainable partnership operations

In 2024 the Partnership formed three Working Groups focused on addressing each of the first three objectives outlined above, with the fourth objective to be addressed by the full Partnership membership during its monthly meetings.

WDBSLO is a member of the full partnership and Working Group #2, Healthcare Career Pathways, which meets monthly to develop local pipelines and training goals for physical, behavioral, and oral health. Working Group #2 also includes members from California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly SLO), Cuesta College, SLO Partners, SLO Health Counts, SLO Cal Careers, as well as local healthcare industry leaders.

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<sup>9</sup> JobsEQ 2024 Q2. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2019 – 2024).

<sup>10</sup> MIT Living Wage Calculator (2024).

The Partnership's 2024 accomplishments included the successful completion of a healthcare employer survey, research to identify the nine most critically needed occupations in San Luis Obispo County by 2030, and the creation of a healthcare career pathway map infographic. In addition, the Partnership developed a pilot program for a career exploration fair and designed a summer paid internship program to be launched in 2025.

In 2025 the Partnership aims to publish a white paper for local employers describing best practices for healthcare recruitment and retention, to build out the healthcare career pathways pipeline program, and to continue to pursue funding initiatives and advocacy efforts at the state and national level.<sup>11</sup>

The **SLO Chamber of Commerce Family Friendly Workplaces Initiative** represents the culmination of efforts coordinated by the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce, First 5 San Luis Obispo County, and a coalition of community, business, and government leaders to address San Luis Obispo County's childcare crisis.

The Initiative offers an online assessment tool to gauge employers' family-friendly policies and to provide connections to personalized assistance to learn more about practical and tangible next steps to foster family-friendly workplaces. The Initiative aims to encourage local employers to adopt practices that will boost employee hiring and retention while supporting the well-being of employees and their families.<sup>12</sup>

Finally, the **SLO Onboarding Assistance Resources (SOAR) Program**, developed in partnership with Cal Poly SLO and REACH, aimed to foster recruitment and increase employee retention by providing additional support to employees who are new to the area (and their trailing spouses), to assist new employees with making SLO their permanent home. Such efforts were also aimed at increasing retention of employees who might otherwise leave the county if their spouses and/or families were unable to form strong community connections after relocation.

The following sections of the Local Plan summarizes San Luis Obispo County's ongoing efforts and plans related to WIOA core and partner coordination, which conform to the objectives outlined in the SCC RPU WIOA Regional Plan 2025-2028.

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<sup>11</sup> [SLO Healthcare Workforce Partnership Year 1 Annual Report Highlights](#), February 2025.

<sup>12</sup> San Luis Obispo County Family-Friendly Workplaces, <https://slochamber.org/family-friendly-workplaces/>

## WIOA Core and Required Partner Coordination

**How Local Boards and AJCC partners will coordinate the services and resources identified in their MOU, as outlined in WIOA Memorandums of Understanding (WSD18-12).**

The Workforce Development of San Luis Obispo County (WDBSLO) has one AJCC center in San Luis Obispo city. The SLO Cal Careers Center is located at 3450 Broad St, Suite 103A, San Luis Obispo CA 93401, in the Acacia Creek Business Park. The center operates Mondays through Fridays, from 9 am to 4 pm, but may also provide in-person or virtual client services after normal business hours on an as-needed basis. While the AJCC center is not typically open outside normal business hours, staff engage with community partners and stakeholders during after-hours events.

The SLO Cal Careers Center offers various technology resources to prospective jobseekers, including 16 public computers, one of which may be used for online interviews. All computers offer zoom capabilities to accommodate customers with vision impediments, and three workstations are sized to accommodate wheelchair users. One computer is also dedicated to veteran customers. In addition, the center provides a meeting space that can accommodate up to 10 to 12 participants.

The SLO Cal Careers Center is typically staffed by four Career Coaches, a Career Services Navigator, a Business Services Manager and Business Services Specialist, Outreach Specialist, and two Program Managers. Staff are trained in the use of communication technologies to bridge cultural divides, as well as in the use of customer-centered design strategies.

The SLO Cal Careers Center partners with local employers to offer interviewing skills workshops and hosts employer HR spotlights, where employers share information regarding their hiring processes. WDBSLO members also foster work experience and OJT placements to champion the public workforce system and the Career Center within their communities.

Career Coaches refer clients to the Business Services Team for job placement. The Business Services Team hosts a Job Club for enrolled clients to support their career goals and encourages clients to attend Labor Market Workshops to learn about growing industry sectors in SLO County.

Co-located partner staff include a TANF/CALWORKs staff, California Employment Development Department (EDD) Wagner Peyser staff and a veterans' representative that coordinates training for AJCC staff on priority of services. Co-located EDD staff provide integrated services alongside WIOA Title I and TANF staff at the AJCC. Access to AJCC services is also available through CalWORKs ESE program office locations.

The AJCC conducts weekly participant orientation sessions to inform the community of available services and provide instruction on accessing them with co-located AJCC programs, the WIOA MOU partners, and relevant community service partners.

The AJCC also meets with WIOA MOU and community partners on a quarterly basis to discuss service availability, current needs or trends, opportunities to align services to avoid duplication of



effort, and strategies to provide direct referrals or to connect customers to various services offered by the AJCC and its partners.

All AJCC staff, including co-located partners, receive training on regional market conditions, including regional target sectors and career pathways, business talent supply chains, and the needs of high road employers. The AJCC provides skill development and training opportunities for customers at all skill and experience levels and assists customers in accessing and enrolling in these services, including career pathways, integrated education and training, workforce preparation, work-based learning, and apprenticeship. The AJCC does not implement a “sequence of service requirement” for training and does not have cumbersome entry steps that prohibit easy access to education and training leading to industry-recognized credentials.

With regard to marketing, the SLO Cal Careers AJCC employs radio advertising and social media campaigns to promote its suite of career development services, attends and delivers presentations at community events, and hosts job and training resource fairs within the community. Outreach materials are available in both English and Spanish, with translations into other languages possible if needed. Ensuring adequate support to non-English speaking populations remains a priority of the SLO Cal Careers Center to enhance service delivery for Spanish-speaking and immigrant populations. WDBSLO provides program and services information as well as resources and WDB meeting materials on the SLOworkforce.com website. The local area also hosts a SLOCalCareers.org landing page for ease of electronic referrals among partner agencies or as direct access by jobseekers or employers seeking to connect with services.

WDBSLO also supports workforce development by hosting a Job Seeker and Business Resource Guide for San Luis Obispo County on its website. The guides outline jobseeker and employer services available through the Career Center and partners, eligibility requirements, and access information, with regular digital updates and print distributions to community partners throughout the County. WDBSLO also manages WIOA participant data in CaJOBS.

In September 2024, WDBSLO engaged Eckerd Connects, the local WIOA Title I service provider and a national provider of workforce development services, to deliver career readiness services through the Regional Equity and Recovery Partnership Grant (RERP). Eckerd has since established a robust partnership with County libraries to increase community access points to SLO Cal Careers services; and has hosted public events at the Career Center and in the community to promote SLO Cal Careers services, including resource fairs, hiring events, and a WIOA orientation.

Contract goals for PY2024-2025 include:

- 80 new Adult/Dislocated Worker career service enrollments
- A minimum of 38 jobseeker enrollments in On-the-Job Training (OJT) or Individual Training Account (ITA)
- 40 new Youth enrollments

**How the Local Board and AJCC partners will work towards co-enrollment and common case management as a service delivery strategy, as outlined in Strategic Co-Enrollment – Unified Plan Partners (WSD19-09).**

The reception desk at the SLO Cal Careers Center initially screens potential walk-in customers to identify the reason for their visit and connects them to the appropriate services, whether at the Center or at a relevant partner agency.

Based on these individualized assessments, Career Center staff promote co-enrollments in relevant partner programs to maximize participation. Customers who require training are placed into a training track, which includes assessment, labor market research, informational interviewing, and ETPL exploration with staff support. Supportive services are provided with a \$1,000 cap per enrollment.

During orientation, Career Center staff discuss available training services and provide customers with one-on-one assistance with completing assessments and researching local in-demand occupations.

The WIOA Youth Program, a TANF/CALWORKs & CalFresh representative, and EDD are co-located at the SLO Cal Careers Center. All Career Center staff and co-located partners are cross trained in partner programs and can assist customers on the Career Center floor.

Staff from all programs participate in bi-weekly co-located partner meetings and occasional all-staff training. Co-located partner management meetings are held monthly to assess the effectiveness of existing strategies and to identify and discuss areas for improvement.

Quarterly partner meetings also allow co-located and non-co-located partners to share updates regarding services, customer needs, system improvement discussions, and training opportunities. The regular convenings also allow all organizations to share information about upcoming events.

WIOA service provider staff have access to a standard referral form that allows them to track and follow up on referrals made to and from partners. Points of contact are identified across the service agencies to support smoother referral hand-off.

Strong local partnerships allow WDBSLO to efficiently leverage funding and services of various providers that address different needs. Individuals may participate in career services through the AJCC while receiving other entities' housing, childcare, or counseling support. Since there is no shared data system among community service providers, communication between case managers of various programs is key to developing shared case plans where each entity can identify the aspects of a customer's service plan they can address.

WDBSLO uses a Universal Release of Information Form, which has been approved by County Counsel to allow all County government entities (such as Mental Health Services, Probation, or Social Services) to utilize this same form to share customer information among service providers. Additionally, WIOA programs align standardized testing (such as TABE or CASAS) with local Adult

Education and Community College providers to ensure that skills assessments from different providers can be utilized by different partners to decrease duplication of assessments for customers.

The Career Center receives referrals from various partner agencies such as DOR, Adult Education, homeless services partners, public assistance programs, as well as child support services and probation. In turn, Career Center staff also refer customers to WIOA Title II partners for GED and ESL services.

**How the Local Board and AJCC partners will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through technology and other means.**

Most residents have access to suitable technology, with 96.6 percent of San Luis Obispo County households owning a computer and 92.6 percent also having an internet subscription.<sup>13</sup> The pandemic increased the demand to provide virtual services, leading to the AJCC abruptly shifting to online and virtual services. The AJCC also previously established several mechanisms to provide access to services. Before the pandemic, access to services through webinars and video conferencing was available through AJCC technology in the training room. This allowed staff to conduct workshops that others could join virtually from external locations.

The AJCC has also offered several monthly workshops through live video conferencing or hybrid options for in-person or virtual attendance options. Customers can also receive career coaching sessions virtually in small groups or via one-on-one sessions with AJCC staff. The AJCC service provider also has a YouTube channel with various recorded seminars, workshops, and available resources that can be accessed either in-person or online.

The AJCC system supports local libraries and public schools in offering wi-fi hot spots and access to computers for free use. The Job Seeker Resource Guide lists free Internet access spots and shared workspace locations throughout the County. The CalWORKs ESE program has a facility where individuals can access AJCC services. A CalWORKs ESE site is also available in the north county region, which serves as an access point to WIOA services. SLO Cal Careers WIOA staff also hold regular office hours at County library locations in the north and south county regions, that provide additional access points to WIOA services. Local Internet service providers have low-cost Internet access options promoted through the AJCC to inform customers.

In addition to remote service delivery, WIOA enrollment is now available completely online through CaUJOBS. Customers can upload documents and digitally sign required forms. AJCC system staff have wi-fi hot spots and laptops that allow them to deliver services across the community, not just at the AJCC facility.

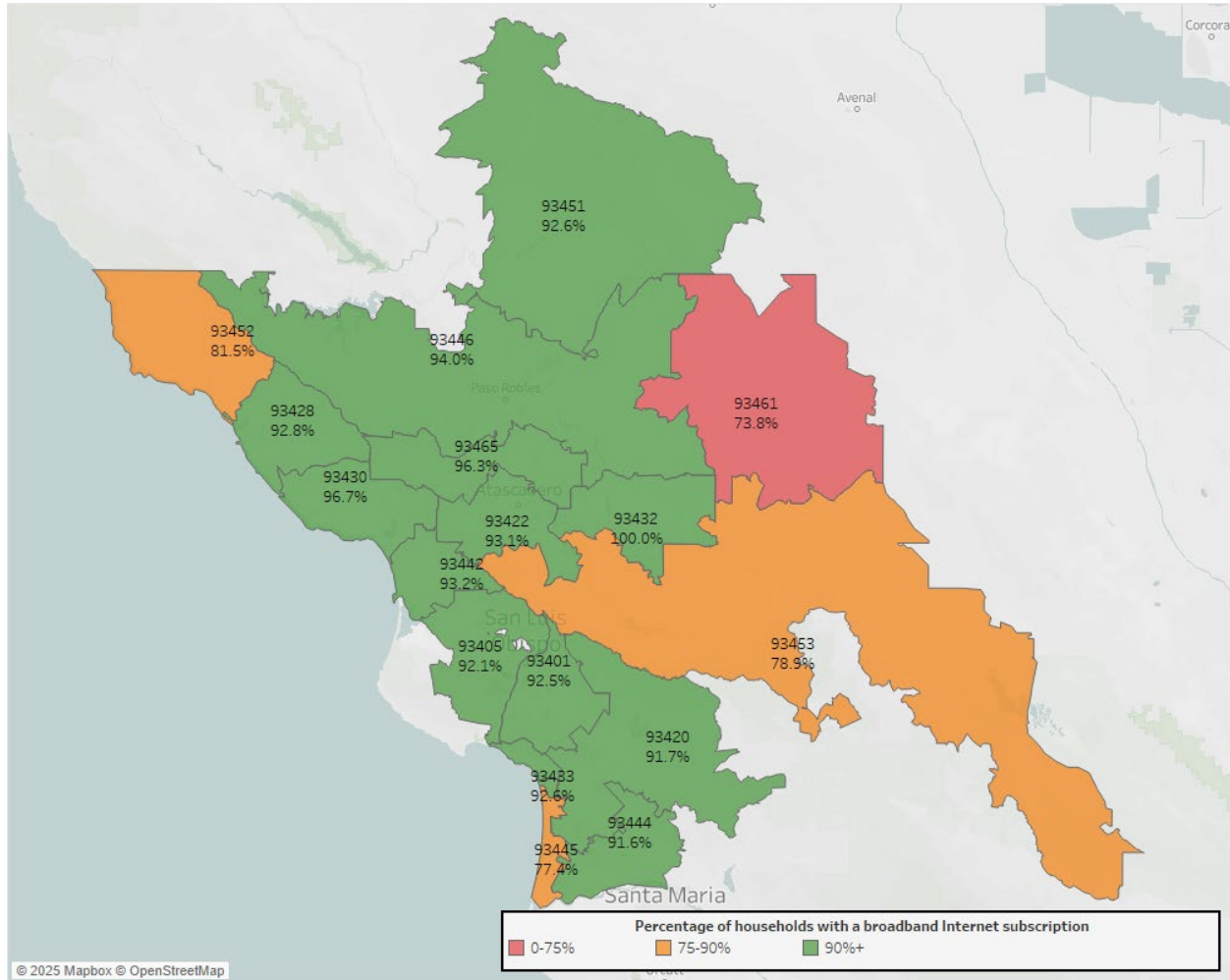
A critical first step to facilitating access to services is identifying regions with limited Internet access. The eastern regions of the county currently have the most limited access to Internet

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<sup>13</sup> American Community Survey 2023 5 Year, United States Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov/>

resources. This region includes zip codes 93461 and 93453, which are the Shandon and Santa Margarita regions. An estimated 73.8 percent and 78.9 percent of households in these zip codes, respectively, have access to Wi-Fi, significantly lower than the county proportion of 96.6 percent (Figure 3).

Figure 3. San Luis Obispo County - Internet Access Map<sup>14</sup>



**How the Local Board and AJCC partners will coordinate workforce and education activities with the provision of appropriate supportive services.**

WIOA service providers partner with adult education programs and community colleges to better connect education with employment services, helping individuals move from learning into the workforce. Supportive services are customized to meet the specific needs of WIOA participants. Before offering supportive services, providers first explore available partner resources to maximize funding and fill any gaps not covered by other community programs. In addition to education and training, WIOA offers ongoing assistance with job searches, interviews, and securing unsubsidized

<sup>14</sup> American Community Survey 2023 5 Year, United States Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov/>

employment. The AJCC system actively reaches out to community college students close to completing their programs, helping them access services that ease the transition from education to employment.

**How the Local Board and AJCC partners will comply with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, assistive technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, as outlined in Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures (WSD17-01).**

WDBSLO and AJCC partners are committed to ensuring full compliance with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, which mandates physical and programmatic accessibility for individuals with disabilities. To meet these requirements, WDBSLO and AJCC ensure that their facilities are physically accessible via ADA-compliant entrances, ramps, and restrooms.

As mentioned previously, the SLO Cal Careers Center offers various technology resources to prospective jobseekers, including 16 public computers that offer zoom capabilities to accommodate customers with vision impediments, and three workstations sized to accommodate wheelchair users.

WDBSLO also provides accessible programmatic services to ensure that jobseekers with disabilities have access to workforce development programs, training, and job placement services. This includes reasonable accommodations such as assistive technology, sign language interpreters, and other support services as needed.

Additionally, WDBSLO ensures that all materials and information, both digital and printed, are accessible to individuals with disabilities via accessible formats for online materials. Alternative formats are also provided upon request.

WDBSLO regularly reviews policies and procedures to ensure compliance with WIOA Section 188 and the ADA and provides staff training to emphasize their commitment to supporting individuals with disabilities. Regular accessibility assessments, including formal annual WIOA 188/EEO monitoring of programs, policies, and facilities, are conducted to identify and address barriers, ensuring participants' equal opportunity.

## State Strategic Partner Coordination

**How the Local Board will coordinate with County Health and Human Services Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who access CalFresh Employment and Training services.**

The Department of Social Services (DSS) continues to administer programs such as WDBSLO, CalFresh, and CalWORKs. Because these programs are under the same structure, collaboration remains relatively easy since staff all belong to the same department. The CalWORKs and WIOA programs currently share a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines organizational cooperation and responsibilities.

The DSS has offices in Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Morro Bay, Nipomo, Paso Robles, and San Luis Obispo. These offices span the county and offer services like the AJCC to CalFresh Education and Training Program (CFET) and CalWORKs participants. WDBSLO works with CalFresh and CalWORKs to align workforce development programs. This collaboration facilitates referrals of CalFresh participants to the America's Job Center of California (AJCC) for job search assistance, career counseling, skills training, and supportive services. Regular communication between WDBSLO and partners helps streamline the referral process and track participant progress.

Additionally, WDBSLO works with community-based organizations and training providers to offer targeted services that address barriers to employment, such as transportation, childcare, and digital literacy. Joint outreach efforts ensure that CalFresh participants are aware of available services and can access the resources they need to secure and maintain employment.

**How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Child Support Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who are non-custodial parents.**

The Workforce Development Board of San Luis Obispo (WDBSLO) is committed to fostering collaboration with the San Luis Obispo County Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) and other community partners to help non-custodial parents access workforce development services. By creating strong referral networks and integrated service models, WDBSLO aims to remove employment barriers and help these individuals gain sustainable, high-quality jobs while meeting their child support obligations.

WDBSLO coordinates with DCSS to ensure that non-custodial parents who need employment services, job training, or educational support can quickly connect to resources that enhance their career prospects. Through the AJCC, WDBSLO helps to provide career counseling, resume assistance, and skills training opportunities tailored to in-demand industries in San Luis Obispo County.

**How the Local Board will coordinate with local Partnership Agreement partners, established in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint, and other local, regional, and statewide partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.**

In San Luis Obispo County, 13 percent of the civilian noninstitutionalized population has a disability, totaling 36,000 individuals in the county.<sup>15</sup> The primary partners involved in the county in serving individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities include WDBSLO, the Tri-Counties Regional Center (TCRC), and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR). DOR staff have regular office hours at the AJCC, allowing direct access to these services and coordination with WIOA-funded programs.

TCRC operates across San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura County to provide family and personal support to people with developmental disabilities. The nonprofit has two offices in the county, one in the city of San Luis Obispo and another in Atascadero. TCRC serves 20,000 clients annually and operates under the Lanterman Act, a part of the welfare and institutions code that states the right for the developmentally disabled to receive help by regulating support services to developmentally disabled individuals.<sup>16</sup>

San Luis Obispo County is situated within the DOR Santa Barbara District, which has one office in the county in San Luis Obispo city.<sup>17</sup> The office plays a vital role by providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. Through these partnerships, WDBSLO ensures that individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities have access to resources, training, and job placement services that align with both local and statewide employment goals.

A critical first step to ensuring equitable access to disability services in the county is to identify regions with higher needs for supportive services. As shown below, disability prevalence in the county ranges from a low of 4 percent in zip code 93452 to a high of 26.2 percent in zip code 93453, while most zip codes fall within the range of 8-18 percent (Figure 4). WDBSLO will ensure that these subregions with high disability prevalence, which includes regions such as Santa Margarita and Oceano, have adequate access to disability support services.

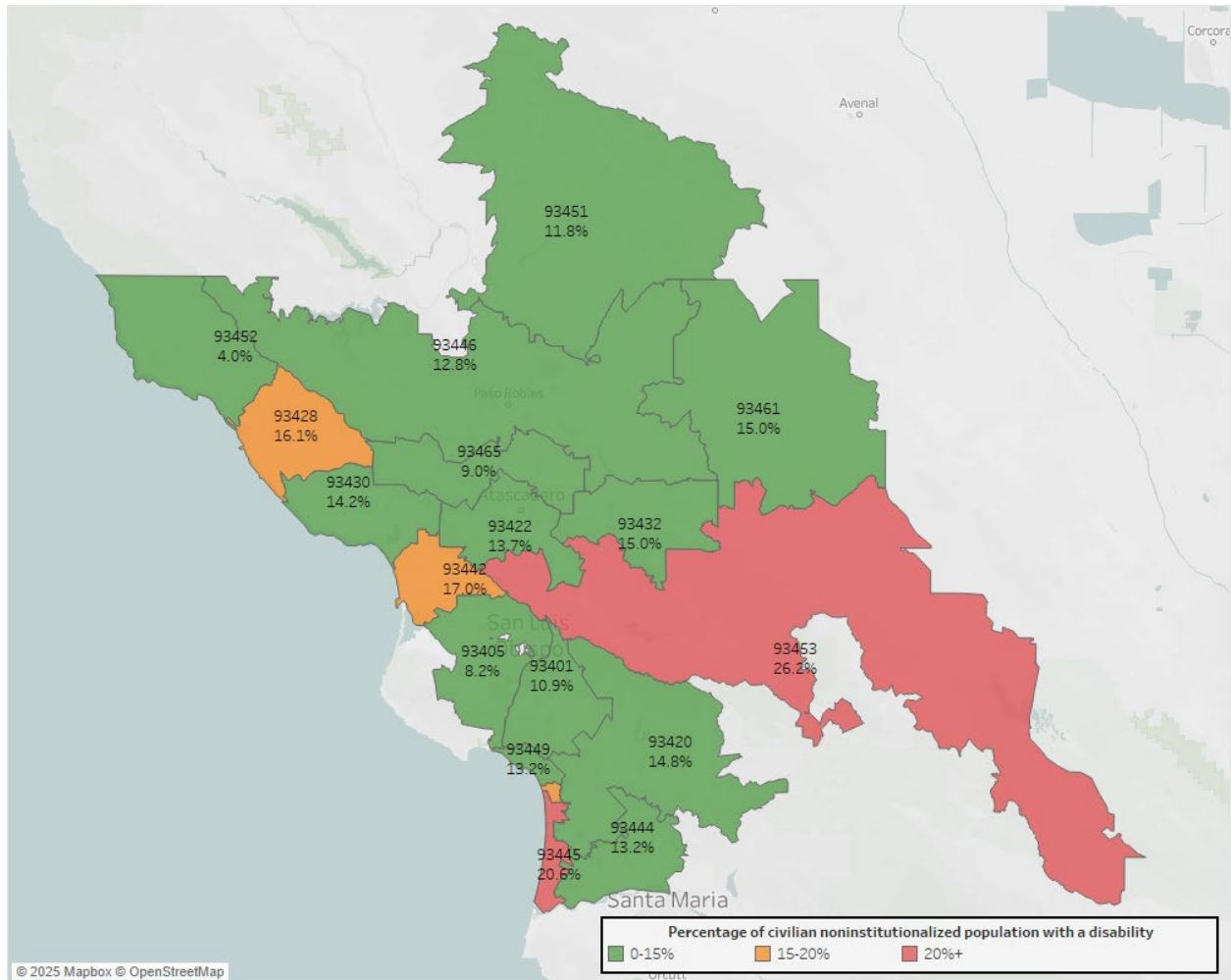
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<sup>15</sup> American Community Survey 2023 5 Year, United States Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov/>

<sup>16</sup> Who We Are, Tri-Counties Regional Center. <https://www.tri-counties.org/who-we-are/>

<sup>17</sup> Find a Service, Department of Rehabilitation. <https://www.dor.ca.gov/Home/ContactUs>

Figure 4. San Luis Obispo County – Disability Map<sup>18</sup>



**How the Local Board will coordinate with community-based organizations and other local partners who serve individuals who are English language learners, foreign-born, and/or refugees.**

In San Luis Obispo County, 17.2 percent of people aged 5 years and older speak English less than “very well”, totaling 46,000 residents.<sup>19</sup> County education and training providers that teach English as a Second Language (ESL) courses include, but are not limited to, San Luis Coastal Unified School District Adult School, Cuesta College, Templeton Adult School, and Lucia Mar Unified School District Adult Education.

Nearly one in ten residents in San Luis Obispo are born outside of the United States.<sup>20</sup> WDBSLO provides general workforce services and makes outreach materials available in both English and

<sup>18</sup> American Community Survey 2023 5 Year, United States Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov/>

<sup>19</sup> American Community Survey 2023 5 Year, United States Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov/>

<sup>20</sup> American Community Survey 2023 5 Year, United States Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov/>



Spanish, with translations into other languages possible if needed. Ensuring adequate support to non-English speaking populations remains a priority of WDBSLO to enhance quality of service delivery for immigrant populations.

In addition, contract requirements ensure there is staff at the SLO Cal Careers Center that are bilingual in Spanish and may utilize the Language Line and/or provide an interpreter to help serve customers speaking a language other than English.

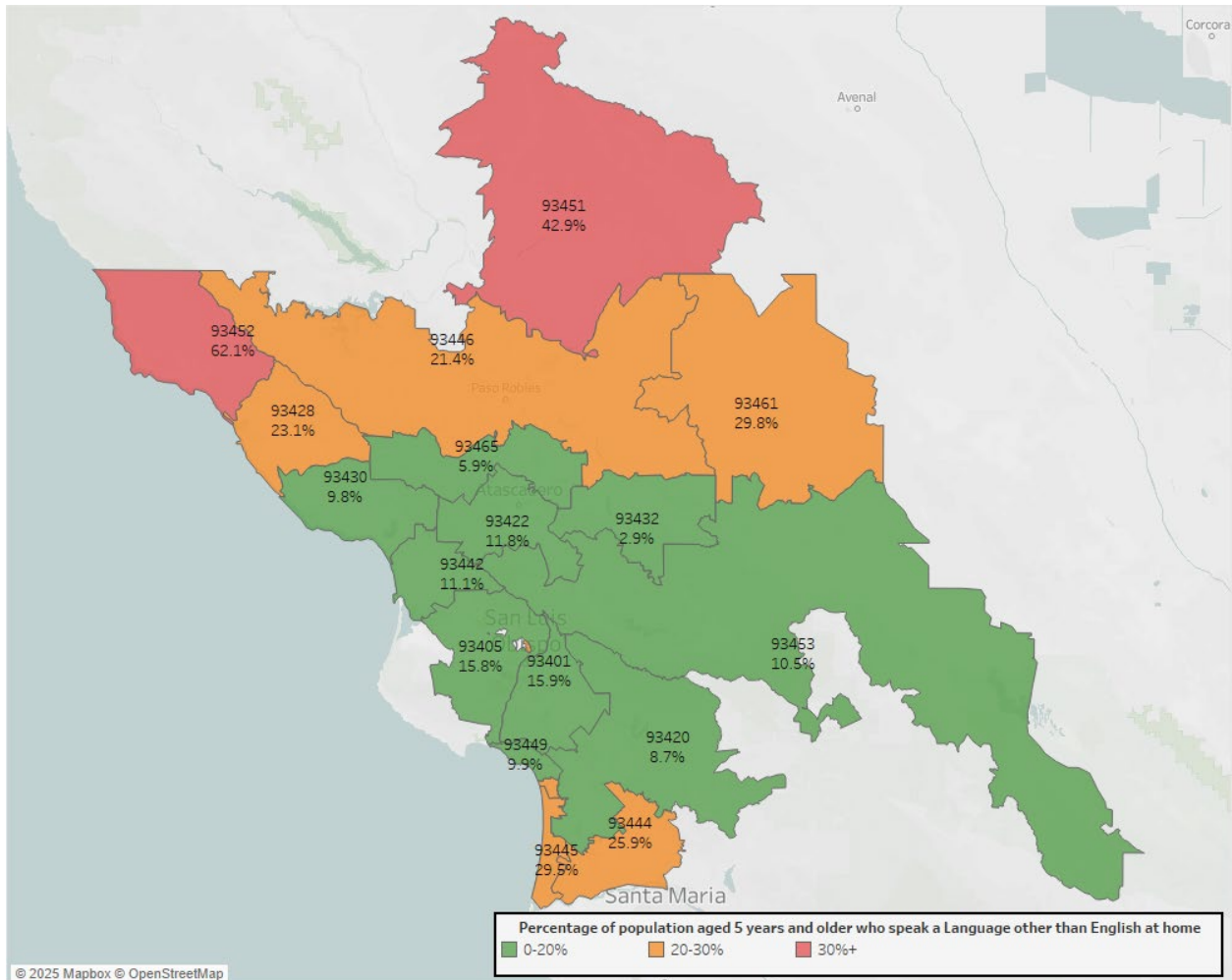
WDBSLO also engages in outreach and recruitment efforts tailored to immigrant populations, to promote awareness of workforce development programs. Through strong partnerships with community-based organizations, WDBSLO addresses language barriers, cultural differences, and other challenges, providing a clear pathway to employment and economic self-sufficiency.

Other local organizations also address the unique needs of foreign-born residents. For instance, entities like SLO County UndocuSupport coordinate resources for undocumented and mixed-status families by providing assistance with rental support, utility payments, transportation, groceries, and health needs.

Furthermore, to ensure superior levels of service for English language learners, foreign-born, and/or refugees, WDBSLO has identified areas of high need for English language fluency skills, i.e., zip codes with high concentrations of limited English proficiency.

As shown, northern regions of San Luis Obispo have a higher concentration of households that primarily speak another language other than English. For example, 62.1 percent of households in zip code 93452, a zip code that encompasses San Simeon and Ragged Point, speak a language other than English at home. These are regions which potentially require additional support in developing English language fluency (Figure 5).

Figure 5. San Luis Obispo County – English Fluency Map<sup>21</sup>



**How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Veteran Affairs, community-based organizations, and other local partners who serve veterans.**

WDBSLO coordinates closely with Local Veteran Affairs, community-based organizations, and other local partners to ensure veterans receive comprehensive services and support. WDBSLO collaborates with local partners to identify and address the specific needs of veterans within its workforce development system, including alignment of resources and services, such as job training, career counseling, and placement services, to meet the unique needs of veterans transitioning to civilian employment.

Via strong partnerships with Local Veteran Affairs, WDBSLO facilitates referrals and ensures veteran access to specialized services, including benefits counseling, mental health support, and

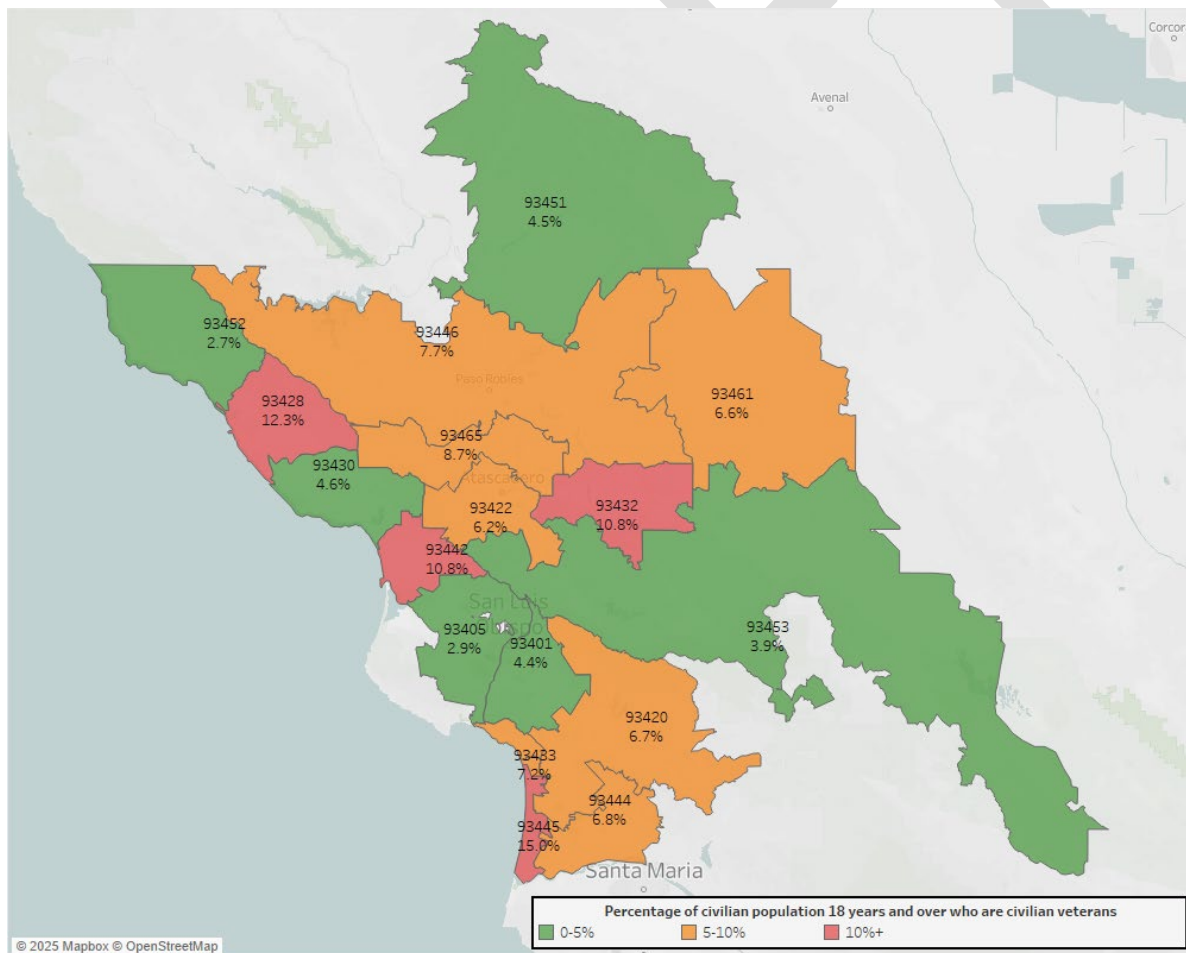
<sup>21</sup> American Community Survey 2023 5 Year, United States Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov/>

legal assistance. The San Luis Obispo Vet Center provides many services to support veterans.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, WDBSLO works with community-based organizations that provide targeted services to veterans, such as housing assistance and family support programs, to create a holistic approach to supporting their reintegration into the workforce.

WDBSLO coordination efforts include regular communication and participation in veteran-focused events and outreach initiatives to raise awareness of available workforce services. This collaborative approach ensures veterans receive timely and effective services that enhance their career opportunities and well-being.

WDBSLO also supports veteran access to services in the county by identifying subregions with high potential needs for support, i.e., zip codes with high veteran populations and limited access to resources. These areas include zip codes 93445 and 93428 which encompass the Oceano, Cambria and Harmony regions (Figure 6).

Figure 6. San Luis Obispo County – Veterans Map<sup>23</sup>



<sup>22</sup> San Luis Obispo Vet Center, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. <https://www.va.gov/san-luis-obispo-vet-center/#locations-and-contact-information>

<sup>23</sup> American Community Survey 2023 5 Year, United States Census Bureau. <https://data.census.gov/>

**How the Local Board will collaborate with the Strategic Planning partners to address environmental sustainability.**

WDBSLO collaborates with local partners to address environmental sustainability by integrating sustainable practices into workforce development strategies. This collaboration focuses on promoting green jobs and clean energy technologies, identifying workforce training needs for emerging industries such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and environmental conservation.

WDBSLO works to align workforce development programs with local and state sustainability goals, ensuring that training opportunities are available to prepare individuals for jobs that support environmental sustainability. This includes working with educational institutions, industry leaders, and community organizations to provide targeted skills training and certifications in green industries. The Office of Sustainability and Natural Resources website contains resources to educate residents about the importance of building an environmentally sustainable community.<sup>24</sup>

Additionally, WDBSLO supports initiatives that encourage environmental stewardship and resource conservation in the workplace and the community. Through these partnerships, the Local Board helps foster a skilled workforce capable of contributing to the growing demand for green jobs, ensuring that sustainability becomes a key component of economic development in the region.

WDBSLO has also contemplated the potential role of an Offshore Wind Ad Hoc Committee to serve as an Advisory Body to the County Board of Supervisors (BOS) and the community, which could seek to secure funding to explore potential economic impacts of Offshore Wind projects, including Tier 1 and Tier 2 job opportunities associated with the Offshore Wind sector.

WDBSLO and the workforce development board of Santa Barbara County are jointly collaborating to explore career pathways to higher-wage jobs in the South Central Coast region via a separate research effort funded by the RERP. The results of this research will be released separately later in 2025.

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<sup>24</sup> Office of Sustainability and Natural Resources, City of San Luis Obispo.  
<https://www.slocity.org/government/department-directory/city-administration/office-of-sustainability-and-natural-resources/sustainable-slo>

## WIOA Title I Coordination

**Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to gain and expand proficiency in digital fluency and distance learning.**

WDBSLO continues to provide online training through Dynamic Works, through WDBSLO and frontline WIOA service provider staff. Additionally, WIOA Title I programs utilize Career Edge software that provides career readiness training to WIOA participants, supplemented with a curriculum and resources for staff that support digital access to career services. WDBSLO also continues to investigate and explore supplemental training resources.

Frontline staff have received substantial training to improve digital fluency and increase distance learning. WDBSLO has previously received staff training support from Eckerd through an online portal, including instruction on topics such as Zoom, WebEx, and Adobe Connect and annual required trainings.

This training has enabled staff to set up a digital classroom and incorporate polls, videos, interactive boards, and other tools to engage jobseekers. WDBSLO staff have successfully conducted virtual job fairs and work one-on-one with job seekers using platforms of the client's choosing.

WDBSLO has supported the effective transition of WIOA service provider staff to use CaJOBS to provide virtual and fully online WIOA eligibility, enrollment, and service provision. WDBSLO provided training and ongoing technical support on CaJOBS to support this transition. WIOA service providers also ensure ongoing training is available to staff so they may remain current on the efficient use of software programs, including the Microsoft Office Suite products and videoconferencing platforms.

**Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma- exposed populations.**

A Trauma Informed Care training curriculum is provided to DSS staff to educate staff on the experiences of trauma-exposed populations. Staff are familiar with operating through a trauma-informed lens to deliver services while working with the DSS.

WDBSLO will continue to educate staff by working with community partners who educate others about the populations they serve and bring exposure to trauma-exposed populations. Examples of programs in disability awareness programs provided by the Department of Rehabilitation and programs offered by Cal Poly SLO. These programs offered by Cal Poly SLO are open to the community as part of the college's effort to increase the community's awareness of diversity matters.

The WDBSLO Director will continue to work with the California Workforce Association, which has a committee to address diversity and cultural competencies in workforce programs. WDBSLO will also collaborate with SLO DSS to address workplace and community diversity.

WDBSLO continues to educate staff on trauma-exposed populations using an online learning platform. Staff are assigned topics such as harassment, cultural sensitivity and awareness, trauma-informed care, and other topics relevant to their job classification. Staff can complete additional courses and attend “Lunch & Learn” opportunities to further develop their understanding and knowledge of their local community.

**How the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as outlined in Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities (WSD16-04).**

WDBSLO provides resources to businesses and employees to enable laid-off workers to return to the workforce as quickly as possible. Information about these resources is available on the WDBSLO website.<sup>25</sup> Jobseekers can also reach out to AJCC staff for assistance through phone and videoconferencing.

Rapid Response is a cooperative effort between the Local Workforce Development Area Rapid Response Coordinator, the SLO Cal Careers Center, and the EDD to assist employers and workers during a mass layoff or business closure. Rapid Response teams disseminate information on the adult and dislocated worker programs available at the SLO Cal Careers Center under Title I of the WIOA and Unemployment Insurance programs. The primary purpose of Rapid Response is to enable affected workers to return to work as quickly as possible following a layoff, or to prevent layoffs altogether.

Rapid Response services provided to workers during layoffs or plant closings results in multiple benefits to employers, such as:

- Higher productivity and worker morale and lower absenteeism during layoff event due to reduced stress.
- Lower unemployment insurance costs as workers are re-employed more quickly when services commence prior to layoff.
- Better public relations for an employer. Rapid Response can work with the media to highlight services an employer is providing to its workers during a layoff period.

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<sup>25</sup> Rapid Response Fact Sheet, County of San Luis Obispo.

<https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/departments/social-services/workforce-development-board/rapid-response-services>

If a dislocation is the result of foreign competition or foreign relocation, dislocated workers may be eligible for assistance, income support, job search assistance/relocation and/or training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA).

WDBSLO continues to attend and co-facilitate the region's quarterly Business Engagement Roundtable meetings, which include Rapid Response discussions. This regional roundtable expands beyond the South Central Coast RPU and also incorporates the North Central Coast RPU as well as other counties with predominant small business communities that find this group to be relevant and educational, even if they are outside the geographic proximity of the Central Coast. State EDD staff also participate in this Business Engagement Roundtable to disseminate information on statewide Rapid Response efforts as well as Trades Adjustment Assistance (TAA) resources. WDBSLO also monitors and reports on Rapid Response activities during its internal Board meetings.

State participation in regional meetings significantly strengthens the Local Area's ability to remain aligned with statewide rapid response activities. It encourages ongoing partnerships with other WDBs to align regional rapid response efforts where industry layoff impacts are felt across counties.

**A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area.** *Note: This includes how the Local Board will ensure that priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as outlined in WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service (WSD24-06). Additional priority groups may need to be considered to serve the local area better. The Economic and Workforce Analysis section of the State Plan identifies workforce targets such as low-wage or high-unemployment industries that could be relevant to the local area's needs.*

WDBSLO ensures priority of service for adult career and training services to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are deficient in basic skills.

WDBSLO continues to implement state and local policies that mandate that a minimum of 75 percent of newly enrolled adults receiving career or training services must be in a priority service category. WDBSLO works with AJCC to ensure the cross-referral system and outreach efforts are effective.

Employment and training activities in the Local Area include the following:

1. Regularly scheduled overview of services and information on how to access AJCC and other community resources.
2. Assessments to define customers' skills, interests, and experience, to help set career goals. Assessments also help identify barriers to employment that need to be addressed.

3. Assistance in determining an individual's eligibility and suitability for workforce programs and supportive services.
4. Information on services in the greater workforce system, including supportive services and employment opportunities. Information on labor market conditions and training opportunities (including the ETPL) is also available.
5. Assistance to develop Individual Employment Plans that address their employment goals, barriers to success, supportive services needed, and the sequence of services.
6. WIOA provides up to \$8,000 per participant to assist with the costs of in-demand occupational skills training. Training may include vocational training, English as a Second Language courses, adult education and literacy activities, and skills upgrades and retraining.
7. WIOA funds subsidized employment opportunities through On-the-Job Training (OJT) services, subsidizing up to 90% of employer wages during a set period of employer provided training.
8. Supportive services to help participants successfully participate in and complete workforce and training services. Supportive services are available through WIOA and many partner organizations and may include transportation support, childcare, licensing and testing fees, and work-related expenses.
9. Job search support includes, but is not limited to, workshops in resumes, interviews, job applications, and others; computer, telephone, and printer access; individualized counseling; employment leads onsite hiring events and career fairs.
10. Staff continue to communicate regularly with enrolled participants for up to 12 months, to assist with any barriers that may have arisen with new employment.

**A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the Local Area, as outlined in WIOA Youth Program Requirements (WSD17-07).**

*Note: This includes any strategies for increasing the digital literacy and fluency of youth participants, including those with disabilities.*

WDBSLO works with Eckerd Connects, the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and One-Stop Operator for the local area as the contracted WIOA Youth services provider, to administer a WIOA youth program for young adults aged 16-24. Youths are assigned career coaches to facilitate the development of career and academic goals, providing a path to industry-recognized credentials, paid incentives, and job readiness training. WIOA programs also offer paid work experience opportunities and funds for classroom training. Career coaches may also be able to offer supportive services necessary to obtain or maintain employment, such as clothing for interviews, work tools, and bus passes.



The WIOA Youth services provider utilizes local labor market information to align training and career coaching with in-demand jobs in the area. The provider collaborates with partners to ensure youth participants have access to all WIOA Youth program elements. Youth without a high school diploma or equivalent are referred to Adult Education programs but continue to work with a career coach to develop and implement a personalized career plan.

The WIOA Youth program maintains a strong partnership with the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) to enhance youth services. Staff are equipped with technology to deliver both in-person and remote services, offering individualized training opportunities. Depending on each participant's skills and interests, training options may include classroom instruction or paid work experience at worksites, supporting their path toward long-term employment.

In addition, individualized outreach is directed toward to 18 to 24-year-olds via partnerships with other youth-serving organizations such as probation, foster-youth-serving agencies, homeless services agencies, and other youth-based organizations throughout San Luis Obispo County.

In 2024, Eckerd hosted youth empowerment events and attended partner events hosted by Transitions Mental Health Association (TMHA), Family Care Network, the IBEW Local 639, UA 403 and IUPAT. Presentations were made at local high schools and Grizzly Youth Academy, ECHO; and outreach was conducted at the Nipomo, Atascadero and SLO Libraries. Youth outreach was also conducted via partner, chamber and HR organization events and participation in Employer Advisory Council (EAC), Job Developer, and community meetings to enhance partnerships and identify potential work experience opportunities for youth program participants.

**The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or the Governor and the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.**

WDBSLO is the entity responsible for disbursing grant funds for WIOA Title I activities, as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or the Governor. WDBSLO ensures that funds are allocated efficiently to support workforce development programs in the region.

The competitive process to award sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities is designed to ensure transparency, fairness, and accountability. This process includes issuing requests for proposals (RFPs) or invitations to bid, with clear guidelines and selection criteria. WDBSLO evaluates proposals based on organizational capacity, experience, cost-effectiveness, and the ability to meet program goals and performance standards.

Once a proposal is selected, contracts are awarded to the successful bidder, and regular monitoring and performance assessments are conducted to ensure the services are delivered effectively and in compliance with WIOA requirements. WDBSLO works closely with local stakeholders to ensure the competitive process aligns with the region's workforce development priorities.

**A description of how the Local Board fulfills the duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider as outlined in Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers (WSD22-13). This should include the name(s) and role(s) of all entities with whom the Local Board contracts.**

WDBSLO manages the responsibilities of the AJCC Operator and Career Services Provider through a competitive procurement process, issuing an RFP that results in a service contract approved by the WDB and awarded by the County Board of Supervisors (BOS). Contracts are typically for one year, with the option to renew for up to two additional years. Each year, the scope of services and budget are reviewed and revised to reflect updated WIOA performance goals, changes in budget allocations, and any new service strategies identified by the WDB. Procurement for the AJCC Operator and Career Services Provider occurs at least once every three years.

The AJCC Operator's duties and funding are specified in the RFP, with a distinct scope of work and line item funding. All WDB and BOS meetings where WIOA contracts are discussed are public, ensuring community input. County Purchasing oversees the procurement process to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, and a selection committee reviews and scores all RFP proposals.

The AJCC focuses on quality jobs by actively promoting targeted sector opportunities and high-demand occupations to all AJCC customers. The AJCC is an integral partner in the implementation of the Local Board's integrated business services strategy and seeks to minimize redundant employer contacts while maximizing access to system-wide, integrated business services. The AJCC offers a wide range of AJCC-based services for employers, including referrals of qualified candidates, on-site recruitment, pre-employment testing, skill verification, and hiring and training subsidies.

## Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

The development of comprehensive plans entails building broad and inclusive partnerships with regional and local entities in a variety of sectors. This includes engaging with employers, labor organizations, and community-based organizations as well as WIOA core, required, and strategic program partners. Utilizing input from the communities themselves ensures the inclusion of person-centered approaches to addressing multifaceted barriers to employment.

WDBSLO and its partners conduct extensive outreach activities to identify and quantify barriers to successful job placement outcomes and areas for improvement, including online satisfaction surveys provided to enrolled clients, employers, and partners. WDBSLO and partner staff attend various community events and meetings, Post Release Offenders Meetings (PROM) and Parole and Community Team (PACT) meetings focused on justice-involved individuals, community library visits, and wrap-around services agency meetings and engages with local unions, employers and partner agencies, to discuss potential partnerships, opportunities, and other resources available to jobseekers and employers in the course of developing the Local Plan.

Additionally, WDBSLO partners with the Atascadero Chamber of Commerce (ACC) to provide layoff aversion services, which include gathering feedback from local businesses regarding workforce challenges and providing essential resources, conducting Business Assessments, and attending regional events to discuss WIOA-related resources, insights, and opportunities to foster job growth and engagement with local businesses that inform the development of the Local Plan.

Other stakeholder engagement efforts directly related to the creation of the Local Plan are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
In-person	TANF	CalWORKs/CalFresh managers and case managers	Increase awareness among CalWORKs/Welfare to Work case managers about WIOA/SLO Cal Careers services beyond subsidized employment training opportunities; Develop policies and procedures for co-case management of co-enrolled WIOA/TANF participants.
Virtual	Economic Development & Employers/Local Business Community	REACH; Chambers of Commerce staff, City and County (SLO & Santa Barbara) economic development staff	Improve communication to Chambers about procurement activities/opportunities; Support development of Chambers' knowledge of WIOA-funded business services. Simplify outreach messaging about the variety of services available through AJCCs. Increase outreach to businesses not engaged with Chambers of Commerce; Simplify multitude of information available about WIOA/AJCC services.
In-person	WDB Executive Committee Members and public. Review of Draft Local & Regional Plans and public input opportunity.	Local Employers, Chamber of Commerce, Department of Rehabilitation	Include recommendations/action steps the WDB/Local Area can take in response to needs identified through LMI included in the Plans. WDB to identify opportunities to outreach/present on findings of Plans to increase community awareness of workforce needs, programs available, and activities of the WDB/SLO Cal Careers.

## Public Comments that Disagree with the Local Plan

**[PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD PENDING]**

DRAFT

## Signature Page

By signing below, the Local Board Chair requests approval of the San Luis Obispo County 2025-2028 Local Plan.

**Local Board Chair**

**Local Chief Elected Official**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Isiah Gomer**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg**

Chair, Workforce Development  
Board of San Luis Obispo  
County

Chair, County of San Luis  
Obispo Board of Supervisors

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