

Guidance Area: W. Va. Code §5B-2B-4	
Title: Career Awareness and Access to Information on High-Wage Occupations	Number: GN-WVC-5B2B-V1
Effective Date: September 22, 2025 Revision Date(s): N/A	Approved by: Scott A Adkins
Review by Date: September 22, 2026	Approval Date: August 21, 2025

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this guidance is to support Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) in meeting the requirements of W. Va. Code § 5B-2B-4 by establishing consistent statewide practices that promote equitable access to high-wage, in-demand occupations. This guidance ensures that all job seekers—regardless of gender—receive comprehensive, unbiased career information, counseling, and referrals that enable informed decision-making about their career pathways.

This issuance **rescinds and replaces** WorkForce WV Guidance Notice 01-14 and **discontinues the use of any tools or practices developed under that notice.**

BACKGROUND:

W. Va. Code § 5B-2B-4 directs LWDBs to provide career guidance that:

1. Delivers current wage and compensation data for jobs and careers offering high earning potential, regardless of whether those occupations have been traditionally dominated by one gender;
2. Offers counseling, skills development, and training opportunities that encourage all individuals to pursue such careers;
3. Provides referral information to employers offering high-wage, in-demand employment opportunities; or
4. Educates individuals about the long-term financial implications—including impacts on Social Security and retirement benefits—of choosing lower-wage occupations.

REFERENCES:

- **W. Va. Code § 5B-2B-4** — State statutory requirement for equitable career guidance.
- **House Bill 4196** — Legislative basis for the statute.
- **WorkForce WV Guidance Notice 01-14** — Superseded by this guidance.

IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDED PRACTICES

LWDBs **must** incorporate the following practices to align with statutory requirements. These elements are designed to support consistent statewide service delivery while allowing for regional flexibility in implementation.

1. Provide Current Compensation Information

LWDBs **must** offer accurate, up-to-date wage and compensation information for occupations that are in demand and offer high earning potential—without regard to gender-based occupational trends.

Recommended Practices:

- Utilize current state and regional labor market information (LMI) to identify and highlight in-demand, high-wage occupations.
- Provide this information during one-on-one career counseling or case management sessions, ensuring the participant understands the data.
- Develop and maintain gender-neutral informational materials (e.g., handouts or reference sheets) that are reviewed and updated at least every two years, in alignment with updates to the Local Plan.
 - Include only occupations that are in-demand or high-earning, as identified through current LMI and aligned with the priority industry sectors outlined in the Local Plan.
 - Salary information **must** reflect a **verified range** appropriate for the local or state labor market and be sourced from standardized tools such as O*NET, using the relevant Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes.

*Note: Merely providing materials is not sufficient. All information **must** be actively reviewed and discussed with the participant during the counseling process and documented accordingly in MACC case notes.*

2. Deliver Counseling, Skills Development, and Training Opportunities

LWDBs **must** ensure that all individuals have access to services that prepare them for success in high-wage, in-demand occupations, regardless of historical gender representation.

Recommended Practices:

- Use gender-neutral language and tools during career exploration and assessments.

- Promote career pathways aligned with regional labor market needs and sectors identified in the Local Plan.
- Connect eligible individuals to:
 - Individual Training Accounts (ITAs),
 - On-the-Job Training (OJT),
 - Registered Apprenticeship Programs,
 - Other training or credentialing opportunities in priority sectors.

3. Provide Employer Referral Information

LWDBs **must** facilitate direct connections between job seekers and employers offering in-demand, high-wage employment opportunities.

Recommended Practices:

- Maintain and regularly update a list of employers offering quality job opportunities in in-demand sectors.
- Actively share relevant job leads and assist participants with applications, referrals, or interview preparation as appropriate.

4. Educate on Long-Term Financial Consequences

Career guidance **must** include discussion of the long-term economic effects of choosing lower-wage occupations, including the impact on future retirement and Social Security benefits.

Recommended Practices:

- Incorporate information about wage progression, retirement savings potential, and Social Security impacts into counseling sessions.
- Use real-life examples or case studies to illustrate the long-term advantages of high-wage career choices.
- Encourage participants to consider the cumulative financial outcomes of various career paths.

5. Tools and Materials Maintenance

All informational tools and materials developed or used under this guidance **must** be reviewed and updated at least every two years to ensure alignment with current labor market trends and local planning efforts. All materials **must** also be developed using a gender-neutral approach that promotes equitable access for all job seekers.

6. Documentation and Reporting

LWDBs **must** document all services provided under this guidance in the MACC system, using appropriate service codes and case notes.

Documentation Instructions:

- **Service Level:** "WIOA Basic Career and Informational Services" (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth)
- **Service Title:** "W1001-WIOA-Provided HB 4196 Information"

- **Case Notes:** Clearly describe the information shared, delivery method (e.g., counseling session, reviewed tool, employer referral), and any follow-up actions.

CONCLUSION

This guidance reaffirms West Virginia’s commitment to providing equitable, data-informed, and gender-neutral workforce services that help individuals pursue rewarding, sustainable careers. LWDBs are expected to fully integrate these practices into service delivery and ensure that all job seekers—regardless of gender or background—are empowered with the knowledge and tools necessary for long-term economic success.

For technical assistance or additional implementation support, please contact the WorkForce WV Technical Assistance and Compliance Unit at wfwvtac@wv.gov.

Version Control

Version #	Effective Date	Description of Changes	Author/Editor	Approval Date
1.0	09/22/2025	<i>New guidance issued under updated naming and formatting structure; rescinds Guidance Notice 01-14 (04/24/2014) issued under HB 4196. Aligns with W. Va. Code § 5B-2B-4 and updates content to reflect labor market needs and gender-neutral service delivery.</i>	<i>WorkForce Unit</i>	08/21/2025