

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 25-16
	DATE December 22, 2016

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS
ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER MANAGERS
STATE VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING DIRECTORS
WIOA SECTION 166 GRANTEES
JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS
ETA REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS
ALL DISCRETIONARY/COMPETITIVE GRANTEES

FROM: PORTIA WU /s/
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Release and Availability of the Technical Assistance Resource, Career Pathways Toolkit: An Enhanced Guide and Workbook for System Development

1. **Purpose.** To announce the availability of a technical assistance resource, the *Career Pathways Toolkit: An Enhanced Guide and Workbook for System Development*, for States, locals, tribal entities, and competitive grantees developing career pathways systems.
2. **References.**
 - Training and Employment Notice (TEN):17-15 Release and Availability of the Technical Assistance Resource, Career Pathways Toolkit: A Guide for System Development
 - Training and Employment Notice (TEN): 14-15 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Requirements for Unified and Combined State Plans
 - Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, Public Law 113-128, as amended
3. **Background.** Our nation’s future depends upon an educated, skilled workforce. Improving the skills, knowledge, and credentials of American workers is critical to economic stability, growth, and global competitiveness. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) that went into effect on July 1, 2015 provides an extraordinary opportunity to improve job and career options for our nation’s workers through an integrated job-driven public workforce system that links diverse talent to businesses. WIOA requires States and localities to collaborate with adult education, postsecondary education, and other partners to establish career pathways systems that make it easier for all Americans to attain the skills and credentials needed for jobs in their regional economy.

Career pathways systems offer an effective approach to the development of a skilled workforce by increasing the number of workers in the U.S. who gain industry-recognized and

academic credentials necessary to work in jobs that are in-demand. Career pathways systems transform the role of businesses from a customer to a partner and co-leader in the development of the workforce.

In April 2016, twelve Federal agencies signed a [Career Pathways Joint Letter](https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/announcements/2016/04/27/11/21/2016_Career_Pathways_Joint_Letter) (https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/announcements/2016/04/27/11/21/2016_Career_Pathways_Joint_Letter) expanding the support at the Federal level for a coordinated career pathways system. The letter demonstrates an unprecedented commitment to promote career pathways by providing updated information and resources from Federal partners to integrate service delivery across Federal and State funding streams. The numerous Federal partners recognize the importance of career pathway strategies as an effective framework to guide States, regions, local entities and tribal communities in helping youth and adults acquire marketable skills, and earn industry-recognized credentials.

The Career Pathways Toolkit: A Guide for System Development, released in the fall of 2015, updates the original 2011 *Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements for Success* by incorporating the new guiding legislation, WIOA, as well as reflects the substantial gains in knowledge and experience since the release of the 2011 Toolkit. The 2015 release maintains the original framework and resources for states and local partners to develop, implement, and sustain career pathways systems and programs.

The Department is now releasing the 2016 version, [Career Pathways Toolkit: An Enhanced Guide and Workbook for System Development](https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/10/20/10/11/Enhanced_Career_Pathways_Toolkitthat) (https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/10/20/10/11/Enhanced_Career_Pathways_Toolkitthat) embeds helpful worksheets into each of the six key elements of career pathways to assist States, localities, tribal communities, and other grantees in operationalizing and sustaining their career pathways systems and programs. The enhanced version draws attention to the complementary resources that support sector strategies and Registered Apprenticeship.

State sector strategies require leadership to help coordinate policies toward common goals. Governors are in a pivotal position to provide the leadership needed to bring systems together. The Sector Strategies Organizational Self-Assessment is embedded in Element 2: *Identify Industry Sectors and Engage Employers*. The purpose of the Sector Strategies Organizational Self-Assessment is to help States evaluate their own sector strategies initiatives by identifying their strengths, learning opportunities and priorities.

Additionally, apprenticeship is the gold standard for a career pathways program. The structure of a Registered Apprenticeship program is incorporated along a pathway for progressive increases in skills, knowledge, and wages. In this “earn and learn” model, workers hired by an industry begin receiving wages on day one of their apprenticeship. Pre-apprenticeship programs are frequently part of the pathway, used as a bridge for individuals who need basic skills and other workforce preparation before entering a Registered Apprenticeship program. To learn more about apprenticeship and access resources to develop apprenticeship strategies, visit www.dol.gov/apprenticeship/toolkit.

4. **Content.** Since the release of the 2015 Toolkit, the U.S. Department of Labor has developed worksheets to assist State and local leadership teams in operationalizing their career pathways systems. The current 2016 release, **[Career Pathways Toolkit: An Enhanced Guide and Workbook for System Development](https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/10/20/10/11/Enhanced_Career_Pathways_Toolkit)** (https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/10/20/10/11/Enhanced_Career_Pathways_Toolkit), is now available in eight distinct modules. This enhanced edition continues to feature the Six Key Elements of Career Pathways, but presents each element as a separate module and embeds helpful, writeable worksheets into the element and components they support. The enhanced Toolkit begins with an introductory module, six distinct modules representing the six key elements, and an eighth module that provides the references to the rich body of knowledge researched to revise the Toolkit including a bibliography and glossary of terms used throughout the Toolkit. The eight modules are listed below and can be found at:
https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/10/20/10/11/Enhanced_Career_Pathways_Toolkit.

- Introduction
- Element 1: Build Cross Agency Partnerships and Clarify Roles
- Element 2: Identify Industry Sectors and Engage Employers
- Element 3: Design Education and Training Programs
- Element 4: Identify Funding Needs and Sources
- Element 5: Align Policies and Programs
- Element 6: Measure System Change and Performance
- References, Bibliography and Glossary of Terms

The modules in the enhanced version of the Toolkit are downloadable, writeable, and printable PDFs. Readers are encouraged to access and use the modules in sequential or non-sequential order as dictated by State needs.

5. **Action Requested.** States, local and tribal entities, and competitive grantees are encouraged to use these resources to support their career pathways initiatives and to share this TEN with workforce investment system partners, including employers, community colleges, adult basic education providers, human services, economic development and community-based organizations and workforce intermediaries. Also, please visit the Workforce GPS Career Pathways Community of Practice at <https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org> to learn more about implementing career pathways in alignment with the vision of WIOA.
6. **Inquiries.** For more information about the Career Pathways initiative, please visit the Career Pathways Community of Practice at <https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org> or contact the appropriate regional office.
7. **Toolkit Worksheets.** A list of worksheets found within each element of the toolkit is listed below:

Element	Worksheet Title	Purpose
1	1.1a Partner Contact Information	Organize partner contact information
	1.1b Governance Structure	Consider how leadership team is represented across different state entities.
	1.1c Identifying Assets of Team	Understanding critical assets and limitations of each partner.
	1.1d Pre-Partnership Check-up	Guide the thinking about ways to assess the value, costs, and risks of creating partnerships.
	1.1e Checklist for Existing Partnerships	Assess the health of existing partnerships on a periodic basis.
	1.3a Matrix of Partner Roles & Responsibilities Worksheet	Define the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
	1.4a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Template	Guide the development of topics, policies, and guidelines for inclusion in an MOU.
2	2.0a Sector Strategies Organizational Self-Assessment	Assess readiness to engage in sector strategies activities.
	2.1a Labor Market Analysis	Understand available resources for conducting labor market analyses.
	2.1b Data and Resource Guide for Identifying Target Industry Sectors	Identify industry sectors based on key questions.
	2.2a Employer Engagement Self-Assessment	Explore current realities surrounding the collective system's employer engagement strategies.
	2.3a Inventory of Partners' Employer Engagement	Identify what industries are engaged across state agencies.
	2.5a Employer Needs Guide	Gather information about an employer or sector.
	2.6a Matrix of Employer Engagement Strategies	Develop a coordinated state employer engagement strategy.
3	3.2a Building Recruitment Strategies for Target Populations	Identify and recruit target populations for career pathways programs.
4	4.2a Funding Options Worksheets	Identify and coordinate funding options for sustaining career pathways programs.
5	5.0a Communications Chart: Continuous Communication	Evaluate how closely mission and vision align with organizational use of communications.
	5.1a Leadership	Rate state status in each of these topic areas.
	5.1b Co-enrollment	
	5.1c Data Management	
	5.1d Education Credit Attainment	
	5.1e Client Services	
	5.1f Eligible Training Providers	
	5.1g Resource Allocation	
	5.1h Skill Attainment	
	5.1i Professional Development	
5.1j Sector Strategies		
6	6.1a Program and System Logic	Create program and system logic models.
	6.2a Performance Measurement Chart	Review partners' program outcome measures.
	6.2b Metrics Self-Assessment Step 1	Identify universal metrics for career pathways in the state or region.
	6.2c Metrics Self-Assessment Step 2	Identify the extent to which the three essential

		features of career pathways are present and can be reflected in collected data.
	6.2d Metrics Self-Assessment Step 3	Identify availability of data needed to calculate each metric.
	6.2e Metrics Self-Assessment Step 4	Identify capacity of partnerships to observe participant results longitudinally.