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Pima County Supervisors adopt five-year Workforce Investment Plan to qualify for federal funds

The Pima County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, Jan. 21, approved a five-year plan to qualify for federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds.

The County is required to submit a five-year plan to the State of Arizona to receive the funds that are used by the Pima County One-Stop Career Center to provide and coordinate workforce services for local employers and job seekers.

“While the marketplace is fairly efficient, ... there are still unmet parts of the employer-job seeker equation that are not profitable for the private sector, and that is where the nation invests its workforce dollars,” the plan says.

In fiscal year 2012-2013, Pima County received \$6 million in WIA funding, of which \$2 million went to training scholarships for adult and laid-off workers and another \$2 million went to basic education, work experience, vocational training and related case management for low-income youth.

More than 15,000 job seekers used One-Stop’s self-service system in FY 2013. Of the 3,879 who received WIA-funded services, 86 percent of the adult and laid-off workers and 77 percent of youth ages 14-21 were successfully placed in employment. More than 750 employers hired One-Stop job seekers in FY 2013.

The Pima County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) – leaders from local businesses, nonprofits and educational institutions appointed by the Board of Supervisors – provide recommendations on local workforce policy and oversight of One-Stop.

One-Stop identifies skill gaps that industry and employers encounter and provides existing employees and job seekers with the soft skills, basic skills and technical skills employers need.

The WIB has identified six industry sectors that show potential for long-term growth and decent-paying jobs: Aerospace and Defense, Health and Bioscience, Logistics, Natural and Renewable Resources, Emerging Technology and Infrastructure.

The WIB’s sector strategy and the adopted workforce plan are in sync with the Economic Development Plan adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2012 and those adopted by the Arizona Commerce Authority and by Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities, charged with attracting businesses to the County.

One-Stop coordinates with an array of partners including local training institutions, community-based organizations and employer groups as well as other border counties

and regional initiatives such as the Sun Corridor. “Together, these partners create a system with a sum that is greater than the parts,” plan says.

The plan identifies two workforce goals for the WIB and One-Stop:

1. Continue to facilitate cross-program strategies in order to better serve both industry sectors and sub-populations of disengaged workers, including increasing the number of active industry sector partnerships that create career ladders for workers.
2. Continue to develop key strategic partnerships between workforce, economic development, and education in order to meet the needs of employers and workers.

Pima County also makes significant investments in the One-Stop system. It provides space for a GED program, an Adult Education Center, the One-Stop centers at 2797 E. Ajo Way and 340 N. Commerce Park Loop, and affiliate centers for homeless job seekers and veterans. The Pima County Public Library system also helps job seekers in coordination with One-Stop. And the County invests in summer youth programs and remedial education to help disadvantaged youth enter the labor market.

To see the Workforce Investment Act five-year plan, please visit the [Workforce Investment Board website](#).