



Inland Empire

2021-2024

Draft Regional Workforce Development Plan

Inland Empire Regional Planning Unit

San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board
Riverside County Workforce Development Board

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Executive Summary

As part of a four-year planning process, the Inland Empire Regional Planning Unit (IERPU) has developed this regional workforce development plan to address the needs of the Inland Empire community. The purpose of the planning process and this plan is to develop equitable, regional, sector-based career pathways in target sectors, ensuring access and inclusion for all of the region's residents, businesses and organizations. The counties of San Bernardino and Riverside are recipients of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, and so the region ensured this process and plan document were in alignment with the State of California Workforce Development Board (CWDB)'s Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan.

The region began the planning by conducting an inclusive process gathering input for this plan from partner organizations, employers and other stakeholders in a series of interactive virtual meetings held between December 2020 and January 2021. Participants were asked to provide ideas for how the region's workforce system can meet the needs of the community in five key areas: responding to COVID-19; developing career pathways to the middle class; providing access and inclusion for all; preparing for the future of work; and building a high road workforce system. The IERPU worked together as members of both workforce development boards, the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board and the Riverside County Workforce Development Board, to process the input received and incorporate it into the plan.

A detailed workforce and economic analysis was provided to the region by the University of California, Riverside. The regional labor market information and workforce demographic data appears in Section II of the report and provided an empirical grounding for the planning process. The data reaffirmed the region's selection of three target sectors of Healthcare, Manufacturing and Transportation and Logistics due to the current demand and expected growth over the next several years.

Five key goal areas were developed as a result of the planning process and form the backbone of this workforce development plan: 1) Regional Sector-Based Career Pathways, 2) High Road Workforce System, 3) Access and Inclusion for All, 4) Future of Work and 5) Regional Coordination and Alignment. Several specific goals that address the region's response to COVID-19 were also developed and are highlighted where they intersect with the areas listed above.

Sections III-V provide additional details on how the region intends to operationalize its goals, including the development of four regional indicators. Each section discusses how the plan aligns with the CWDB's priorities to foster demand-driven skills attainment, provide high road employment, ensure equity and economic justice and align/coordinate services across the region. Appendices provided at the end provide additional documentation on the process, how the plan will be executed and public comment received about the plan.

I. Introduction

Inland Empire Region

The Inland Empire region consists of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, part of inland Southern California. Representing a richly diverse region of the state, among San Bernardino County’s population of 2,180,085, over half of the residents are Hispanic or Latino, over 9% are Black, 8% are Asian and about 3.6% are of two or more races.¹ The county makes up more than half of the region geographically, and is the largest county in the U.S. San Bernardino County covers over 20 thousand square miles and a vast majority of its residents live in the southeastern corner of the county known as the Valley Region.² Over 80% of the rest of the County land is under federal jurisdiction including areas like the Mojave National Preserve and the San Bernardino National Forest.

Riverside County, a contiguous county to the south of San Bernardino, includes a smaller amount of land but is home to more residents. With about 53% of the Inland Empire region’s population (2,470,546) calling the county home, it covers a little over 7,200 square miles.³ Including the San Jacinto Mountains, it also has large swaths of uninhabited natural lands with its population concentrated in the valleys that lay between mountainous areas. Together, the two counties make up the scenic, culturally diverse and dynamic Inland Empire region that has a thriving economy and a need for a strong, high-road workforce development system to ensure there is a path to the middle class for all.

Inland Empire Regional Planning Unit and its Vision

The Inland Empire Regional Planning Unit (IERPU) is comprised of the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board (SBCWDB) and the Riverside County Workforce Development Board (RCWDB). The two WDBs of the IERPU created a vision statement for the region to set the strategic direction for planning and implementation. See Figure 1 for the IERPU vision.

Figure 1: The IERPU Vision for Workforce Development

The workforce development vision for the Inland Empire is a reinvented regional system that engages business and industry in identifying high quality jobs and designing training programs to prepare a competitive workforce. The IERPU partners will prepare the workforce by ensuring that services address barriers to employment and promote educational attainment to create pathways from dependency to prosperity.

¹ Census (2020). QuickFacts: Riverside County, California; San Bernardino County, California. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/riversidecountycalifornia,sanbernardinocountycalifornia/AFN120212>.

² San Bernardino County (2020). County Profile. Retrieved from: <https://wp.sbcounty.gov/indicators/county-profile/>.

³ Census (2020).

With this vision in mind, the regional partners across both counties and boards developed several objectives for the development of the Inland Empire 2021-2024 WIOA Regional Workforce Development Plan:

- To create strategies that develop equitable, regional, sector-based career pathways in target sectors, ensuring access and inclusion for all of the region’s residents, businesses and organizations
- To learn from what worked and identify what still needs to be done in response to COVID-19, both in the short- and long-term
- To build a high-road employment system, leveraging the support of high-road employers to build robust career pathways that lead to family-sustaining wages
- To increase efficiencies, reduce duplication and improve overall quality of services through synergistic regional cooperation and mutually reinforcing strategies
- To consider how automation, new technologies, the gig economy and related “future of work” concepts will impact the regional economy, targeted sectors and jobs

Future of Work

In addition to regional sector-based career pathways, high road employment, access and inclusion and regional coordination, a fifth overarching concept, the future of work, was addressed by the region and its partners. Changes to the economy and jobs brought about by automation, remote working and the gig economy, for example, are highly likely over the next four years. In 2017, the McKinsey Global Institute analyzed individual activities within jobs and found that as much as 50 percent of time spent on activities across all sectors could be automated with current technology.⁴ A more recent survey of businesses conducted by McKinsey in June 2020 of 800 executives found that over 67 percent have accelerated their adoption of automation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵



⁴ “Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained: Workforce Transitions in a Time of Automation,” McKinsey Global Institute, December 2017, <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/jobs-lost-jobs-gained-what-the-future-of-work-will-mean-for-jobs-skills-and-wages>

⁵ “What 800 Executives Envision for the Postpandemic Workforce,” McKinsey & Company, Sept 2020, <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/what-800-executives-envision-for-the-postpandemic-workforce>



Automation is only one facet, however, and the growth of the gig economy is another. When last analyzed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) in 2017, “contingent workers” (including independent contractors, on-call workers, temp workers and workers provided by contract firms) made up 3.8% of all workers at 5.9 million, down from 4.1% in 2005 when the survey was last conducted.⁶ The Freelancer Union calculated a much higher figure for gig workers at 57.3 million in 2017, or 37% of the workforce, staying relatively consistent at this number through 2019.⁷ The BLS study has been scrutinized for using survey questions that may have left out many contingent workers and the Freelancer Union, who

works with gig work platform Upwork on their research, may have a bias toward overestimating the number of gig workers.⁸ This probably means the actual number of gig or contingent workers likely falls somewhere between the two figures. In any case, the number of workers engaged in the gig economy is considerable, nationally and also in the Inland Empire region.

Impacts of COVID-19

As the Inland Empire continues to manage a public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic, an economic response has also been necessary in light of many business closures and reductions in early 2020. Workers and families were significantly impacted by the losses of income, childcare and in-person schooling while trying to keep themselves safe from the virus. Individuals in training programs saw delays, shifts to virtual classes or outright cancellations of their program, impacting their ability to upskill. County staff offering employment services to the community had to quickly pivot to virtual services and other means to safely continue to provide services. The multiple layers of challenges faced all at once are likely to have long-term impacts, even as a vaccine is now becoming more available and the region is plotting a course to economic recovery.

There are a few potential long-term impacts the region considered in relation to the pandemic hit. First, workers who lost their job looked to the gig economy to replace their income. Many of these jobs are not high-quality jobs and these workers will need assistance in charting a path and getting support in obtaining a better job. Second, there was a tremendous increase in remote working across the region. For some, this actually may have provided a higher degree of work-life balance, but for others, it proved to be a difficult transition and exacerbated inequities related to access to technology and reliable internet access. It is likely that some businesses will choose to keep more of

⁶ “A Look at Contingent Workers,” Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2018, <https://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2018/contingent-workers/home.htm>

⁷ “Freelancing in America”, Freelancers Union, October 2019, <https://www.freelancersunion.org/about/freelancing-in-america/>

⁸ “Experts Puzzled by New BLS Contingent Workforce Data,” Society for Human Resource Management, June 2018, <https://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/Pages/Experts-Puzzled-New-BLS-Contingent-Workforce-Data.aspx>

their workers working remotely, even after the pandemic is no longer a major issue due to cost savings and other efficiencies.

As the restrictions on in-person gatherings loosen and workplaces reopen, bringing workers back on the job, as well as participants back in for workforce services, brings in a third potential long-term impact – new health and safety policies in the workplace. This might include new regulations on how workplaces are designed for the sake of physical distancing, policies about mask-wearing and/or requiring “workplace infection control plans”.⁹ With these potential long-term developments in mind, the region considered how to incorporate the impacts of COVID-19 on the economy and jobs into its workforce development strategies.

Regional Workforce Plan Development Process

The IERPU developed this plan as mandated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), with guidance provided by the State of California’s Workforce Development Board via Directive WSD20-05 and in alignment with the CWDB Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan. The process included initial planning and document review, stakeholder and community input, plan development and public posting, and regional leadership approval and finalization. These four phases are described below.

Initial Planning and Document Review

Staff members of the IERPU, which includes both San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, met to create a process for developing the plan, scheduling partner input meetings, setting dates for plan development and a process for regional leadership review and finalization. The prior 4-year regional plan and modification documents were reviewed for historical reference and documents related to current programming and services across the region were gathered for analysis. Guided by a plan outline, the IERPU began gathering input from stakeholders and community partners.

Stakeholder and Community Input

A total of nine virtual meetings were scheduled to gather stakeholder and community input for the regional plan. AJCC MOU Partners, RCWDB members, SBCWDB members, regional employers and nonprofit community partners all took part in these meetings as detailed in Appendix A. In these virtual meetings, participants were able to give input via breakout sessions covering five areas: COVID-19, Career Pathways to the Middle Class, High Road Employment System, Access and Inclusion and Future of Work. These highly engaging sessions provided input into the design of the regional and local plans, particularly in developing goals, tactics and indicators. Meetings were followed by an online survey that asked for feedback on each meeting as well as provided an opportunity for additional input for the plan.

Feedback from participants in the region is gathered on an ongoing basis by two primary methods – participant surveys and focus groups. In these processes, participants are asked questions such as “What are your primary reasons for visiting the AJCC?”, “Share your experience with the service

⁹ “Former OSHA Head Talks Biden’s Executive Order on Workplace Safety”, National Public Radio, January 23, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2021/01/23/959985609/former-osh-head-talks-bidens-executive-order-on-workplace-safety>

provided by the AJCC including your interaction with staff.” and “What other resources and services have you been referred to by staff at the AJCC?” The feedback received is reported back to the oversight and coordination bodies in the region for incorporation into planning. A few examples of feedback from participants in these processes that have been incorporated include:

- Include a description of the AJCC system partner services (to participants)
- Add online workshops for participants to access
- Add networking opportunities for job seekers to engage with employers

Plan Development and Public Posting

Between January and February 2021, the plan was written based on state guidance, SBCWDB and RCWDB priorities, staff expertise and the input received from all stakeholders. After an overview of this draft plan was reviewed by both WDBs in February 2021, the plan was then posted for public comment for 30 days.

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II. Analytical Overview of the Region

In the following section, an analytical overview of the Inland Empire region is provided. The analysis was provided to the region by the University of California Riverside (UCR) Center for Economic Forecasting and Development. For most of the subsections here, data was only available through 2019, however, the region considered the economic impacts of the pandemic in 2020 in the planning process. The IERPU will continue to monitor the impacts of the pandemic on the workforce and utilize new data as it becomes available.

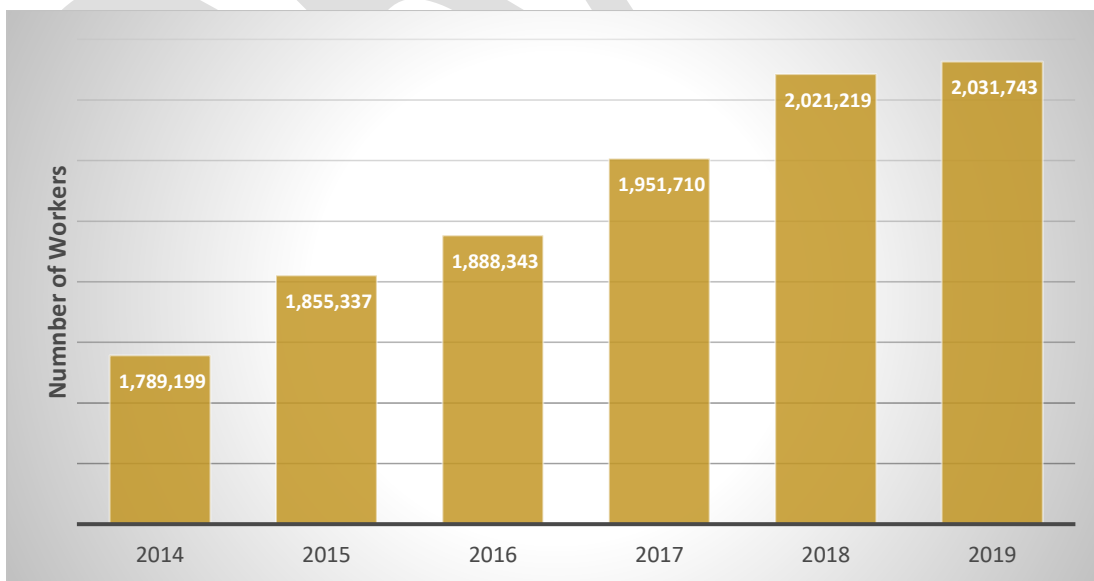
The next subsection begins with a look at the Inland Empire workforce – current employment, largest industries and most common occupations. This is followed by a breakdown of the region’s labor force participation including demographics and educational attainment. Next, unemployment is analyzed, then employer needs are described in terms of emerging demand and an occupational skills assessment. Finally, relevant gaps between employer needs and the workforce’s qualifications are described.

Current Employment, Largest Industries and Most Common Occupations

Current Employment

Total nonfarm employment reached 2.03 million in 2019 in the Inland Empire, up 0.5% compared to 2018. 2019 marks the year with the slowest year-over-year growth in employment in the Inland Empire since 2014. Except for 2016, when employment increased 1.8% compared to the previous year, other years had year-over-year employment increases of over 3% (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Total Nonfarm Employment in the Inland Empire, 2014-19



Source: American Community Survey. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Largest Industries

In the Inland Empire, Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest industry sector (Table 1), employing over a quarter of a million workers, followed by Retail Trade, Professional and Business Services, Educational Services, and Manufacturing. These five industry sectors employed over one million people or 52.3% of total employment in 2019, down from 53.4% in 2014. Compared to 2014, these industries sector grew 12.3%, 7.1%, 13.5%, 22.0%, and 4.5%, respectively.

Table 1: Nonfarm Employment and Wage by Sector in the Inland Empire, 2014-2019

	NUMBER OF WORKERS			AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGE		
	2014	2019	% Change	2014	2019	% Change
Health care and social assistance	230,994	259,436	12.3%	\$45,549	\$54,143	18.9%
Retail trade	228,703	244,950	7.1%	\$28,503	\$33,421	17.3%
Professional and business services	179,225	203,384	13.5%	\$36,768	\$47,831	30.1%
Educational services	146,212	178,322	22.0%	\$42,126	\$49,749	18.1%
Manufacturing	169,761	177,367	4.5%	\$46,315	\$53,659	15.9%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	132,736	176,113	32.7%	\$43,511	\$45,133	3.7%
Construction	140,855	175,017	24.3%	\$39,371	\$48,065	22.1%
Accommodation and food services	136,901	153,296	12.0%	\$18,349	\$24,929	35.9%
Other services, except public administration	91,710	108,971	18.8%	\$24,452	\$28,228	15.4%
Public administration	90,907	107,639	18.4%	\$66,773	\$72,873	9.1%
Wholesale trade	58,636	62,241	6.1%	\$43,002	\$53,574	24.6%
Finance and insurance	53,519	56,647	5.8%	\$51,136	\$63,628	24.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	44,269	48,299	9.1%	\$25,466	\$32,588	28.0%
Real estate and rental and leasing	39,414	37,009	-6.1%	\$35,150	\$53,203	51.4%
Information	23,217	25,111	8.2%	\$52,393	\$51,803	-1.1%
Natural resources and mining	22,140	17,941	-19.0%	\$30,597	\$36,861	20.5%
Total/Average	1,789,199	2,031,743	13.6%	\$38,823	\$46,215	19.0%

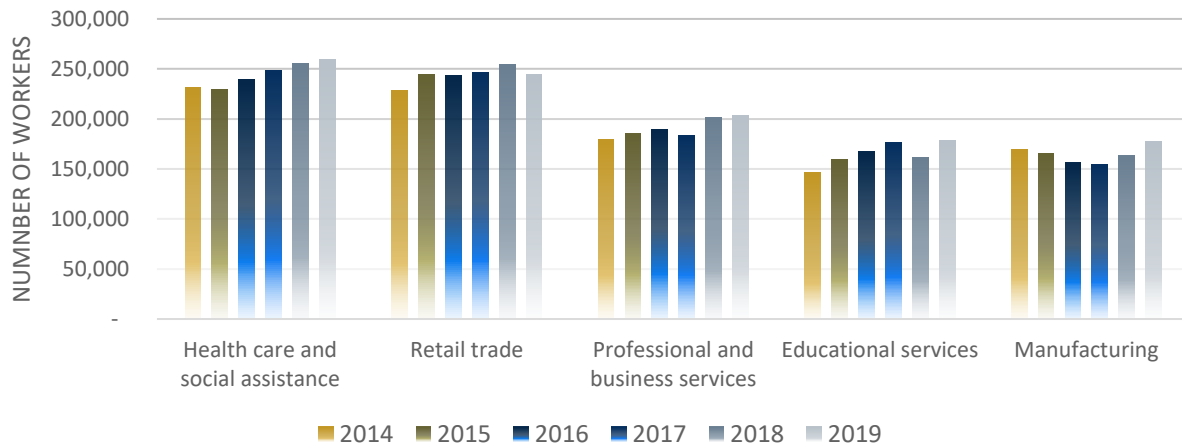
Source: American Community Survey. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

In 2019, except for Retail Trade (\$33,400), the average wages for the largest industry sectors paid above the total average of all jobs (\$46,200) in Inland Empire: Health Care and Social Assistance (\$54,100), Professional and Business Services (\$47,800), Educational Services (\$49,700), and Manufacturing (\$53,700). The average wages of Health Care and Social Assistance and Manufacturing paid 17.2% and 16.1% more than the total average of all jobs, respectively. On the other hand, the average wage in Retail Trade is 27.7% lower than the total average. Public Administration (\$72,900) has the highest average wage in Inland Empire. The average wage increased in all industry sectors from 2014 to 2019 except for Information, which contracted 1.1%.

Except for Manufacturing, the largest industries in the Inland Empire had sustained and gradual increases during the period of 2014 to 2019 (Figure 3). The sustained and gradual increases are

most prominent in Health Care and Social Services and Professional and Business Services. Meanwhile, after years of declining employment, Manufacturing employment rebounded after 2017. From 2017 to 2019, Manufacturing added 22,900 jobs, or a 14.8% increase.

Figure 3: Largest Industries by Employment in the Inland Empire, 2014-19



Source: American Community Survey. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Largest industry Subsectors

The largest industry subsectors in Inland Empire are Educational Services (Primary/Secondary), Construction, Food Services and Drinking Places, Professional and Technical Services, and Ambulatory Health Care Services (Table 2). The first three subsectors each employed over 100,000 workers and just under half a million workers altogether, while the other two subsectors each employed almost 100,000 workers. Altogether, the 15 largest industry subsectors shown in this table employed 1.2 million workers; three in five workers in the Inland Empire work in one of these 15 subsectors.

In recent years, the Inland Empire has seen a tremendous growth in the Transportation and Warehousing industry, and correspondingly, Warehousing and Storage more than doubled in employment (+130.8%) from 2014 to 2019. On the other hand, employment in Truck Transportation declined 18.1% during the five-year period. Employment in General Merchandise Stores (-14.6%) and Food and Beverage Stores (-3.7%), both of which are client facing and contact heavy, had declined significantly. Collectively, there are 15,900 fewer jobs in these three industry subsectors in 2019 than in 2014.

Table 2: Largest Subsectors by Employment in the Inland Empire, 2014-2019

	NUMBER OF WORKERS			AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGE		
	2014	2019	% Change	2014	2019	% Change
Educational services (primary/secondary)	146,212	178,322	22.0%	\$42,126	\$49,749	18.1%
Construction	140,855	175,017	24.3%	\$39,371	\$48,065	22.1%
Food services and drinking places	118,672	132,936	12.0%	\$16,593	\$23,441	41.3%
Professional and technical services	74,258	97,857	31.8%	\$50,520	\$65,190	29.0%
Ambulatory health care services	80,489	97,522	21.2%	\$45,959	\$55,343	20.4%
Administrative and support services	96,678	96,431	-0.3%	\$25,554	\$29,513	15.5%
Hospitals	79,562	85,037	6.9%	\$63,227	\$73,672	16.5%
Warehousing and storage	24,238	55,950	130.8%	\$29,662	\$31,025	4.6%
Public administration	46,953	51,970	10.7%	\$80,955	\$92,078	13.7%
Social assistance	46,199	51,652	11.8%	\$23,459	\$28,922	23.3%
Food and beverage stores	42,260	40,684	-3.7%	\$30,127	\$33,339	10.7%
Repair and maintenance	30,535	39,113	28.1%	\$30,095	\$35,241	17.1%
Amusements, gambling, and recreation	34,179	37,017	8.3%	\$27,285	\$34,785	27.5%
Truck transportation	45,068	36,893	-18.1%	\$38,697	\$43,889	13.4%
General merchandise stores	42,131	35,964	-14.6%	\$23,987	\$28,047	16.9%
Inland Empire Overall	1,7891,99	2,031,743	13.6%	\$38,823	\$46,215	19.0%

Source: American Community Survey. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Most Common Occupations

The Inland Empire has a strong Transportation and Warehousing industry, and intuitively Material Moving Workers (SOC 53-7000) is by far the most common occupation, with 129,100 workers employed in this occupation in 2019. Motor Vehicle Operators is another major occupation in transportation and warehousing, employment 80,500 workers (Table 3). Other popular occupations in the Inland Empire include: Construction Trade Workers, Retail Sales Workers, and Other Management Occupations. Altogether, the five largest occupations employed over half a million people and the 15 largest occupations employed over a million people in 2019.

Given that Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest industry by employment, healthcare related occupations also make the list of largest occupations in the Inland Empire. Specifically, 71,300 workers are Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners and 54,000 are Home Health and Personal Care Aides; and Nursing Assistants, Orderlies, and Psychiatric Aides.

The boom in the Transportation and Warehousing industry translates into a significant increase in the number of people working as Material Moving Workers (+61.0%). Meanwhile, the increase in healthcare and related jobs are bifurcated: The number of people working as Home Health Aides, which are low paying, had increased by 278.3%, while the number of Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners, which are significantly higher paying, increased by only 20.6%, which is still above the Inland Empire overall of 13.6%.

Table 3: Most Common Occupations by Employment in the Inland Empire, 2014-2019

	NUMBER OF WORKERS			AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGE		
	2014	2019	% Change	2014	2019	% Change
Material Moving Workers	80,196	129,125	61.0%	\$23,506	\$27,834	18.4%
Construction Trades Workers	89,260	115,487	29.4%	\$31,818	\$42,254	32.8%
Retail Sales Workers	101,411	104,552	3.1%	\$16,723	\$22,698	35.7%
Other Management Occupations	87,763	99,114	12.9%	\$61,708	\$70,273	13.9%
Motor Vehicle Operators	75,002	80,541	7.4%	\$36,736	\$40,225	9.5%
Information and Record Clerks	61,189	76,876	25.6%	\$25,817	\$30,967	19.9%
Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners	59,164	71,343	20.6%	\$82,209	\$102,048	24.1%
Preschool, Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Special Education Teachers	52,719	66,888	26.9%	\$52,715	\$59,254	12.4%
Supervisors of Sales Workers	52,441	62,464	19.1%	\$51,338	\$46,379	-9.7%
Building Cleaning and Pest Control Workers	49,195	54,981	11.8%	\$18,206	\$21,841	20.0%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides; and Nursing Assistants, Orderlies, and Psychiatric Aides	14,271	53,987	278.3%	\$22,434	\$22,276	-0.7%
Business Operations Specialists	34,788	47,822	37.5%	\$55,907	\$62,690	12.1%
Cooks and Food Preparation Workers	45,412	47,036	3.6%	\$14,368	\$20,593	43.3%
Other Production Occupations	39,516	44,316	12.1%	\$34,616	\$36,822	6.4%
Other Office and Administrative Support Workers	37,964	39,349	3.6%	\$29,797	\$34,362	15.3%
Inland Empire Overall	1,789,199	2,031,743	13.6%	\$38,823	\$46,215	19.0%

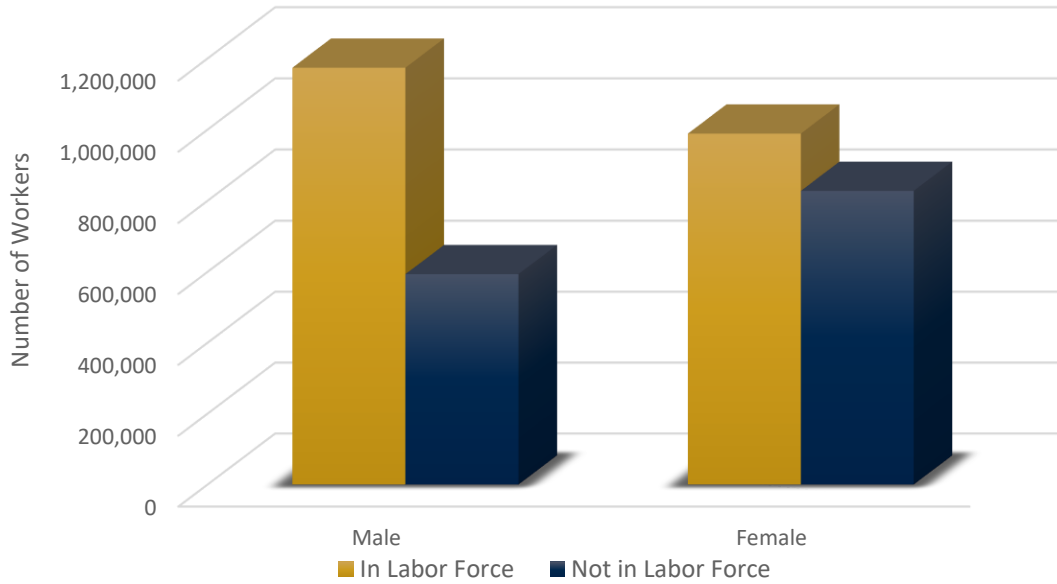
Source: American Community Survey. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Inland Empire Labor Force Participation

Gender

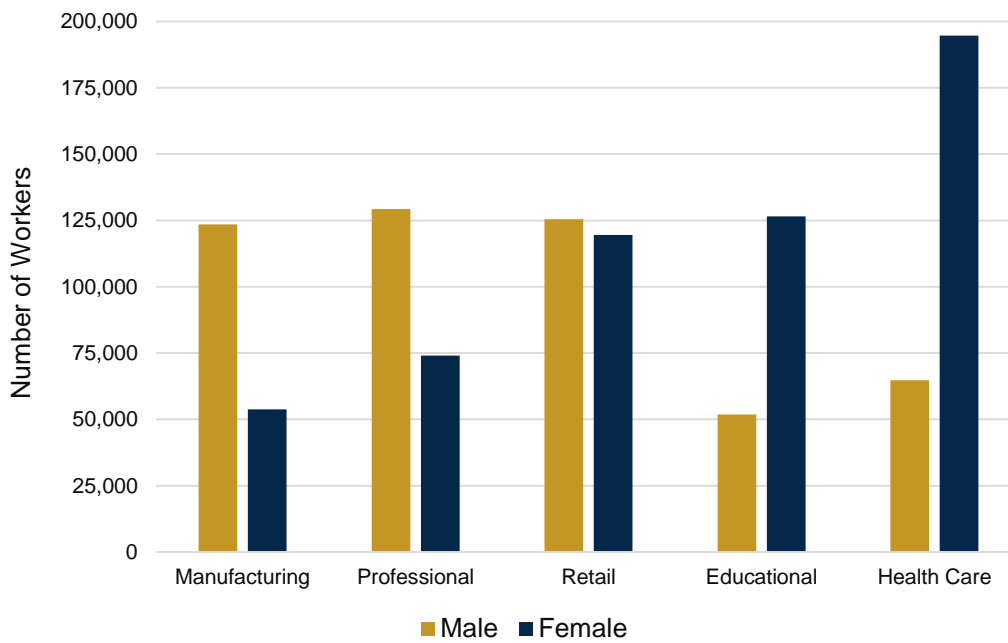
There are about 988,721 females in the labor force, compared to about 1,173,904 males in the labor force. This translates to 66.4% of all males in the region who are part of the labor force in the Inland Empire, a significantly higher rate compared to the 54.4% labor participation rate seen in females (Figure 4). Over the last five years, female participation increased by about 8.1%, and the largest five-year growth took place among women in the educational sector, which grew 25.6% from 100,690 workers in 2014 to 126,488 workers in 2019. There was a faster growth rate among women than men across each of the five sectors represented in the data, with the only exception being the Professional Services sector (Figure 5). Men in this group represented a 15.3% increase across the population in the Inland Empire, compared to 10.4% for women.

Figure 4: Labor Force by Gender in Inland Empire, 2019



Source: American Community Survey. UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Figure 5: Industry Employment by Gender in Inland Empire, 2019

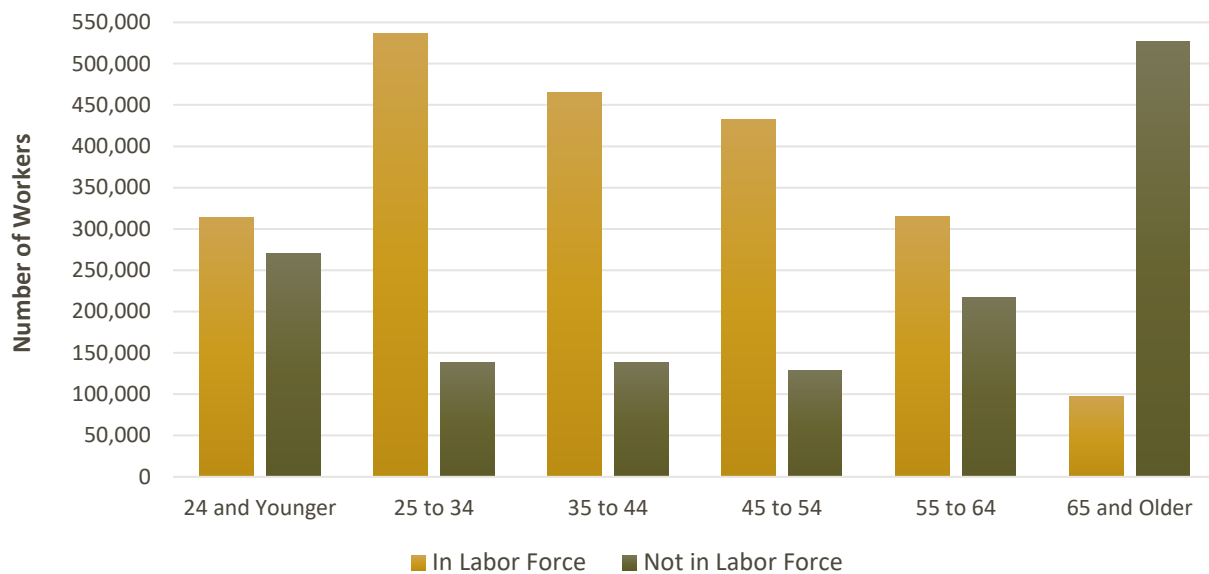


Source: American Community Survey. UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Age

Labor force participation rates in the Inland Empire are strongest among the residents between ages 25 and 34, who made up 537,000 of the County's workforce in 2019 (Figure 6). Although the number of residents outside the labor force held steady for workers between ages 25 and 54, the number of residents in the labor force tapered off as workers grew older (with a steep drop off workers age 65 and older due to retirement). That said, for each of the region's top five sectors, employment for workers over 25 actually increased across all age groups from 2014 to 2019 with the one exception of decline of nearly 1,000 workers between the ages of 45 and 54 in the Professional Services sector.

Figure 6: Labor Force Participation by Age Group in Inland Empire, 2019

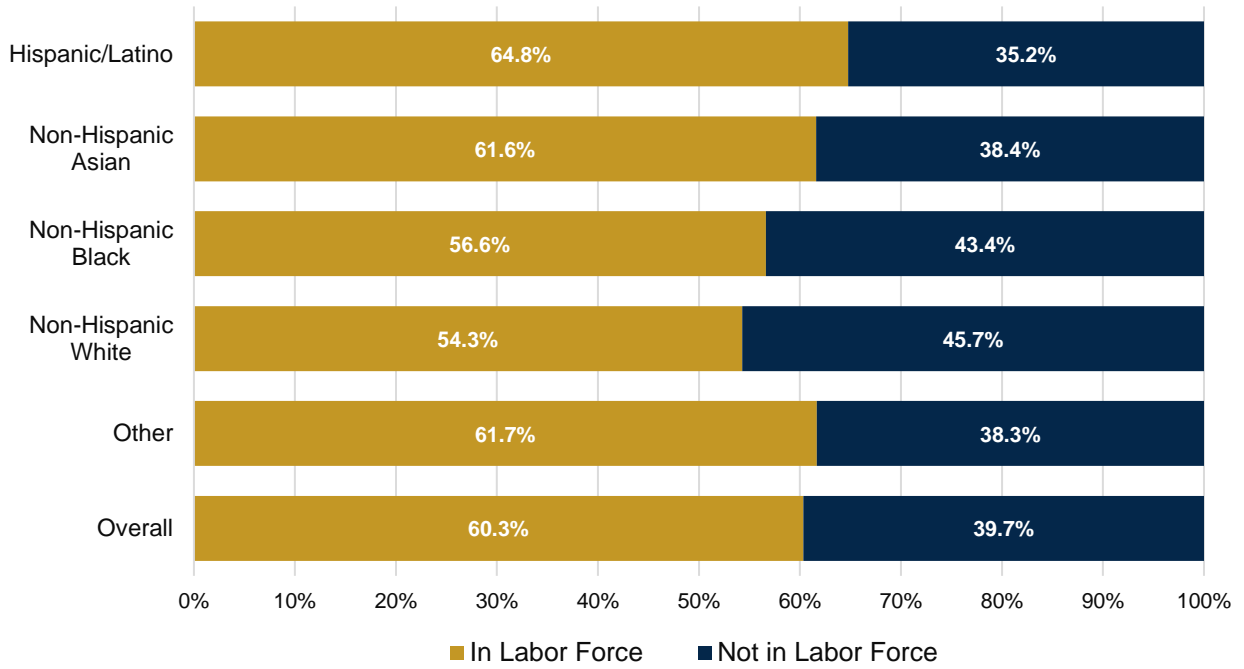


Source: American Community Survey. UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Race and Ethnicity

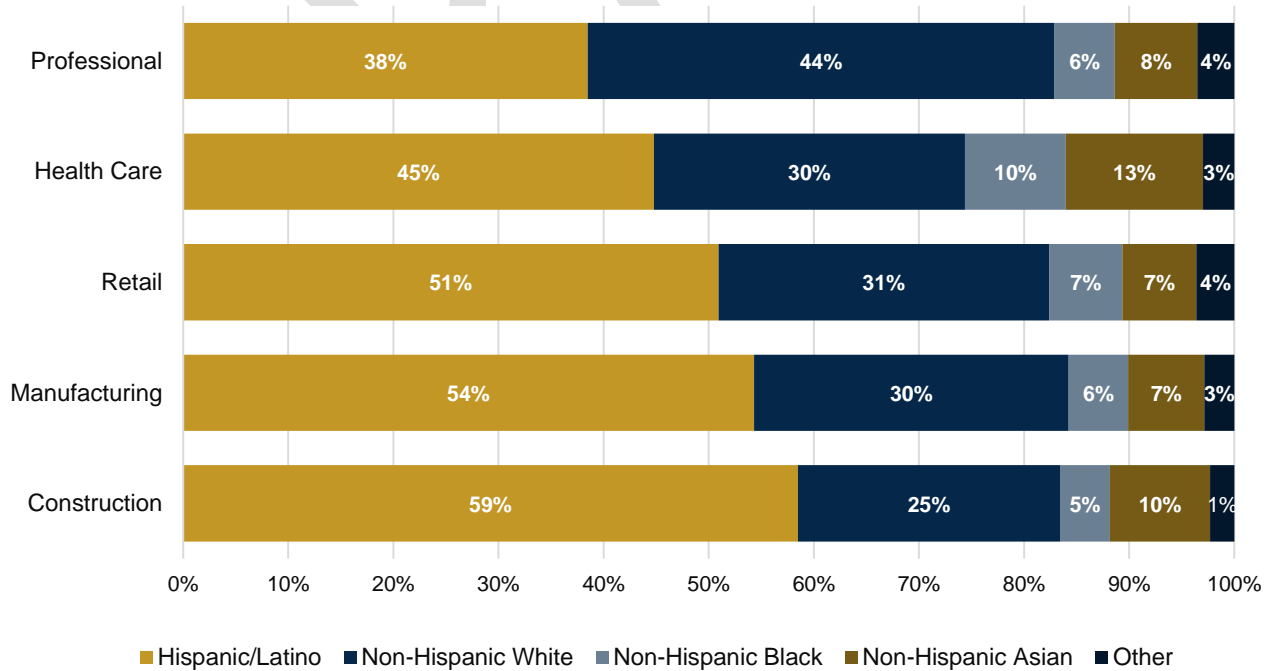
Across the Inland Empire, labor force participation rates among Hispanic/Latino and non-Hispanic Asian residents (at 64.8% and 61.6%, respectively) were markedly higher than non-Hispanic White (54.3%) and Non-Hispanic Black (56.6%) residents (Figure 7). Across each of the race groups, the largest five-year change took place among Hispanic/Latinos in the labor force, which grew over 15% from 988,098 in 2014 to 1,137,859 in 2019. Hispanic/Latino workers comprised the largest share of the workforce for four out of the five largest sectors (Figure 8) – in Professional Services, non-Hispanic Whites made up the largest share – and made up a majority of the workforce in Construction (at a 59% share), Manufacturing (54%), and Retail (51%). Non-Hispanic Black and non-Hispanic Asian workers contributed a combined share of 23% of the Healthcare workforce but were otherwise not highly represented among the Inland Empire's five largest sectors.

Figure 7: Labor Force Participation by Race in Inland Empire, 2019



Source: American Community Survey. UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Figure 8: Industry Employment by Race in Inland Empire, 2019

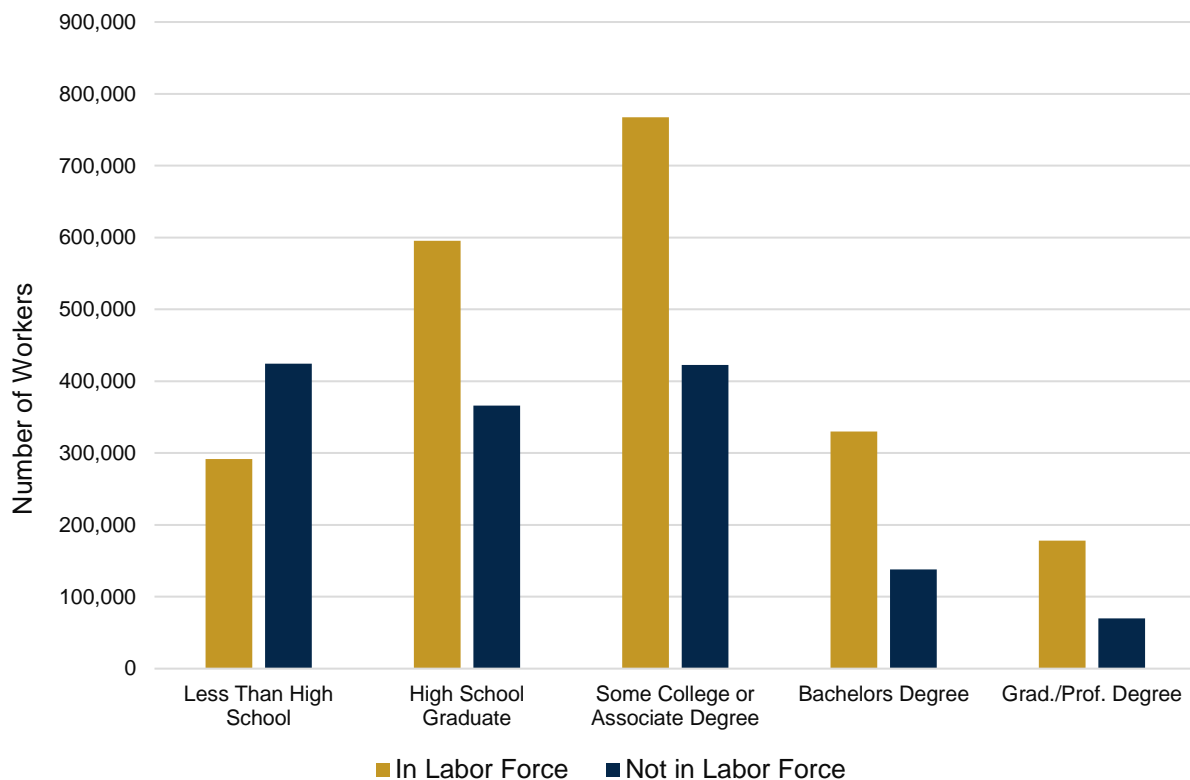


Source: American Community Survey. UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Educational Attainment

The majority of workers in Inland Empire have at least some college education: 1,275,470 workers (66.9%) fall into this category, compared to the 630,612 (33.1%) workers that have at most a high school degree (Figure 9). Across each of the educational attainment categories listed, the fastest growth has been among those with a bachelor's degree who are in the labor force, which grew 26.2% between 2014 and 2019.

Figure 9: Labor Force Participation by Educational Attainment in Inland Empire, 2019

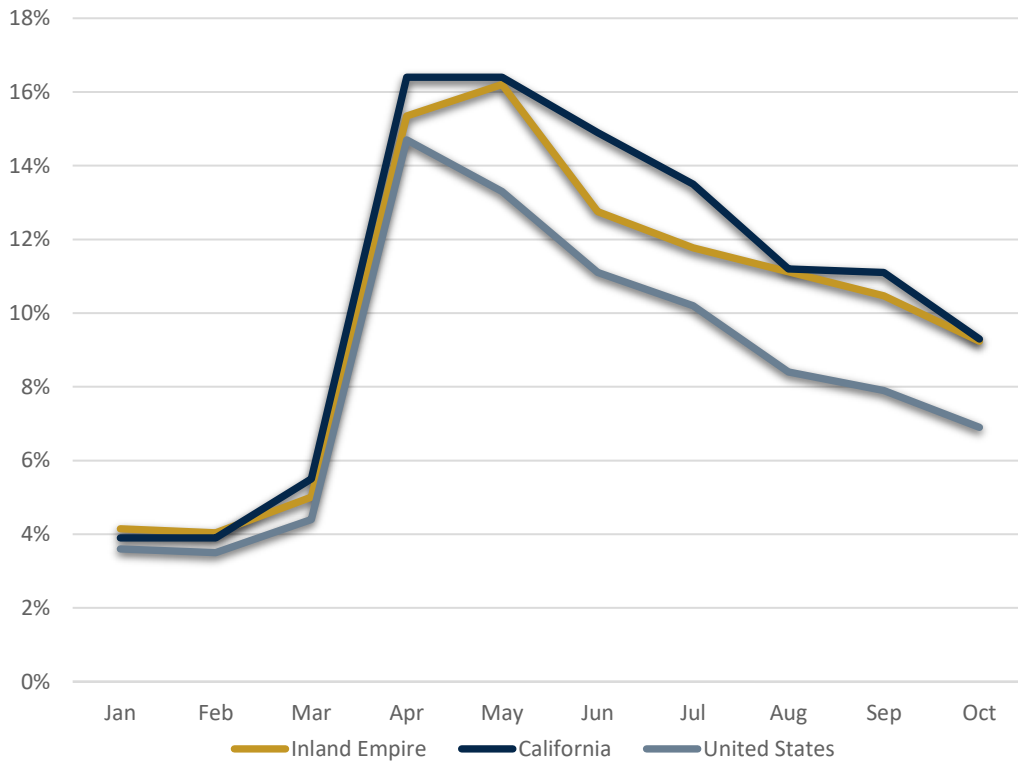


Source: American Community Survey. UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Unemployment

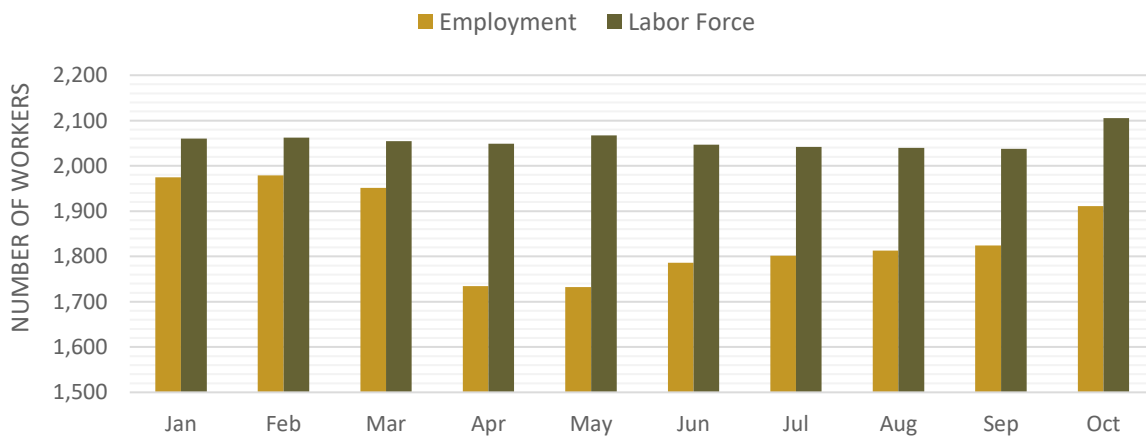
The pandemic has caused the Inland Empire's unemployment rate to increase over the last year, however it has also improved from the lows immediately following statewide lockdown orders (Figure 10). The Inland Empire's unemployment rate is now 9.2%, a far cry from the 4.0% rate a year earlier. The unemployment rate in the Inland Empire is higher relative to the United States (6.9%), but is below California (9.3%). Although unemployment rates remain elevated, the region's labor force has largely recovered (Figure 11). From October 2019 to October 2020, 28,300 workers entered the Inland Empire's labor force, a 1.4% increase. This increase is in stark contrast to declines in the state (-1.1%) and nation (-2.1%) over the period. Without the decrease in California's labor force, the state's unemployment figure would be even higher than the Inland Empire's.

Figure 10: Change in Unemployment Rate in the Inland Empire, January to October 2020



Source: California EDD. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Figure 11: Change in Employment and Labor Force in the Inland Empire, January to October 2020 (in Thousands)



Source: California EDD. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Labor Market Demand

Emerging Demand

The Inland Empire's labor market has continued to steadily recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, adding 93,100 jobs since April's lows. Despite the ongoing labor market recovery, year-over-year employment fell 7.1% (-110,600 jobs), one of the largest annual declines on record. The sizeable losses over the last year has also pushed down long-run growth for the region. From October 2015 to October 2020, the Inland Empire has expanded payrolls by just 4.5%.

Although job losses have been widespread, a few bright spots exist. The surge in e-commerce has helped keep the region's Logistics resilient over the last several months. Payrolls in Logistics expanded by 100 employees over the last year, compared with a 3.3% decline in the state over the same period. From a longer-term perspective, Logistics has also been a significant source of job gains for the region. From October 2015 to October 2020, Logistics payrolls expanded by a 45.3%, well above the 4.5% growth in the region overall (Table 4). Health Care (20.4%), Natural Resources and Construction (16.2%), and Wholesale Trade (8.0%) also posted growth levels well above average over the last year.

The short-term job losses caused resulting from the mandates related to the COVID-19 pandemic are also impacting longer-run growth rates. From October 2015 to October 2020, Information (-18.6%), Leisure and Hospitality (-18.1%), and Other Services (-16.8%) all posted sizeable declines in employment levels relative to five years ago. Still, once containment measures related to the virus are able to ease these sectors should have significant job gains as companies ramp up production to meet surging consumer demand.

Table 4: Change in Employment by Industry in the Inland Empire, October 2016 to October 2020 (in Thousands)

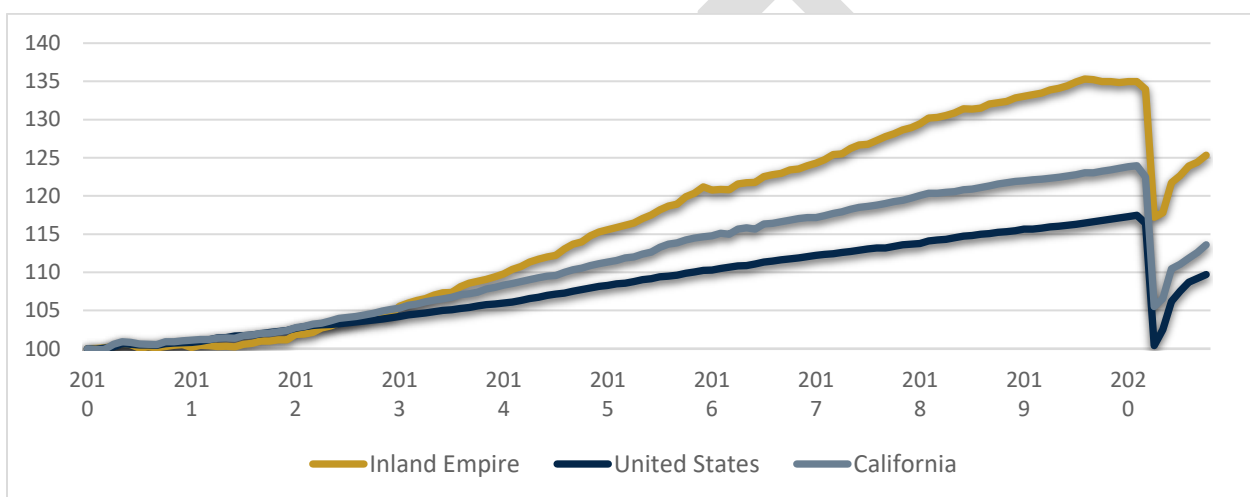
	October 2020	1-Year Percentage Change	2-Year Percentage Change	5-Year Percentage Change
Government	249.45	-4.7%	-3.2%	5.8%
Health Care	230.38	-1.2%	3.3%	20.4%
Retail Trade	170.82	-6.2%	-5.9%	-3.5%
Logistics	146.64	0.0%	8.7%	45.3%
Leisure and Hospitality	126.38	-27.6%	-26.5%	-18.1%
NR/Construction	104.58	-2.0%	-2.7%	16.2%
Administrative Support	97.94	-6.4%	-3.5%	-3.1%
Manufacturing	88.86	-11.6%	-12.7%	-8.9%
Wholesale Trade	66.53	-0.2%	0.5%	8.0%
Financial Activities	44.09	-0.9%	0.8%	0.0%
Professional Services	40.34	-4.9%	-5.6%	3.1%
Other Services	36.97	-18.5%	-19.6%	-16.8%

Education	17.01	-15.3%	-13.1%	-6.0%
Information	9.66	-15.2%	-15.0%	-18.6%
Management	9.04	2.0%	7.0%	0.5%
Total Nonfarm Employment	1,438.70	-7.1%	-5.2%	4.5%

Source: California EDD. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Employment growth since mid-2020 has kept pace with California and the U.S. (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Indexed Employment Growth for the Inland Empire Compared to California and the United States, 2010 to 2020



Source: California EDD. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Of all of the industries, Transportation and Warehousing grew at the fastest pace, adding 43,400 jobs, followed by Construction, which added 34,200 jobs and Educational Services, which added 32,100 jobs from 2014 to 2019 (Table 5). The ten fastest growing industries listed in Table 5 added 236,500 jobs in the Inland Empire, or 97.5% of all jobs added in the region between 2014 and 2019.

Table 5: Fastest Growing Industries in the Inland Empire by Number of Workers Added, 2014-2019

	NUMBER OF WORKERS		
	2014	2019	Change
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	132,736	176,113	+43,377
Construction	140,855	175,017	+34,162
Educational services	146,212	178,322	+32,110

Health care and social assistance	230,994	259,436	+28,442
Professional and business services	179,225	203,384	+24,159
Other services, except public administration	91,710	108,971	+17,261
Public administration	90,907	107,639	+16,732
Accommodation and food services	136,901	153,296	+16,395
Retail trade	228,703	244,950	+16,247
Manufacturing	169,761	177,367	+7,606
Inland Empire Overall	1,789,199	2,031,743	+242,544

Source: American Community Survey. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

At the industry subsector level, Construction added the most jobs (+34,200), followed by Educational Services (+32,100 jobs) and Warehousing and Storage (+31,700 jobs). These three subsectors added almost 100,000 jobs in the Inland Empire alone. These ten fastest growing subsectors added 197,900 jobs, or 81.6% of the region's total jobs added (Table 6).

Table 6: Fastest Growing Subsectors in the Inland Empire by Number of Workers Added, 2014-2019

	NUMBER OF WORKERS		
	2014	2019	Change
Construction	140,855	175,017	+34,162
Educational services (primary/secondary)	146,212	178,322	+32,110
Warehousing and storage	24,238	55,950	+31,712
Professional and technical services	74,258	97,857	+23,599
Ambulatory health care services	80,489	97,522	+17,033
Nonstore retailers	5,871	21,881	+16,010
Food services and drinking places	118,672	132,936	+14,264
Administration of human resource programs	10,822	21,684	+10,862
Couriers and messengers	11,790	21,327	+9,537
Repair and maintenance	30,535	39,113	+8,578
Inland Empire Overall	1,789,199	2,031,743	+242,544

Source: American Community Survey. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

In just five years, the presence of e-commerce has expanded significantly (Table 7). Correspondingly, employment in Nonstore Retailers have almost quadrupled (+272.7%) from 2014 to 2019. Employment in Warehousing and Storage (+130.8%) and Administration of Human Resource Programs (+100.4%) have also at least doubled during the same period. The rise of Warehousing and Storage jobs is due to the booming logistics industry in the region, which also likely explains the increase in Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation employment (+88.0%) and Rail Transportation (+33.8%). Administration of Human Resource Programs, which is a

subsector of Public Administration, comprises government establishments primarily engaged in the planning, administration, and coordination of programs for public assistance, social work, and welfare activities.

Table 7: Fastest Growing Subsectors in the Inland Empire by Employment Growth Rate, 2014-2019

	NUMBER OF WORKERS		
	2014	2019	% Change
Nonstore retailers	5,871	21,881	272.7%
Warehousing and storage	24,238	55,950	130.8%
Administration of human resource programs	10,822	21,684	100.4%
Transit and ground passenger transportation	7,885	14,825	88.0%
Couriers and messengers	11,790	21,327	80.9%
Motion picture and sound recording industries	4,046	5,855	44.7%
Chemical manufacturing	11,955	16,542	38.4%
Miscellaneous store retailers	18,766	25,913	38.1%
Membership associations and organizations	18,051	24,803	37.4%
Rail transportation	4,834	6,468	33.8%
Inland Empire Overall	1,7891,99	2,031,743	13.6%

Source: American Community Survey. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

The number of people who work as Home Health and Personal Care Aides; and Nursing Assistants, Orderlies, and Psychiatric Aides have almost quadrupled (+278.3%) from 2014 to 2019, highlighting the Inland Empire's growing needs for basic healthcare services (Table 8). In addition, the number of people working as Counselors, Social Workers, and Other Community and Social Service Specialists (+54.3%) and Religious Workers (+53.0%) also grew substantially, underscoring the region's increasing demand for social services. Although employment in the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry (+9.1%) grew slower than overall employment in the Inland Empire (+13.6%), some of its related occupations are the fastest growing in the region. There are substantially more Media and Communication Equipment Workers (+93.1%) and Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers (+66.1%) in 2019 than in 2014.

Table 8: Fastest Growing Occupations in the Inland Empire by Employment Growth Rate, 2014-2019

	NUMBER OF WORKERS		
	2014	2019	% Change
Home Health and Personal Care Aides; and Nursing Assistants, Orderlies, and Psychiatric Aides	14,271	53,987	278.3%
Media and Communication Equipment Workers	2,628	5,075	93.1%
Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers	6,504	10,802	66.1%
Other Construction and Related Workers	4,529	7,444	64.4%
Material Moving Workers	80,196	129,125	61.0%
Counselors, Social Workers, and Other Community and Social Service Specialists	22,568	34,830	54.3%
Religious Workers	5,097	7,796	53.0%
Drafters, Engineering Technicians, and Mapping Technicians	6,739	10,117	50.1%
Animal Care and Service Workers	3,732	5,399	44.7%
Operations Specialties Managers	23,580	32,942	39.7%
Inland Empire Overall	1,7891,99	2,031,743	13.6%

Source: American Community Survey. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Occupational Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

This section highlights the knowledge, skills, and abilities desired by employers across industries for occupations most in demand today as well as for emerging occupations. Tables below list the technical skills as well as workplace success personal attributes or “soft skills” that may be required for a given occupation. See Tables 9 and 10 for the knowledge skills and abilities for the most common occupations in the region and the fastest growing occupations.

Table 9: Desired Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities for Most Common Occupations in the Inland Empire

	Knowledge	Skills	Abilities	Credentials
Material Moving Workers	English Language; Mechanical; Production and Processing; Public Safety and Security; Mathematics	Operation Monitoring; Operation and Control; Monitoring; Critical Thinking; Active Listening;	Multi-limb Coordination; Control Precision; Problem Sensitivity; Near Vision; Manual Dexterity	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher
Construction Trades Workers	Building and Construction; Mechanical; Mathematics; English Language; Customer and Personal Service	Critical Thinking; Coordination; Active Listening; Monitoring; Speaking	Near Vision; Arm-Hand Steadiness; Manual Dexterity; Multi-limb Coordination; Trunk Strength	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher
Retail Sales Workers	Customer and Personal Service;	Active Listening; Service Orientation;	Oral Expression; Oral	Usually requires High

	English Language; Sales and Marketing; Mathematics; Clerical	Speaking; Reading Comprehension; Social Perceptiveness	Comprehension; Speech Clarity; Speech Recognition; Problem Sensitivity	School Diploma or Higher
Other Management Occupations	Administration and Management; Customer and Personal Service; English Language; Personnel and Human Resources; Education and Training	Speaking; Active Listening; Reading Comprehension; Critical Thinking; Coordination	Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension; Written Comprehension; Problem Sensitivity; Written Expression	Varies from High School Diploma to Bachelor's Degree or higher
Motor Vehicle Operators	Customer and Personal Service; Transportation; Public Safety and Security; English Language; Law and Government	Operation and Control; Active Listening; Speaking; Critical Thinking; Operation Monitoring	Far Vision; Near Vision; Multi-limb Coordination; Problem Sensitivity; Control Precision	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher
Information and Record Clerks	Customer and Personal Service; English Language; Clerical; Computers and Electronics; Mathematics	Active Listening; Speaking; Reading Comprehension; Critical Thinking; Service Orientation	Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension; Written Comprehension; Speech Clarity; Speech Recognition	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher
Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners	Medicine and Dentistry; Customer and Personal Service; English Language; Psychology; Biology	Active Listening; Critical Thinking; Speaking; Reading Comprehension; Social Perceptiveness	Problem Sensitivity; Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension; Inductive Reasoning; Deductive Reasoning	Usually requires Associate Degree or Higher
Preschool, Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Special Education Teachers	Education and Training; English Language; Psychology; Customer and Personal Service; Computers and Electronics	Speaking; Instructing; Active Listening; Learning Strategies; Reading Comprehension	Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension; Written Comprehension; Problem Sensitivity; Written Expression	Varies from High School Diploma to Bachelor's Degree and/or Certification
Supervisors of Sales Workers	Customer and Personal Service; Administration and Management; English Language; Sales and Marketing; Personnel and Human Resources	Active Listening; Speaking; Monitoring Social Perceptiveness; Coordination	Oral Comprehension; Oral Expression; Speech Clarity; Speech Recognition; Problem Sensitivity	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher

Building Cleaning and Pest Control Workers	Customer and Personal Service; English Language; Public Safety and Security; Administration and Management; Chemistry	Active Listening; Critical Thinking; Time Management; Social; Perceptiveness Speaking	Near Vision; Oral Comprehension; Oral Expression; Speech Clarity; Problem Sensitivity	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher
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Source: O*NET Online. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Table 10: Desired Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities for Fastest Growing Occupations in the Inland Empire

	Knowledge	Skills	Abilities	Credentials
Material Moving Workers	English Language; Mechanical; Production and Processing; Public Safety and Security; Mathematics	Operation Monitoring; Operation and Control; Monitoring; Critical Thinking; Active Listening;	Multi-limb Coordination; Control Precision; Problem Sensitivity; Near Vision; Manual Dexterity	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher
Home Health and Personal Care Aides; and Nursing Assistants, Orderlies, and Psychiatric Aides	Customer and Personal Service; English Language; Public Safety and Security; Psychology; Education and Training	Service Orientation; Social Perceptiveness; Active Listening; Speaking; Monitoring	Oral Comprehension; Oral Expression; Problem Sensitivity; Near Vision; Speech Recognition	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher
Construction Trades Workers	Building and Construction; Mechanical; Mathematics; English Language; Customer and Personal Service	Critical Thinking; Coordination; Active Listening; Monitoring; Speaking	Near Vision; Arm-Hand Steadiness; Manual Dexterity; Multi-limb Coordination; Trunk Strength	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher
Information and Record Clerks	Customer and Personal Service; English Language; Clerical; Computers and Electronics; Mathematics	Active Listening; Speaking; Reading Comprehension; Critical Thinking; Service Orientation	Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension; Written Comprehension; Speech Clarity; Speech Recognition	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher
Preschool, Elementary, Middle, Secondary, and Special Education Teachers	Education and Training; English Language; Psychology; Customer and Personal Service; Computers and Electronics	Speaking; Instructing; Active Listening; Learning Strategies; Reading Comprehension	Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension; Written Comprehension; Problem Sensitivity; Written Expression	Varies from High School Diploma to Bachelor's Degree and/or Certification
Business Operations Specialists	English Language; Customer and Personal Service;	Speaking; Active Listening; Reading Comprehension;	Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension;	Varies from High School Diploma to

	Administration and Management; Mathematics; Computers and Electronics	Critical Thinking; Writing	Written Comprehension; Deductive Reasoning; Speech Clarity	Bachelor's Degree or higher
Counselors, Social Workers, and Other Community and Social Service Specialists	Psychology; Therapy and Counseling; Customer and Personal Service; English Language; Education and Training	Active Listening; Social; Perceptiveness; Speaking; Reading Comprehension; Critical Thinking	Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension; Problem Sensitivity; Written Comprehension; Written Expression	Usually requires Associate Degree or Higher
Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners	Medicine and Dentistry; Customer and Personal Service; English Language; Psychology; Biology	Active Listening; Critical Thinking; Speaking; Reading Comprehension; Social Perceptiveness	Problem Sensitivity; Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension; Inductive Reasoning; Deductive Reasoning	Usually requires Associate Degree or Higher
Other Management Occupations	Administration and Management; Customer and Personal Service; English Language; Personnel and Human Resources; Education and Training	Speaking; Active Listening; Reading Comprehension; Critical Thinking; Coordination	Oral Expression; Oral Comprehension; Written Comprehension; Problem Sensitivity; Written Expression	Varies from High School Diploma to Bachelor's Degree or higher
Supervisors of Sales Workers	Customer and Personal Service; Administration and Management; English Language; Sales and Marketing; Personnel and Human Resources	Active Listening; Speaking; Monitoring Social Perceptiveness; Coordination	Oral Comprehension; Oral Expression; Speech Clarity; Speech Recognition; Problem Sensitivity	Usually requires High School Diploma or Higher

Source: O*NET Online. Analysis by UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Current Openings and Most Commonly Desired Certifications

An analysis of current openings and the most commonly desired certifications for the three sectors the region plans to focus on was conducted in late January 2021. At that time, 6,169 jobs were identified in healthcare and these positions most commonly required AHA CPR and First Aid Certification in addition to nursing credentials and certifications and NNCC Certifications. Less common were Social Worker-related credentials and certifications, and National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians. In Manufacturing, 1,662 current openings were identified, and a Commercial Driver's License was the most commonly desired certification, with a small number requesting CPR, First Aid, PMI and ASQ certifications. A total of 1,552 openings were noted in Transportation and Logistics and similar to Manufacturing, a Commercial Driver's License was the most commonly desired certification. A relatively few number of employers requested CPR and First Aid and the RETA certification in this industry. Please see Table 11.

Table 11: Current Openings and Most Commonly Desired Certifications in the Inland Empire (January 2021)

IERPU Target Sector	Current Openings	Commonly Desired Certifications
Healthcare	6,169	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Heart Association (AHA) CPR & First Aid • American Red Cross - First Aid Certification • Nursing Credentials and Certifications • Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission (NNCC) Certifications
Manufacturing	1,662	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial Driver's License (CDL) • American Society for Quality (ASQ) Certification • American Heart Association (AHA) CPR & First Aid Certifications • Project Management Institute (PMI) Certifications
Transportation and Logistics	1,552	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial Driver's License (CDL) • Refrigerating Engineers & Technicians Association (RETA) Certification • American Heart Association (AHA) CPR & First Aid Certifications

Source: CalJOBS. UCR Center for Economic Forecasting and Development

Relevant Gaps Between Employer Needs and Workforce Qualifications

The primary characteristic for which we can base this gap analysis is the education level required for current most common and fastest growing occupations and the education level of the Inland Empire workforce. The vast majority of the occupations currently and growing noted above in Tables 9 and 10 only require a High School Diploma or less and 66.9% of the Inland Empire workforce have at least some college, which is above that level of education. However, most of these are also low-wage occupations and higher-wage occupations such as Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners require at least an Associate's Degree or higher. Since more than 33% of Inland Empire residents have a High School Diploma or less, and a portion of the 66.9% do not have an Associate's Degree, there is a qualifications gap here. There is also likely an educational mismatch and those with education levels that include at least some college may not have coursework that prepares them for the high-growth occupation.

III. Fostering Demand-Driven Skills Attainment

IERPU Goals and Regional Indicators

In order to meet the needs of the participants, employers and its organizational partners, the IERPU has developed a comprehensive set of goals for this plan. The goals are categorized in five key areas: 1) Regional Sector-Based Career Pathways, 2) High Road Employment System, 3) Access and Inclusion for All, 4) Future of Work and 5) Regional Coordination and Alignment. Please see Table 12 for a summarized list of the regional goals and Appendix B for the goal list, complete with tactics and indicators for each. Goals that intersect with the region's response to COVID-19 (#8, #11 and #14) are highlighted in color in Appendix B.

As noted under tactics for Goal #1, the region will develop four regional indicators:

Regional Indicator 1: Development of a process to communicate industry workforce needs to supply-side partners

Regional Indicator 2: Development of policies supporting equity and defining job quality

Regional Indicator 3: Identification of shared target populations of emphasis

Regional Indicator 4: Deployment of shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education to meet target population needs

The IERPU will coordinate with CWDB and a Technical Assistance Provider Evaluation Team to establish and track outcomes related to the four regional indicators noted above.

Table 12: Inland Empire Regional Goals

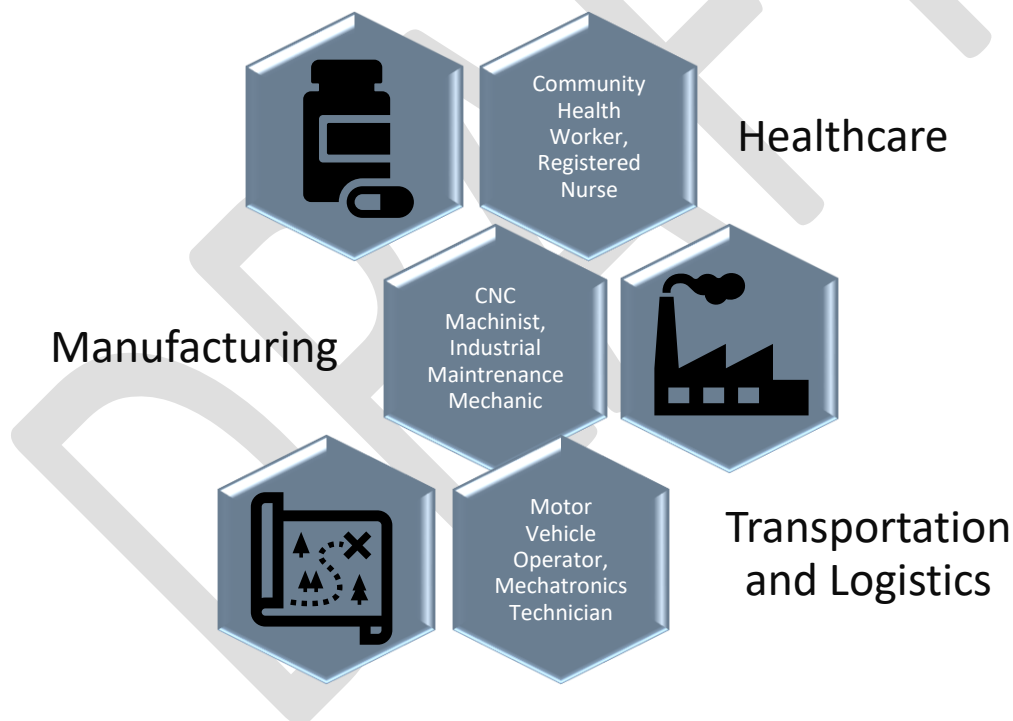
<p>Regional Sector-Based Career Pathways</p>	<p>#1) Continue to develop and measure participant success in regional sector-based career pathways for both youth and adults, with a focus on the following sectors: 1) Healthcare, 2) Manufacturing and 3) Transportation and Logistics</p> <p>#2) Ensure all pathways are accessible and lead to a living-wage occupation</p> <p>#3) Develop pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs in both traditional (e.g. building trades) and non-traditional sectors (e.g. healthcare)</p>
<p>High Road Workforce System</p>	<p>#4) Facilitate the necessary partnerships and organizational development among the workforce development boards, America’s Job Centers of California, and other key partners to support high road employment</p> <p>#5) Develop a small business strategy to support high road entrepreneurship, including the creation and support of high-road jobs</p> <p>#6) Work with employers to identify career pathways to high-road employment</p>
<p>Access and Inclusion for All</p>	<p>#7) Facilitate community involvement to identify and address issues of race, equity and high road principles for the purpose of promoting improved service delivery, income mobility for individuals with barriers for employment, and growth in the regional economy</p> <p>#8) Development of regional, sub-regional and multi-regional strategies in response to COVID-19</p> <p>#9) Improve access to technology and build the digital literacy skills of participants in the region</p> <p>#10) Improve information and referral system to ensure participants receive the services they need</p>
<p>Future of Work</p>	<p>#11) Create a culture of adaptiveness, flexibility and acceptance of change when faced with FOW challenges or major disruptions such as COVID-19</p> <p>#12) Respond to the impacts of automation on jobs and career pathways</p> <p>#13) Prepare participants to thrive in remote and gig work situations and organizations/employers to ensure these jobs are high road</p> <p>#14) Integrate new on-the-job Health and Safety considerations into services (e.g. social distancing, new OSHA or CDC policies likely to come into effect due to COVID-19)</p>
<p>Regional Coordination and Alignment</p>	<p>#15) Conduct an organizational analysis/assessment to improve and streamline service delivery efforts</p> <p>#16) Increase efficiencies and reduce duplication through regional cooperation</p> <p>#17) Professional development, training and capacity building of workforce staff and partners</p>

In-Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Based on the Analytical Overview, the IERPU plans to continue developing regional sector pathways in the three sectors with the highest current and emerging demand: 1) Healthcare, 2) Manufacturing and 3) Transportation and Logistics. These three sectors were the region's focus in the prior 2017 – 2020 regional plan and remain the sectors with the most opportunity in the Inland Empire for the next four years.

As noted above in the Analytical Overview, each of these sectors have high road employment opportunities such as Registered Nursing in Healthcare, Industrial Maintenance Mechanic in Manufacturing and Mechatronics Technician in Transportation and Logistics (Figure 13). The education level required for these positions are usually at an associate's degree level primarily, which aligns well with the population of the region as noted in Tables 10 and 11 above. Given the high level of emerging demand in these sectors, there is ample opportunity that facilitates accessibility for participants in the region.

Figure 13: Targeted In-Demand Regional Sectors and Sample Occupations



The approach to developing career pathways in these in-demand industry sectors is captured in the goals the region has collaboratively developed below in Appendix B. Under the first section of the Inland Empire Regional Goals, Regional Sector-Based Career Pathways, the region developed Goals 1-3:

- 1. Continue to develop and measure participant success in regional sector-based career pathways for both youth and adults, with a focus on the following sectors:**
 - a. Healthcare**

- b. Manufacturing**
- c. Transportation and Logistics**

- 2. Ensure all pathways are accessible and lead to a living-wage occupation**
- 3. Develop pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs in both traditional (e.g., building trades) and non-traditional sectors (e.g., healthcare)**

Tactically, the region intends to accomplish the first goal by coordinating with partners; continuing to track labor market information; leveraging a business-to-business approach to employer engagement (such as identifying and using “business champions”) to deepen partnerships with employers in the region; ensuring credentials are portable and stackable and promoting lifelong learning. These tactics are all consistent with current activities in the region and will also result in the development of Regional Indicators 1-4 as identified above.

Ensuring that all pathways lead to a living wage occupation requires the development of a definition of living wage at a subregional level because of the variance in cost of living across the region. The CWDB’s High Road framework will be used as a guide in determining job quality, including the definition of living wage. In order to make pathways more accessible, the region intends to improve the referral process with technology and integrating virtual services. Additionally, the region will support those who have left the workforce in returning, breaking down silos and reducing competition between workforce agencies working together to build career pathways in the region.

Finally, the region has prioritized the development of pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, building upon foundational programs at the InTech Center, High Desert Training Center and Riverside Community College District. Through improving program alignment, expanding program capacity and incorporating work-based learning opportunities, the region expects to be able to increase the number of participants in these programs, increase the persistence rate or trainees and develop new pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship programs.

Responding to the Future of Work

All three of the target sectors identified above will be impacted by changes to the economy brought on by automation, the gig economy and remote work. In order to anticipate emerging demand in these sectors, these concepts are germane to career pathways for both youth and adults. The region took this into account in the planning process, intentionally discussed this with partners during input meetings and developed a specific set of goals related to the “Future of Work” in Appendix B, Goals 11-14:

- 11. Create a culture of adaptiveness, flexibility and acceptance of change when faced with FOW challenges or major disruptions such as COVID-19**
- 12. Respond to the impacts of automation on jobs and career pathways**

13. Prepare participants to thrive in remote and gig work situations and organizations/employers to ensure these jobs are high road

14. Integrate new on-the-job Health and Safety considerations into services (e.g., social distancing, new OSHA or CDC policies likely to come into effect due to COVID-19)

Both in response to the changes to the economy that new technology and changing work culture will bring and the long-term impacts of COVID-19, Goal #11 addresses the need to create a culture of adaptiveness in the region. This will include tactics such as creating alignment and trust among stakeholders, improving communication and more specifically, providing support for surge occupations recruitment when needed. An indicator of success is a positive response from employers who are able to recruit from the regional workforce development system to meet changing workforce needs.

Two more goals, Goals #12 and #13, call out responding to and preparing the workforce development system for automation, the gig economy and remote working, ensuring that jobs are high quality. Tactically, it will require reviewing current programs and services to look for opportunities to update them where needed to ensure participants are ready for the changes to existing jobs, or even for new ones that may be created. Building the digital literacy skills of participants will be a keystone of this approach as well as training staff on new technologies in the target sectors. Finally, working with employers to understand how technology, remote work and the gig economy may be changing jobs and how to ensure they are high road jobs will be necessary.

Goal #14 specifically addresses how the pandemic will directly change working conditions on the job, through new health and safety regulations. Workforce development organizations can expect that workspace layouts will change, there may be less individuals in a specific space than before and there may be new standards for cleanliness and sanitization they will need to be aware of. These new regulations will also impact training and in-person services, perhaps impacting the capacity of programs. Demonstrating real-time responsiveness to known and anticipated workplace health and safety changes in addition to policies and procedures for providing services are potential indicators of success.

Implementation of Regional Sector-Based Career Pathways

Assigned Partner Organizations

Implementation of regional sector-based career pathways relies on coordination with key partners. The IERPU consists of the Riverside County Workforce Development Board (RCWDB) and the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board (SBCWDB), and its primary partners include the agencies listed below in Table 13. In addition, the IERPU works with a number of nonprofit and other support organizations, which participated in the planning process outlined in Appendix A.

Table 13: Assigned Partners

Agency	Regional Partner
California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)	Inland Empire Regional Office
Community Colleges	Barstow, Chaffey, College of the Desert, Copper Mountain, Crafton Hill, Moreno Valley, Mt. San Jacinto, Norco, Palo Verde, Riverside City, San Bernardino Valley, Victor Valley
Adult Education Block Grant (AEBG)	Barstow Area Consortium for Adult Education, Victor Valley Adult Education Regional Consortium, Morongo Basin AEBG Consortium, Desert Regional Consortium, Palo Verde River Consortium, Inland Adult Education Consortium, About Students Regional Consortium, S. Riverside AEBG, West End Corridor/ Chaffey Regional AE Consortium
Economic Development Centers (EDC)	Coachella Valley Economic Partnership, Inland SoCal Link iHub, California Network for Manufacturing Innovation (CNMI) iHub
Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)	Coachella Valley, Inland Empire, Orange County Inland Empire
County Office of Education (COE)	San Bernardino, Riverside
K-12 Career and Technical Education (CTE)	California Department of Education Region 7

Guiding Principles

There are three guiding principles the IERPU and its partners will utilize to foster demand-driven skills attainment in the region:

- 1. Equitable Access to Regional Sector-Based Career Pathways for All:** In order to ensure that all participants in the IE region have equitable access to career pathways, strong supports and services need to be in place. Particularly in response to COVID-19, which has exacerbated existing inequities and exposed new ones. The region plans to develop regional, sub-regional and multi-regional responses to the pandemic, facilitating community involvement to identify long-standing as well as emerging issues of racial and ethnic inequities. Specifically, the region has identified access to technology, Wi-Fi, in-person services as a barrier to equity, particularly for remote areas of the region and has strategies to address these issues. They are discussed in detail below and in Appendix B under “Access and Inclusion for All”.

Automation, the gig economy and remote working are a few concepts that will all have an impact on access and inclusion for participants. These “future of work” issues have the potential to dramatically alter jobs tasks, job quality and possibly to eliminate entire job categories. The IERPU plans to address this through creating a culture of adaptiveness, responding to the impacts of automation, gig economy and remote work in the design of career pathways and considering how new health and safety standards will impact jobs. Please see Appendix B under “Future of Work” for more details.

- 2. High Road Employment Focus:** The IERPU engages in a number of business engagement activities to regularly receive guidance about industry needs and to guide the development of career pathway programs. The goal is to make each business a true partner in workforce development and not only a customer. Both local workforce boards work with business intermediaries such as Chambers of Commerce to leverage a Business to Business or “B2B” approach. The B2B approach utilizes business champions to recruit their peers to become employer partners with the IERPU and its workforce development partners. This type of partnership provides opportunities for the region to encourage high road business practices such as family-supporting wages (used interchangeably with “living wage” in this document), benefits, safe working conditions, fair scheduling practices, and transparent career advancement opportunities.

As a partner with the business community, the IERPU regularly looks for opportunities to provide support to regional businesses in new ways. In 2020, the region worked closely with economic development teams in both counties to support businesses impacted by COVID-19. This included outreach related to Rapid Response and other layoff aversion programs. As an example of a new approach, SBC staff made an average of 1,000 business calls per week to offer the assistance of the SBC COVID-Compliant Business Partnership Program. The program included up to \$5,000 in emergency funding and access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at cost. Being a valuable service provider to businesses in multiple ways builds a stronger partnership and new opportunities for participants with these employers. The IERPU intends to facilitate organizational development, develop a small business strategy for supporting high road entrepreneurship and to work closely with employers to identify career pathways to high road employment. Please see below and Appendix B under “High Road Employment System” for more details.

- 3. A Cohesive Regional Workforce Development System:** The three guiding principles rely on having a cohesive regional workforce development system. Both counties are committed to ensuring that the IERPU is successful in delivering accessible career pathways to the middle class and intend to build upon its successful regional partnership and address outstanding issues as they are identified. This begins with an assessment of the region’s strengths and weaknesses in terms of coordinated service delivery, increasing efficiencies while reducing duplication and professional development, training and capacity building of workforce staff and partners. Please see below and Appendix B under “Regional Coordination and Alignment” for more details.

Regional Organizing Mechanisms

On an ongoing basis, the IERPU Regional Goals will be reviewed against progress made on the indicators that are identified for each goal in Appendix B. There are three key mechanisms for establishing regional indicators and tracking progress on these regional goals:

Implementation of the IERPU Regional Plan : As noted above, the region submitted a proposal for funding its regional planning process, which includes the hiring of a consultant to help establish benchmarks, develop Regional Indicators 1-4 and set indicators for measuring progress. The Joint Annual AJCC MOU Partner Meetings will also be a key tactic for operationalizing the regional plan.



Regional Strategic Planning: In addition to regular local WDB meetings for both SBCWDB and RCWDB, the IE region has the IERPU Steering Committee. This body supports specific regional projects such as Prison to Employment (P2E) in addition to broad-scope regional organizing, training coordination and support. Members from both county workforce boards serve on this committee in addition to other partner organizations. As noted above, a Joint AJCC MOU Partner Meeting is held annually.

Local Strategic Planning: On an ongoing basis, both SBCWDB and RCWDB have local planning processes, focused on ensuring the workforce development system is appropriately responsive to business and community needs. The WDBs rely on LMI data and occupational outlooks from the most current data sources. Occupational outlooks are cross-referenced with the O*NET for education, experience and skills requirements as well as entry-level wage information that is used in identifying workforce needs. These analyses are also used to determine the target industries that the WDBs will prioritize as they plan and implement the local workforce development strategies. Strategic planning sessions of the WDBs are usually scheduled annually for each WDB to identify adjustments to be made to plans or developing new goals as needed.

IV. Enabling Upward Mobility for All Californians

High Road Workforce System

In alignment with the CWDB state workforce plan, a high road workforce development agenda will require regional systems that support high road employment. It is the intention of the IERPU and its partners to prioritize working with employers who provide quality, high road jobs with family-sustaining wages and comprehensive benefits. The region also has a plan for developing a policy related to job quality. This is outlined in the set of regional goals titled “High Road Workforce System” in Appendix B, Goals 4-6:

- 4. Facilitate the necessary partnerships and organizational development among the workforce development boards, America’s Job Centers of California, and other key partners to support high road employment**
- 5. Develop a small business strategy to support high road entrepreneurship, including the creation and support of high-road jobs**
- 6. Work with employers to identify career pathways to high-road employment**

Employer-Driven Training Model

The employer driven training model is a collaborative effort with employers, education partners and the Workforce Development Boards (WDBs). It emerged as a strategy to better support regional businesses as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. This model allows the employers to select employees prior to the start of their training, ensuring that participants will be hired upon completion of the training. So far, it has proven to be a successful approach to both a CNA and a Truck Driving training cohort. The region is considering expansion of the model to the manufacturing sector in response to employer needs.

With relation to employers offering high road jobs, the IERPU intends to leverage its industry consultants to work with employer on identifying high-road employment opportunities. Industry consultants for healthcare and manufacturing have been active since 2016 (with a several month interruption in activity for manufacturing in 2020). An industry consultant for transportation and logistics was added in 2019. A new consultant for manufacturing was recently identified in late 2020 and is coming on board at the writing of this plan.

An example of the industry consultants’ responsibilities that will prioritize high road employment is in healthcare where the consultant will assist the region to partner with the LAUNCH Initiative to continue to promote the Community Health Worker (CHW) training program for high road healthcare jobs.

In response to the needs that small businesses in the region express, the IERPU and its partners will identify solutions that include high road jobs. A strong, high-functioning workforce leads to a strong business, creating jobs that pay a living wage, include benefits, and are flexible and supportive to the needs of workers. This goal will also include developing and augmenting entrepreneurship training with education about high road jobs and why they should be part of a business plan. Finally, training will be provided to small business employees to help them with meeting the demands of a high road job and helping make a small business successful.

As described in Goal #4, the region will convene an annual Joint AJCC Partnership Meeting with MOU partners from both counties. An outcome of this meeting will be a formal policy for job quality. The partners will make use of regional LMI data, a cost-of-living assessment for the region, discussion with employers as noted in Goal #1, and feedback from other partners and participants to develop the policy. Aligned with the CWDB Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan, the region will explore elements of job quality related to family-supporting wages, benefits, safe working conditions, fair scheduling practices, and career advancement opportunities that are transparent.

Finally, the region will develop a formal policy related to job quality as part of the regional plan implementation. This is accomplished through coordination with a consultant to establish benchmarks, develop and measuring progress towards Regional Indicators 1-4. Regional Indicator 2 includes the development of a formal policy related to job quality. The CWDB's High Road Framework will be a key tool in developing this policy and it will include elements of equity, climate and what makes high-quality jobs such as paying a living wage. The annual Joint AJCC Partnership meeting, noted under tactics in Goal #4, will also be leveraged to determine what will be included in this policy.

Equity and Economic Justice

As noted in the Analytical Overview, the IE region is both a culturally diverse and a geographically vast area. There is a prevailing interest to ensure all participants have equitable access to career pathways, no matter where they live or the services they need to be successful. The IERPU has developed a set of goals, with associated tactics and indicators for success under the category of "Access and Inclusion for All" in Appendix B, Goals 7-10:

- 7. Facilitate community involvement to identify and address issues of race, equity and high road principles for the purpose of promoting improved service delivery, income mobility for individuals with barriers for employment, and growth in the regional economy**
- 8. Development of regional, sub-regional and multi-regional strategies in response to COVID-19**
- 9. Improve access to technology and build the digital literacy skills of participants in the region**

10. Improve information and referral system to ensure participants receive the services they need

Goal #7 includes hiring a consultant to establish benchmarks and new strategies, including for access and inclusion. It will include an organizational analysis to determine barriers for specific populations in the system and opportunities to reduce these barriers to entry. It will also include regular community conversations, engagement and feedback to ensure that the IERPU is aware of and addressing any outstanding needs for access and inclusion in regional career pathway programs.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as in relation to access and inclusion, a response at multiple levels – regional, sub-regional and multi-regional – is necessary. It will take regular engagement with partners, participants and employers to develop new strategies, both short- and long-term to help the region’s economy recover from the pandemic. Providing more accessible and safer in-person services through co-location of staff in partner agencies is an important tactic to achieve this. Finally, the pandemic also highlighted an ongoing need to improve the access to technology and build digital literacy in the region. The region intends to support efforts to identify and connect communities who need better access and disseminate information at AJCCs and partner organizations as well.

Other indicators of success for this group of goals include new policies to support equity, access and inclusion that are co-developed by regional partners, benchmarks on current performance and measurements to identify success in this area. In order to address the need for digital literacy, AJCCs and partner organizations will add training to workshops and programs. Finally, new tools and resources will be identified or created to assist workforce staff with ensuring access and inclusion for all.

Across WIOA core partners, Community Colleges, Adult Education Programs and community-based organizations the IERPU will also identify shared target populations of emphasis as part of the development of Regional Indicator 3.

Access to Programs for Special Populations

The IERPU partners, with other agencies and community-based organizations (CBOs), continue to serve multiple other special populations and subpopulations including low-income individuals, foster youth, disconnected youth, English Language Learners (ELL), and Persons with Disabilities (PWD). Both WDBs have leveraged these partnerships as part of a regional strategy as well as program development and co-enrollment of shared customers.

Partnerships will continue to be developed to reach and serve special populations throughout the region. IERPU partners rely on the Inland Regional Center (IRC) and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) for connections and referrals to PWD living in Independent Living Centers (ILC). IRC and DOR case manage and provide services to PWD including those residing in ILCs and other independent living facilities in the Inland Empire. Co-enrollment of special populations with CBOs allows for additional services to be provided including supportive services, mental health services, Healthcare, training, counseling, childcare, among others as needed to ensure customer success.

During the annual Joint AJCC Partnership Meeting with both counties that is outlined in Goal #4, a regional planning process will be developed to review target populations to look for any necessary service strategy adjustments or additions. This will be based on the partners' observations about the needs of the community, specific population needs and relevant regional demographic data.


Working with Employers and Training Providers to Ensure Equal Access

As noted under "Access and Inclusion for All" above, the region is committed to working with employers, training providers and all partners to ensure that historically unserved and underserved have equal access to regional sector pathways, earn and learn opportunities and supportive services.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the region has set a goal to develop regional, sub-regional and multi-regional strategies to address access and inclusion issues that were either created or exacerbated by the pandemic (see Goal #8). The strategies will address ways to ensure regular engagement of community partners in relation to health and safety issues, addressing both short- and long-term needs of participants (e.g., the availability of virtual services while the pandemic is still a significant concern vs. returning to more in-person services when it is safe to do so).

As described earlier, the region is very geographically large and access to services in remote parts of either county is an issue. Goal #9 addresses this issue by working with regional agencies to advocate for improved broadband access infrastructure, offering access to Wi-Fi in all regional partner locations and building the digital literacy of participants. Indicators of success here include access to affordable and accessible Wi-Fi in the majority of residential locations in the region and increased access to digital literacy training through AJCC workshops and programs or through partner collaboration.

Finally, the region will develop a formal policy related to equity as part of the regional planning process. Both counties have already formally recognized racism as a public health crisis, which provides a strong foundation for developing the policy. This will be accomplished through coordination with a consultant (Goal #7) to establish benchmarks, develop and measuring progress towards Regional Indicators 1-4. Regional Indicator 2 includes the development of a formal policy related to equity. The annual Joint AJCC Partnership meeting, noted under tactics in Goal #4, will also be leveraged to determine what will be included in this policy.



**Providing Access to Jobs for
Justice-Involved Individuals:
The Inland Empire Prison to Employment
Initiative (P2E)**

The Inland Empire Prison to Employment Initiative connects individuals who were formerly incarcerated and other justice-involved individuals with high demand jobs in the labor market with the goal of reducing recidivism. Both Riverside and San Bernardino Counties have partnered with several community-based organizations to provide the services including Operation New Hope, Center for Employment Opportunities, Inland SoCal United Way, San Bernardino Community College District, Goodwill, Reintegration Academy and Starting Over, Inc.

These organizations assist individuals with training and employment opportunities including unsubsidized and transitional (subsidized) employment opportunities. In addition, participants are able to access case management and supportive services to pave the way to a successful job.

V. Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services

System Alignment

Having all workforce system partners moving together toward a shared purpose requires continuous assessment of efficiencies and gaps, followed by changes to improve efficiency. Agreeing on good communication and written agreements are important, but do not tell the whole story of proper system alignment. Keeping this in mind, the IERPU has developed a robust set of goals for system alignment, categorized under “Regional Coordination and Alignment” in Appendix B, Goals 15-17:

- 15. Conduct an organizational analysis/assessment to improve and streamline service delivery efforts**
- 16. Increase efficiencies and reduce duplication through regional cooperation**
- 17. Professional development, training and capacity building of workforce staff and partners**

The next steps for system alignment will be identified through an organizational assessment conducted by a committee comprised of county workforce staff and regional partners. The committee will identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that can be used to develop strategies to close gaps, increase efficiencies, reduce duplication and ensure workforce services are as efficient and effective as possible. Tactics for implementing these new strategies will likely include working with various regional coalitions, business organizations and AJCC system partners in both counties.

Other key tactics that will increase system alignment goals include generating, sharing and utilizing quarterly reporting to track progress. It is important for WDB directors, project leads and service delivery partners to be on the same page with current progress as they make decisions about service delivery strategy. In addition, the region will ensure WDB members from both boards participate in AJCC MOU partner meetings at regular intervals. This gives them a better understanding of the tactical challenges and needs of the day-to-day operations as they help shape regional strategies.

Finally, professional development, training and capacity building of workforce staff and partners will be conducted as part of system alignment. Collaborating as a region, the number of workforce staff trained will be tracked and a method to determine impact of the training will be implemented. The local plans for both San Bernardino County and Riverside County contain additional details about the content of workforce staff training.

Joint Annual AJCC MOU Partner Meeting

On an annual basis, the two AJCC MOU Partner groups from both SBCWDB and RCWDB will co-develop an agenda and meet to discuss region-wide workforce activities in order to align and coordinate efforts. Generally, the group will identify needs for coordination among participant services, employer engagement and support services for the shared populations. This body will be a core part of developing Regional Indicators 1-4, benchmarking current activities and setting metrics to determine success against the four indicators. Another priority for this group during the term of this plan is to assist in coordinating capacity building for MOU partners and training for staff.

IERPU MOU and Administrative Cost Arrangements

The RCWDB and SBCWDB entered into a MOU in April of 2018 to formalize their partnership as the IERPU, agree to coordinate on regional planning and implementation, staff and workforce board training and to jointly carry out tasks that are outlined in grant funding from the CWDB. It also established a framework for service agreements between the two counties for subgrants received by either county related to regional workforce development. As one of the first agreements of its kind in the state, it has served as a model for other regions. Please see Appendix C for the complete agreement (to be added in final draft).

As Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), workforce funds are awarded separately from CWDB with either county serving as the administrative and fiscal lead. The MOU created as an “umbrella” agreement for the use of regional funds per IERPU regional WIOA plans, allows for sharing of funds between the two counties, regardless of the designated administrative lead.

Scope of Services in the MOU:

- i. Work with county staff and the CWDB staff to deepen regional collaborations
- ii. Develop and build workforce/education/economic development partnerships
- iii. Engage employers as full partners in the workforce system
- iv. Support the implementation of regional activities

A primary subgrant the two workforce boards officially coordinate together on under the terms of this MOU is the state Regional Plan Implementation (RPI) grant, currently the 4.0 iteration. A few activities the counties will coordinate in the current cycle include:

- Stakeholder engagement, and inclusion, strategic partnership development within and across the region (supporting strategic partnership development in singular communities and counties, sub-regional partnership initiatives, and/or expanding or building partnerships across multiple jurisdictions).
- Facilitating community conversations, engagement, and/or training on issues of race, equity and high road principles for the purpose of promoting improved service delivery, income mobility for individuals with barriers for employment, and growth in the regional economy.
- Convene annual Joint AJCC Partnership meeting with Riverside, San Bernardino County and AJCC partners to share best practices, review labor market data and regional plan activities.

In the last planning period, RPI 3.0, the region developed a workplan and collaborated on included activities such as the IERPU Steering Committee (see above under “Regional Organizing Mechanisms”), developing contracts for manufacturing and healthcare consultants, Next Gen Logistics/Transportation Partnership meetings, regular bi-weekly staff meetings including Business Services Solutions and training for participants in the targeted industry sectors.

VI. Conclusion

The IERPU looks forward to implementing this regional workforce development plan with its partners over the next four years. While the data has pointed the region toward specific industries for focusing its sector-based career pathway development efforts - namely in Healthcare, Manufacturing and Transportation and Logistics - there are other important considerations for the regional workforce development system. This plan seeks to balance the employment demand observed in the data with the future of work, access and inclusion, building a high road employment system and ensuring regional system coordination - all while continuing to manage the economic recovery from COVID-19.

With the guiding principles of creating equitable access to regional, sector-based career pathways for all, a high road employment focus and maintaining a cohesive regional workforce development system, the IERPU will continue to realize its vision of a reinvented regional system that engages business and industry in identifying high quality jobs and designing training programs to prepare a competitive workforce.

Appendix A: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

As part of the plan development process, the IERPU held a series of interactive input sessions to engage its stakeholders and gain valuable insight for community needs and resources to develop proposed goals.

Process

Sessions and Attendance

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
Virtual Conference	Assigned Partners, AJCC MOU Partners, Service Providers and other Stakeholders	126* and 41	Sessions held 12/17/20 and 1/13/21
Workforce Development Board Meeting Workshop (Virtual)	San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board (Planning Workshop)	Approx. 15	Workshop held at regular board meeting 12/16/20
Virtual Conference	Small Working Groups of San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board	2- 4 board members per session	Small group discussions held with board members 1/4/21, 1/6/21, 1/12/21, 1/21/21
Workforce Development Board Meeting Workshop (Virtual)	Riverside County Workforce Development Board (Planning Workshop)	83	Board meeting called specifically to discuss proposed plan goals on 1/11/21
Virtual Conference	Regional Employer Partners	65	Session held 1/20/21

* 126 were registered but technical difficulties with Zoom kept attendance to 100 during the session. Participants who were not able to attend on 12/17/20 were invited to attend on 1/13/21

Format

All sessions were held via Zoom and leveraged a collaborative whiteboard tool, Miro. The sessions included a mix of presenting information and then collecting input in small breakout rooms (max of 20 people) per breakout.

In larger sessions, information was added to the shared board space by a facilitator; in smaller sessions, individuals were given a brief training and added content to the board themselves for a virtual “gallery walk” to provide input.

After small group breakouts, we would debrief as a group.

Analysis

Review of the input sessions including leveraging the “top 3” presented by each breakout area (if the meeting had such a report back) as well as looking for repeated ideas/phrases, and the main facilitator’s observation of ideas that were well received during the course of each discussion.

Feedback

The workforce development boards received overall positive feedback that the meetings were highly engaging and inclusive, seeking input from both vocal participants, as well as leveraging chat feature to also incorporate feedback provided by less vocal participants – this allowed for a more inclusive participation format.

Breakout room facilitators reported that they were able to engage all participants effectively and keep participation high.

Nearly all participants in sessions stayed online and engaged for the full meeting time.

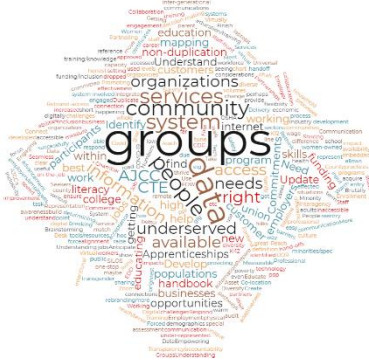
Synthesis of Input

Overarching themes:

- Work collaboratively to avoid competitive duplication of services, including referral system and stronger communication; “warm hand-offs.” Partner with stakeholders to identify and break down silos.
- Better shared data – both service provider, as well as labor market and state level data (e.g., ETPL).
- Leveraging virtual services – the surge forward in using Zoom during COVID-19 broke down seeming barriers to working virtually with clients, and also identified barriers to access for some members of the community.
- All groups clearly identified alignment with various partners in the education system, not just K-12, but also adult education, community colleges
- Partnering with employers both to review and understand data, and also take time to educate and engage them on crucial topics. Employers can be informed of the new terms/thinking of the workforce system.
- Leveraging and engaging workforce partners in labor market data so everyone is on the same page about trends and projections.
- Protect small businesses. “Mom and pop” business are a staple of our economy, and can get quickly left behind as things change.
- Asset mapping surfaced in several conversations as a possible next step to identifying resources, looking for duplication of services/possible partnerships, and lifting up the assets of the community overall. They also specified some best practices to inform the region that will help spur things ahead.
- All groups discussed the disparate impact on vulnerable populations, and that serving these communities will be as much about workforce services as mental health, housing and other supports that take into consideration the social and economic impacts of the pandemic as it exacerbated individual/family challenges.
- Discussed ensuring the different needs of rural vs. urban areas, and keeping in mind the variation in industries across the region.

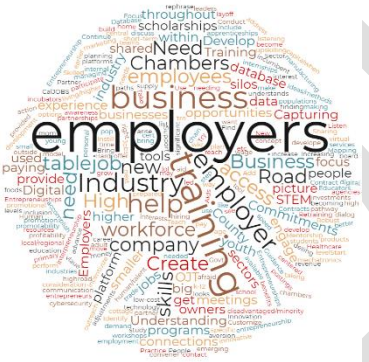
Major Discussion Topics by Theme

Access & Inclusion



- Virtual services: leverage engagement that is possible when you can use tools like zoom well, and the flexibility of virtual service offerings.
- Digital divide: ensure all have high speed internet, and give special attention to reaching and understanding customers without internet
- Build platforms to improve digital literacy.
- Focus on education by building a stronger connection to the K-12 system, and focus CTE as well as adult education. Ensure that these programs target under-represented communities.
- Employer engagement will be crucial in understanding how to improve access.
- Build capacity by getting information out, maybe rebranding
- Focus on increasing warm hand-offs, and seamless interagency communication.
- Create transparency with organization charts, communication and increasing representation from under-represented groups in decision-making.

High Road Employment System



- Remember small business – especially “mom and pop” in thinking of solutions.
- Create a central convener, and bring together the employers. Make sure they see value when they come to the table – employers that need high skill workers will want to participate. Engagement of businesses around high-road employment will be crucial, and language to frame it.
- Leverage human centered design to build the mode, using new methods and ideas that will help identify innovations like industry-specific incubators.
- Look at new training opportunities – either by focusing on a new audience, such as upskilling adults and/or leveraging adult schools; OJT, incumbent worker training, and low-cost training and certifications.
- Identify and increase access to scholarships, as well as consider deeper apprenticeship programs.

Career Pathways to the Middle Class



- Apprenticeship Programs - building trades and non-traditional Industries. Some industries are established, but need to focus on industry where there is more opportunity.
- Engaging with businesses and the education systems, largely to increase partnership and specifically to raise up awareness for students and parents to jobs which do not require a 4-year degree
- Begin with the end in mind – leverage labor market data to forecast demand, and work with employers to clearly mine the data and clarify needs.
- Improve the eligibility process for pathway opportunities, and ensure the pathways focus on living-wage jobs and that have a progression to better paying.
- Make sure it is clear that career pathways are both for youth and adults

COVID-19



- Consistent collaboration and communication emerged as both a strength of what emerged during the crisis, and also something to focus on moving ahead.
- Engaging with the community and employers will be essential in addressing what “normal” will be moving ahead. The pandemic forced partners to embrace some automation, and adapt quickly. All sessions discussed how to continue the flexibility, creativity and quick pivoting that partners did during the most restrictive of pandemic restrictions.
- The input strongly reflected that we are not getting back to “normal” but rather the pandemic revealed capacity to gear-up quickly and address online-learning.
- The pandemic also highlighted disparities for vulnerable populations, in terms of (and not limited to) underlying health and mental health issues, and digital divide challenges.
- Ensuring safety of all workforce partners will be an ongoing concern – partners had to double their “footprint” to ensure safety, and navigate the logistics of accessing PPE/safety equipment.

NOTE: this began as a separate discussion group during input sessions, but the impact of COVID-19 was discussed in every group.

Appendix B: Inland Empire Regional Workforce Goals

Below are the IERPU Workforce Goals for 2021-2024, along with associated tactics (how goals will be accomplished) and indicators (how success will be achieved). Goals highlighted in color are part of the region's response to COVID-19.

Regional Sector-Based Career Pathways		
Goal	Tactics	Indicators
<p>1. Continue to develop and measure participant success in regional sector-based career pathways for both youth and adults, with a focus on the following sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare • Manufacturing • Transportation and Logistics <p><i>Note: the region will also continue to pursue other emerging sectors and occupations as they are identified.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with partners to implement IERPU's RPI 4.0 proposal • Utilize labor market information, workforce board guidance and feedback from employers to ensure strategies are relevant and effective • Leverage a business-to-business (B2B) approach and deepen partnerships with employers in the region • Ensure credentials are portable and stackable through coordination among regional partners • Promote lifelong learning as part of career pathway development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Regional Indicator 1:</u> Development of a process to communicate industry workforce needs to supply-side partners • <u>Regional Indicator 2:</u> Development of policies supporting equity and defining job quality • <u>Regional Indicator 3:</u> Identification of shared target populations of emphasis • <u>Regional Indicator 4:</u> Deployment of shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education to meet target population needs
<p>2. Ensure all pathways are accessible and lead to a living-wage occupation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an agreed-upon definition of living wage that is based on consistently and readily accessible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Indicator 2 (above) • System in place to track co-enrolled participants to engaged

	<p>metrics and able to be regularly (e.g., annually) updated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the referral process by utilizing technology, integrating virtual and in-person services • Support people who have left the workforce in retraining and returning to jobs in target sectors, particularly those impacted by job loss in retail and hospitality sectors • Improve efficiency through breaking down silos and reducing competition between agencies • Leverage the CWDB High Road Framework to guide the definition of job quality and high road employment 	<p>them more holistically throughout their career path</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of high road occupations for the Inland Empire (Regional Indicator 2) • Definition of living wage at a subregional level
<p>3. Develop pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs in both traditional (e.g., building trades) and non-traditional sectors (e.g., healthcare)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve program alignment and expand pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities in the region • Leverage existing apprenticeship programs at InTech, High Desert Training Center, and Riverside Community College District • Incorporate work-based learning opportunities to gain hands-on experience where possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the # of participants in existing apprenticeship programs • Increased persistence rate in training programs and # of job placements • Development of new pre- and/or standard apprenticeship programs in target sectors
High Road Workforce System		
Goal	Tactics	Indicators
<p>4. Facilitate the necessary partnerships and organizational</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene annual Joint AJCC Partnership meeting with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Indicators 1-4 (above)

<p>development among the workforce development boards, America’s Job Centers of California, and other key partners to support high road employment</p>	<p>Riverside, San Bernardino County and AJCC partners to share best practices, review labor market data and regional plan activities, and determine the four regional indicators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with RPI 4.0 Technical Assistance Provider Evaluation Team to establish and track outcomes • Assessment of critical infrastructure; management and facilitation of organizational change where needed • Staff professional development and organizational capacity building • Regional planning process to develop additional identified target populations. • Continuing to assess how COVID-19 has impacted employers and customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and/or enhanced services and practices that support high-road employment
<p>5. Develop a small business strategy to support high road entrepreneurship, including the creation and support of high-road jobs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the needs of small businesses • Offer more options for entrepreneurship training • Training targeted to small business employees to meet higher performance standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of 3-4 digital tools to support high-road entrepreneurship and high-road jobs • Provide access to high-quality entrepreneurship training for small business owners and youth
<p>6. Work with employers to identify career pathways to high-road employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage industry consultants to work with employers to identify high-road employment opportunities and necessary skills and qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of required skills and qualifications for high-road employment in target industries • Regional Indicator 1 (above) • Regional Indicator 2 (above)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower business engagement staff at County and AJCCs to identify and engage high-road employers 	
Access and Inclusion for All		
Goal	Tactics	Indicators
<p>7. Facilitate community involvement to identify and address issues of race, equity and high road principles for the purpose of promoting improved service delivery, income mobility for individuals with barriers for employment, and growth in the regional economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow County procurement procedures to contract with a consultant to assist with establishing benchmarks, developing and measuring progress towards Regional Indicators 1-4 Organizational analysis/assessment to improve/streamline service delivery efforts. Leverage regular community conversations, engagement, and/or training to surface issues and potential solutions Deployment of shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education to ensure equity, access and inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Indicator 2: policy for equity (above) Regional Indicator 3: shared target populations (above) Established benchmarks and measurements to track progress towards ensuring equity, access and inclusion The development and/or obtainment of tools to assist workforce staff with ensuring access and inclusion Development of Regional Indicators 1-4 (above)
<p>8. Development of regional, sub-regional and multi-regional strategies in response to COVID-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular engagement with partners, participants and employers to understand health and safety issues Development of new strategies to address issues, both short- and long-term Provide more accessible and safer in-person services through co-location of staff in partner agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated regional, sub- and multi-regional strategies to address layoffs through Rapid Response and other services Adjusted participant service delivery strategies Co-locating staff in remote areas of the region for in-person services in

		county offices, libraries, community colleges and nonprofit agencies
9. Improve access to technology and build the digital literacy skills of participants in the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate to identify communities with limited Wi-Fi / internet access and support planning to improve access, working with appropriate local agencies • Disseminate information about Wi-Fi access for participants in all regional AJCCs and/or through partner collaboration • Building digital literacy modules into existing training and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable and accessible Wi-Fi is more readily available in the region • Increased access to digital literacy training through AJCC workshops and programs or through partner collaboration
10. Improve information and referral system to ensure participants receive the services they need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore 1-2 potential technology solutions for information and referral management • Develop standard procedures for referrals between agencies that improve the uptake of new services by participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection and implementation of an information and referral system • Final standard procedures for referrals between agencies
Future of Work		
Goal	Tactics	Indicators
11. Create a culture of adaptiveness, flexibility and acceptance of change when faced with FOW challenges or major disruptions such as COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create alignment and trust among employers, training providers, education and public agencies in responding to a changing environment • Improve communication and alignment among regional partners (see Regional Coordination and Alignment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of metrics for measuring and determining effectiveness of communication and culture change • Positive response from employers in response to a changing economic environment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for surge occupation recruitment efforts from Business Services staff 	
<p>12. Respond to the impacts of automation on jobs and career pathways</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review programs and services to participants for potential impacts due to automation and update as necessary • Provide professional development to organizational staff to better understand automation and specific technologies relevant to target sectors • Gather feedback from employers on how technology is changing in the workplace and what skills and qualifications are needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of 3-4 new programs or augmentation of existing programs to address automation in a target sector • Offering at least one new professional development opportunity to staff related to automation and new technologies
<p>13. Prepare participants to thrive in remote and gig work situations and organizations/employers to ensure these jobs are high road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building digital literacy skills for participants (see Access and Inclusion) • Preparing participants for how to identify and perform in high-quality gig and remote work opportunities, including learning employability skills • Working with employers to identify remote work opportunities and skills/qualifications, etc. • Working with employers to ensure gig and other contingent working arrangement create high road jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to digital literacy training through AJCC workshops and programs or through partner collaboration • Employers, participants and workforce partners are coordinating to ensure job opportunities that are remote or gig/contingent by nature are considered high road, as defined by job quality standards developed in Regional Indicator 2 (above)
<p>14. Integrate new on-the-job Health and Safety considerations into services (e.g., social distancing, new OSHA or CDC policies likely</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor local, state and federal guidelines related to public health and employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real-time responsiveness to known and anticipated health and safety considerations for services and employment

<p>to come into effect due to COVID-19)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare partners and participants for anticipated working environments with more social distancing, more remote working arrangements and stricter health and safety standards • Business Services teams share best practices and resources with businesses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include awareness of new working conditions in participant services and training • Policies and procedures for providing services that are responsive to new guidelines and anticipated on-the-job working conditions
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Regional Coordination and Alignment

Goal	Tactics	Indicators
<p>15. Conduct an organizational analysis/assessment to improve and streamline service delivery efforts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assemble a committee to conduct a strategic planning session for regional workforce development staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis) • Set of strategies that leverage strengths, take advantage of opportunities, address weaknesses, and plans for potential threats • Documented clarification of roles between WDBs, AJCCs MOU Partners, County workforce staff and other partners
<p>16. Increase efficiencies and reduce duplication through regional cooperation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with regional coalitions, business organizations, AJCC System partners, community colleges, etc. • Identify and share related and relevant state and federal grant projects that should be aligned/coordinated with the regional effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased capacity and local technical assistance planning and local board development to incorporate strategies for system alignment and upward mobility for residents • Participation in a minimum of two statewide meetings per year • Participation in meetings with LWDBs and partners to keep them

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Regional Training Coordinators, regional coalitions, professional development partners, and the CWDB to build capacity of LWDB staff and partners. • Receive and review regional initiative quarterly reports, ensure report(s) are shared with LWDB directors and project leads • Have members from both WDBs participate in MOU partner meetings 	informed about current regional initiatives
17. Professional development, training and capacity building of workforce staff and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IERPU will promote quality services by collaborating on professional development and staff training leveraging regional training coordination funds and other regional funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Indicator 4 (above) • Track number of workforce staff trained and evaluate impact of professional development