

## LCWD Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 8:00 AM  
College of Lake County – Grayslake Campus  
Room A013

---

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Public Comment**
- III. Chair Report**
- IV. Consent Agenda**
  - a. December Board of Directors Meeting Minutes [Attachment A](#)
  - b. Approve modifications to Policy 7 – On-The-Job Training (OJT) to align with DCEO guidance and to support expanded use of OJT for DOL registered apprenticeship programs. [Attachment B](#)
  - c. Accept the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Career Planning Training Academy supporting the Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) 2.0 in the amount of \$119,123.05. [Attachment C](#)
- V. Regular Business**
- VI. Strategic Focus: Employer Engagement**

A board-level conversation focused on employer engagement and the Board’s role related to employer engagement across the workforce system. This discussion builds on themes raised during recent board conversations and feedback, including the board retreat.
- VII. Other Business / Updates**
  - a. The Workforce Impact Awards
  - b. Deloitte Presentation at April Board of Directors Meeting
- VIII. Member Time**
- IX. Adjournment**

### Upcoming Meetings:

LCWD Board of Directors Meeting

- Thursday, April 16, 2026, at 8:00 AM

**LCWD Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, December 4, 2025, at 8:00 AM**  
**College of Lake County – Grayslake Campus**  
**Room A013**

---

**Present:** *John Castillo, Kevin Considine, Laura Crivlare (Proxy), Timothy Dempsey, Josh Fischer, Edward Gallagher, Jennifer Harris, Marcus Jordan, Dr. Michael Karner, Dennis Kessler, Noelle Kischer-Lepper (Proxy), Rachel Loberg, Troy McIntosh, Dr. Darryl Rader, Dr. Carlotta Roman, Mary Ross-Cunningham, Carla Schroeder, Jennifer Serino, Dr. Tasha Shell, Quinton Snodgrass, Ken Swanson, Amy Van Strien, Kimberly Wimer*

**Absent:** *Carrie Espinosa, Yvette Ewing, Christian Fernandez, Laticia Holbert, Lisa Johnson, Sara Knizhnik, Kathy Nellis, Julie Savitt, Dr. Lori Suddick, Dr. Andrew Warrington*

---

**I. Call to Order..... Chairwoman, Dr. Carlotta Roman**

*The meeting was called to order on Thursday, December 4, 2025, at 8:02 AM by Board of Directors Chairwoman Dr. Carlotta Roman.*

**II. Public Comment**

*No public comments were made.*

**III. Chair Report**

*No chair report.*

**IV. Consent Agenda**

- a. Approval of September 2025 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes*
- b. Approval of the 2026 Board Meeting Schedule*
  - i. Motion to approve the consent agenda was made and seconded.*
  - ii. Motion carried unanimously.*

**V. Regular Business**

- a. Manufacturing Sector Training RFP*

- i. Authorize staff to enter negotiations with **Symbol Training Institute** to develop a contract for manufacturing sector training and workforce development services, for an amount up to \$340,000, consistent with the proposal submitted.
  1. Motion to approve was made and seconded.
  2. Motion carried unanimously.

**b. WIOA Education Sector Strategy RFP**

- i. Authorize staff to enter negotiations with **United Way of Lake County** for implementation of the WIOA Education Sector Strategy: Expanding Parent Mentor Models Through District Partnerships initiative, for an amount not to exceed \$100,000.
- ii. Jennifer Serino reminded the Board that this program was presented at the June Board Meeting. It recently received statewide recognition from **the Illinois Workforce Innovation Board**, earning a **Collaborative Program Award** for its community impact and strong cross-partnership design.
  1. Motion to approve was made and seconded.
  2. One abstention was noted.

**c. AI Implementation RFP**

- i. Authorize staff to enter negotiations with **Deloitte Consulting LLP** to develop a contract for implementation of the WIOA Artificial Intelligence (AI) Workforce Innovation Initiative, for an amount not to exceed \$100,000, consistent with the proposal submitted.
- ii. Lake County Workforce Development Project Analyst, Eric Nordstrom, provided an overview of the initiative, which positions Lake County Workforce Development as a leader in AI literacy, training, and local employer readiness.
- iii. Deloitte will provide:
  1. A six-month research and impact report,
  2. Support in curriculum design,
  3. Access to their AI Academy platform,
  4. Staff and employer training modules,
  5. 100+ hours of direct consultation for Lake County small businesses.
- iv. Total project term: 18 months.

- v. *Board members emphasized the importance of staying ahead of rapid technological shifts affecting workforce and employer needs.*
  - 1. *Motion to approve was made and seconded.*
  - 2. *One abstention was noted.*

## **VI. Member Time**

### **a. College of Lake County – Innovation Bridge Transition Grant**

- i. *Dr. Tasha Shell (College of Lake County) announced that the college secured a \$253,000+ Innovation Bridge Transition Grant to expand support for:*
  - 1. *Non-native English speakers*
  - 2. *Students needing readiness support for college-level reading and writing*
- ii. *This grant will enhance academic and transition supports and aligns with workforce pathways for adult learners.*

### **b. Pace Suburban Bus – Transit Funding Update**

- i. *Edward Gallagher (Pace Suburban Bus) reported that Senate Bill 2111 passed, providing full transit funding for northeastern Illinois. Key implications:*
  - 1. *No fare increases anticipated*
  - 2. *Service enhancements planned, including expanded weekend and late-evening service*
  - 3. *A county-wide system revision begins early 2026, targeting approximately a 10% increase in service levels*

### **c. Federal and State Legislative Update – Workforce Funding**

- i. *Jennifer Serino (Lake County Workforce Development) provided updates on federal workforce legislation:*
  - 1. *Federal government shutdown did not impact WIOA funding; all grants remain appropriated.*
  - 2. *Congress is showing renewed interest in WIOA reauthorization.*
  - 3. *Discussion continues regarding a requirement that 50% of funds be used solely for training, though definitions differ from existing Illinois policy.*
  - 4. *Current proposals do not support converting WIOA into a block grant.*
  - 5. *Another major proposal under review:*
    - a. *Giving Governors the authority to reconfigure local workforce areas; potential consolidation (some states have only one workforce board).*

b. *Illinois has 22 local areas; no decisions or discussions have begun within the State.*

**d. *National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB)***

i. *Jennifer Harris (Kemper) shared updates from NAWB:*

1. *Next Board Meeting in January*
2. *CEO search is underway, interim CEO in place*
3. *2026 NAWB Forum will be held in Las Vegas, a change from its long-standing location in Washington D.C.*
4. *NAWB continues to track federal legislative developments and policy shifts*

**VII. *Adjournment***

*The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 AM.*

**Upcoming Meetings:**

*LCWDB Finance & Compliance Committee Meeting*

- *Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 8:00 AM via Zoom*

## POLICY 7: ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

### I. Purpose

This policy provides information and guidelines to assist the W.D.D. in implementing OJT programs.

### II. References

Illinois workNet ePolicy Chapter 7, Section 3: Training Provider and Training Program Eligibility

WIOA Section 134

WIOA Policy 15-WIOA-5.2.1.1

### III. Terms

OJT is training that is provided by an employer to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that provides the knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job. OJT programs must provide potential new employees, or active underemployed employees (adults, dislocated workers or eligible youth, when appropriate) with the opportunity to acquire new skills or knowledge essential to job performance.

### IV. Policy

#### a. Funding Guidelines

i. The W.D.D. is responsible for administering the OJT program.

ii. Reimbursement is provided to the employer to pay for the extraordinary cost of the training and additional supervision. The W.D.D. is responsible for negotiating the reimbursement rate based on the hiring hourly wage, the negotiated number of training hours and the negotiated rate of reimbursement.

iii. The allowable reimbursable rate is based on employer size and other qualifying factors:

(1) Employers with 1–50 employees: up to 90% reimbursement

(2) Employers with 51–300 employees: up to 75% reimbursement

(3) Employers with 301+ employees: up to 50% reimbursement

(4) The W.D.D. will negotiate the reimbursement rate based on factors such as the participant's barriers to employment, employer size, wage offered, and whether the training leads to an industry-recognized credential.

(5) OJT contracts may be written for up to 1,040 hours to reflect six months of full-time work and align with DCEO guidance.

~~(b)(6)~~ DOL-registered apprenticeship OJT contracts may extend up to 2,080 hours (12 months) and may be eligible for up to 90% reimbursement, based on justification.

~~iii.—The allowable reimbursable rate cannot exceed a rate of 50% of the hourly wage.~~

~~iv.—Reimbursement rate up to 90% when taking into account the following factors:~~

~~(1)—The characteristics of the participants taking into consideration whether they are individuals with barriers to employment, which is defined as a member of 1 or more of the following populations:~~

~~a.—Veterans~~

~~b.—Displaced homemakers~~

~~c.—Low-Income individuals~~

~~d.—Individuals with disabilities~~

~~e.—Older individuals~~

~~f.—Out-of-School Youth~~

~~g.—Ex-Offenders~~

~~h.—Homeless Individuals~~

~~i.—Participant is unemployed 26 weeks or longer~~

~~j.—The training will lead to an industry recognized credential;  
or~~

~~k.—50 or less employees — and all these factors — would allow for a 90% OJT reimbursement rate~~

~~(2)—The number of full-time employees~~

~~a.—Employer Size and Rate~~

~~i.—1 to 50 employees up to 90% of hourly salary eligible for reimbursement~~

~~ii.—51–300 employees up to 75% of hourly salary eligible for reimbursement~~

~~iii.—301 or more employees up to 50% of hourly salary eligible for reimbursement~~

**b. Employer Eligibility**

- i. OJT may be provided under a contract with an employer in the public, private non-profit, private sector, which includes staffing agencies that temp to hire. The W.D.D. is responsible Page 17 of 44 Lake County Workforce Development Board Service Policies for ensuring the employer meets the criteria and is suitable for an OJT program.

Employers selected as OJT contractors must meet the following program guidelines:

- (1) The employer must not be involved in a current labor dispute and must not have a history of frequent layoffs.
- (2) The employer must not utilize an OJT contract to displace currently employed workers or to reduce the hours of those employed below their normal schedule.
- (3) An OJT contract cannot be written for a position in which a worker is currently on layoff or for a position that will deny a current worker promotional opportunity.
- (4) The employer must address the skills identified and goals identified within the individualized service employment training plan.
- (5) Temp-to-hire agencies and the host employer will hire the participant within a five-month time frame when utilizing staffing agencies. The placement by the staffing agency must be full-time as defined by the host employer.
- (6) The wage provided by the employer to the OJT participant must be at least equal to the federal, State or local minimum wage (Fair Labor Standards Act), but the W.D.D. will ensure all wages are equitable as it pertains to the identified occupation and training plan.
- (7) Employer is not eligible if the OJT is for seasonal employment.
- (8) Employer must address the skills gaps specific to the individual and there is appropriate supervision.
- (9) Employer must be in a targeted industry identified by the W.D.B. The PY2016 Industry Targets are Healthcare, Manufacturing, Logistics and Transportation, I.T., Finance and Business. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the local needs of Lake County.

c. Participant Eligibility

- i. An OJT contract may be written for an occupation that requires a period of significant training and instruction to acquire specific skills and knowledge. The W.D.D. is responsible for assessing that the position meets the criteria.
- ii. The position must be in an occupation that is demand, local employer need within the company's given industry, or is anticipated to be in

demand. This will be reviewed by the W.D.D. staff to approve employer demand.

- iii. OJT participants must be determined eligible for each applicable funding source and have worked with the career planner to complete an I.E.P.
- iv. An employee in OJT may work overtime hours, but overtime hours are not eligible for wage reimbursement.
- v. OJT may be used to train an underemployed customer who currently works at the OJT employer only if the OJT elevates that employee to reach at least a self-sufficient wage through skill upgrade training that relates to any of the following:
  - (1) The employee is not earning a self-sufficient wage, which is currently \$14.00/hr. to be determined self-sufficient.
  - (2) The OJT relates to the introduction of new technologies, new production or service procedures, an upgrade to a higher-skilled position requiring the individual to learn additional skills.
  - (3) Other appropriate purposes identified by the LWIA and/or the W.D.B.

d. Customer Eligibility

- i. The W.D.D. is responsible for an individual customer's eligibility, intake and referral; it will evaluate the client's appropriateness and job readiness for the OJT.
  - (1) The individual must meet the current eligibility criteria as defined by WIOA under the adult, dislocated worker or youth definitions.
  - (2) The individual must be 18 years of age or older.
  - (3) The individual must have an I.E.P. documenting that an OJT is an appropriate activity.
  - (4) OJT may be provided to eligible unemployed individuals with WIOA adults, dislocated workers or youth funds.
  - (5) OJT may be provided to eligible employed individuals with WIOA adult funds if the individual's income falls below 185% of the LLSIL for an individual living in Lake County, as published by D.O.L.

e. Training Plan

- i. OJT training is provided to enable an individual to become skilled and knowledge while on the job. OJT is not intended to last until the participant has achieved mastery of the occupation. The W.D.D. is responsible for working with the employer to develop an individualized

skills acquisition training plan. Training plans must incorporate SVP (Specific Vocational Preparation) justification using ONET data.

(1) The OJT plan cannot exceed six months or ~~104000~~ hours including any additional time spent in related classroom training during which wages are paid to the OJT employee/participant by the OJT contractor/employer.

(2) Training plans may exceed six months or ~~104000~~ hours in the event of unavoidable and/or authorized absences including holidays, vacations, illness, and/or temporary shutdowns.

~~(2)~~ DOL-registered apprenticeship OJT training plans may extend up to 2,080 hours (12 months), based on SVP justification and documented in the participant file.

f. Monitoring

i. The employer agrees to cooperate with monitoring and reporting efforts as required by WIOA legislation, including award letter questions addressed in the worksite and training plan agreement document and agree to a monitoring during the span of the OJT. The W.D.D. will verify reimbursement requests, hours worked, rate of pay by reviewing invoices, payroll ledgers, and or timesheets, and other documentations that are permitted prior to reimbursement.

ii. SVP documentation must be reviewed before contract approval and included in the participant file



### **Action Item:**

Accept the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) Career Planner Training Academy supporting Illinois Workforce Development System (IWDS) 2.0 in the amount of \$119,123.05.

### **Grant Details:**

- **Funding Source:** Illinois DCEO Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Grant Funds (WIOA)
- **Grant Period:** October 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027
- **Grant Amount:** \$119,123.05

### **Background:**

The Illinois workforce case management, performance and reporting system is changing. The changes will drive putting customers first, rather than focusing solely on results and compliance. Career planners will go beyond just checking eligibility and completing services; they will work with customers to set goals, build relationships, and connect services leading to finding meaningful jobs. To implement and launch the new IWDS 2.0 system, A Train-the-Trainer model is being implemented and funded.

Workforce Development has a team member with qualifications and experience to be the lead trainer for career planners in the region including Lake, McHenry and DuPage Counties. The trainer will assist with rolling out the system, training, and implementation which includes understanding how the system supports WIOA policy and strong service relationships.

#### **Phase 1: Preparation and Orientation (November 2025 – Ongoing)**

Trainers will carry out the necessary activities to help identify system requirements and become subject-matter experts in using IWDS 2.0. GOAL: Trainers attend 90% of all meetings and activities and 100% of the train-the-trainer activities and development.

#### **Phase 2: Training Plan (March- May 2026)**

Trainers will continue all relevant activities from the earlier phase, in addition to developing a regional training plan, manage all planning and logistical tasks for training sessions.

#### **Phase 3: Train the Trainer (April 2026- June 2026)**

Trainers will continue all relevant activities from earlier phases, participate in the IWDS 2.0 final technical training, train the trainer bootcamp, participate in a statewide conference to kick-off training.

#### **Phase 4: Career Planner Training (June 2026 -December 2026)**

Trainers will continue all relevant activities from earlier phases, deliver and facilitate regional training, support career planners with online training, host regular virtual office hours. GOAL: 90% of all career planners in the region receive training by August 31, 2026.

#### **Phase 5: IWDS GO LIVE & BEYOND (JULY 1, 2026)**

Trainers will continue all relevant activities from earlier phases, facilitate career planner follow-up trainings as well as IWDS 2.0 implementation evaluation and analysis. GOAL: Trainers achieve an average satisfaction rating of at least 80%.