WIOA REGIONAL PLAN

2021-2024

North State Regional Planning Unit:

NoRTEC

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Introduction

The Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC), also known as the Workforce Development Board (WDB), provides oversight, guidance and direction for the federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in the 11-county region of Butte, Del Norte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties. NoRTEC's mission is to develop strategic partnerships and solutions that meet the workforce needs of businesses and jobseekers, promoting the economic growth of the region. As part of that mission, one of NoRTEC's goals is to promote open communication among local and regional workforce partners to create a shared vision and regional strategy. Cultivating a network of partners and promoting aligned and collaborative efforts is critical for success, especially because of the large geographic area and diversity of the NoRTEC region. The region covers a vast geographical area, with diverse landscapes and economies, each with unique strengths and needs.

In 2020, the NoRTEC Workforce Development Board and our service providers continued to actively engage partners and employers to understand the current environment, needs, challenges, and opportunities. Through an extensive engagement process, stakeholders identified common opportunities and challenges across county lines and municipal borders. Throughout the year, NoRTEC conducted extensive information gathering and stakeholder engagement, including data analysis, asset inventory, business surveys, and county outreach meetings.

This WIOA Regional Plan for Program Year 2021-2024 is organized in accordance with requirements outlined in the Employment Development Department's (EDD) Workforce Services Directive 20-05. The plan describes NoRTEC's sector partnerships, industry engagement, career pathways, and coordination with partners. Together, agencies and organizations will promote a workforce development network that will strengthen communities across the entire region through collaborative efforts to serve businesses, support job seekers, and engage partners in a shared vision for success and opportunity.

VISION

Partners combining their diverse strengths to support healthy and thriving communities.

GOALS

Goal 1: Increase connections with employers to understand current and emerging business needs and increase awareness of the services that are available to businesses.

Goal 2: Implement career pathway strategies to fulfill the employment needs of the region.

Goal 3: Promote open communication among local and regional workforce partners to create a shared vision and regional strategy.

Goal 4: Increase awareness of NoRTEC activities, fostering regional awareness and partnerships.

The enclosed Regional WIOA plan represents continued progress toward realizing this vision and achieving these goals. NoRTEC and its partners continue to promote collaborative efforts among our organizations and communities. We look forward to continuing to innovate to meet the needs of businesses and jobseekers as well as promote the economic growth of our region.

Since the original regional strategic plan was submitted in 2016, several natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic impacted planning efforts. Large portions of NoRTEC's region were impacted by the November 2018 Camp Fire in Butte County, the most damaging wildfire in California's history. Also, in 2018, the region suffered from the Carr Fire, a large wildfire that burned in Shasta and Trinity Counties. The region also experienced devastating winter storms in 2019 in Del Norte, Modoc, Shasta, and Trinity counties. The fires and winter storms resulted in a need for workers to complete clean up and repair damages.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 also greatly impacted the region. Businesses closed and unemployment soared during shelter-in-place orders. Employers deemed essential were required to have additional health and safety protocols for workers. NoRTEC and partners responded by serving employers and jobseekers throughout the region. Please see NoRTEC's local plan for a more detailed description of the impact of the fires, winter storms of 2019, and COVID-19. Despite these impacts, the region increased engagement and coordination with partners using technology to identify and understand needs, share information, and coordinate activities.

WIOA Regional Plan

This regional plan is being submitted on behalf of the North State Regional Planning Unit. This RPU consists of one local board – the Northern Rural Training and Employment Consortium (NoRTEC) – which serves the 11-county region of Butte, Del Norte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Sierra, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity Counties.

Regional Partners

In early 2020, NoRTEC began a planning process to gather input and engagement from as many regional partners and stakeholders as possible through calls, virtual meetings, and surveys. Due to the California "shelter in place" orders and different opening and closing requirements for each county, NoRTEC conducted regular virtual meetings with partners across the region. Additionally, partners and community members were invited to complete a Workforce System Partner survey. NoRTEC has continually surveyed businesses about their workforce needs since the start of the COVID-19 health pandemic.

Partners engaged in this planning process include:

- Business and Industry Representatives
- WIOA Title I Service Providers
- Industry Sector Partnerships
- State Agencies
- Community Colleges and Universities
- County Offices of Education, K-12 Education, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education

- Economic Development Agencies

Analytical Overview of the Region

NoRTEC invests in labor market information for the region by producing regional labor market reports, quarterly regional occupational outlooks, county labor market reports, and the regional labor market database. The data is shared with partners throughout the region to assist in identifying needs, priorities, and service strategies. The region utilizes data from Emsi and Dun & Bradstreet, tools like Tableau, and experts such as Dr. Robert Eyler of Sonoma State University.

NoRTEC utilizes Tableau to publish a current Regional Labor Market Database on NoRTEC's website and has created a public NoRTEC Tableau site for regional labor market and career pathway data that can be filtered by county. The long-term goal for the site is to be the regional repository for Labor Market and Economic Development Information. This interactive tool grants users access to data on changes in jobs by industry, projected job growth by industry, employment levels by occupation, high-demand occupations, projected job growth, population trends, and demographics by race and education. Partners throughout the region have been utilizing the website to filter data according to their needs.

The region provides Dun & Bradstreet data to partners on a regular basis through the EconoVue platform. The data helps partners and Business Service Representatives (BSRs) identify and target at risk businesses for outreach that may need benefit from services. This is being used during the pandemic to assist with identifying industries impacted by closures, minority and female owned businesses and most currently for assisting counties with vaccination outreach.

NoRTEC actively participates in regional economic events and studies and provides labor market and industry information to various partners. NoRTEC works closely with Economic Development Districts in our region who are in the process of preparing their required Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies. The planning process for the CEDs is being coordinated with the WIOA planning process which has resulted in more robust conversation about how regional partners can build capacity and address workforce needs that would best serve economic development in the region.

California State University, Chico coordinates an annual forecast event that draws attendance from local governments, elected officials, private industry as well as our workforce, education and economic development partners. Workforce has been a primary topic of the forecast event for the past two years. Through these collaborative events, NoRTEC has brought attention to the importance of Industry Sector Partnerships, the changing workforce training needs, impacts of the economy to the retail and commercial industries and current industry feedback.

In 2020, NoRTEC partners and service providers contracted with economist Dr. Robert Eyler, President of Economic Forensics & Analytics, to share county economic forecast information. For each of the 11 counties, Dr. Eyler completed research and delivered county-specific webinars detailing Recovery and the Future: The Economy 2021 to 2024. His webinars connected the impact of current global events to the neighborhoods and local businesses in the region. The presentations included national information on the labor force, changes in jobs across selected industries, recovery comparisons, and economic outlook growth projections. Additionally, California and county information on employment levels, housing prices and forecasts, recovery models, population changes, and items to watch were part of the presentations.

As part of this planning process and analysis of the region, NoRTEC distributed a survey to businesses to collect their input on the impact of COVID-19 on staffing levels, adaptations to operations, changes in products or service delivery, economic forecasts, and service needs. Over 260 businesses responded to the survey. The region also conducted a Workforce Partner Survey to get input from educational, economic development and workforce partners, which is discussed later in this Plan.

Impacts of Wildfires and COVID-19

In 2018, large portions of NoRTEC's region were impacted by the Camp Fire in Butte County, the most damaging wildfire in California's history. The region suffered from the Carr Fire a large wildfire that burned in Shasta and Trinity Counties. The region also experienced devastating winter storms in 2019 in Del Norte, Modoc, Shasta, and Trinity counties. The fires and winter storms resulted in strains on housing and public services. Impacted areas are also experiencing out migration as individuals leave the area increasing the challenges of having an adequate workforce necessary for clean-up, repair, and rebuilding efforts.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 greatly impacted the region. Businesses closed and unemployment soared during shelter-in-place orders. Employers deemed essential required additional health and safety protocols for workers. Schools closed in-person learning resulting in challenges for working parents, especially women. The challenges in the 11-county region were exacerbated as each county had different opening/sheltering in place policies and schools across the region operated differently resulting in inconsistencies across the region. NoRTEC and partners responded by serving employers and jobseekers throughout the region with customized services based on local needs such as PPE procurement assistance, unemployment, federal, state and local grant and loan assistance, filling jobs, and virtual services. The fires and pandemic impacted planning efforts by limiting in person meetings and outreach. However, the region increased engagement and coordination with partners using technology to identify and understand needs, share information, and coordinate activities. Partners utilized technology to meet more frequently as well as implement virtual services for employers and jobseekers.

Business Engagement

With the assistance from our regional partners and service providers, NoRTEC administered a survey to businesses across the region to understand current and future needs of employers. The survey had 267 responses with representation from all 11 counties. The respondents represented a wide variety of types of businesses with the most responses from retail, skilled trades, manufacturing/food processing, and restaurant, which each had over 20 responses. Small and medium businesses responded to the survey more than larger businesses due to the greater impacts they received from state and county closures.

Type of Business	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Other	59	22.69%
Retail	41	15.77%
Skilled Trades (Construction, Electrical, etc.)	25	9.62%
Manufacturing/Food Processing	24	9.23%

Restaurant	23	8.85%
Personal Services	18	6.92%
Hospitality/Tourism	15	5.77%
Non-Profit/Government	15	5.77%
Healthcare	14	5.38%
Agriculture	7	2.69%
Entertainment	6	2.31%
Professional Services (Financial, Legal, Administrative, etc)	5	1.92%
Education	4	1.54%
Information Technology	4	1.54%

Staffing Changes

As noted, many of the respondents represented small businesses with 77% having fewer than 20 employees. The responding companies have reduced their workforce since COVID-19. Prior to COVID-19, 113 respondents indicated having 1-5 employees. With the follow up question, 134 respondents indicated they currently have 1-5 employees, indicating employment levels shrank during the past year, which is shown in the chart below.

Number of Employees	Prior to COVID-19	Current Employment
1-5	113	134
6-10	51	44
11-20	40	30
21-30	14	13
31-40	7	8
41-50	3	1
51-100	19	18
101-200	8	6
Over 200	10	9

However, there is promising data as 46.62% (n-124) of respondents indicated they anticipate increasing their staffing levels over the next 6 months compared to 7.89% (n-21) that anticipate decreasing their staffing levels. Nearly half of the respondents (45.49%) (n-121) do not anticipate changing their staffing levels over the next six months. For those planning to increase staffing levels, 45.02% (n-104) indicated they are having difficulty filling positions. Respondents provided the following themes on the difficulties.

- Finding entry level positions no more difficult than pre-COVID
- Skilled trades challenging
- Difficult to say at this point – unemployment currently pays more
- Our members tell us they are having difficulty
- Lack of available Dental RDAs and RHDs in Butte County
- CDL licensed drivers difficult to find as well as mechanics
- Difficult finding people to work hard and show up regularly once hired

- Always difficult finding/hiring qualified individuals
- EMT and Paramedics

COVID Response

Business have responded in various ways due to COVID-19 from no action to reduced hours and temporary closings. The survey did not allow respondents to make multiple selections so many of the respondents included comments that they have made multiple changes including reduced hours, remote work, online services, temporary closings, and furloughing employees. Comments also referenced operational changes including distancing, masks, sanitation procedures, and PPE precautions.

Business Adaptations	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
No action taken	45	16.85%
Reduced employee hours	41	15.36%
Temporary closed	38	14.23%
Furloughed/Laid off employees	27	10.11%
Moved to online/virtual sales or services	19	7.12%
Having employees work remote	17	6.37%
Permanently closed	0	0.00%

Some of the respondents have had to pivot its product or service delivery, but others indicated business as normal. Specifically, 37.16% have new methods of delivery or access, and 57.09% are doing business as usual.

In addition, the respondents were asked if the business disruption continues at the current rate to identify how soon they anticipate the risk of closing. Most of the respondents (65.91%) indicated they were not at risk of closing, while 28.79% indicated 6-12 months and 5.3% indicated 1-5 months.

Business Revenue Forecast

The respondents' business revenue forecasts varied. The following chart includes responses to the question of "What change do you forecast to your business revenue for 2020?".

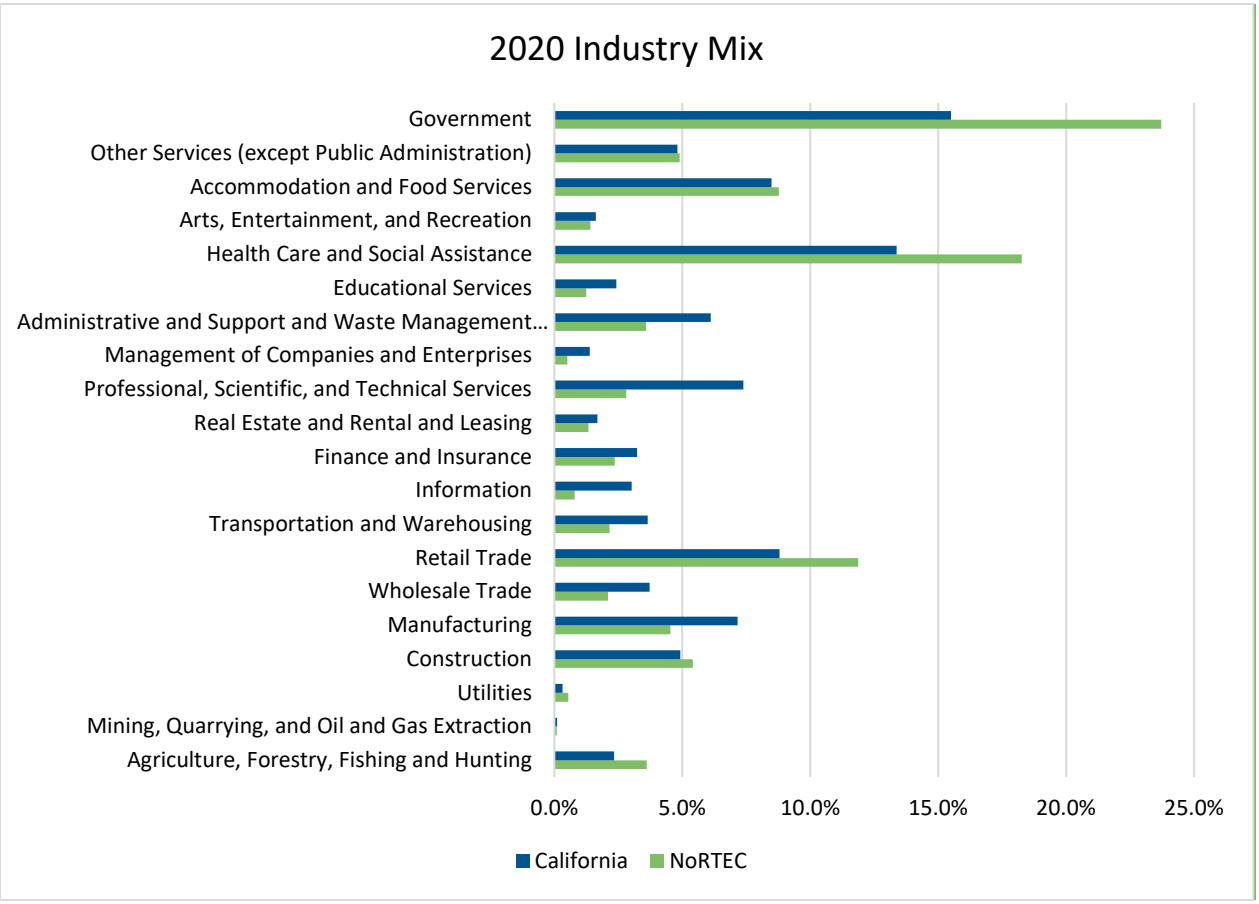
Business Revenue Forecast	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Decrease less than $100K	104	46.02%
Increase up to $100K	55	24.34%
Decrease $100K - $250K	39	17.26%
Decrease more than $250K	16	7.08%
Increase more than $250K	9	3.98%
Increase $100K - $250K	3	1.33%

Those that reported anticipating revenue loss identified reduced sales and canceled events as the main causes. To address these disruptions, companies shared the services they would find helpful.

Services	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Assistance with filling positions	105	42.86%
COVID cleaning supplies/PPE	98	40.00%
Assistance with finding and applying for loans	67	27.35%
Other debt payment plan/forgiveness	61	24.90%
Marketing	58	23.67%
Switch to or strengthen online presence	53	21.63%
Utilities payment plan/forgiveness	48	19.59%
COVID modifications – interior/exterior and furnishings	44	17.96%
Rent/mortgage payment plan	28	11.43%
Business model redesign	24	9.80%
Help with developing a disaster preparedness/business disruption plan	23	9.39%
Other IT assistance (including hardware and software)	20	8.16%
Childcare	16	6.53%
Remote work set up or management	12	4.90%
Planning for layoffs/closure	8	3.27%

Analysis of Economic Conditions

The industry mix of the NoRTEC region is characteristic of the types of jobs, skills, and education and training requirements needed by regional employers. For example, in the state of California, the share of jobs across industry sectors is much lower than that of the NoRTEC region. As detailed below, sectors like Government, Health Care and Social Assistance, and Retail Trade represent a greater share of all the jobs. A heavy reliance on certain sectors in the NoRTEC region can be positively or negatively impactful, which is why significant consideration is placed on emerging sectors based on recent labor market trends and employer feedback. NoRTEC shares occupational outlook reports with regional employers every quarter to assess the region's labor market and economy. NoRTEC responds accordingly to ensure employer needs are addressed and provided. This regular check-in has allowed NoRTEC to be nimble in industry response as well as good predicters of labor market changes.



Source: Emsi 2021.1

Demographics

Population in the region has grown over the last five years by more than 3,300 people, or 0.47%. Counties that experienced the greatest increase in population from 2015-2020 include Shasta County (+2,426), Tehama County (+2,263), and Nevada County (+1,616). Butte County experienced the greatest decrease in population during that time (-2,523). Population growth in the NoRTEC region is concentrated in individuals 65 years and over, or those traditionally not in the labor force. Younger workers age 20-34 experienced a decline of 4,750 individuals over the last five years. Only Siskiyou

County and Tehama County experienced population growth in this age cohort during that time. Even more concerning is that individuals age 35-54 represent a population decline of -9,020, second only to those age 55-64 years. NoRTEC is aware of these population changes and has initiated talent recruitment and retainment efforts, as will be explained in further detail later in this plan.

	Population Change 2015-2020						
	Under 5 years	5 to 19 years	20 to 34 years	35 to 54 years	55 to 64 years	65 years and over	Total Change
NoRTEC	(165)	(892)	(2,374)	(4,510)	(7,331)	18,607	**3,335**
Butte	(67)	(666)	(923)	(807)	(2,907)	2,847	**(2,523)**
Del Norte	(141)	200	(123)	(52)	11	862	**757**
Lassen	14	(151)	(395)	(705)	(413)	769	**(881)**
Modoc	(34)	(93)	(6)	(264)	(96)	229	**(264)**
Nevada	24	(703)	(617)	(624)	(1,609)	5,145	**1,616**
Plumas	149	41	60	(195)	(409)	778	**424**
Shasta	(50)	240	(507)	(733)	(1,045)	4,521	**2,426**
Sierra	27	(30)	(12)	(48)	(67)	147	**17**
Siskiyou	(162)	106	4	(318)	(873)	1,642	**399**
Tehama	92	299	366	(415)	527	1,394	**2,263**
Trinity	(18)	(136)	(223)	(349)	(450)	271	**(905)**
Total	**(331)**	**(1,785)**	**(4,750)**	**(9,020)**	**(14,662)**	**37,212**	**6,664**

Source: Emsi 2021.1

The NoRTEC region is three-quarters White (74.5%) followed by Hispanic (15.0%), Two or More Races (3.6%), Asian (2.9%), American Indian or Alaskan Native (2.2%), Black (1.5%), and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (0.2%). Over the last five years, each population cohort has experienced growth except for White, non-Hispanic. NoRTEC's acknowledgement of this trend has lent a focus into diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices to how workforce services are carried out.

	2020 Population	2015-2020 Change		2020 % of Cohort
White	531,734	(12,559)	(2%)	74.5%
Hispanic	107,197	10,444	11%	15.0%
Two or More Races	25,519	2,404	10%	3.6%
Asian	20,934	1,934	10%	2.9%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	15,455	85	1%	2.2%
Black	10,986	848	8%	1.5%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1,552	180	13%	0.2%
Total	**713,376**	**3,335**	**0%**	**100.0%**

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Unemployment by Age and Race: As of December 2020, the unemployment rate is 6.7% nationwide. Approximately 9.9% of Black workers and 9.3% of Latino workers were unemployed in December, compared to 6.0% of white workers. Unemployment has also risen faster among workers who were born outside the United States (this includes individuals who are now U.S. citizens) than U.S.-born workers. The increasing unemployment rates has led to 1 in 3 adults nationwide having difficulty

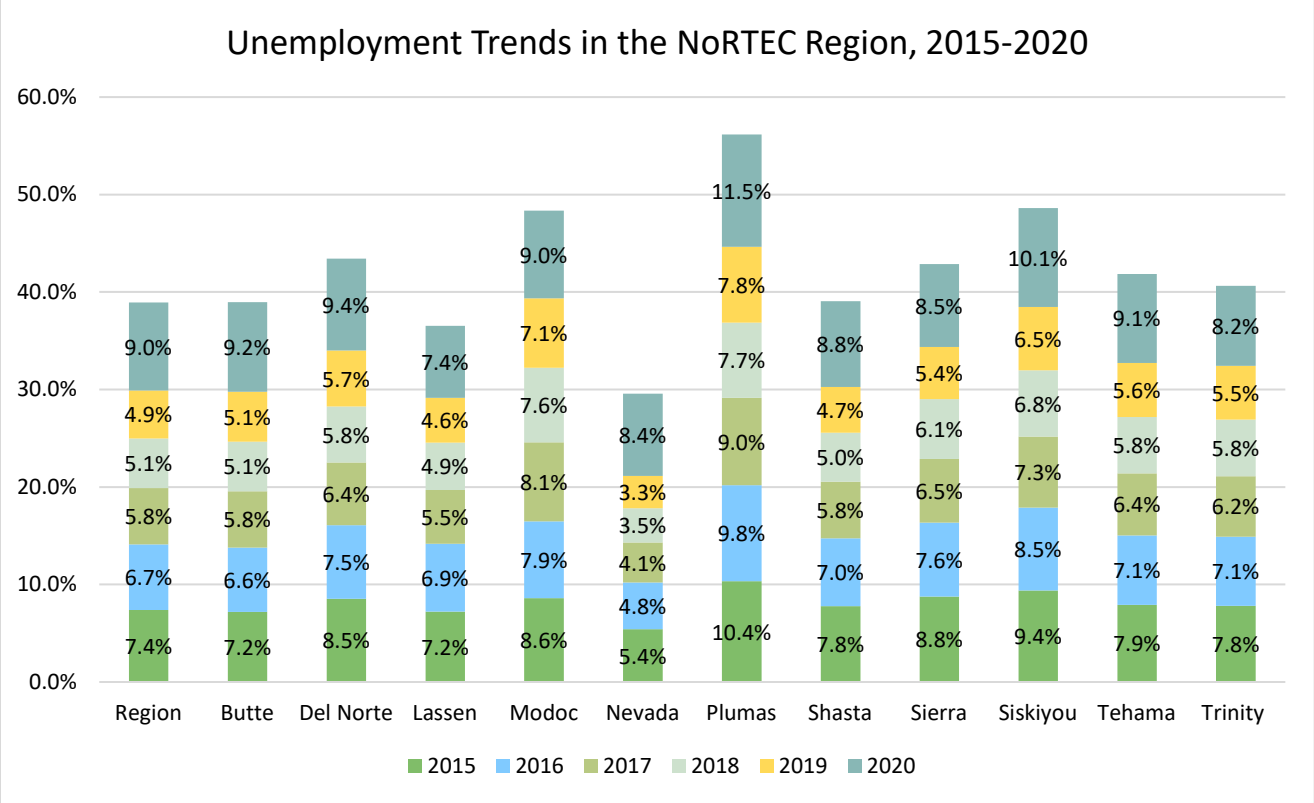
covering usual household expenses. Additionally, across the state of California, the unemployment rate stands at 8.7%, with 2,770,000 unemployment claims the week of January 9th.[i]

Young adults ages 16-24 have experienced the highest unemployment rates from any age group. Unemployment rates jumped from 8.4% from Spring 2019 to 24.4% by Spring 2020. Unemployment rates were even higher for young Black, Hispanic, and Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI) individuals (29.6%, 27.5%, and 29.7%)[ii]

Current Employment and Unemployment NoRTEC Data

Across the NoRTEC region, there were more than 268,700 workers employed in 2020. Adding the more than 18,800 individuals who were unemployed, this amounted to a labor force of over 287,500. With a working age population over 593,000, the NoRTEC region had a labor force participation rate of approximately 48.67% in 2020.

The average unemployment rate in 2020 across the NoRTEC region was 9.00%, which is nearly double the 2019 average of 4.93%. Much of this is likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disrupted business growth and operations across the nation and world. Some recovery is emerging; however, as the unemployment rate averaged 9.73% between January and August 2020, then began to recover, falling to 7.88% in September, 6.76% in October, and 6.54% in November.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

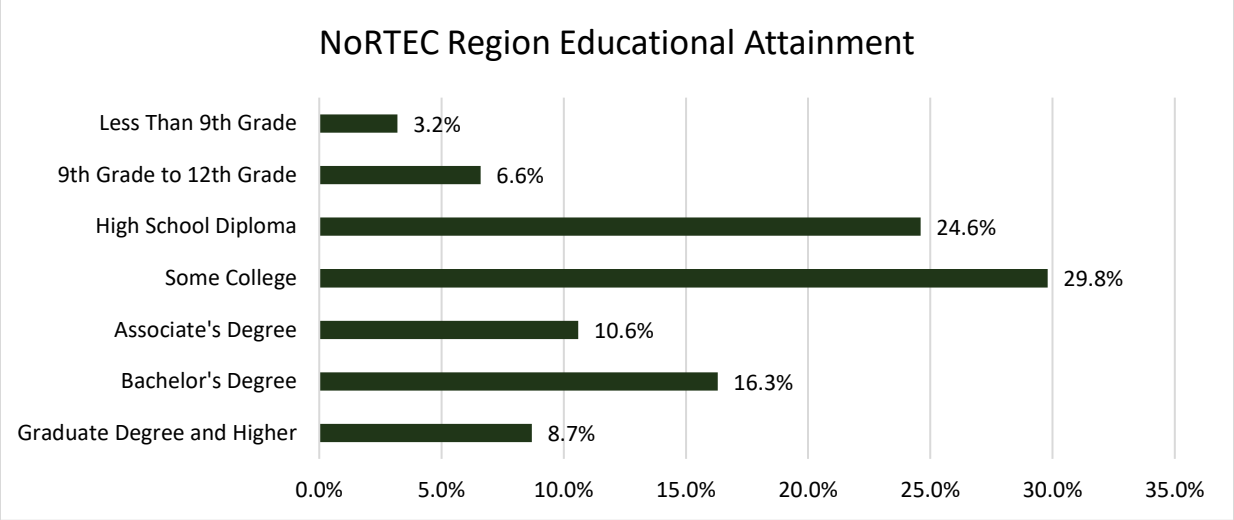
Of NoRTEC's 11 counties, Plumas County has the highest unemployment rate, with a 2020 average of 11.52%, although its rate in November 2020 was 7.19%, showing signs of recovery. In recent years, the county with the lowest unemployment rate has consistently been Nevada County, but it seemed to be

harder hit by the pandemic, as the county with the lowest unemployment rate in 2020 was Lassen County. By November 2020, all 11 counties had unemployment rates fall back down below 7.60%.

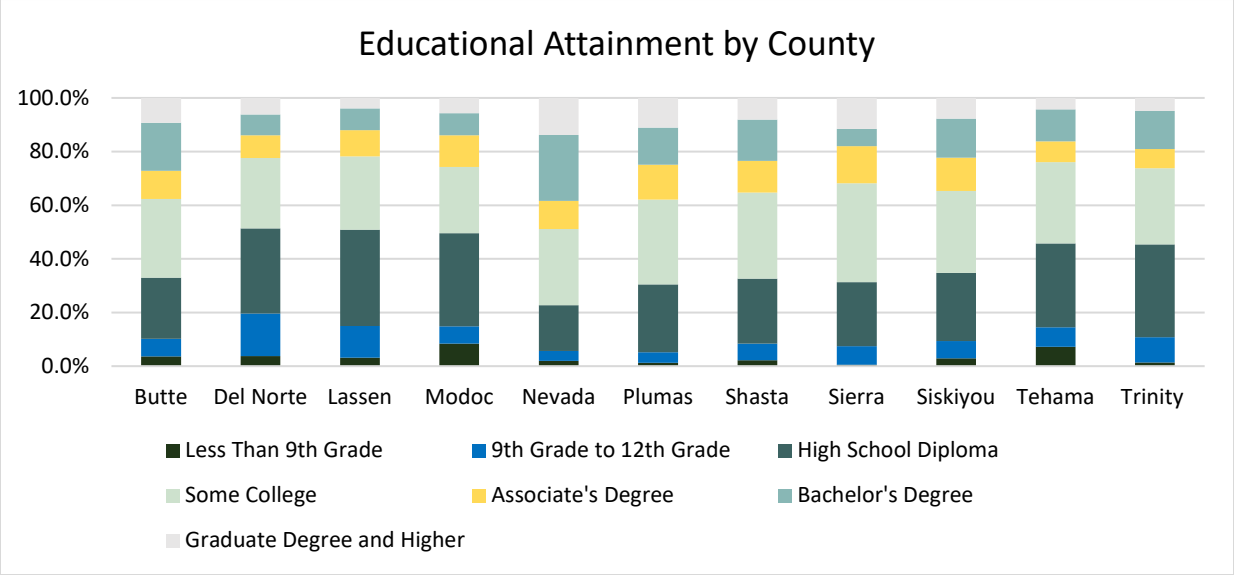
In 2020, there were over 278,000 jobs in the NoRTEC region. While this is a decrease from 2019, it is a 2.5% increase since 2015. This growth rate is slightly lower than that of the national rate over the same time, which was 3.6%.

Current Educational and Skill Levels

Across the NoRTEC region, more than one fourth of individuals have some college (29.8%), and slightly less than one fourth have attained a high school diploma (24.6%).



Source: Emsi 2021.1



Source: Emsi 2021.1

Industry Analysis

Impacts on Industry: In the early months of the pandemic, unemployment was concentrated in industries that provide in-person services including hospitality. In April, the hospitality industry experienced an unemployment rate of 39.3%, before declining to 16.7% in December with more services staying open to the public. While unemployment rates for service industries remain elevated, other industries with loose attachment to in-person services are now experiencing higher rates. For example, the mining industry exhibited an unemployment rate of 13.1% in December, the second highest observed among all industries.[iii]

Counties across the region experienced various levels of business closings. Butte and Shasta Counties were most impacted. While there was minimal impact in Sierra, Modoc, and Trinity Counties.

County	Businesses Removed	Businesses Removed %	Total # of Businesses	% of Total NoRTEC Businesses
Butte County	1,151	29.95%	10,878	27.97%
Del Norte County	74	1.93%	973	2.50%
Lassen County	91	2.37%	957	2.46%
Modoc County	32	0.83%	556	1.43%
Nevada County	681	17.72%	7,647	19.66%
Plumas County	149	3.88%	1,176	3.02%
Shasta County	1,064	27.69%	10,476	26.93%
Sierra County	24	0.62%	127	0.33%
Siskiyou County	264	6.87%	2,778	7.14%
Tehama County	275	7.16%	2,830	7.28%
Trinity County	38	0.99%	499	1.28%
TOTAL	**3,843**	**100.00%**	**38,897**	**100.00%**

Source: Dun & Bradstreet, 2021

Skills and Occupations

NoRTEC collects occupational data each quarter to assess in-demand skills and occupations within each of its targeted sectors. The tables in the following section identify the occupations within each sector that experienced the greatest increase and decrease in jobs over the last year (2019-2020). Also in each table is a list of the top ten technical skills employers have identified in job postings within each respective sector. In some cases, industries experienced growth in jobs but declines in job postings, growth in both, or decline in both. Each industry is unique as is its labor market trends. NoRTEC will continue to track industry growth/decline quarterly and annually and share data with regional employers to provide them with talent to fill in-demand jobs but to also identify skill gaps. The data is also reviewed and discussing the industry sector partnerships which identify Critical and Hard to Fill occupations on a regular basis. Closing the feedback loop with employers is critical to validating the labor market information.

Agriculture

From 2019 to 2020, the number of jobs in the agriculture industry increased by 2.2%. The number of job postings for this sector in 2020 was 19,652, a decrease of 3,005 from the year prior.

Greatest Increase in Employment		Top Technical Skills of All Occupations in Sector
Packaging & Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	+11 jobs	• Merchandising • Accounting • Flatbed Truck Operation • Auditing • Reefer Truck Operation • Warehousing • Dry Van Truck Operation • Selling Techniques • Truckload Shipping • Restaurant Operation
Food Batchmakers	+10 jobs	
Microbiologists	+6 jobs	
Greatest Decrease in Employment		
Management Analysts	-2 jobs	
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	-2 jobs	
Separating, Filtering, Clarifying, Precipitating, and Still Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	-2 jobs	

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Construction

From 2019 to 2020, the number of jobs in the construction industry experienced a 3.6% increase. NoRTEC's regular engagement with employers, industry associations, and service providers has informed the Board and staff that the demand for construction-related jobs remain high. Construction need has also increased in response to the rebuilding efforts following the Carr and Camp wildfires in 2018. The number of job postings for this sector in 2020 was 10,797, a decrease of 1,416 from the year prior. Note: an attributing factor to this decrease in job postings may be due to a majority of job postings being with labor union sites which are not accessible by public data.

Greatest Increase in Employment		Top Technical Skills of All Occupations in Sector
Electricians	+70 jobs	• Flatbed Truck Operation • Reefer Truck Operation • Dry Van Truck Operation • Truckload Shipping • Collision Avoidance Systems • Over-the-Road Driving • Customer Satisfaction • Data Warehousing • HVAC • Accounting
Roofers	+59 jobs	
Construction Laborers	+55 jobs	
Greatest Decrease in Employment		
Glaziers	-4 jobs	
Helpers, Painters, Paperhangers, Plasterers, and Stucco Masons	-3 jobs	
Millwrights	-3 jobs	

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Healthcare

The healthcare industry experienced a 1.3% decrease in jobs from 2019 to 2020. The number of job postings for this sector in 2020 was 24,199, a decrease of 3,840 from the year prior.

Greatest Increase in Employment		Top Technical Skills of All Occupations in Sector
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	+27 jobs	• Nursing • Basic Life Support • Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) • Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) • Acute Care • Intensive Care Unit • Emergency Departments • Caregiving • Pediatric Advanced Life Support • Nursing Care
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	+12 jobs	
Nurse Practitioners	+9 jobs	
Greatest Decrease in Employment		
Dental Assistants	-51 jobs	
Registered Nurses	-47 jobs	
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	-37 jobs	

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Hospitality

The hospitality industry experienced a 7.8% decrease in jobs from 2019 to 2020. The number of job postings for this sector in 2020 was 18,690, a decrease of 1,714 from the year prior.

Greatest Increase in Employment		Top Technical Skills of All Occupations in Sector
Travel Agents	+3 jobs	• Restaurant Operation • Merchandising • Cash Register • Selling Techniques • Cash Handling • Accounting • Food Services • Customer Experience • Food Safety • Customer Satisfaction
Actors	+3 jobs	
Reservation and Transportation Ticket Agents and Travel Clerks	+2 jobs	
Greatest Decrease in Employment		
Waiters and Waitresses	-448 jobs	
Cooks, Restaurant	-246 jobs	
Dishwashers	-156 jobs	

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Information Technology and Digital Media

The industry experienced a 1.9% decrease in jobs over the last year. The number of job postings for this sector in 2020 was 6,242, a decrease of 2,731 from the year prior.

Greatest Increase in Employment		Top Technical Skills of All Occupations in Sector
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	+15 jobs	• Accounting • Selling Techniques • Software Engineering • Computer Science • Auditing • Operating Systems • Python (Programming Language) • Machine Learning • Automation • SQL (Programming Language)
Customer Service Representatives	+7 jobs	
Biological Technicians	+5 jobs	
Greatest Decrease in Employment		
Civil Engineers	-25 jobs	
Lighting Technicians and Media Communication Equipment Workers, All Others	-8 jobs	
Interior Designers	-3 jobs	

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Manufacturing

The manufacturing industry experienced a 1.2% decrease in jobs from 2019 to 2020. The number of job postings for this sector in 2020 was 16,743, a decrease of 2,366 from the year prior.

Greatest Increase in Employment		Top Technical Skills of All Occupations in Sector
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	+12 jobs	• Flatbed Truck Operation • Reefer Truck Operation • Warehousing • Dry Van Truck Operation • Truckload Shipping • Accounting • Collision Avoidance Systems • Over-the-Road Driving • Forklift Truck • Mechanics
Food Batchmakers	+10 jobs	
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	+5 jobs	
Greatest Decrease in Employment		
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	-24 jobs	
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	-21 jobs	
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	-13 jobs	

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Professional Services

The professional services industry experienced a 4.5% decrease in jobs from 2019-2020. The number of job postings for this sector in 2020 was 24,079, a decrease of 4,768 from the year prior.

Greatest Increase in Employment		Top Technical Skills of All Occupations in Sector
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	+39 jobs	• Accounting • Auditing • Selling Techniques • Reefer Truck Operation • Dry Van Truck Operation • Warehousing • Loans • Billing • Financial Statements • Bookkeeping
Insurance Sales Agents	+16 jobs	
Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	+13 jobs	
Greatest Decrease in Employment		
Office Clerks, General	-40 jobs	
Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	-37 jobs	
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	-28 jobs	

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Public Services

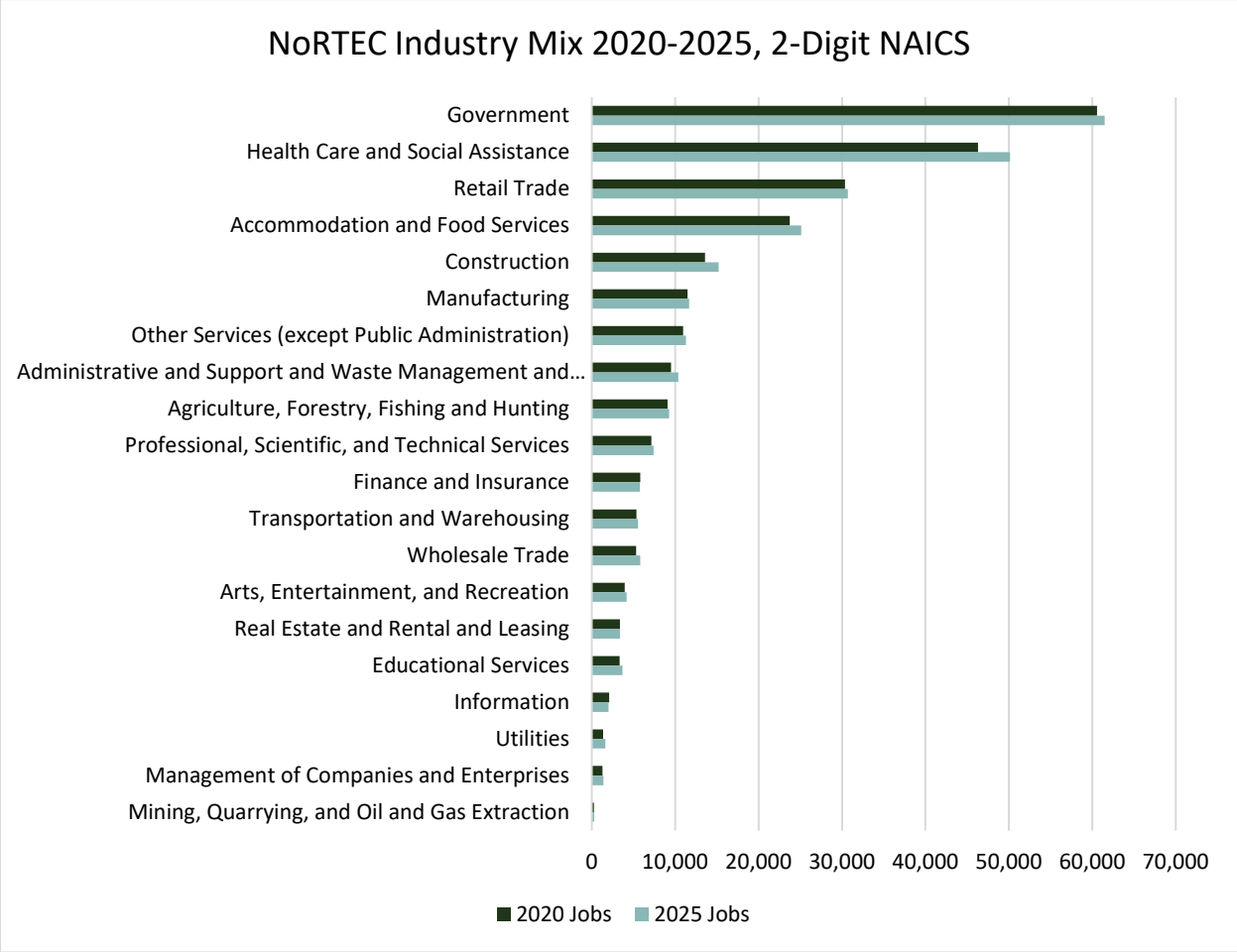
The public services industry experienced a 1.6% decreased from 2019 to 2020. The number of job postings for this sector in 2020 was 10,800, a decrease of 2,923 from the year prior.

Greatest Increase in Employment		Top Technical Skills of All Occupations in Sector
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	+13 jobs	• Accounting • Auditing • Caregiving • Social Work • Bookkeeping • Accounts Payable • Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) • Financial Statements • Budgeting • Accounts Receivable
Management Analysts	+9 jobs	
Compliance Officers	+5 jobs	
Greatest Decrease in Employment		
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	-139 jobs	
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	-134 jobs	
Substitute Teachers, Short-Term	-74 jobs	

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Industries and Occupations with Emerging Demand

In 2020, the top industries in the NoRTEC region included Government (60,578 jobs); Health Care and Social Assistance (46,292 jobs); Retail Trade (30,338 jobs); Accommodation and Food Services (23,731 jobs); and Construction (13,563 jobs). Projections over the next five years indicate a continued trend for all industries with exception of Finance and Insurance (-0.5%); and Information (-4.1%).



Source: Emsi 2021.1

Job Change, Earnings, and Location Quotient (LQ)

Average annual earnings for industries in the NoRTEC region range from $24,181 for Accommodation and Food Services to $180,996 for Utilities. Health Care and Social Assistance, which is projected to add the most jobs over the next five years, has an average earning of $55,831, and Construction, which is projected to add the second most jobs over the next five years, has an average earning of $69,788. Construction has the highest average earnings per job among the top ten industries in the NoRTEC region.

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting has the highest LQ (3.89). Industry LQ provides a measure of how "concentrated" an industry is in a region compared to the nation, with a measure of 1.00 indicating the same concentration as the nation. In this analysis, LQs greater than 1.25 are considered to be the threshold for identifying an industry as relatively strong for the county's economic base. Sectors with an

LQ greater than 1.25 include Utilities (1.50); Government (1.49); and Health Care and Social Assistance (1.38).

Description	2020 Jobs	Job Change (2020-2025)		Avg. Earnings Per Job	2020 LQ
Government	60,578	883	1.5%	$76,501	1.49
Health Care and Social Assistance	46,292	3,843	8.3%	$55,831	1.38
Retail Trade	30,338	352	1.2%	$40,692	1.19
Accommodation and Food Services	23,731	1,356	5.7%	$24,181	1.03
Construction	13,563	1,646	12.1%	$69,788	1.07
Manufacturing	11,484	182	1.6%	$66,551	0.55
Other Services (except Public Administration)	10,947	356	3.2%	$34,567	1.10
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	9,511	879	9.2%	$43,576	0.62
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	9,092	177	1.9%	$57,518	3.89
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	7,147	261	3.7%	$69,598	0.45
Finance and Insurance	5,821	(30)	(0.5%)	$74,652	0.55
Transportation and Warehousing	5,358	173	3.2%	$64,099	0.57
Wholesale Trade	5,302	519	9.8%	$64,553	0.55
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3,946	247	6.3%	$30,231	0.99
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	3,367	17	0.5%	$50,467	0.87
Educational Services	3,324	378	11.4%	$34,351	0.51
Information	2,078	(85)	(4.1%)	$62,688	0.44
Utilities	1,353	291	21.5%	$180,996	1.50
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,295	102	7.9%	$91,178	0.33
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	257	29	11.2%	$97,799	0.24

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Top 20 NAICS Code Jobs Data

Diving deeper, the top 20 NAICS code (6-digit NAICS) in the NoRTEC region are listed in the table below. The top NAICS codes in the region in 2020 include Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals (19,648 jobs); Elementary and Secondary Schools (Local Government) (17,385 jobs); Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (12,127 jobs); General Medical and Surgical Hospitals (11,481 jobs); and Full-Service Restaurants (8,457 jobs). Each of these NAICS codes have experienced job growth over the last five years and are projected to continue growing over the next five years.

NAICS codes that are more concentrated in the NoRTEC region compared to the nation (LQ above 1.25) include Crop Production (4.92); Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (3.64); Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (Local Government) (2.73); State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals (2.15); Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals (2.07); Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars (1.93); General Medical and Surgical Hospitals (1.47); Elementary and Secondary Schools (Local Government) (1.46); Supermarkets and Other Grocery (except Convenience) Stores (1.39); Federal Government, Civilian, Excluding Postal Service (1.32); and Insurance Agencies and Brokerages (1.28).

In shift share analysis, competitive effect (CE) is the portion of regional growth that cannot be explained by either overall national growth or industry/occupation-specific trends. Rather, competitive effect is the growth or decline of a sector that is unique to the NoRTEC region. NAICS codes with the largest positive CE include State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals (+529 jobs); Elementary and Secondary Schools (Local Government) (+442 jobs); Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals (+422 jobs); and General Medical and Surgical Hospitals (+407 jobs). NAICS codes with the largest negative CE include Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (-1,787 jobs); Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists) (-693 jobs); Federal Government, Civilian, Excluding Postal Service (-415 jobs); and Crop Production (-335 jobs).

Description	2020 Jobs	Job Change (2015-2020)		Job Change (2020-2025)		Avg. Earnings Per Job	2020 LQ	CE
Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	19,648	1,176	6.4%	662	3.4%	$83,208	2.07	422
Elementary and Secondary Schools (Local Government)	17,385	852	5.2%	249	1.4%	$66,684	1.46	442
Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities	12,127	1,275	11.7%	2,561	21.1%	$17,256	3.64	(1,787)
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	11,481	1,058	10.1%	423	3.7%	$91,997	1.47	407
Full-Service Restaurants	8,457	294	3.6%	202	2.4%	$25,498	0.94	(113)
State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	8,034	516	6.9%	252	3.1%	$85,447	2.15	529
Limited-Service Restaurants	7,685	481	6.7%	315	4.1%	$21,203	1.04	(241)
Supermarkets and Other Grocery (except Convenience) Stores	5,738	107	1.9%	(32)	(0.6%)	$39,340	1.39	117
Federal Government, Civilian, Excluding Postal Service	5,025	(212)	(4.0%)	(24)	(0.5%)	$99,722	1.32	(415)
Crop Production	4,440	(431)	(8.8%)	(77)	(1.7%)	$55,411	4.92	(335)
Offices of Physicians (except Mental Health Specialists)	3,982	(417)	(9.5%)	(289)	(7.3%)	$104,173	0.92	(693)
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (State Government)	3,741	495	15.3%	232	6.2%	$67,554	0.83	376
Nursing Care Facilities (Skilled Nursing Facilities)	3,066	(358)	(10.4%)	(16)	(0.5%)	$50,623	1.18	(236)
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools (Local Government)	3,040	(464)	(13.3%)	(216)	(7.1%)	$48,195	2.73	(324)
Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels	2,696	263	10.8%	150	5.6%	$30,073	0.99	82
Religious Organizations	2,528	(38)	(1.5%)	38	1.5%	$22,110	0.90	(94)
Temporary Help Services	2,479	186	8.1%	148	6.0%	$34,239	0.52	133
Snack and Nonalcoholic Beverage Bars	2,476	558	29.1%	439	17.7%	$21,626	1.93	(28)
Insurance Agencies and Brokerages	2,376	512	27.5%	242	10.2%	$60,922	1.28	257
Department Stores	2,019	(544)	(21.2%)	(389)	(19.3%)	$29,561	1.16	(140)

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Data

The top occupations at the 2-digit Standard Occupational Classification in the NoRTEC region include Office and Administrative Support Occupations (32,125 jobs); Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (24,666 jobs); Sales and Related Occupations (23,592 jobs); Educational Instructional and Library Occupations (21,635 jobs); and Healthcare Support Occupations (17,835 jobs). Each of the occupations at the 2-digit SOC level is projected to experience job growth over the next five years with the exception of Military-only occupations (-9 jobs, -1.7%).

Occupations with the largest number of annual openings include Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations (4,709 openings); Office and Administrative Support Occupations (3,864 openings); Sales and Related Occupations (3,676 openings); and Healthcare Support Occupations (3,147 openings).

Average hourly wages range from $14.62 for Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations to $48.33 for Management Occupations. Occupations with the greatest projected increase in jobs (Healthcare Support Occupations; Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations; and Construction and Extraction Occupations) have average hourly wages ranging from $14 to $26.

Description	2020 Jobs	% Job Change (2020-2025)	Annual Openings	Avg. Hourly Earnings
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	32,125	0.5%	3,864	$19.41
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	24,666	5.3%	4,709	$14.62
Sales and Related Occupations	23,592	1.9%	3,676	$18.80
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	21,635	2.2%	2,158	$28.06
Healthcare Support Occupations	17,835	12.3%	3,147	$15.34
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	16,612	4.8%	2,330	$18.86
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	14,942	4.1%	1,013	$45.82
Management Occupations	12,678	5.4%	1,247	$48.33
Construction and Extraction Occupations	11,555	11.2%	1,620	$26.55
Production Occupations	10,078	2.3%	1,292	$20.22
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	9,908	4.4%	1,111	$24.40
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	8,945	5.5%	987	$30.79
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	8,488	6.4%	1,269	$16.52
Community and Social Service Occupations	7,617	6.4%	934	$24.73
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	7,183	1.9%	1,235	$17.39
Protective Service Occupations	7,025	2.9%	753	$31.68
Personal Care and Service Occupations	6,749	5.7%	1,211	$16.07
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	3,645	3.9%	410	$32.36
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	2,887	5.0%	262	$36.46
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	2,763	6.9%	276	$40.91
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	2,129	6.2%	285	$27.44
Legal Occupations	1,218	5.3%	98	$44.48
Military-only occupations	526	(1.7%)	60	$24.59

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Looking more closely at the occupational data, the top 20 occupations in the NoRTEC region at the 5-digit SOC-level is listed in the table below. The top occupations include Home Health and Personal Care Aides (13,061 jobs); Cashiers (8,096 jobs); Fast Food and Counter Workers (7,378 jobs); Retail Salespersons (6,433 jobs); and Registered Nurses (5,531 jobs). Of the top 10 occupations, four do not

require any formal educational credential and seven require only short-term on-the-job training. Average hourly wages for the top 20 range from $13.61 for Home Health and Personal Care Aides to $48.15 for General and Operations Managers.

Only six occupations in the table below require some level of post-secondary education. These include Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary; Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks; Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education; Registered Nurses; and General and Operations Managers.

Description	2020 Jobs	% Job Change (2020-2025)	Average Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education	Typical On-The-Job Training
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	11,086	17.8%	$13.61	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term on-the-job training
Cashiers	8,203	(1.3%)	$14.47	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training
Fast Food and Counter Workers	6,759	9.2%	$13.79	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training
Retail Salespersons	6,255	2.8%	$15.82	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training
Registered Nurses	5,244	5.5%	$45.61	Bachelor's degree	None
Office Clerks, General	5,141	1.8%	$17.61	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term on-the-job training
Waiters and Waitresses	4,127	2.7%	$14.75	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training
Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	4,077	2.4%	$15.04	Some college, no degree	None
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3,818	(1.1%)	$18.65	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term on-the-job training
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	3,761	2.4%	$33.01	Bachelor's degree	None
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	3,489	2.8%	$14.20	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	3,397	5.7%	$15.64	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training
General and Operations Managers	3,164	7.7%	$48.15	Bachelor's degree	None
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	3,064	6.9%	$15.74	No formal educational credential	Short-term on-the-job training

Description	2020 Jobs	% Job Change (2020-2025)	Average Hourly Earnings	Typical Entry Level Education	Typical On-The-Job Training
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	2,964	(0.1%)	$20.11	Some college, no degree	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Stockers and Order Fillers	2,874	2.3%	$15.57	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term on-the-job training
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,641	6.3%	$23.20	Postsecondary nondegree award	Short-term on-the-job training
Cooks, Restaurant	2,622	8.6%	$15.26	No formal educational credential	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	2,603	5.4%	$20.08	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term on-the-job training
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	2,503	0.5%	$25.88	High school diploma or equivalent	None

Source: Emsi 2021.1

Fostering Demand-Driven Skills Attainment

Employer engagement and feedback are key to understanding local demand and needs. The private sector has responded by providing strong leadership and engagement with the NoRTEC Workforce Development Board, and by participating in this planning process. Business leaders have been at the forefront of identifying and addressing workforce needs and advocating for improvements to and support of the system. Additionally, government leaders are engaged in the workforce development system, actively participating on boards, providing feedback on data, plans, and policies, and aligning their priorities with identified workforce needs.

In-demand Industry Sectors

NoRTEC has created occupational outlooks for each of the WDB's priority sectors, emerging sectors and sectors with significant occupational postings. These outlooks show detailed information about occupations that are growing within the region at different levels of education and experience and corresponding salaries. The occupational outlooks are regularly updated and distributed across the region to inform decision making. NoRTEC shares the data with businesses through partners and the industry sector partnerships and requests feedback. All of the NoRTEC supported Industry Sector Partnerships submit quarterly Hard to Fill/Critical Occupational reports that are provided by industry. NoRTEC looks to the businesses to validate the data and indicate if it is reflective of current needs and demand. Additionally, NoRTEC staff and service providers meet weekly on a Directors' call to share feedback they are receiving from the businesses in their communities. NoRTEC Business Service Representatives (BSRs) also have a monthly standing meeting to share information and maintain a Slack page that is updated daily to reflect changing business needs and services available. Local EDD offices are also included in the conversation through regular meetings with our service providers in each

county. The regular distribution of data and meetings are creating a continual and critical feedback loop from local business to the workforce system.

NoRTEC identified priority sectors that contribute or have the potential to contribute the most to regional economic growth. The WDB understands that not all jobs within these sectors represent strong career paths or positions with good wages and benefits. Many available positions in the NoRTEC region, and many of the persistent needs of employers, are at low-skill, low-wage levels, particularly in the Tourism sector, which is prone to low wage and sometimes seasonal positions. While NoRTEC understands and agrees that jobs with good wages and benefits are the ideal target and that higher wage positions are what will enable economic growth for communities and residents, they also see the low-skilled, low-wage positions as opportunities for young, early career, or inexperienced workers to gain experience, workplace exposure, and entry into the workforce.

NoRTEC is focusing its efforts on career pathway development to ensure that if jobseekers are not able or ready to find high wage positions, they are at least able to find a position that enters them into a clearly articulated career pathway with opportunities for growth and upward mobility. NoRTEC and its partners are committed to ensuring that customers are educated and aware of the career pathways that are available in the region. As career pathway development continues, NoRTEC and its partners will work to identify the employers who are providing the greatest opportunities for local jobseekers, including those with barriers, and target these entities for more exposure and input. NoRTEC will gather information from individual business services representatives as well as industry sector convenings to identify these employers and prioritize their engagement and service. A key component to identifying these employers is to have strong business services representatives who are experts and specialize in specified target sectors, enabling them to speak the same language as the industry employers and cultivate stronger relationships. NoRTEC will put more resources and staff into job development that focuses on industry-tailored service and is better able to identify and respond to businesses' unique needs.

NoRTEC will also work with partners, including business intermediaries, such as employer associations and chambers of commerce, to identify those businesses each organization has worked with in the past who have been open to hiring high-need or disadvantaged populations. This network of partners will expand NoRTEC's resources and contact to ensure a wider range of opportunities are available for customers.

NoRTEC has identified the following eight in-demand industry sectors and/or occupational pathways for the region. The following identified sectors are included because they reflect local regional needs.
Agriculture

- Agriculture
- Healthcare
- Hospitality
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Professional Services
- Public Services

For example, with the recent Carr and Camp wildfires and recent winter storms there is a need for construction and skilled trades for rebuilding efforts. This has resulted in the region identifying construction as a priority sector. Likewise, data indicates there will be a significant increase in government retirements resulting in vacancies in public services in the coming years. Therefore, the region identified public services as a priority sector.

Sector Initiatives

The workforce development activities in the 11-county NoRTEC region span a wide range of programs and service providers that address the workforce needs of employers and that focus on developing the skill, abilities, and credentials of the population, including those with barriers to employment. The region's workforce development system is known for employer-driven initiatives, particularly within targeted industry clusters.

Workforce development and educational institutions have collaborated with the region's hospitals for more than a decade to improve training opportunities to help increase the number of nurses in the region and face other staffing needs. The region's community colleges have developed new programs in direct response to employer needs. For example, the Grow Manufacturing Initiative has lengthy partnerships with major manufacturers in developing tailored training programs such as the recent Manufacturing Bootcamp. Direct involvement with employers also helps to validate labor market information that is obtained from secondary sources, creating a more well-rounded picture of the local economy and labor market.

NoRTEC is also a leader in Next Generation Industry Sector Partnerships (Next Gen IPs), a sector strategy to coordinate and align workforce, education, economic development, and other public and community partners to support an industry. NoRTEC has supported the development, enhancement and expansion of Industry Sector Partnerships utilizing the Next Gen model. A Next Gen IP is a partnership of businesses, from the same industry and in a shared labor market region, who work with economic development, education, workforce development, and community organizations to address the overall competitiveness needs of the targeted industry. By addressing these business-driven priorities, Next Gen IPs not only support the overall competitiveness of an industry and regional economy and promote cross-sector collaboration, but also benefit workers, students, and the broader community by connecting people to career pathways. In turn, NoRTEC supports this model for these benefits along with the training and credential attainment, increased wages, talent recruitment, and increased career and industry awareness supported by Next Gen IPs.

All Partnerships participate in "peer sharing" meetings within NoRTEC and on a national level for ongoing technical assistance and support. Each Partnership also is required to submit Critical and Hard to Fill position reports on a regular basis. NoRTEC reviews the reports with partners and tries to integrate current industry needs into Occupational Analysis for the continued business feedback loop.

There are currently six Industry Sector Partnerships in the NoRTEC Region:

> **Butte County Grow Manufacturing Initiative (GMI):** The Butte County Grow Manufacturing Initiative was created to address a lack of skilled labor in the North State – a major barrier to industry growth. The initial project was the North State Manufacturers Directory. The Directory serves as a connection point for businesses to build a locally-based supply chain, collaborate on

innovation, and share technology. GMI has grown in scope and projects, including advocacy and outreach to educators and students. This creates a pipeline of local talent trained on the latest technology. GMI members include manufacturers, suppliers, financial institutions, training, education, business service, and private organizations. The partnership is housed at NoRTEC.

The Butte County GMI partners with companies, organizations, and individuals to create jobs and strengthen communities in the North State. It also works to connect educators and manufacturers through several activities designed to inspire STEM education and engineering pathways for Northern California students. The partnership's goal is to connect middle and high school students with valuable, real-world experiences both inside and outside the classroom. This is accomplished through a mix of classroom presentations, events, job shadowing opportunities, and manufacturing plant tours. The Butte County GMI gathers students and manufacturers annually for the Grow Manufacturing Expo to showcase the latest and greatest in the manufacturing. Additional activities include job fairs, mini–Maker Fairs, and presentations to immerse students in the possibilities with manufacturing.

This GMI also coordinates in-depth tours of many of the member plants. The facility tours provide valuable exposure to the job floor. Job shadowing is another area where students gain valuable real-world experience. The Butte County GMI works with its members and educators to create short-term internships providing students an edge in their STEM education. The GMI works with educators to bring local engineers, technicians, and machine operators directly to the classroom. The presenters engage with students, give advice, and share their experiences in a real-world engineering career. The Butte County GMI sponsors scholarships, mentorships, and site visits to help develop the next generation of innovators and manufacturers.

In response to the pandemic and to alleviate barriers associated with field trips from the classroom, the Butte County GMI has a YouTube Channel, with Manufacturing Tours Playlist for virtual facility tours. The annual in-person Manufacturing Expo was held virtually, which allowed greater participation from educational partners and students who would not have been able to attend the Expo in person due to cost and travel time. Butte GMI, Shasta GMI and Sacramento Valley GMI hold regular meetings to share best practices, coordinate events and discuss industry needs specific to the pandemic.

Shasta County Grow Manufacturing Initiative (GMI): Shasta GMI was designed to bring together Shasta County's manufacturing businesses to help them collaborate to be more effective and profitable. The primary purpose is to support manufacturers and promote economic development through manufacturing in the Shasta County Region. With this forum, the members can exchange ideas, network, and support scholarship and STEM programs.

The objectives of the Shasta GMI are:

- Development of a sustainable employer-led industry sector partnership framework that will focus on key issues related to the manufacturing industry sector in Shasta County;
- Development of a marketing plan to promote industry and career growth;
- Provide a comprehensive list of expert resources needed most by manufacturers;

- Support educational and workforce development opportunities; K-12 and post-secondary; and
- Support and nurture a thriving manufacturing ecosystem.

Shasta GMI has five focus areas with objectives and strategic actions as part of its 2019-2021 Action Plan:

1. Partnership Engagement, Leadership, and Sustainability
2. Customized Training
3. Workforce Recruitment
4. Educational Innovation and Pathways
5. Marketing and Communications

Through the convening of industry-led meetings and workgroups, Shasta GMI facilitates the sector partnership and implements the tools and best practices for accomplishing these objectives. The partnership includes: a core leadership team; manufacturing members that participate in a minimum of two advisory/strategic planning meetings a year; three subcommittees (Customized Training, Workforce Recruitment, and Educational Pathways) that meet quarterly; and support partners. Shasta GMI is committed to helping manufacturers embrace continuous improvement, providing technical assistance, sharing resources, and helping alignment between educational, workforce development, and economic development efforts.

Nevada County Tech Connection (NCTECH): The vision of NCTECH is to create a culture of innovation, creativity, and global problem solving that supports a diverse economy and a sustainable future for Nevada County. The Nevada County Economic Resource Council serves as the primary convenor for the partnership and is responsible for expanding and sustaining the partnership. The partnership supports and promotes the regional tech industries, small businesses, and entrepreneurs by supporting and connecting initiatives that develop, retain, and attract tech talent and businesses to Nevada County. NCTECH also provides tech education and resources to the community. Examples of activities include TechTonic Tuesdays, VR/XR workshop, and Writers Workshop.

The partnership has a “Manufacturing Task Force” that meets quarterly to survey changing needs and requirements of the business community. Using the information to assist new and struggling businesses in the county. The “Talent Task Force” assists with local workforce needs by attending job fairs and assisting with training programs which includes internships at the high school and college level. The partnership has a Google form that employers can fill out and provide feedback on critical or hard to fill positions as well as provide feedback on events, indicate interest in initiatives, and share comments, questions, or advise for how NCTECH can best serve the local tech and manufacturing community.

Rural Healthcare Collaborative: There are two partnership efforts supporting the healthcare sector needs in the rural communities. Service providers AFWD and SMART are working together to support these partnerships. AFWD is expanding their partnership which has been in

operation since 2016, and SMART is just starting a partnership. AFWD is aligning the Modoc partnership with the SMART and the HWY 299 healthcare collaborative. This partnership will promote and increase employer engagement throughout NoRTEC's most rural counties. AFWD will take its model for rural healthcare engagement and expand to eastern Shasta County and Siskiyou County. Working together, the partners will provide needed support to the HWY 299 healthcare collaborative which primarily serves as a recruitment tool for partner facilities. The collaboratives serve Modoc, Lassen, Plumas, Shasta, and Siskiyou Counties.

Healthcare organizations serve the rural communities with limited resources and funding, and struggle with recruiting, training and retaining talent. The collaboratives formed to support the unique needs of rural healthcare. A more robust collaborative will leverage resources and workforce supports across the region. This will promote and increase employer engagement throughout NoRTEC's most rural counties. These projects work to align education, workforce and industry to provide real time industry needs to ensure there is an adequate labor pool to meet current and future demands. Efforts focus on reducing employer recruitment and turnover costs, increase employee retention, increase job placements, and provide career pathway opportunities for currently employed workers.

COVID-19 created challenges and opportunities that demand healthcare professionals to work in new ways. This collaborative can help with information sharing and resources to support the healthcare professionals in the rural counties to effectively support community members. Prior to the COVID-19 effects on the economy, the rural areas were experiencing difficulty both attracting and retaining high quality employees. Rural hospitals and clinics were already stretched thin from a staffing standpoint. Now these facilities are under tremendous financial strain. With the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, workforce development services will be vital to the sustainability of rural healthcare facilities.

The collaborative set out to use real time, employer validated data to identify specific needs. The partnership regularly identifies and shares critical and hard to fill positions highlighting job titles, companies reporting the position, skills needed for the position, ideal candidate qualifications, and number of open positions.

Siskiyou Rural Tourism/Hospitality: The latest partnership in the region is a new partnership with Siskiyou County forming to address the impact of COVID-19 to the tourism and hospitality sector while working to bring more tourism to the area. The Siskiyou Economic Development Council is the convener for the partnership and is responsible keeping the partnership on track and moving forward to accomplish the goals of the businesses in the partnership. The activities of the partnership include convening a leadership team, generating a list of business contacts, developing and implementing a communication strategy, conducting virtual industry meetings, and building an action plan.

Chicostart's growTECH: growTECH is an established and self-sustaining industry led partnership between tech and entrepreneur industry leaders and supporting community organizations. The mission and purpose is to grow, support, and connect the thriving tech and entrepreneurial hub in Chico and Northern California. The partnership is led by qualifying tech and entrepreneur

businesses and facilitated by Chicostart as the convener. It is assisted by agencies that support these businesses, economic & workforce development groups, and educators like Butte College and CSUC. While the Partnership is business and employer driven, support organizations have the resources to respond to sectors needs where appropriate.

The partnership sees the tech and entrepreneur sector as a catalyst for the success of the economy because of its ability to scale quickly and create high paying jobs. The partnership includes existing and emerging companies in the greater Chico area that have an investment in tech talent, whether the company has tech as a product, service, or biz ops. The Partnership drives strategies that act on industry identified opportunities and challenges. It also provides a physical and social platform for this community to share and collaborate on events, challenges, successes, people, processes, and results. The following are some growTECH programs:

- **Chico's open source consortium** – a partnered effort with CSUC and local business where students work with tech business teams to develop open source libraries.
- **Project based work Butte / CSUC** – an effort that brings together student teams to work on technology projects for technology business teams. This fosters student awareness for staying in town as well as job placement and student credit opportunities. It is a wonderful pathway to teaching relevant technology and team skills.
- **Internships Butte/CSUC** – this effort facilitates a strong internship placement opportunity for students to startups and tech-based business.
- **Tech job placement for software teams** – this effort provides creative job placement programs, talent matching.

Workforce development and educational institutions have collaborated with the region's employers for more than a decade to develop new programs in direct response to employer needs. Direct involvement with employers also helps to validate labor market information that is obtained from secondary sources, creating a more well-rounded picture of the local economy and labor market. The private sector has responded by providing strong leadership and engagement with the NoRTEC Workforce Development Board. Business leaders have been at the forefront of identifying and addressing workforce needs and advocating for improvements to and support of the system.

Labor market information, provided and updated by NoRTEC, is utilized in each of the counties to assist staff and partners in developing specific pathways that exist in local industries. The job market differs greatly across the rural versus populated and diverse topographical areas within the region. In many counties, AJCC staff sit on Regional Occupation Program and Community College Advisory Committees, which are a source for both training need and local employment information. Labor market information is incorporated into all Multidisciplinary team meetings, forums and pre-employment workshops for clients. Career pathways are explained to partners and participants in ways that encourage understanding of training and supportive service needs required to achieve sustainable employment outcomes.

For the past four years, each quarter NoRTEC has created and updated occupational outlook reports within the region's target industries to share common information among partners and customers about the in-demand occupations and career pathways that exist within the region. Most recently these reports were completed in December 2020 for the following sectors:

- Agriculture
- Construction
- Healthcare
- Hospitality
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing
- Professional Services
- Public Services

NoRTEC also understands that initiatives are necessary for those industries or businesses specifically that have been most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the most recent occupational outlook update, a report on COVID-19 effects was also completed. This provides a baseline of information from which to build to continue to support businesses in their recovery and growth.

Enabling Upward Mobility

Quality Jobs

NoRTEC continues to work to identify the needs of local employers and improving the resulting services. In the strategic goals and strategies laid out in the Local Plan, the WDB's first goal is to "Increase connections with employers to understand current and emerging business needs and increase awareness of the services that are available to businesses". Strategies related to this goal are focused on creating more and better relationships with local businesses as a means of hearing directly from industry about their needs and creating coordinated responses.

NoRTEC has a long established "Business First Philosophy" (BFP). The BFP provides a pathway to strengthen community economic health. Providing business services to local businesses on their individual and specific needs improves business stability and promotes growth, which results in increased job opportunities.

Each local area includes a Business Services team and several AJCC Centers are equipped with a Business Resource Center for use by the business community. Working in partnership with its education, economic development, and industry association partners, the Business Services team provides the following business services to employers:

- Business Start-Up Assistance/Services: Job postings, referrals, customized recruitment, interview facilities, information on personnel policies, employee benefits, business loans, tax incentives, training, marketing, labor law information, workers compensation information, business start-up checklist, access to Business Resource Center.
- Business Expansion Assistance/Services: Job postings, referrals, customized recruitment, interview facilities, information on personnel policies, employee benefits, business loans, tax incentives, training, marketing, labor law information, workers compensation information, e-commerce, internships, OJT, access to Business Resource Center.
- Business Retention Assistance/Services: Services listed above under Business Expansion assistance plus employer workshops (topics tailored to the needs of local business), business networking, referrals to lending sources, referrals to partner agencies.

- Business Information Exchange: Sharing of information through networking, workshops, one-on-one customized training, on-site business visits, resource libraries, internet-based training, labor market information, newsletters, employer forums/roundtables, job fairs.
- Human Resource Support/Services: Consultation/assistance with personnel policies and employee handbooks, development and review of job descriptions, annually updated information on labor law changes and how to obtain legal assistance, consultation/assistance with interviewing, hiring and termination of workers, customized recruitments, hiring/termination forms and checklists.
- Employee Recruitment Assistance/Services: Job Postings, customized recruitment, ad creation and media placement, job descriptions, interview questions, prescreening, interviewing, new hire orientation development, job fairs.
- Employee Training Services: Skill upgrades, internships, classroom training, internet-based training, OJT, customized training.
- Layoff Assistance: "Rapid response" orientations of available services to laid-off employees, assistance for employers with required documentation for termination, layoff letters, and separation forms, information on federal and state regulations with respect to terminating employees.
- Public Policy Information: Helping businesses stay up-to-date with regulatory changes (via e-mail, newsletters, and through discussion with Business Service Representatives, annual reports to local business service organizations and County Board of Supervisors, workshops (topics tailored to local business needs).

Services offered to the employer free of charge (e.g., job postings, recruitment, and screening of potential employees--Employee Recruitment Assistance/Services category) are internally referred to as gateway activities. These types of activities provide a needed service and assist in developing relationships between the employers and AJCC Business Service Representatives (BSR). These relationships often open opportunities to provide assistance with current or future employee training, human resource support, and business expansion or retention assistance. Most of the initial contact between the employer and BSRs takes place at the employer's place of business, as bringing the services to the employer has been more successful than advertising available services in print or electronic media and waiting for the employer to call or come into the AJCC. In response to COVID-19 these meetings are occurring virtually with great success.

Each of the priority sectors that were identified by the NoRTEC WDB have opportunities for individuals at various levels of education and experience. Wages in the NoRTEC region tend to be lower than neighboring regions, and the WDB acknowledges that some of the occupations within its priority sectors may not meet the State Board's definition of good jobs. However, because of this, the WDB is focusing heavily on a career pathways approach within regional sectors to ensure that upward mobility is available and that even if an individual's first step on a career pathway is not one that immediately provides economic security and benefits there is a pathway to a quality job.

NoRTEC and its partners serve all employers in the region and value employers who provide quality jobs that provide economic security through family-sustaining wages and comprehensive benefits. The region identified in-demand industry sectors that offer career pathways for economic security.

NoRTEC does not currently have a formal policy related to job quality. However the region has several initiatives supporting employers with quality jobs primarily through its Industry Sector Partnerships. Through the use of Occupational Outlooks, NoRTEC is able to demonstrate sectors with the most employment potential, and able to focus its resources on sectors and occupations that pay family-sustaining wages and have career growth potential. NoRTEC's workforce system, including staff, board members, and partner organizations, have been holding discussions regarding a jobs quality statement or policy. Conversations are ongoing at NoRTEC WDB meetings. After implementing the goals of the RPI 4.0, NoRTEC will work with stakeholders to determine if a quality jobs policy would help to advance the work of the system.

The region is creating a Workforce Equity and Integration Working group to continue conversations and develop corresponding policies and initiatives while working toward systemic change. NoRTEC also forwards Dun & Bradstreet data to all our BSRs across the region. The data highlights minority owned and female owned businesses so BSRs can work to better serve and support the local businesses. Additionally, the WDB is making a concentrated effort to diversify the composition of the WDB membership so it is representative of the region's population.

NoRTEC is actively involved in the region's six industry partnerships which are connected to technology, manufacturing, and healthcare which feature strong pathways to quality jobs with benefits leading to economic security. With the partnerships, NoRTEC supports subcommittees focused on Recruitment and Retention supporting discussions with case studies, bringing in consultants, sharing employee voice. Based on these conversations, employers are understanding employee needs and considering comprehensive benefits to support employees such as through wages, flexible schedules, good working conditions, and investment in skill development. Additionally, NoRTEC, partners, and employers are continually trying to expose job seekers to opportunities, show career possibilities, provide education and training supports for advancement, sharing labor marketing information, and explaining pathways to family-sustaining careers.

Target Populations and Service Strategies

NoRTEC and its partners work together closely on targeted service strategies in the region. Specific examples include the work with the region's industry sector partnerships. The partnerships pull together support from various partners representing industry, economic development, education and training, and community partners. NoRTEC shares information including data such as the Dun & Bradstreet and EMSI information to develop regional and county labor market profiles and occupational outlooks. Regular business surveys are also conducted to understand business needs. Additionally, the partnerships provide quarterly reports on Critical and Hard to Fill jobs within the critical sectors. NoRTEC serves as the central repository for labor market information and shares it regularly with partners and businesses and works to close the feedback loop. The labor market data informs discussions about labor needs and opportunities, and coordinate outreach to targeted populations.

NoRTEC and its partners meet quarterly to discuss regional needs and develop targeted service strategies. Partners and providers are offering specialized programs for minorities, women, non-English speakers, and other target populations. Additionally, NoRTEC is currently updating the asset map information that is available on the website to broadly share the resources available across the region. NoRTEC and its partner websites are available in various languages and the AJCC and services are ADA compatible.

NoRTEC and its regional partners work together to identify shared target populations and develop targeted service strategies for a variety of needs. In addition to the core partners, the North State is reliant on a robust and critical system of community-based organizations (CBOs) to reach and work with groups that have some of the most significant barriers to employment. CBOs participate in program development, outreach, and specialized supportive services, in coordination with one-stop partner groups across the region. By working with these community-embedded organizations and ensuring appropriate referral and co-enrollment, the workforce system is better able to assist individuals with accessing regional sector pathways and connecting them with needed supportive services and resources to ensure that they will remain in relevant programs as they work their way through career pathways. Recent efforts around a shared target population have been focused on justice involved individuals, using the resources from the state's Prison2Employment initiative.

One of the targeted populations for the region is justice involved individuals which are being addressed through the regions Prison2Employment (P2E) program. Californians for Safety and Justice's research report, Repairing the Road to Redemption in California, found that 76% of individuals with a criminal conviction have experienced barriers to success, including 46% who have experienced difficulty in finding a job and 35% who have experienced difficulty with obtaining an occupational license. Access to gainful employment is strongly correlated with a reduced likelihood that people re-entering society from the criminal justice system will return to crime. However, employers are less likely to hire a candidate with a conviction history. Studies show that an estimated 72% of U.S. employers use background checks to screen their applicants and many are unwilling to hire applicants with convictions. (Duane, M., La Vigne, N., Lynch, M., & Reimal, E. (2017). Criminal Background Checks: Impact on Employment and Recidivism (p. v). Urban Institute.) Input from stakeholders and staff experience is consistent with these research findings on barriers for individuals in reentry.

Based on research, stakeholder input and the challenges specific to the NoRTEC area, the following list identifies needed supports the P2E program includes to ensure success for this population: Supportive Services to Address Multiple Barriers to Employment; Career Counseling and Job Readiness Training; Work-based Learning and Receptive Employers; Occupational Skills Training; and a Supportive Community. P2E builds on existing partnerships with law enforcement entities (county probation and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation), AJCC operator and staff, employers, and health organizations community-based organizations that provide mental health and support services. P2E provides justice involved individuals with career counseling and guidance; labor market information; an assessment of job readiness, occupational, and basic skills; employment plan development; job placement assistance; and supportive services. Some individuals participate in occupational skills training, but a majority participate in an "earn and learn" activity (OJT, Work Experience, Transitional Job) to provide them an income while they are learning.

Unserved and Underserved Communities

In the delivery of its programs, NoRTEC's Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Policy states no one shall be excluded from participation, denied benefits, subjected to discrimination, or denied gainful employment because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. NoRTEC

and all Service Providers provide services to the broadest populations possible utilizing the universal access approach outlined in WIOA.

NoRTEC and its providers work with employers and training providers throughout the region to ensure historically unserved and underserved communities are reached. NoRTEC is actively promoting equity and equal access to workforce system services. As detailed in the local plan, diversity and inclusion trainings as well as strategies for serving specific communities has been an ongoing topic for professional development. NoRTEC is in the process of developing an equity statement to capture the WDB's commitment to ensuring equal opportunity for historically underserved communities.

All NoRTEC Service Providers have established partnerships throughout the service area. Partnerships with EDD, Department of Health and Human Services, County Offices of Education (ROP), Adult Education/Literacy, Butte Community College, Shasta Community College, Lassen Community College, Feather River Community College, Sierra College, College of the Redwoods, Experience Works, local economic development entities, and other community-based organizations, provide valuable services to the individuals accessing services at the AJCCs.

The most common partnerships with CBO's focus on additional wrap-around supports for vulnerable populations in order to enhance their accessibility to the workforce system and ensure their inclusion in the workforce. CBO partners are an integral part of the pipeline to direct clients into regional sector pathways, either by directly providing training for in-demand occupations themselves, exposing youth clients to careers in demand sectors, or providing wrap-around services to reduce barriers to employment. Access NoRTEC's local plan for further detail on the roles of partner organizations.

Local partner meetings are held each week to discuss partner activities and to ensure nonduplication of services. The partners provide valuable input on workforce preparation issues and needs. Successful AJCCs recognize the value of partnerships with other service agencies, job seekers, employers and the community served.

NoRTEC's goal is to ensure that, when any individual walks in the door of an AJCC, it is clear to those in need that they have entered a place where they may truly succeed in their search for the right employee, the right employer, the right career, as well as any temporary financial assistance they may need. NoRTEC strives to make sure that all individuals benefit from the partnerships described above that have been established by maintaining strong communication and referral channels.

The region's sector partnerships are making concentrated efforts to serve diverse populations and increasing outreach efforts to targeted populations that are under-represented in specific industries such as women and minorities. NoRTEC and its partners are committed to ensuring that all individuals, including individuals with barriers to employment, have access to opportunities in regional priority sectors and career pathways. To ensure all populations are served by career pathways, NoRTEC will:

- Explore expanding target sectors to serve more industries in the region, in addition to the WDB's priority sectors.
- Engage WIOA title II adult education providers to ensure English Language Acquisition and Basic Skills students have entry points to the pathway.
- Build entry points for WIOA Title I adults, especially priority of service populations.

- Build entry points for WIOA Title I youth, particularly out-of-school youth populations who need reattachment to education and training.
- Engage WIOA Title IV vocational rehabilitation providers so individuals with disabilities are well served in pathways to integrated competitive employment.
- Continually discuss aligning programs or building new programs that can connect to form a longer, more robust pathway.
- Allocate resources to support individuals in career pathway programs (e.g., cohort training funds, support services).
- Build staff capacity to offer critical workforce development services under the new WIOA definitions: career services, training services.

The development of career pathways within the region's priority sectors is one of the WDB's goals articulated in its strategic plan. Staff at regional AJCCs will refer any jobseeker who is basic skills deficient to a training provider as the first step on a career pathway. By utilizing career pathways as a mode of planning and communication, these individuals will begin this training with a job in mind. Likewise, NoRTEC will work with adult education, English as a second language, and other basic skills training providers to reach and connect underserved students with employment opportunities upon their completion of training. Partners will also work together to promote work-based learning opportunities to provide these students with work experiences that will help them move into employment and into career paths.

Support services are a key ingredient to successful career pathways to help ensure that individuals can stay engaged and mitigate the outside challenges that keep them from succeeding at work or school. It is important to promote a system of services, rather than individual programs, to individuals entering regional sectors and career pathways.

NoRTEC is supporting its providers by investing in staff training. As described in the local plan, staff across the region are completing trainings related to equity, inclusion, and trauma, and sharing the strategies and practices with other team members. Although the region does not have a formal policy related to equity, the region has a workgroup discussing racial inequity. In addition to increased training, coordinated activities and efforts, the work group is exploring the need to recommend a formal policy.

NoRTEC and partners have several programs working to reach and serve unserved and underserved communities through access to training and supports. Specific examples include the Prison2 Employment Program (P2E) which focuses on providing work-based learning activities and needed supportive services (housing assistance, counseling, and court-ordered classes, etc.) to job seekers who are seeking placement in unsubsidized employment. The services may include assessments, career counseling, job search assistance, occupational classroom training, and paid work-based learning.

The WAF 7.0 Launching Latino Youth program in another example of reaching specific populations and providing access to opportunities. The program serves Latino youth through outreach events and activities to accelerate and expand career awareness and improve opportunity and access to services such as mentoring and internships.

Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services

Regional Service Strategies

As the North State Regional Planning Unit is made up of one local area, regional services strategies mirror those cooperative/collaborative initiatives described in the local plan. NoRTEC's mission is to bring together workforce development, educational, economic development and other employment services in a seamless customer-focused delivery network that enhances access to program services and improves long-term employment outcomes. The AJCC partners, are committed to administering our independently funded programs as a set of integrated streamlined services to job seekers and employers, by:

- Helping businesses find skilled workers and access other support services, including education and training, for their current workforce;
- Providing an array of employment and business services and connecting customers to work-related training and education;
- Continuing to align investments in workforce, education and economic development to regional in-demand jobs;
- Reinforcing partnerships and strategies to provide job seekers and workers with high quality career services, education and training, and supportive services needed to get good jobs and stay employed;
- Continuing to plan, coordinate, and provide services in an integrated manner to maximize the utilization of resources and assure there will be no "wrong door" for customers seeking services from the system;
- Measuring customer satisfaction and continuously improving services based upon customer feedback; and
- Designing and continuously improving a system that reflects statewide/regional economic development strategies and is responsive to industry sectors in the region.

In addition to the MOU partners providing the numerous programs, NoRTEC understands that there are many other community agencies and organizations in the 11-county area that are providing valuable services to related to workforce development or that support workforce customers. NoRTEC maintains close working relationships with other non-core partners to ensure a strong network of resources and referrals is available to all customers, providing the best access possible to employment, training, education, and supportive services. NoRTEC has regular meetings with many of these partners for the purposes of developing a comprehensive workforce system that enhances access to the program services with the goal of administering separately funded programs as a set of integrated streamlined services to customers.

To truly promote a comprehensive system approach, the WDB sees that each of these community organizations has a valuable role to play in the workforce system. NoRTEC launched the Workforce Asset Service Directory to catalog the organizations that may be appropriate or beneficial for collaboration and alignment.

Information and data sharing is a key part of the regional partner MOU. AJCC partners have committed to principles of common reporting and sharing information through electronic dissemination and shared technology. Partners share data to the greatest extent allowable under governing legislation and confidentiality requirements. To aid in sharing, partners work together to develop enhancements to

current technology to improve common interfaces. Partners ensure that shared data is used only for its strictly intended purpose, as increased data sharing must be done with the highest level of confidence that security is maintained.

Workforce Partner Survey

In an effort to gather additional input from partners and understand the impact of COVID-19 to their operations and services as well as needs, NoRTEC administered a survey. There were 29 responses to the Workforce System Partner survey representing a wide variety of partners: state agencies, county departments of education, economic development corporations, adult education, sheriff's departments, probation and parole operations, social services, TANF, and additional workforce partners. This survey is discuss in the NoRTEC Local Plan and is being utilized to address how regional partners can better serve clients during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Type of Organization	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Education	7	30.43%
State Agency	7	30.43%
Community Partner (non-profit)	6	26.09%
Economic Development Organization	4	17.39%

The responding organizations have adapted in various ways to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Adaptations	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Employees working remotely	23	79.31%
Changes in office setting (distance of work spaces, masks)	22	75.86%
Changes in service delivery	16	55.17%
Temporarily closed	6	20.69%
Other	6	20.69%
Reduced employee hours	2	6.90%
Furloughed/laid off employees	2	6.90%
Permanently closed	0	0.00%
No action taken	0	0.00%

Respondents were asked how services have been modified due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Modifications	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Offering services remotely (workshops, client meetings)	25	89.29%
Serving fewer clients in person	20	71.43%

Stopped offering certain services	10	35.71%
Offering different services in response to the pandemic	9	32.14%
Other	9	32.14%
No longer offering services to the public	0	0.00%

Respondents were asked if they had any suggestions for actions the workforce system should take to assist job seekers through the COVID pandemic. Respondents shared ideas around the following themes.

- Virtual job fairs, virtual hiring events, virtual job boards
- Increase availability of virtual services – workshops
- Continued collaboration with partners
- Help with virtual communication skills – how to present yourself on Zoom
- Increased check-ins and follow ups
- Share events, job openings, encourage job seekers to continue to apply for jobs
- Ensure job seekers have access to computers, provide paper packets of information for those without access to technology

The respondents were also asked to provide suggestions for actions the workforce system should take to assist businesses through the COVID pandemic. The following are examples of the responses provided.

- Stay in contact – provide information about resources, grants, loans, PPE, PPP, safety precautions and policy updates, and other assistance
- Encourage employers to provide flexible scheduling for parents trying to balance work, distance learning, and childcare
- Help businesses find ways to stay open – help them figure out what to do and understand the options for grants and other resources
- Participate in their local Business Recovery Task Force to help deliver business support services
- Explore new ways to align the available workforce with their needs – hire then train, utilize OJT, work experiences, apprenticeships

Respondents also provided suggestions for the local AJCC on actions they can take to assist job seekers or businesses through the COVID pandemic. Respondents provided suggestions around the following themes.

- Continue strong and consistent outreach, more advertising and marketing
- Keep creating partnerships to assist businesses with networking in the community
- Create a virtual job fair and virtual hiring events for the community, more virtual events and services
- Ensure communication and access are sustained
- Continue to adapt services and job readiness skill building to remote formats
- Appreciate the number of bilingual staff available at the AJCC and the training programs that are available with Spanish speaking instructors
- No suggestions, AJCC is doing a great job

Respondents were asked if they foresaw any needed changes to the referral process with the AJCC considering the COVID pandemic. Thirteen of the responses were “no”, “not sure”, or “none specifically.” Respondents also indicated the current referral process is working well with electronic and online referrals.

The final question of the survey asked respondents for other thoughts on how the workforce system should best adapt to address current circumstances (through 2022). Respondents identified suggestions around the following themes.

- Keep connecting through virtual platforms, look to modify business practices if needed
- Continue to be flexible and adapt at working with various programs
- Establish and communicate plans for future service delivery model such as a hybrid system between in-person and remote service delivery
- Bilingual staff
- Ongoing information about training programs, more online training
- Meet via Zoom regularly with community partners
- Support efforts addressing lack of technology/device access and internet connectivity issues
- Supports for those struggling with high levels of anxiety, unready or unavailable for work
- Serve homeless population

Regional Administrative Cost Arrangements

As the North State Regional Planning Unit is made up of one local area, administrative costs and strategies are the same as described in the local plan. NoRTEC and the AJCC MOU partners developed a consolidated system-wide budget for the network of comprehensive AJCCs. NoRTEC is the WIOA Title I grant recipient and administrative entity representing the Local Workforce Development Area comprised of a consortium of eleven counties: Butte, Del Norte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity. NoRTEC procures AJCC Operators and Career Services providers in a competitive process. The current AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers for the region are:

- Job Training Center in Tehama County;
- SMART Workforce Development Center in Del Norte, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Trinity Counties; and
- Alliance for Workforce Development in Butte, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Plumas, and Sierra Counties.

Appendices

1. Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Participation	Comments
Partner Survey (virtual meetings/telephone/ online/website/WDB Meetings/social media/email)	Workforce System Partners sent to 142 Partners via Survey Monkey and Constant Contact emails. NoRTEC core partner agencies as well as other education and economic development partners, including: County Departments of Health/Social Services, EDD, California Human Development, AARP, High School Districts, Offices of Education, DOR, California Indian Manpower Consortium, CalFresh, Child Support Service Partners, Competitive Integrated Employment Partners, English Language Learners Partners, Re-Entry Services Partners, Community Colleges, CSU Chico, Economic Development Districts and local chambers of commerce.	30 Responses	Comments were incorporated into the Plan regarding how to better serve clients, align resources and streamline services and referral systems.
Regional and Local Plan Survey (virtual meetings/telephone/ online/emails)	Workforce System Partners	5 Responses	Comments were included in Local Plan

Business and Industry Survey (telephone/online)	Business and Industry implemented through regional partners, BSRs and Industry Sector Partnership meetings	270 Responses – all industry sectors represented: Healthcare, Manufacturing, IT, Tourism, Hospitality, Agriculture, Personal Services, Professional Services, Public Services	Comments regarding COVID impacts and industry/technical assistance needs were incorporated into the Regional Plan Economic Analysis and Local Plan Business Assistance
Encuesta de Negocios (telephone/online)	Business and Industry	5 Response	See above
Public Comment Survey (online)	Public	1	Comment was made that a bigger investment in *high wage* career path training, like that provided by the Building Trades unions in Northern California was needed.
Public Comment Post (online)	Public	0	n/a
Public Comment Community Hearings (virtual - Zoom)	Public and Partners Stakeholder meetings were held to attain feedback and recommendations specifically about the Regional and Local plan content. These focused on the needs of the AJCC System, regional needs, and system improvements to ensure that the system serves those most in need.	NoRTEC Staff, One Stop Operator and TPMA & Associates	n/a

	March 23, 2021 and April 1, 2021		
Regional Partner Meetings (virtual)	Regional Workforce, Education and Economic Development Partners Coordination with regional planning processes	3Core Economic Development District, Sierra Business Council, Superior California Economic Development District and CSU Chico Center for Economic Development, County and City Economic Development Departments	Need to coordinate planning processes, business input (surveys) and labor market information.
Workforce Development Board Meeting (email/website/public notices/PowerPoint presentation)	January 28, 2021, NoRTEC Governing Board, Workforce Development Board, NoRTEC staff and Service Providers and Public	NoRTEC Governing Board, Workforce Development Board, NoRTEC staff and Service Providers and Public	Regional planning process, opportunities for input, preliminary economic and workforce data presented.

2. Public comments received that disagree with the Regional Plan

Throughout the regional and local planning process, stakeholder comments were solicited to ensure that both plans meet the needs of the entire 11-county NoRTEC region. Throughout the public comment phase of there were no comments submitted that disagreed with the plans.

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3. Signature Page

North State Regional Planning Unit Regional Plan

This unified regional plan represents the NoRTEC Workforce Development Board's efforts to maximize and coordinate resources available under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

This regional plan is submitted for the period July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2025, in accordance with the provisions of WIOA.

Local Workforce Development Board Chair	**Chief Elected Official**
DocuSigned by: Joe Wilson 4C67263464A4F0...	DocuSigned by: Bob Williams 48CC4E976C3A430...
Signature	Signature
Joe Wilson	Bob Williams
Name	Name
Chair	Chair
Title	Title
Date	Date

[i] Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (2021) *Tracking the COVID-19 Recession's Effects on Food, Housing, and Employment Hardships*. Retrieved from: https://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/tracking-the-covid-19-recessions-effects-on-food-housing-and

[ii] Gould, E., & Kassa, M. (2020) *Young Workers Hit Hard by the COVID-199 Economy.* Retrieved from: https://www.epi.org/publication/young-workers-covid-recession/

[iii] Congressional Research Service (2021) *Unemployment Rates During the COVID-19 Pandemic: In Brief*. Retrieved from: https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R46554.pdf