

# PASSAIC COUNTY LOCAL WORKFORCE PLAN

Program Years 2023-2026

Workforce  
Development  
Board of  
Passaic County

## Table of Contents

1.	Introduction .....	5
1.1.	Overview .....	5
1.2.	Alignment with NJ State/NJDOL Goals.....	5
1.3.	Vision & Mission.....	6
1.4.	Snapshot of Passaic County and the Region .....	6
1.5.	Benefits of Having a Local Workforce Plan .....	7
1.6.	Stakeholder Contributors.....	7
1.7.	Themes & General Observations .....	7
2.	Strategic Planning Framework .....	9
2.1.	Overview .....	9
2.2.	Role of the WDBPC and the Local Elected Official (LEO) in the planning Process .....	9
2.3.	Overview of the required elements needed to develop the plan from WIOA, NJDOL and the NJSETC .....	9
2.4.	Additional Planning Elements .....	9
3.	Regional and Local Workforce Strategies .....	11
3.1.	Population Demographics and Economic Overview .....	11
3.2.	Economic Conditions – Recovery from COVID-19 .....	12
3.3.	Analysis of Local Market Information .....	37
4.	Target Sectors, Recommendations and Regional Strategies .....	44
4.1.	Regional Joint Work to Meet Needs of Sectors and Occupations .....	45
4.2.	Passaic County Recommendations .....	46
4.3.	Region Joint Work to Target Jobseekers to Meet Industry/Occupation Needs and Support Skill Development and Barrier Removal.....	47
4.4.	Regional Approach to Ongoing Analysis and Review of LMI Data .....	48
4.5.	Strategic Priorities.....	49
5.	One Stop Career Center Regional Support, Joint Efforts, Common Models .....	50
5.1.	One-Stop Delivery and Flow .....	50
5.2.	Operational Priorities.....	53
5.3.	Service Expansion and Accessibility in One-Stop Career Centers (OSCC).....	53
5.4.	Detailed Partnership and Service Integration.....	53

5.5. Employer Engagement .....	54
6. Local WDB Structure and Functions.....	55
6.1. Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Structure .....	55
6.2. Procurement of Operator and Services .....	55
6.3. Oversight and Monitoring.....	55
6.4. Performance Measures and Accountability.....	56
6.5. Training and Development.....	57
7. Appendix .....	58



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Overview

Passaic County boasts a rich history of pioneering initiatives in workforce development. Post Revolutionary War, Alexander Hamilton, serving as the US Secretary of the Treasury, recognized the potential of the Great Falls in Passaic County. Consequently, he engaged investors from New York to support the establishment of the inaugural Manufacturing Complex in the United States.

In the spirit of upholding this tradition of innovation and dedication to industry and workforce enhancement, the Passaic County Workforce Development Board aspires to adopt a more strategic and adaptable approach, prioritizing transformation over mere transaction. The county's leadership aims to instigate systemic change by:

1. Cultivating and inspiring a vision for the future.
2. Confronting and addressing challenging realities of the present.
3. Utilizing factual information, tools, and resources to formulate a strategy that leverages the tension between vision and reality, encouraging genuinely innovative approaches to workforce development.

The four-year strategic plan functions as a guiding blueprint for realizing all the objectives and goals pinpointed throughout the strategic planning process. Crafted during a transitional period marked by new hiring practices and socio-economic challenges in a post-COVID-19 pandemic world, alongside ongoing economic shifts in our economy. The plan is also developed amidst the anticipation of Federal and State elections that could potentially reshape the nature of our business. Consequently, the plan is geared towards enhancing capacity and improving our ability to serve employers and customers effectively, adapting to the dynamic and changing environment.

## 1.2. Alignment with NJ State/NJDOL Goals

The Passaic County Workforce Development Board aligns with the State of New Jersey and its Department of Labor on several topics. The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development's mission outlines a dedication to protecting the state's workforce, strengthening its businesses, and prompting the dignity of work.<sup>1</sup> The Division of Workforce Development is responsible for overseeing the One-Stop Career Centers throughout the state.

As such, Passaic County's goals are set by the New Jersey Department of Labor of Workforce Development Assumptions— including performance goals for employment, median earnings, and credential attainment rate. These goals are specified for five different program populations offered through the One-stop Career Centers and the One-Stop Career Center system, including: adults,

---

<sup>1</sup> NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development. "Our Mission." Accessed Oct 9, 2023. Found on <https://www.nj.gov/labor/aboutlwd/ourmission.shtml#:~:text=The%20New%20Jersey%20Department%20of,promoting%20the%20dignity%20of%20work.>

dislocated workers, youth, adult education, Wagner-Peyser (WIOA), and vocational rehabilitation. Customer satisfaction standards are additionally outlined by the U.S. Department of Labor and the New Jersey Department of Labor. Passaic County's Workforce Development Board shares these goals with the state, as is evident through its extensive program offerings.

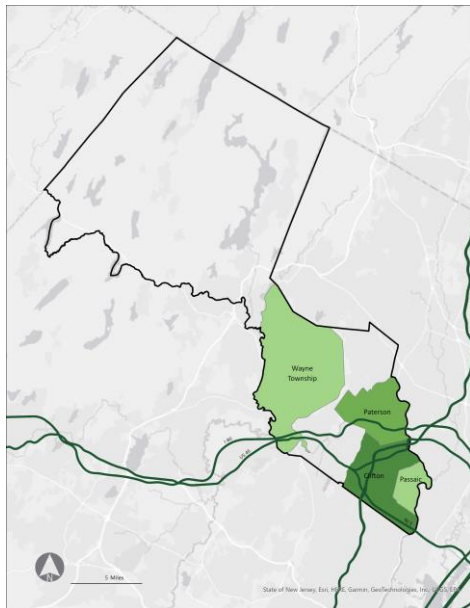
### 1.3. Vision & Mission

The Vision and Mission State for the Workforce Development Board of Passaic County is...

**Vision Statement:** Connecting skilled labor and quality education with industry demand, our goal is to construct a workforce investment system that cultivates a competitive environment, empowering all stakeholders to succeed in the 21st-century landscape.

**Mission Statement:** Our mission is to offer leadership and guidance, seizing opportunities to foster the growth of Passaic County employers and provide job seekers with access to contemporary pathways leading to meaningful employment.

### 1.4. Snapshot of Passaic County and the Region



Nestled in northern New Jersey, Passaic County shares its borders with New York State to the north and is surrounded by Sussex, Morris, Essex, and Bergen counties within the state. Ranking as the 9th most populous county in New Jersey, Passaic County was founded in 1837 and derives its name from the majestic Passaic River.

Devoted to fostering the development and prosperity of its business community, Passaic County actively promotes business expansion and welcomes new business relocations. The county encompasses 16 municipalities within 197.05 square miles, boasting a diverse population of 520,223. From the urban centers of Paterson and Passaic to the scenic Highlands region with its mountains and lakes in the Townships of West Milford and Ringwood, Passaic County offers a mix of urban, suburban, and rural settings.

A standout asset is Passaic County's robust transportation infrastructure, featuring options like air, water, land, and rail. Key roadways include the Garden State Parkway, New Jersey Turnpike, Interstates 287 and 80, as well as state Routes 3, 19, 20, 21, 23, 46, and 208.

Presently, Passaic County's business landscape is marked by diversity, hosting a blend of large corporations and small family-owned businesses. With over 20,000 businesses calling the county home, this dynamic mix provides employment opportunities for the resident labor force of approximately 250,000. Notable employers in Passaic County include BAE Systems, St. Joseph's Regional Medical, Driscoll Foods, Accurate Box Company, Maquet Cardiovascular, and UPS, creating a unique atmosphere that harmonizes tradition and innovation.

## 1.5. Benefits of Having a Local Workforce Plan

The implementation of a workforce development plan yields numerous benefits for both the County, employers, and jobseekers, connecting them to services that enhance overall economic conditions and the quality of life for the County and Region. The Passaic County Workforce Development Board facilitates opportunities for training and skill enhancement programs, cultivating a workforce that is more skilled and knowledgeable. Investing in employees' professional growth through development opportunities not only boosts morale but also enhances job satisfaction. This comprehensive workforce development initiative allows for adaptability, incorporating training on emerging technologies and industry trends, making job seekers more resilient and better equipped to navigate changes in the ever-evolving business environment. Positioned strategically, the Workforce Development Board aims to provide Passaic County with a competitive advantage by spearheading the development of a well-designed workforce, making strategic investments, and aligning employers and employees for the betterment of the Passaic County economy.

## 1.6. Stakeholder Contributors

The Workforce Development Board has taken a proactive approach by commissioning a Strategic Planning Committee to spearhead the creation of a local strategic plan. This committee comprises individuals from diverse backgrounds who are actively involved in workforce development initiatives. Additionally, the WDB has engaged the services of a consulting firm to facilitate meetings and provide expert guidance throughout the process.

Under the stewardship of the WDB Executive Director, the Strategic Planning Committee has devised a comprehensive plan to systematically navigate us through this endeavor. This approach closely adheres to the NJ Local Plan Guidance disseminated during the WDB Director's Meeting in Fall 2023.

The finalized Strategic Plan will be made available to the public on the Workforce Development Board website in March 2024. A dedicated section for comments will be provided for a period of precisely 30 calendar days. Notices will be distributed via county procurement systems and partner networks, inviting stakeholders to review the plan and provide feedback. Following the conclusion of the public comment period, all feedback will be meticulously reviewed, and appropriate suggestions will be incorporated into the final document. The revised plan will then undergo approval by county authorities.

## 1.7. Themes & General Observations

Passaic County's key priorities stem from a combination of distinctive assets and local opportunities, coupled with strategies fostering a regional approach and collaborative efforts:

- Collaborate with regional partners to optimize service options for clients and business leaders.
- Direct intentional efforts towards serving youth, underrepresented, and low-income populations.
- Offer enhanced support for literacy and numeracy programs targeting vulnerable groups.
- Prioritize service delivery and policy formation through the lens of equity and inclusion.

- Continue to provide support to workforce and employers post COVID epidemic era.
- Address the differing needs of the diverse areas of the County.
- Expand pathways to employment other than a college degree through job training such as apprenticeships.

Since the last plan we have observed changes as mentioned in the LMI:

- Noteworthy influx of diverse ethnic groups with limited English literacy skills.
- Certain communities, disproportionately affected by Covid in the last three years, continue to grapple with lingering pandemic impacts, especially on health and housing. Residents/jobseekers in these areas urgently require meaningful supportive services.
- Decline observed in the manufacturing sector.
- Surge and anticipated continuation of hybrid work arrangements.
- Growing trend of older workers choosing to remain employed within the County.
- Substantial impact on individuals' mental health attributed to the Covid pandemic.
- Heightened instances of substance abuse observed in the workplace.
- Lack of a standardized method to track employee performance or employment data across all members of the WDBPC staff. The absence of a comprehensive performance measurement tool covering all BCJC staff may impede the full execution of this plan.
- Recognizing the potential of technology to enhance training and workforce services for clients.
- Urgent need for improved communication between NJDOL, NJ SETC, and the Workforce Development Board of Passaic to bolster and optimize the work conducted at the WDBPC.

Industry – Passaic County has employers in the region's highest demand industries, including healthcare and social assistance, retail trade, professional and technical services, and manufacturing.

Occupations – The top five occupations in demand in the region are represented in Passaic County: retail salespersons, laborers and freight, stock and material movers, cashiers, registered nurses, home health aides, and personal care aides.

Workforce – There are continuing issues of age discrimination as a barrier to employment, as well as mental/behavioral health and long-term unemployment. Disparities in literacy and ESL are persistent challenges facing jobseekers in the region. Further work is needed to implement the support services needed to assist those struggling with barriers to employment.



## 2. Strategic Planning Framework

### 2.1. Overview

The planning framework serves as a proactive vision, functioning as the foundational blueprint and guide. Its purpose is to guarantee the alignment of strategies with our overarching mission, vision, and values, providing a clear roadmap for the implementation of suggested recommendations. This comprehensive plan will be utilized to make informed decisions, allocate resources efficiently, navigate through changes, and ensure the realization of our long-term objectives. By doing so, the Workforce Development Board of Passaic County aims to effectively serve its constituents.

### 2.2. Role of the WDBPC and the Local Elected Official (LEO) in the planning Process

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law in 2014, requires Local Workforce Development Boards (WDB)s and local elected officials (LEO)s within each of New Jersey's local workforce planning areas to participate in a local planning process resulting in a comprehensive four-year plan. This plan may be modified every two years.

### 2.3. Overview of the required elements needed to develop the plan from WIOA, NJDOL and the NJSETC

This plan reflects the requirements outlined in WIOA Section 106 element to include: Labor Market Analysis, Strategic Planning, Service Delivery, Performance Accountability, Resource Alignment, Partner Roles and Responsibilities and Equal Opportunity.

Key elements required by NJSETC and NJDOL for Regional and Local Planning directive of September 29, 2022 requires: areas of focus are: Integration of required Job Center partners and services in the BCJC, customization of services for employers and jobseekers and strengthening local governance.

WIOA section 108 requires: Resources needed to implement the plan include identification of potential additional funding sources, explanation of how the resources will be allocated to the different strategies, identification of strategies to achieve the goals and objectives, real time assessment of Unemployment data that lead to changes leading to the development of action plans that outline specific activities, timelines, and responsible parties for each strategy, and integration of strategies and action plans with community resources, priorities, and capacity.

### 2.4. Additional Planning Elements

The vision of the Workforce Development Board of Passaic County centers on bridging skilled labor and quality education to address industry demands, thereby establishing a competitive workforce investment system. This approach empowers all stakeholders to thrive in the 21st-century landscape. The Board is dedicated to realizing this vision by providing leadership, direction, and strategically

leveraging opportunities for Passaic County employers to expand. Concurrently, it aims to create modern avenues for meaningful employment for job seekers.

Our plan will encompass specific expectations related to:

1. Expanding the accessibility of employment, training, and education, including adult literacy and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those facing barriers to employment.
2. Broadening and ensuring access to workforce development services that contribute to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workforce.
3. Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment across WIOA and partner programs.
4. Continuing to provide support to employers and job seekers post-COVID.
5. Increasing access through partners and programs to a variety of individualized career and training services, such as career coaching, work readiness activities, learning new technology, and training programs leading to industry-valued credentials.
6. Expanding work-based learning opportunities in partnership with postsecondary education institutions, employers, and workforce partners, including On-the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs, Apprenticeship, and youth-specific programs.
7. Supporting multiple pathways for young people aged 16-24 through One-Stop Career Center services and additional youth program models.
8. Providing support for new pathways toward emerging fields and online opportunities.

### 3. Regional and Local Workforce Strategies

When formulating strategies for regional workforce development, analyzing labor market trends offers valuable insights into diverse current and anticipated employment metrics. This encompasses demographic profiles of the region, employment statistics (such as industry and occupation breakdowns, educational attainment), and employer requirements (anticipated growth, job openings, as well as necessary skills and certifications).

#### 3.1. Population Demographics and Economic Overview

The following is a demographic and economic overview of Passaic County.












	Total Passaic County population increased to 520,223		Median age is 33 with 28% of Passaic residents over 50 years old (compared to NJ's and US's median age of 40.3 and 38.8, respectively)
	Diverse population 41% Hispanic, 38% White non-Hispanic, 10% Black non-Hispanic, 6% Asian non-Hispanic		Foreign born 45.4%
	Veterans 1.1% = 527		Population with a disability (18-64yrs) 5.4%
	Lacking broadband internet 10.5%		Under age 65 and lacking health insurance 12.2%, as compared to 8.0% in New Jersey.
	Average household size 3.4 persons per household		In Passaic County 30.1% of those 25 years or older have a bachelor's degree or higher
	Median household income is \$84,465 in Passaic County, and the per capita income is \$38,932. 12.4% of the population of Passaic County are in poverty.		

Figure 3.1: Passaic County Economic Overview in Comparison to State of New Jersey

	Passaic County	New Jersey	Passaic County as % of State
Population (2022)	520,223	9,431,189	5.5%
Labor Force (Dec 2022)	257,648	4,819,767	5.3%
Jobs (2022)	191,624	4,615,838	4.2%
Cost of Living	114.9	121.3	94.7%
GRP	\$26.7 B	\$758.7B	3.5%
Imports	\$33.9 B	\$621.5B	5.5%
Exports	\$22.B	\$626.6B	3.5%

Source: Lightcast (2023)

## 3.2. Economic Conditions – Recovery from COVID-19

Despite the challenges posed by the Delta variant of the COVID-19 pandemic, the economy is on a path to recovery. Throughout the pandemic, economic growth has consistently exceeded expectations, with households and businesses maintaining significant levels of activity and spending despite social distancing measures. The impact on the workforce varied based on factors such as job type, location, and other key considerations, leading to an uneven recovery for both employers and job seekers. Remote work facilitated a smoother transition for some, while those required to be physically present faced distinct challenges, contributing to disparities in the post-COVID economic recovery.

The economic output during the pandemic can be attributed, in part, to substantial legislative responses aimed at addressing both the pandemic and the resulting human hardships. Key among these legislative measures are the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), the Consolidated Appropriations Act, and the American Rescue Plan Act, enacted by Congress in 2020 and 2021. Ongoing fiscal support from successive rounds of federal, state and local legislation has played a crucial role in boosting economic activity since March 2020, with projections indicating continued support through 2023.

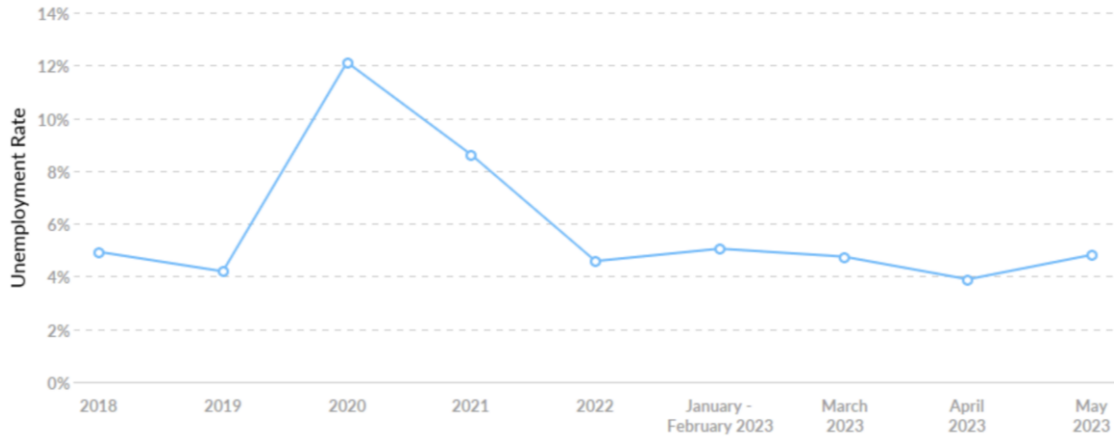
Passaic County has mirrored regional trends in its recovery efforts. As post-recovery initiatives unfold, Workforce Development Boards are adapting to a new landscape for employers and jobseekers. This includes addressing economic shifts brought about by the emergence of hybrid work schedules and their impact on local commerce, particularly in urban areas and main streets. Additionally, the influence of Artificial Intelligence and Life Sciences on workers across the economic spectrum, along with the proliferation of "gig economy" jobs, has become increasingly significant in light of changing consumer behaviors.

As we distance ourselves from the economic stimulus implemented during COVID, which included incentive programs benefiting businesses and individuals, the workforce system must continue to implement strategies to fortify the economy in this new post-COVID reality.

### Snapshot of Passaic County Post COVID Pandemic

The following chart depicts the five-year unemployment trend in Passaic County. The county experienced a spike in unemployment between 2019 and 2021, which can be attributed in part to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2022, the county's unemployment rate has recovered to pre-pandemic levels, and the rate began to climb in May of this year.

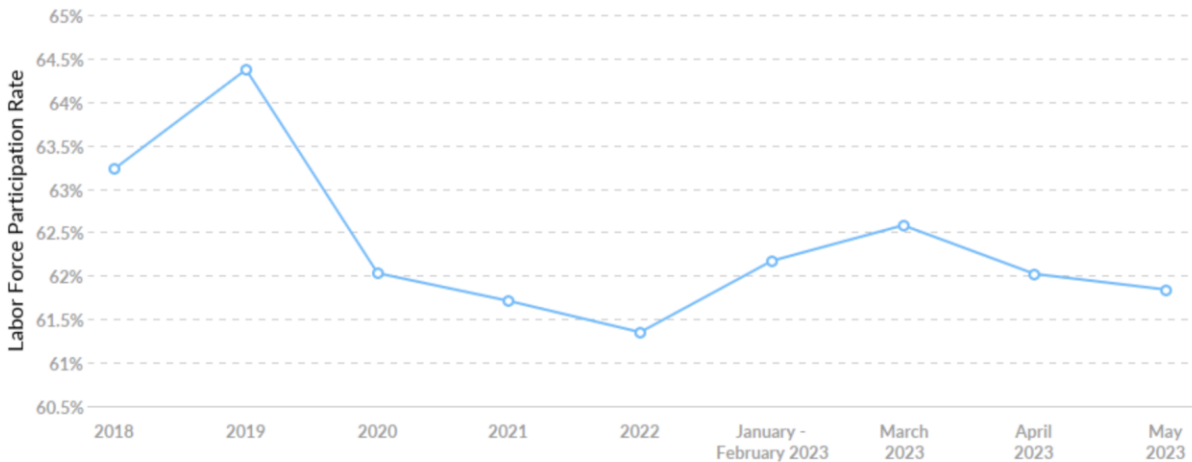
Figure 3.2: Passaic County Unemployment Rate 5-year Trend



Source: Lightcast (2023)

The county's labor force participation rate has been trending down over the last five years. Reaching a high of 64.5 percent in 2019, the labor force participation rate has dipped below 62 percent as of May of this year (see Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: Passaic County Labor Force Participation Trends

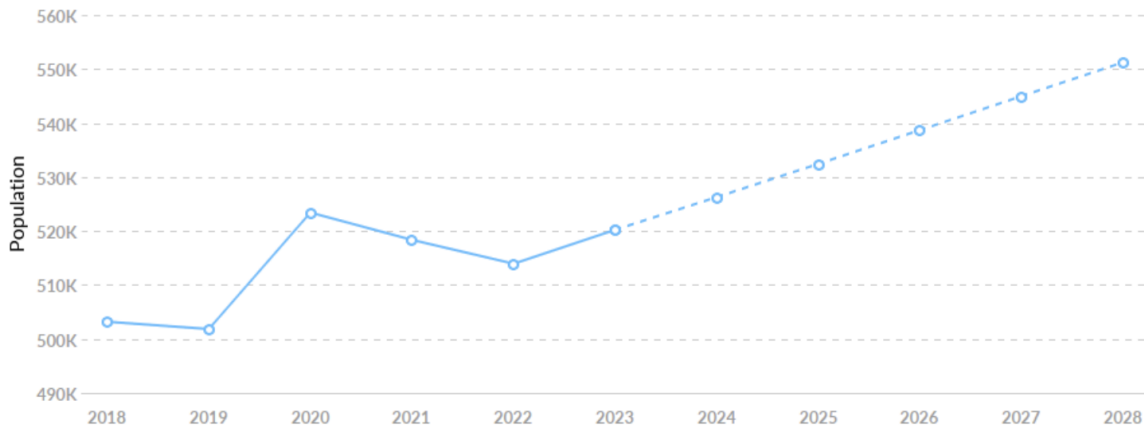


Source: Lightcast (2023)

## Looking Ahead

As of 2023 the region's population increased by 3.4 percent since 2018, growing by 17,031. Population is expected to increase by 6.0% between 2023 and 2028, adding 31,018 new people. Comparatively, New Jersey's population is expected to grow by 9 percent and the nation's population is expected to grow by 3 percent during the same period.

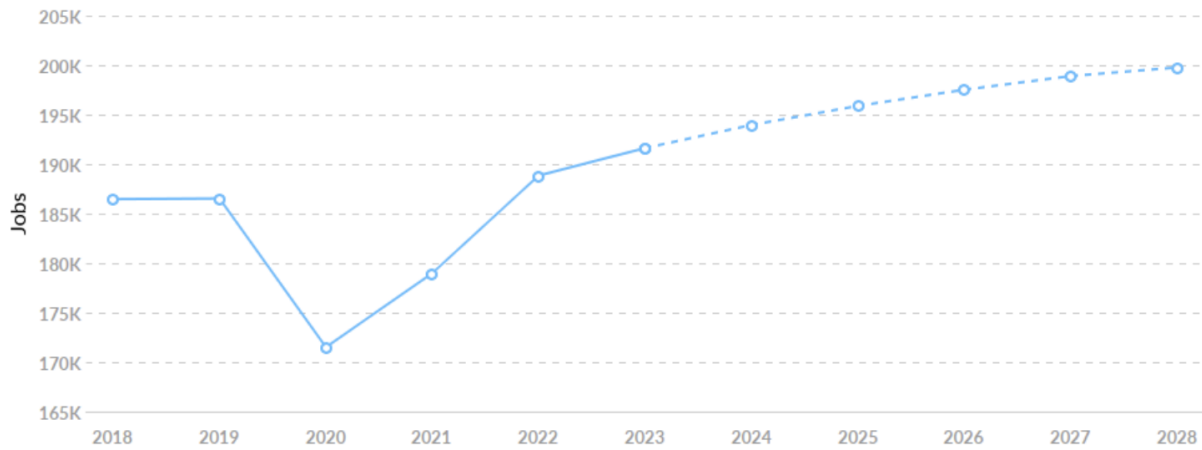
Figure 3.4: Passaic County Five-year Population Trends Forecast



Source: Lightcast (2023)

Job Growth in the County is anticipated to be 7 percent from 2023 to 2028. The largest growth will be in the areas of Transportation and Warehousing (19 percent) and Real estate and Rental Leasing (18 percent). Subsequently, the largest decline is anticipated to be in Management (-23 percent). The County is on pace with the State of New Jersey that is expected to grow 8 percent during the same period. With it largest growth also coming in Real estate and Rental Leasing (16 percent) and Transportation and Warehousing (15 percent).

Figure 3.5: Passaic County Five-Year Job Trends Forecast



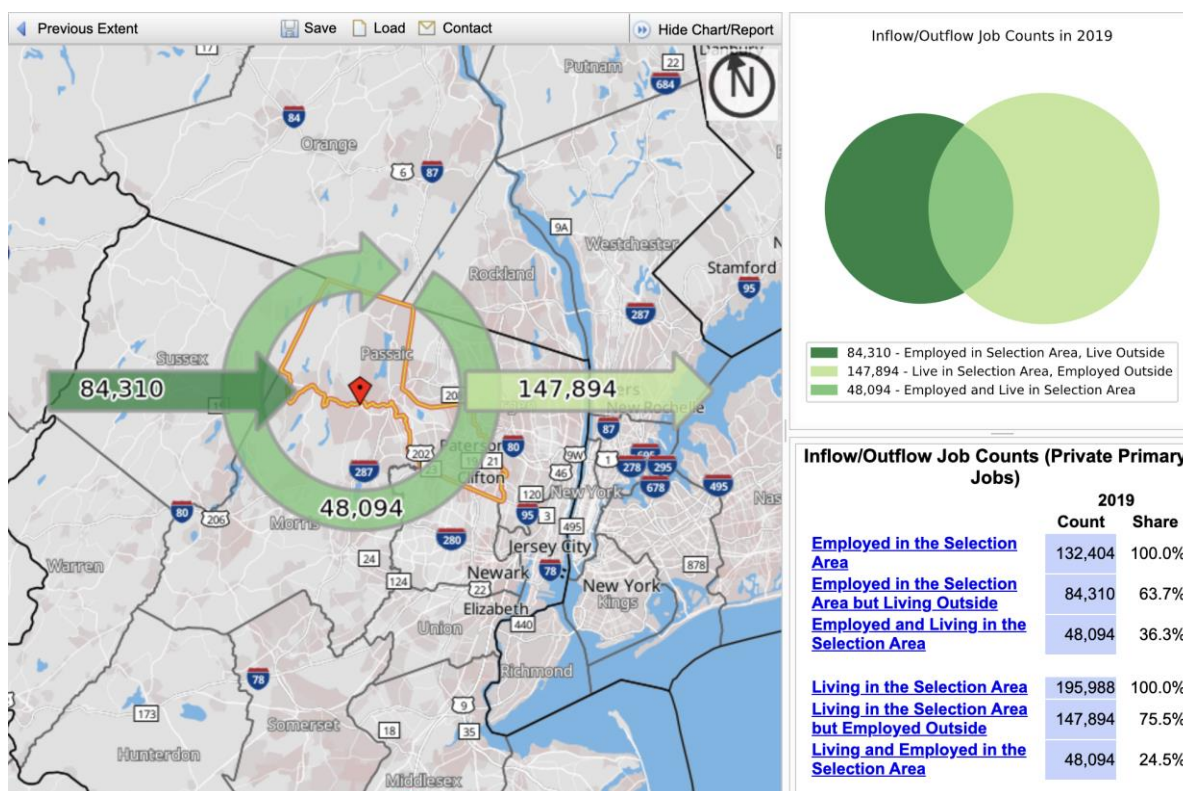
Source: Lightcast (2023)

### Commuting Patterns

The following data was collected pre-pandemic in 2019 and 2021 and starts to reflect post-pandemic changes. As of this latest data collection, however, more region residents were employed outside of the region than non-region residents who commuted into the region for work. Post-pandemic, a wave of migration occurred from New York City to New Jersey— primarily led by the expanded work from home option and less need to live in an urban employment hub. For 2021, we start to see a number of people that have moved to the area and travel to work (see figure 3.6 and 3.6a)

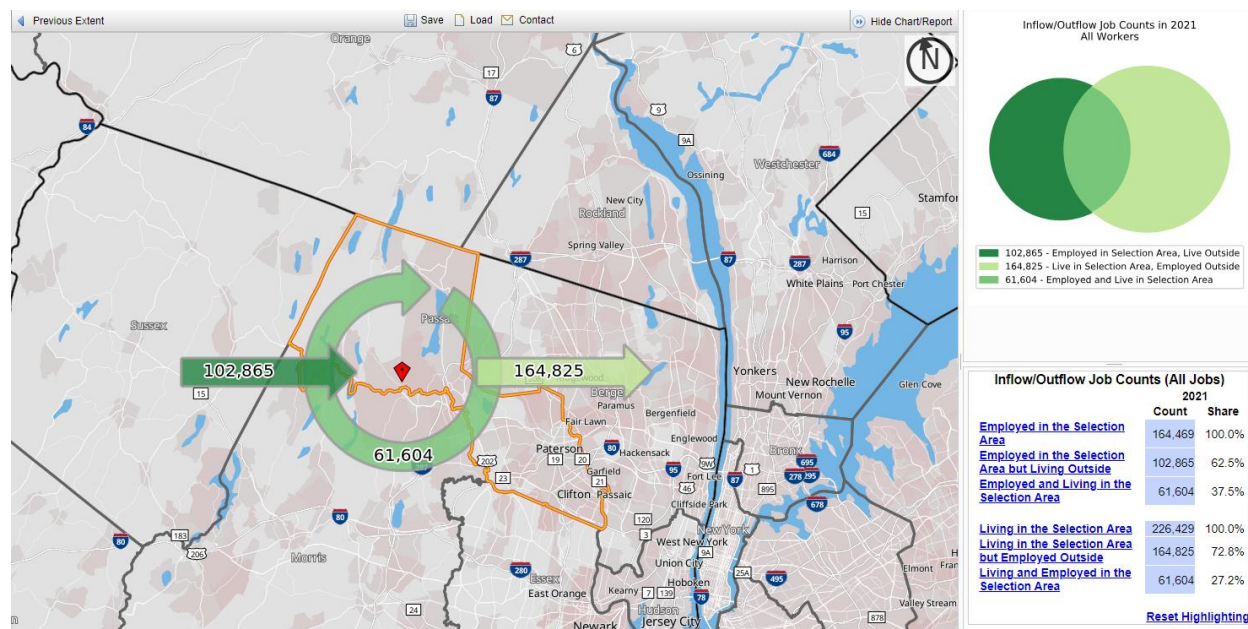


Figure 3.6: Passaic County Inflow/ Outflow Job Counts, 2019



Source: OnTheMap, Census.gov (2019)

Figure 3.6a: Passaic County Inflow/ Outflow Job Counts, 2021



Source: OnTheMap, Census.gov (2019)



In 2022, the region's Labor Force was still below its 2019 level and also represented a slightly smaller percent of the state total Labor Force. This is another indication that the region as a whole was impacted more severely than the state (see figures 3.7 and 3.8).

Figure 3.7: Passaic County Labor Force Breakdown (2022)

<b>Population</b>	
Total Population	524,118
16+ Civilian Non-Institutionalized Population	408,052
Not in Labor Force (16+)	137,368
Labor Force	270,684
Employed	254,727
Unemployed	15,957
Under 16, Military, and institutionalized Population	116,066
Unemployment Rate	5.9%
Labor Force Participation	66.3%

Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2022)

Figure 3.8: Passaic County Labor Force and Unemployment Rate (2022)

<b>Passaic County Annual Averages</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>Net Change 2019-2022</b>
Labor Force	270,684	269,701	265,371	5,313
Employed	254,727	240,603	252,644	2,083
Unemployed	15,957	29,048	12,727	3,230
Unemployment Rate	5.9%	10.8%	4.8%	1.1%

Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2022)

Overall, Passaic County has had modest growth in related industries. In the past year, the occupation families that have shown the fastest growth in Passaic County are food preparation and serving related occupations, healthcare support occupations, and transportation and material moving occupations (see Figure 3.9).

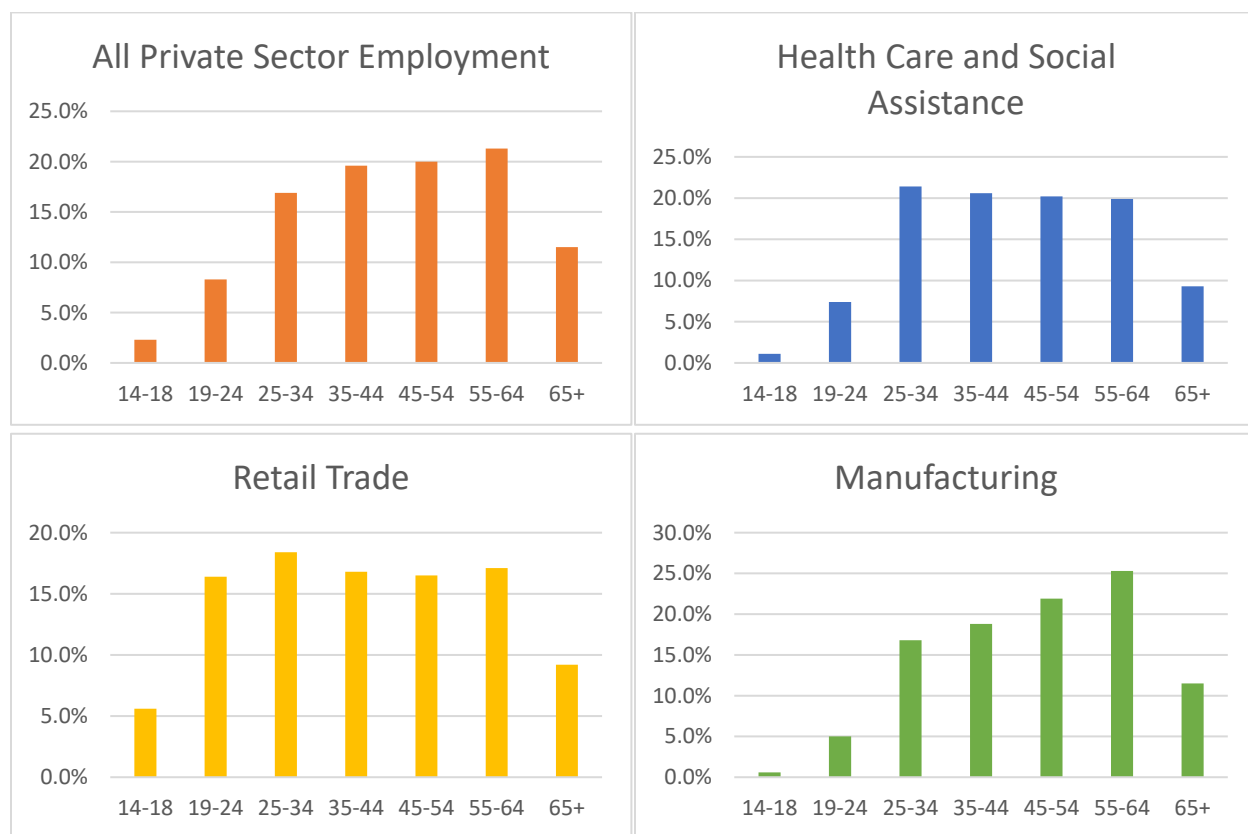
Figure 3.9: Fastest Growing Occupation in Passaic County

Description	2022 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2022 - 2023 Change	2022 - 2023 % Change
Management Occupations	19,970	20,430	460	2%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	16,258	16,625	367	2%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	4,571	4,583	12	0%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	2,484	2,508	24	1%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,949	1,974	25	1%
Community and Social Service Occupations	4,253	4,314	61	1%
Legal Occupations	1,480	1,480	0	0%
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	16,342	16,457	115	1%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	6,337	6,372	35	1%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	11,847	12,003	156	1%
Healthcare Support Occupations	10,294	10,733	439	4%
Protective Service Occupations	4,638	4,612	(26)	(1%)
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	12,486	12,968	482	4%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	8,057	8,182	125	2%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	8,892	9,082	191	2%
Sales and Related Occupations	33,864	34,309	446	1%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	26,048	26,309	261	1%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	295	300	5	2%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	10,671	10,826	155	1%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	7,949	8,101	153	2%
Production Occupations	12,463	12,623	159	1%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	28,970	29,901	931	3%
Military-only occupations	522	524	3	0%
Unclassified Occupation	672	703	31	5%

Source: Lightcast (2022-2023)

Labor demand is affected by both industry growth and retirements; thus, it is important to monitor which industries expect to see the greatest share of retirements in the coming years. Considering the top three industries by employment in Passaic County, the manufacturing sector has the highest share of older workers and will likely experience a loss of workers. The retail trade and health care and social assistance industries have a more even distribution of ages and will likely not see as many retirements (see Figure 3.10).

Figure 3.10: Passaic County Employment Pipeline

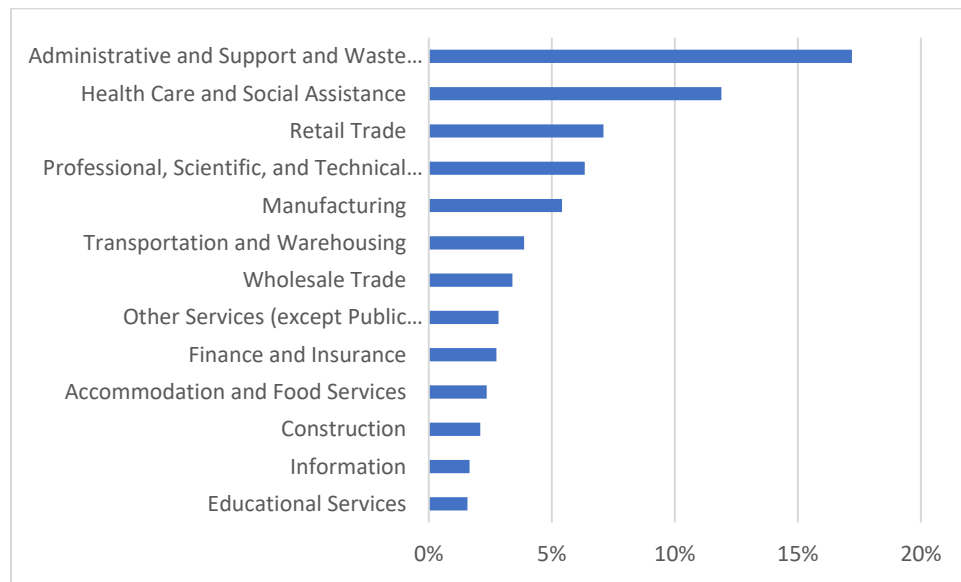


Source: Lightcast (2023)

### Labor Demand and Occupations

Between September 2022 and October 2023, the industries that had the highest number of job postings in Passaic County are administrative and support and waste management and remediation services, health care and social assistance, and retail trade (see Figure 3.11).

Figure 3.11: Industries with the Highest Number of Job Postings in Passaic County, 2022-2023



Source: Lightcast (2022 -2023)

The largest occupation families in Passaic County are management occupations, business and financial operations occupations, and healthcare support occupations (see Figure 3.12).

Figure 3.12: Passaic County Largest Occupation Families, 2018-2023

Description	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	2018 - 2023 Change	2018 - 2023 % Change
Management Occupations	16,202	20,430	4,228	26%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	13,846	16,625	2,778	20%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	4,870	4,583	(287)	(6%)
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	2,434	2,508	75	3%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,891	1,974	83	4%
Community and Social Service Occupations	4,210	4,314	104	2%
Legal Occupations	1,487	1,480	(7)	(0%)
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	17,077	16,457	(619)	(4%)
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	6,547	6,372	(175)	(3%)
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	11,643	12,003	360	3%
Healthcare Support Occupations	8,969	10,733	1,764	20%
Protective Service Occupations	4,558	4,612	55	1%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	12,412	12,968	556	4%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	7,819	8,182	363	5%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	9,395	9,082	(313)	(3%)
Sales and Related Occupations	34,773	34,309	(463)	(1%)
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	25,643	26,309	666	3%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	267	300	33	12%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	10,478	10,826	348	3%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	7,566	8,101	536	7%
Production Occupations	12,726	12,623	(104)	(1%)
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	25,833	29,901	4,068	16%
Military-only occupations	476	524	48	10%
Unclassified Occupation	590	703	113	19%

Source: Lightcast (2018-2023)

Occupations that are expected to experience the fastest growth rate in the next decade in Passaic County are couriers and messengers (55 percent), nurse practitioners (40 percent), and laundry and dry-cleaning workers (38 percent).

## Educational Attainment, Skills, and Certification Requirements

Over one third of the county’s population has a high school diploma or equivalent credential. Around 20 percent of residents hold a Bachelor’s degree, and 10 percent hold a Graduate or other professional degree (see Figure 3.13).

Figure 3.13: Population of Passaic County, by Educational Attainment

	Number	Percent
Population 25 years and over	345,942	100%
Less than 9th grade	28,117	8.13%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	22,534	6.51%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	115,995	33.53%
Some college, no degree	50,687	14.65%
Associate's degree	22,456	6.49%
Bachelor's degree	70,292	20.32%
Graduate or professional degree	35,861	10.37%

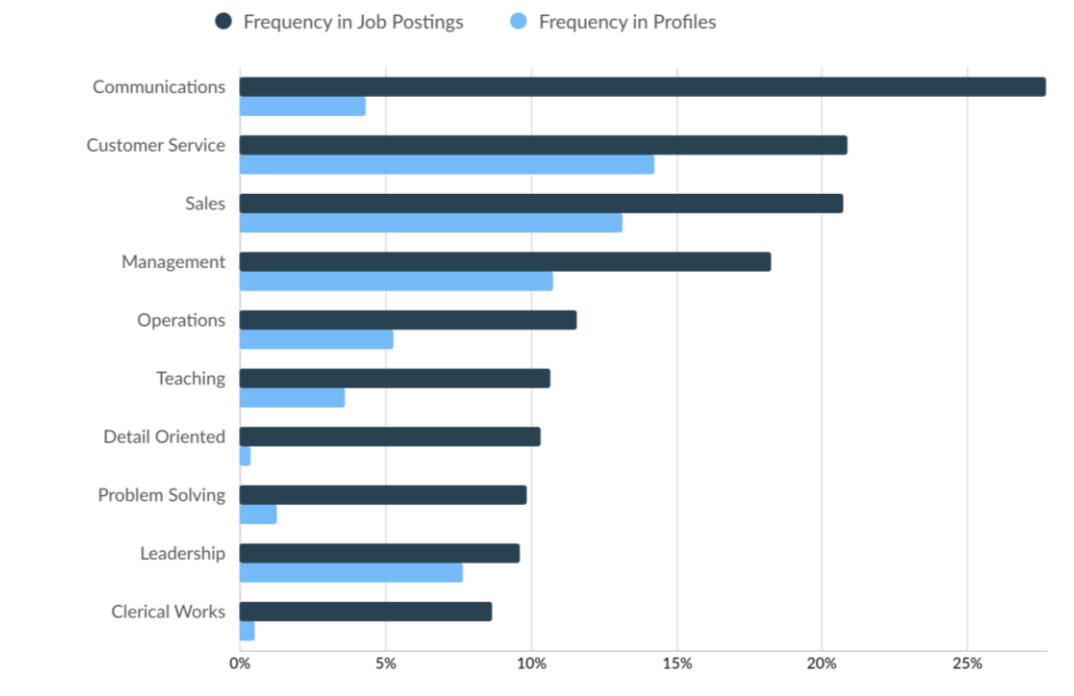
Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2022)

It is important to understand the labor supply of the Northern New Jersey region, not just related to its population, labor participation, and unemployment rate— but also related to education and skill level. 12.2 percent of the region’s population aged 25 and over do not have a high school diploma, 23.7 percent have a high school diploma or equivalent as its highest level of education attained, and only 47.5 percent have achieved some form of a college degree.

As is the case on the state level, the Northern New Jersey region’s workforce is overeducated. The largest and growing occupations do not require advanced levels of educational attainment. It is expected that many of the new employment opportunities in Northern New Jersey are a result of the following projects: the Newark Port Expansion, the Chips Act, and the Off-Shore Wind Project. To accommodate the expanded labor supply market and new occupation opportunities, it is important to understand which types of training they require. Communication skills are considered the most highly requested soft basic skill by employers. Basic skills have also expanded from general computer literacy to an understanding of commonly used software, like Microsoft Office. The specialized skills that are most in need include marketing, auditing, agile methodology, nursing, computer science, and various computer languages. Certifications for in-demand jobs are primarily in the healthcare industry, such as RNs and LPNs. Unsurprisingly, a driver license and/ or commercial driver license (CDL) are the certification most sought after by employers.

In reference to baseline, or soft skills, recent job postings most frequently seek communication skills, followed by customer service, sales, and management skills (see Figure 3.14). By comparison, job profiles within Passaic County mention these skills at much lower rates. This suggests two potential approaches— the first being measures to strengthen these skills with individuals who are searching for jobs. The second, being professional development activities that educate individuals on how to frame their experiences with these skills at the forefront.

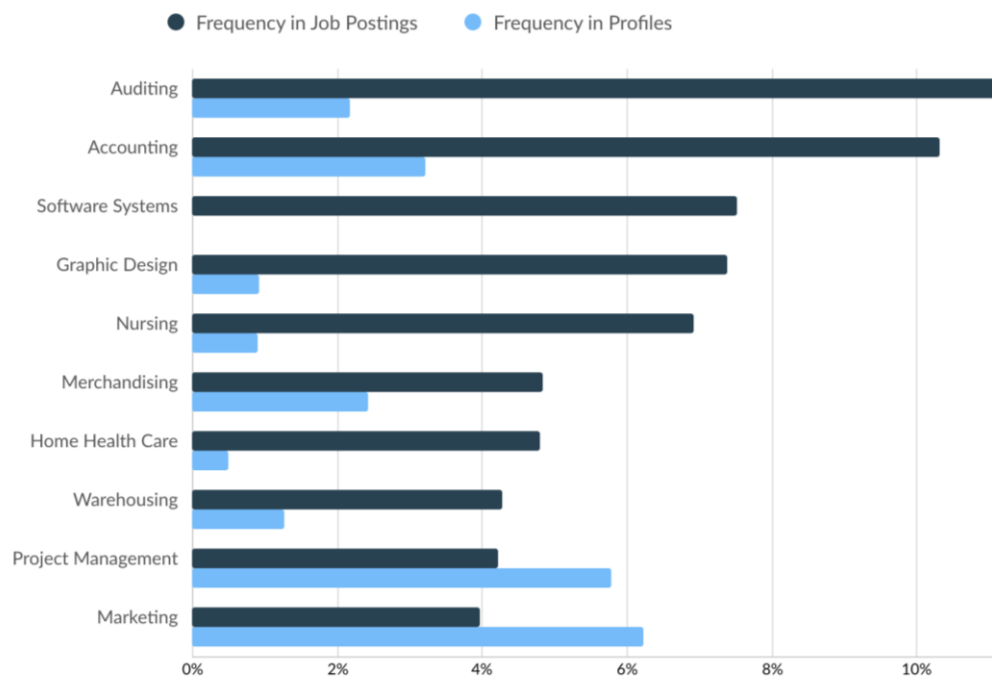
Figure 3.14: Top 10 Baseline Skills Required by Employers



Source: Lightcast (2023)

Based on job postings, the top specialized skills that employers look for are auditing, accounting, and software systems (see Figure 3.15).

Figure 3.15: Top Specialized Skills Based on Job Postings



Source: Lightcast (2023)

The top qualifications and certifications required by employers in Passaic County are registered nurse qualifications, a valid driver's license, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification (see Figure 3.16).



Figure 3.16: Top Qualifications/Certifications Required by Employers

Qualification	Postings with Qualification
Registered Nurse (RN)	1,372
Valid Driver's License	1,353
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	432
Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	409
Licensed Practical Nurse (LP)	361
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	303
Nurse Practitioner (APRN-CNP)	227
Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	206
CDL Class A License	183
Certified Home Health Aide	169
Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ALS) Certification	165
Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)	156
Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)	134
First Aid Certification	119
Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA)	96
Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)	86
Board Certified/Board Eligible	83
Licensed Marriage And Family Therapist (LMFT)	79
Teaching Certificate	69
Licensed Social Worker	69

Source: Lightcast (2023)

## Labor Force and Unemployment

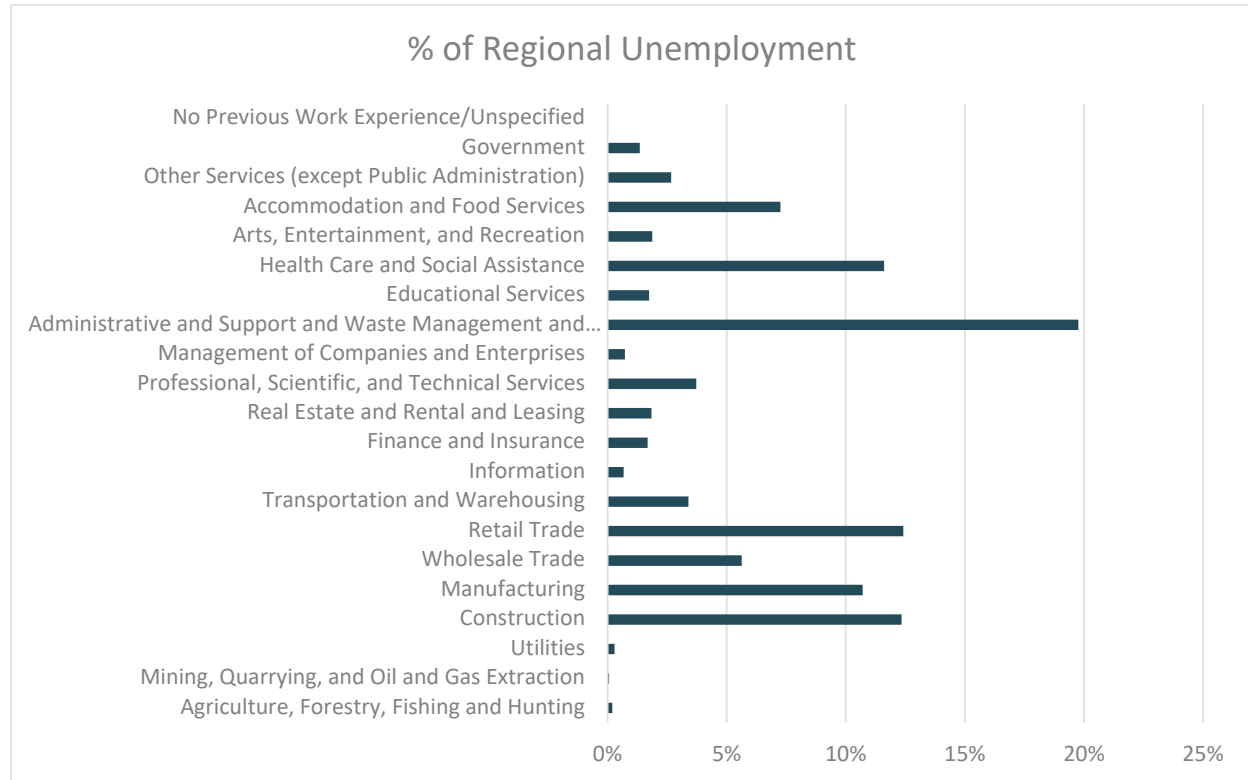
Northern New Jersey's unemployment held a 3.6 percent average in 2022, with the year ending at 3.1 percent. Still, regional workforce participation rates remain below pre-pandemic levels. For reference, 2019's regional workforce participation high was at 66 percent, yet 2022's regional workforce participation closed at a high of 62.3 percent.

Out of the counties in the Northern New Jersey region, Passaic County fronts with one of the largest populations, highest rates of poverty, and one of the most racially diverse populations— all of which were compounded and resulted in severe effects by the pandemic. Essex County largest shares in this trend. While levels of unemployment and workforce participation are improving across all counties, Essex and Passaic have a higher unemployment rate when compared to the region, and lower workforce participation when compared to the region.

The unemployment and the workforce participation rate are improving in all the counties, however, some of the region's counties have a higher unemployment rate than the region and a lower workforce participation than the region. Essex and Passaic had a 4% unemployment rate at the end of 2022; Passaic and Essex's workforce participations rate is also lower, 61% for Passaic and only 57% for Essex. These are the same counties with large population centers, larger areas of poverty and among the

region's most racially diverse and most affected by the pandemic. In 2023, the Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services Industry experienced the largest unemployment rate at 20 percent.

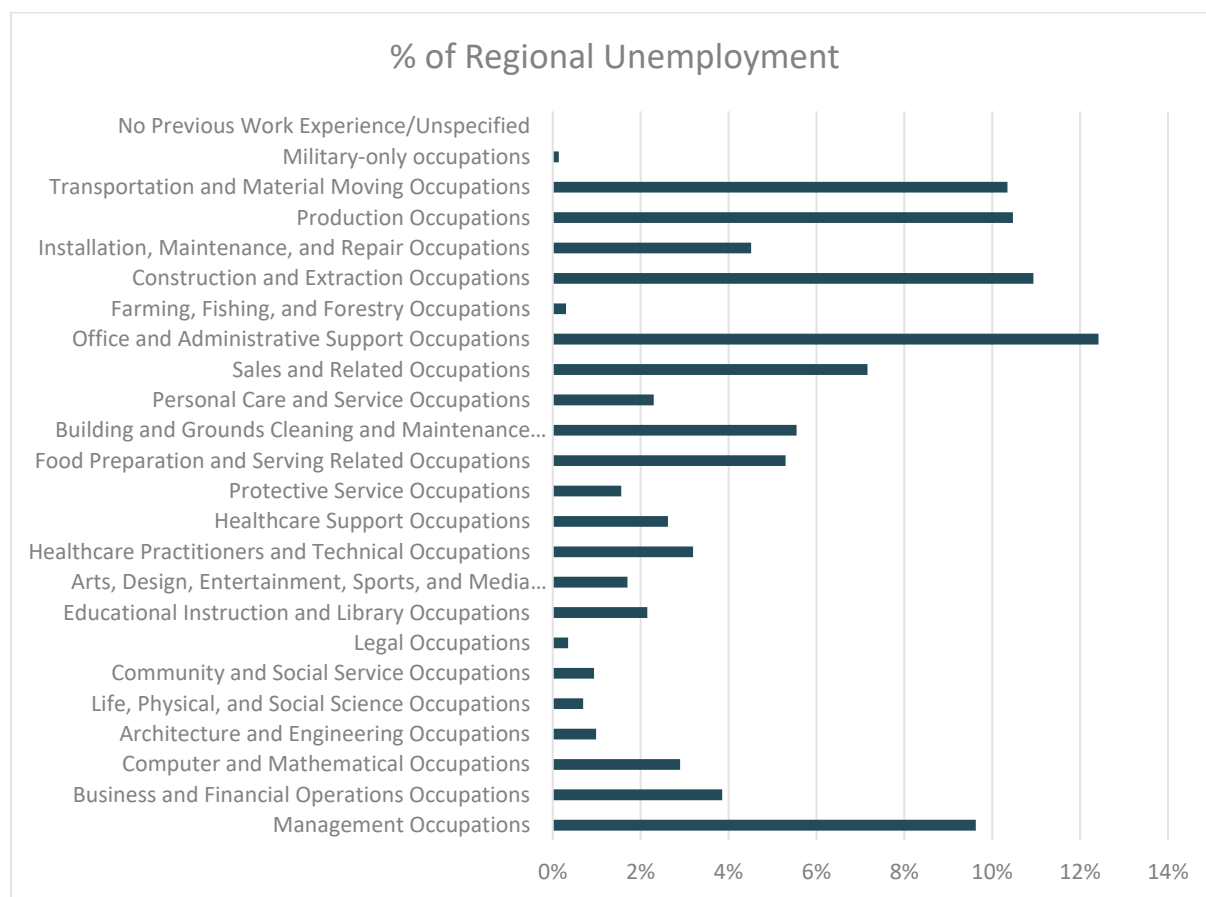
Figure 3.17: Unemployment by Industry- Passaic County



Source: Lightcast (2023)

In 2023, the Office and Administrative Support Occupation experienced the largest unemployment rate at percent.

Figure 3.18: Unemployment by Occupation- Passaic County



Source: Lightcast (2023)

## Unemployment by Demographic Groups

The following Figures 3.19-3.22 highlight Passaic County unemployment by different metrics. Over 50 percent of the unemployed population in the county identifies as male. Sixty-four percent of unemployed persons identify as White, and 29 percent identify as Black or African American. 61 percent of unemployed persons are non-Hispanic or Latino. The largest share of unemployed persons in Passaic County are between the ages of 25-34 (25 percent), followed by 35-44 (21 percent), and 45-54 (19 percent).

Figure 3.19: Passaic County Unemployment by Gender

Gender	Unemployment (May 2023)	Percent of Unemployed
Females	5,546	44.57%
Males	6,896	55.43%
Total	12,442	100%

Source: Lightcast (2023)

Figure 3.20: Passaic County Unemployment by Race

<b>Race</b>	<b>Unemployment (May 2023)</b>	<b>Percent of Unemployed</b>
American Indian or Alaskan Native	140	1.13%
Asian	614	4.93%
Black or African American	3,557	28.59%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	132	1.06%
White	7,999	64.29%
Total	12,442	100%

Source: Lightcast (2023)

Figure 3.21: Passaic County Unemployment by Ethnicity

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Unemployment (May 2023)</b>	<b>Percent of Unemployed</b>
Hispanic or Latino	4,865	39.10%
Not Hispanic or Latino	7,577	60.90%
Total	12,442	100%

Source: Lightcast (2023)

Figure 3.22: Passaic County Unemployment by Age

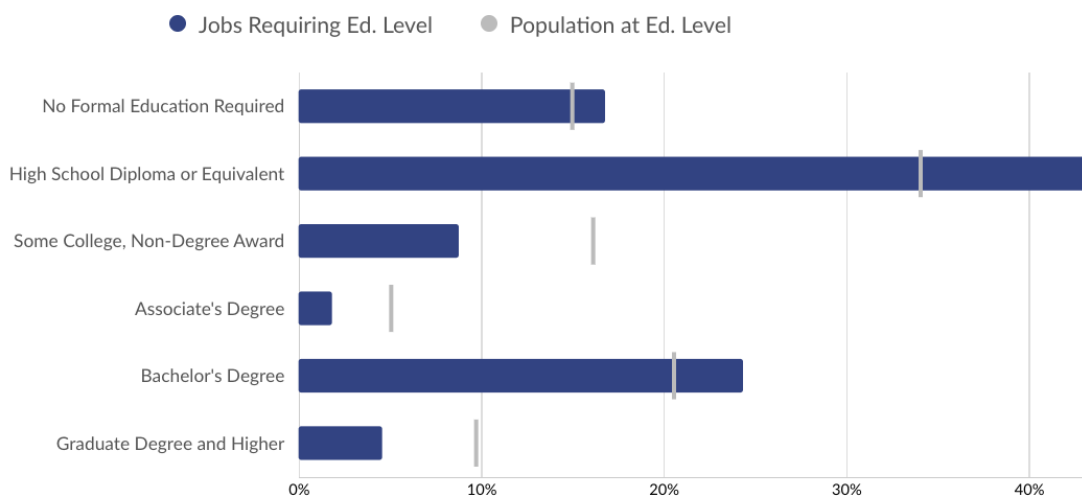
<b>Age</b>	<b>Unemployment (May 2023)</b>	<b>Percent of Unemployed</b>
<22	441	3.54%
22-24	716	5.75%
25-34	3,049	24.51%
35-44	2,587	20.79%
45-54	2,331	18.73%
55-59	1,232	9.90%
60-64	1,059	8.51%
65+	1,028	8.26%
Total	12,442	100%

Source: Lightcast (2023)

## Under-employment

Passaic County job seekers have the necessary education requirements for jobs that require some college or an Associates' degree, but fall short in jobs that require a high school diploma or equivalent or a Bachelor's degree (see Figure 3.23).

Figure 3.23: Passaic County Underemployment and Educational Attainment



Source: Lightcast (2023)

## Examination of education and training available in the local area

Figure 3.24: Educational Pipeline (2022)

School	Total Graduates
William Paterson University of New Jersey	2,495
Passaic County Community College	839
Berkeley College-Woodland Park	817
Fortis Institute-Wayne	314
American Institute-Clifton	297
Hohokus School of Trade and Technical Sciences	230
Capri Institute of Hair Design-Clifton	54

Source: Lightcast (2023)

## Special Populations

### Veterans

In Passaic County, 3.3% of residents, totaling 12,474 individuals, are veterans. Addressing the needs of this priority group, job search/training assistance is offered through collaboration with NJDOL Veterans' Representatives. The Veterans Services office plays a crucial role as a key partner, offering valuable resources to ensure veterans receive the necessary support for job placement and a high quality of life.

### Disabilities

In Passaic County, 11 percent of the population has a disability, with 81 percent of those individuals in the age group of over 65 years of age (see Figure 3.25).

Figure 3.25: Passaic County Special Populations

<b>Passaic County Population with a Disability by Age Group</b>	<b>Passaic County Total</b>	<b>With Disability</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Under 5 years	32,029	0	0%
5 to 17 years	87,878	3,445	3.9%
18 to 34 years	116,854	5,693	4.9%
35 to 64 years	194,517	18,945	9.7%
65 to 74 years	46,776	12,514	26.8%
75 years and over	32,797	17,687	53.9%
<b>Passaic County Total</b>	<b>510,851</b>	<b>58,284</b>	<b>11.4%</b>
<b>18 to 64 years</b>	<b>311,371</b>	<b>24,638</b>	<b>7.9%</b>

Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2022)

### Limited English Proficiency

Twenty-three percent (23%) of adults in the County report speaking English “less than very well.” For people who speak “a language other than English” the number rises to 51%. Assisting ESL learners with supportive services is one of the keys to closing the unemployment gaps.

### Individuals with no Income or Income Below Poverty Level (incl. TANF/GA)

Understanding Passaic County’s current poverty rate and associated needs, as compared to the surrounding region, is important to shape an efficient workforce development plan. With about 14 percent of Passaic County’s population living below the poverty level, this is about four percent higher than the state of New Jersey and makes Passaic the county with the third highest percentage in Northern New Jersey. High rates of poverty compound other work-related challenges, like increased housing vulnerability.

Figure 3.26: Poverty Estimates by County in Northern New Jersey Region

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Below Poverty Level</b>	<b>Percent Below Poverty Level</b>
<b>Passaic County, NJ</b>	<b>511,015</b>	<b>72,041</b>	<b>14.1%</b>
Bergen County, NJ	943,734	71,588	7.6%
Essex County, NJ (Includes Newark, NJ)	833,009	126,854	15.2%
Hudson County, NJ	694,796	111,289	16.0%
Hunterdon County, NJ	125,473	4,134	3.3%
Morris County, NJ	501,826	28,609	5.7%
Somerset County, NJ	341,777	17,933	5.2%
Sussex County, NJ	144,223	8,788	6.1%
Union County, NJ	565,979	51,096	9.0%
Warren County, NJ	109,033	11,794	10.8%
NNJ Region	4,770,865	504,126	10.6%
New Jersey	9,093,135	930,602	10.2%
Newark City, NJ	293,735	74,066	25.2%

Source: North Jersey Partners WIOA Regional Plan (2023)

In Passaic County in 2022, the median household income was just under \$80,000. A combined 34 percent of households had an annual income of less than \$50,000 (see Figure 3.27).

Figure 3.27: Passaic County Income in the Last 12 Months (2022 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

<b>Income</b>	<b>Percent of Households</b>
Less than \$10,000	4.9%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.8%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	5.9%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	7.0%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	11.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	13.5%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	16.9%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9.5%
\$200,000 or more	13.1%
Median income (dollars)	79,955
Mean income (dollars)	106,078

*Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2022)*

## Living Wage Analysis

This analysis serves as a tool to establish income thresholds for supportive services and acts as a foundation for crafting career pathways leading to occupations with living wages. In Passaic County, a substantial disparity exists between federal poverty wages and the income required for a sustainable lifestyle, especially for individuals with families. As illustrated in the table below, a single adult (typically a youth) would need to earn \$23.03/hour (approximately \$47,900/year) to achieve a living wage, with the Office & Administrative Support occupation family being the primary source at risk due to its projected decline over the next five years.

While several in-demand industries currently exhibit typical wages below this living wage threshold, strategic career pathways can pave the way to attain it. For instance, Sales and Related career pathways may lead to Sales Management, while Healthcare career pathways offer the potential for progressively higher incomes in various healthcare occupations (such as Patient Tech, RN, Ultrasound technicians, etc.).

For a single adult with one child, the living wage rises to \$32.33/hour, with the cost of childcare being a significant contributing factor. Occupations with typical wages at this level include those in Healthcare Professional and Technical Occupations or Construction and Extraction Occupations (see Figure 3.28).

In Passaic County, 48% of households earning under \$50,000 and 22.3% of individuals fall below the poverty line. Approximately 23% of workers in Passaic County earned \$35,000 or less in 2022, translating to \$2916/month or \$16.80/hour. However, even when adjusted for inflation, the percentage of the "working poor" is notably higher based on the Living Wage Calculation thresholds shown in the table below.

Passaic County underscores the importance of assisting residents in securing jobs that offer a living wage. This commitment not only enhances worker morale and boosts business productivity but also fosters better economic growth for the county and an improved quality of life for its residents.



Figure 3.28: Passaic County Cost of Living Calculation

Occupation Group	Passaic County Typical Annual Salary	Hourly	1 Adult	2 Adults (1 Working)	1 Adult & 1 Child	2 Adults (1 Working) & 1 Child
Management	\$170,260	\$82.02				
Legal	\$132,100	\$63.51				
Computer & Mathematical	\$114,360	\$54.98				
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	\$112,820	\$54.24				
Business & Financial Operations	\$102,270	\$49.17				
Architecture & Engineering	\$100,890	\$48.50				
Life, Physical, & Social Science	\$94,270	\$45.32			\$39.49	
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, & Media	\$80,660	\$38.78				\$38.22
Construction & Extraction	\$73,540	\$35.36				
Education, Training, & Library	\$69,040	\$33.19		\$32.33		
Protective Service	\$63,400	\$30.48				
Community & Social Service	\$62,700	\$30.14				
Installation, Maintenance, & Repair	\$62,460	\$30.03				
Sales & Related	\$58,700	\$28.22				
Office & Administrative Support	\$49,410	\$23.75	\$23.03			
Production	\$47,040	\$22.62				
Transportation & Material Moving	\$44,050	\$21.18				
Personal Care & Service	\$39,900	\$19.18				
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	\$39,790	\$19.13				
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	\$38,780	\$18.64				
Healthcare Support	\$37,950	\$18.25				
Food Preparation & Serving Related	\$37,500	\$18.03				

Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator (2024)

Figure 3.29: Passaic County Poverty Wage & Living Wage Comparison

	1 Adult	2 Adults (1 Working)	1 Adult & 1 Child	2 Adults (1 Working) & 1 Child
Poverty Wage	\$7.24	\$9.83	\$9.83	\$12.41
Living Wage % Above Poverty Wage	318.1%	328.9%	401.7%	308.0%

Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator (2024)

## Identification of Potential Barriers to Employment

The Workforce Development Board of Passaic County, in collaboration with our partners, remains committed to proactively addressing a spectrum of potential barriers that individuals may encounter in their quest to secure and sustain employment. These barriers are diverse and encompass:

- Lack of Education or Skills: Individuals requiring additional training for skill enhancement.

- Limited or no English proficiency: Overcoming language barriers to enhance communication skills.
- Absence of a High School diploma: Addressing educational gaps to broaden employment opportunities.
- Limited or no work experience (TANF/GA population): Supporting individuals with limited professional backgrounds.
- Age 55+ (age discrimination or in need of skills upgrade): Combating age-related challenges through skills enhancement.
- Disabilities or health-related issues: Creating inclusive workplaces that accommodate diverse health needs.
- Mental health, Addiction: Providing resources and support to address mental health and addiction challenges.
- Lack of soft skills (e.g., some TANF/GA, Youth): Offering training to enhance interpersonal skills.
- Lack of computer literacy (e.g., older adults, TANF/GA): Bridging the digital divide through computer literacy programs.
- Lack of exposure to potential opportunities (e.g., youth, some educated foreign-born): Facilitating access to diverse career pathways.
- Lack of transportation: Addressing mobility challenges to enhance accessibility to job opportunities.
- Insufficient income from low-wage jobs: Advocating for work support to meet essential needs like childcare, housing, and transportation.
- Long-term or chronic unemployment: Implementing strategies to re-integrate individuals into the workforce.
- Lack of math skills required for trades occupations: Offering educational support to enhance math proficiency.
- Juvenile Justice or Criminal record: Assisting individuals in overcoming obstacles related to their criminal history.
- Networking challenges: Facilitating connections between individuals and employers.
- Health Issues: Providing support and accommodations for individuals facing health-related challenges.
- Family Responsibilities - family responsibilities, childcare: Addressing the impact of family obligations on employment.

The WDBPC is steadfast in its commitment to addressing these challenges through a comprehensive approach, encompassing supportive policies, educational initiatives, awareness campaigns, and inclusive

workplace practices. By fostering equal opportunities for all individuals, we aim to ensure their success and prosperity in the dynamic job market.

## Business Demographics

In Passaic County is home to small businesses. Over 65 percent of businesses have few than 10 employees. This will continue impact strategies for employment as well as it necessity for a regional strategy.

Figure 3.30: Passaic County Jobs by Firm Size (2021)

<b>Firm Size</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Share</b>
0-19 Employees	34,158	24.5%
20-49 Employees	16,611	11.9%
50-249 Employees	24,757	17.7%
250-499 Employees	6,787	4.9%
500+ Employees	57,314	41.0%

*Source: US Census OnTheMap (2021)*

Figure 3.31: Passaic County Businesses by Size

	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Business Count</b>
1 to 4 employees	33.4%	6,894
5 to 9 employees	31.7%	6,553
10 to 19 employees	21.0%	4,337
20 to 49 employees	11.2%	2,308
50 to 99 employees	1.8%	370
100 to 249 employees	0.7%	136
250 to 499 employees	0.2%	36
500+ employees	0.1%	11

*Source: Lightcast (2023)*

Figure 3.32: Employers with the most job postings in 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2023

<b>Top Companies Posting</b>	<b>Unique Postings</b>
Saint Joseph Health	1,331
Paterson Public Schools	587
Saint Joseph Healthcare Pharmacy	521
ShiftMed	488
State of New Jersey	415
St. Mary's General Hospital	407
Catholic Charities USA	406
Summit Health	323
BAE Systems	306
Healthcare Employment Network	279

*Source: Lightcast (2023)*

Figure 3.33: Occupations Projected to Experience the Highest Growth from 2023-2033

Description	2023 Jobs	2033 Jobs	2023 - 2033 Change	2023 - 2033 % Change
Couriers and Messengers	2,916	4,517	1,601	55%
Nurse Practitioners	324	454	130	40%
Laundry and Dry-Cleaning Workers	557	766	209	38%
Cooks, Restaurant	1,104	1,518	413	37%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	6,118	8,278	2,159	35%
Light Truck Drivers	1,649	2,200	552	33%
Taxi Drivers	5,967	7,823	1,856	31%
Personal Financial Advisors	3,650	4,729	1,079	30%
Property Appraisers and Assessors	1,095	1,416	321	29%
Financial and Investment Analysts	996	1,263	267	27%
Physician Assistants	246	304	58	24%
Speech-Language Pathologists	358	438	81	23%
Driver/Sales Workers	1,354	1,658	304	22%
Chefs and Head Cooks	499	611	112	22%
Bus Drivers, School	850	1,040	190	22%
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	376	456	80	21%
Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	1,955	2,367	412	21%
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	365	439	74	20%
Physical Therapists	377	452	75	20%
Bartenders	671	801	130	19%
Barbers	485	579	94	19%
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	1,078	1,284	207	19%
Medical and Health Services Managers	776	920	144	19%
Waiters and Waitresses	2,023	2,399	376	19%
Food Service Managers	1,149	1,357	208	18%
Medical Assistants	907	1,060	153	17%
Managers, All Other	3,453	4,006	552	16%
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	3,707	4,279	572	15%

Source: Lightcast (2023)

### 3.3. Analysis of Local Market Information

#### LMI Data Analysis

As defined by the state, the Northern New Jersey region is comprised of eight local areas: Bergen, Hudson/Jersey City, Essex, Newark, Passaic, Union, Greater Raritan (Somerset/ Hunterdon), and Morris/Sussex/Warren. This encompasses the following counties: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren. This region has national economic strength, as it

encompasses over half of New Jersey's population (52 percent) and is situated between the Delaware River, Atlantic Ocean, and New York City. This economic vitality is jointly contrasted by its hosting of some of the poorest communities in the country.

Passaic County has an average private sector employment of about 133,000, with workers receiving an average annual wage of approximately \$58,500. These average wages are lower than the Northern New Jersey regional average wage of approximately \$82,400 for each worker, and lower than the state level of approximately \$76,600 (see Figure 3.34).

Figure 3.34: Northern New Jersey Partnership Private Sector Employment 2021

Area	Establishments	Average Employment	Average Wages	Total Wages
<b>Passaic, NJ</b>	<b>13,419</b>	<b>132,592</b>	<b>\$58,502</b>	<b>\$7,756,877,782</b>
Bergen, NJ	33,838	369,601	\$75,903	\$28,053,722,029
Essex, NJ	21,661	249,545	\$79,140	\$19,748,919,068
Hudson, NJ	17,025	217,996	\$90,443	\$19,716,253,326
Hunterdon, NJ	3,876	37,838	\$72,033	\$2,725,561,487
Morris, NJ	17,152	254,440	\$98,184	\$24,981,821,712
Somerset, NJ	10,242	165,369	\$101,309	\$16,753,439,237
Sussex, NJ	3,316	30,515	\$50,854	\$1,551,769,229
Union, NJ	15,257	188,064	\$79,872	\$15,021,088,044
Warren, NJ	2,652	26,230	\$54,476	\$1,428,902,852
<b>NNJ Region</b>	<b>138,438</b>	<b>1,672,190</b>	<b>\$82,370</b>	<b>\$137,738,354,766</b>
<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>291,389</b>	<b>3,383,902</b>	<b>\$76,623</b>	<b>\$259,285,847,087</b>

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages, Annual Averages (2021)

## Industry Sectors and Employment Forecast

Over 50 percent of Passaic County's private employment is within its top four industry sectors, which are health care and social assistance, retail trade, manufacturing, and administrative and waste services. The most prominent industry sectors in the county are aligned with the overall leading industries in the region, though the Northern New Jersey region also includes professional and technical services in its top four industries (see Figure 3.35).

Figure 3.35: Passaic County Private Sector Employment by Industry (2021)

<b>Avg. Employment by Sector and County</b>	<b>Passaic</b>	<b>Northern New Jersey</b>
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	101	2,116
21 Mining	-	-
22 Utilities	-	3,025
23 Construction	7,727	72,557
31 Manufacturing	17,256	131,487
42 Wholesale trade	8,720	106,449
44 Retail trade	22,352	204,935
48 Transportation and warehousing	3,913	102,702
51 Information	928	28,469
52 Finance and insurance	3,968	104,365
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	1,841	28,580
54 Professional and technical services	6,000	155,258
55 Management of companies and enterprises	1,506	49,988
56 Administrative and waste services	11,824	127,747
61 Educational services	2,357	36,523
62 Health care and social assistance	26,101	281,757
71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation"	1,282	15,560
72 Accommodation and food services	9,626	119,628
81 Other services, except public administration	5,729	64,201
99 Unclassified	473	5,426
<b>Total</b>	<b>131,704</b>	<b>1,640,773</b>

*Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Annual Averages (2021)*

Over the next decade, Passaic County is projected to see an increase in jobs in the Transportation and Warehousing, Accommodation and Food Services, and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing sectors (see Figure 3.36). The North New Jersey region similarly expects to see growth in the Transportation and Warehousing sector, along with Professional and Technical Services and Health Care and Social Assistance.

Figure 3.36: Passaic County Projected Growth Industries, 2022-2033

Industry	2022 Jobs	2033 Jobs	2022 - 2033 Change	2022 - 2033 % Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	248	269	22	9%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	178	176	(2)	(1%)
Utilities	862	994	131	15%
Construction	14,506	15,766	1,259	9%
Manufacturing	18,836	18,979	142	1%
Wholesale Trade	10,043	10,030	(13)	(0%)
Retail Trade	28,139	28,242	103	0%
Transportation and Warehousing	17,330	23,734	6,405	37%
Information	1,848	1,745	(103)	(6%)
Finance and Insurance	12,216	14,307	2,091	17%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	18,567	22,490	3,923	21%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	12,586	12,852	267	2%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,186	1,175	(1,011)	(46%)
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	16,658	18,695	2,037	12%
Educational Services	4,901	5,376	475	10%
Health Care and Social Assistance	32,647	38,389	5,741	18%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3,734	4,326	592	16%
Accommodation and Food Services	13,853	17,258	3,405	25%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	14,032	15,333	1,301	9%
Government	27,102	26,864	(238)	(1%)
Unclassified Industry	839	902	63	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>251,310</b>	<b>277,901</b>	<b>26,591</b>	<b>11%</b>

Source: Lightcast (2023)

## Occupational Employment Characteristics

The top occupations by employment in the North New Jersey region are displayed below in Figure 2.6, translating to trends related to salary, employment level, and education requirements. The majority of popular occupations in the Northern New Jersey region only require a high school diploma or equivalent, or do not require any formal educational credential. Examples of formal educational credentials required may be HHA/CNAs, tractor trailer truck driver license, and other on-the-job training. There is a trend between job occupations which require a bachelor's degree and higher average salaries. All occupations which do not require a bachelor's degree earn an average salary below \$45,000, and the majority earn below \$40,000.

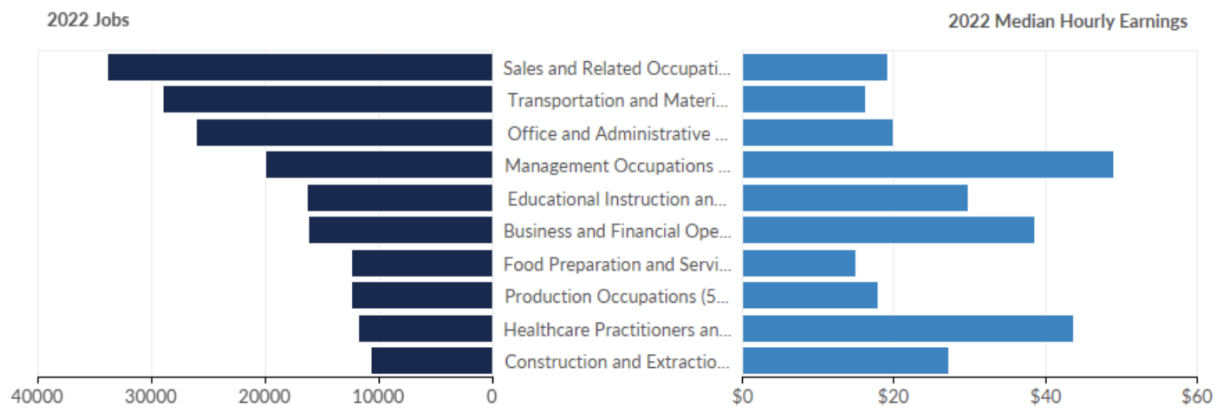


Figure 3.37: Northern New Jersey's Top Occupations by Employment (2021)

Top Occupations	Estimated Employment	Average Salary	Education
Retail Salespersons	50,640	\$35,450	No formal educational credential
Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Mover	41,040	\$38,380	No formal educational credential
Cashiers	41,000	\$29,630	No formal educational credential
Registered Nurses	37,270	\$92,270	Bachelor's degree
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	36,530	\$32,250	High school diploma or equivalent
Stockers and Order Fillers	36,090	\$34,550	High school diploma or equivalent
Customer Service Representatives	33,360	\$44,550	High school diploma or equivalent
Janitors and Cleaners	32,740	\$36,320	No formal educational credential
Office Clerks, General	30,280	\$42,820	High school diploma or equivalent
Fast Food and Counter Workers	27,830	\$29,250	No formal educational credential
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	27,300	\$46,560	High school diploma or equivalent
Receptionists and Information Clerks	26,190	\$36,730	High school diploma or equivalent
Software Developers	25,260	\$125,200	Bachelor's degree
General and Operations Managers	24,650	\$173,280	Bachelor's degree

Source: Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics Surveys (2021), New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Bureau of Labor Market Information (2022)

Figure 3.38: Passaic County Largest Occupations Based on Jobs and Median Hourly Earnings



Source: Lightcast (2023)

Passaic County has the fifth largest population compared to the counties in Northern New Jersey. It is also the fourth most racially diverse county in the region, with the majority of the county identifying as non-white. Passaic County's non-white population is about five percent greater than the region's average (see Figure 3.39).

Figure 3.39: Northern New Jersey Counties by Race

	Total Population	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian and Alaska Native alone	Asian alone	Some Other Race alone	Population of two or more races
<b>Passaic</b>	<b>524,118</b>	<b>43.8%</b>	<b>11.0%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>25.7%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>
Bergen	955,732	56.9%	5.7%	0.5%	16.6%	10.1%	10.2%
Essex	863,728	30.3%	38.8%	0.5%	5.5%	14.4%	10.5%
Hudson	724,854	34.3%	11.0%	1.0%	17.2%	22.1%	14.4%
Hunterdon	128,947	82.8%	2.5%	0.2%	4.4%	3.2%	6.9%
Morris	509,285	69.7%	3.3%	0.3%	11.4%	6.1%	9.2%
Somerset	345,361	53.7%	9.2%	0.4%	19.5%	8.1%	9.0%
Sussex	144,221	84.5%	2.1%	0.2%	2.1%	3.1%	7.9%
Union	575,345	41.1%	20.4%	0.7%	5.6%	18.4%	13.8%
Warren	109,632	79.2%	5.4%	0.2%	2.7%	4.2%	8.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,881,223</b>	<b>48.7%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>11.1%</b>

Source: Decennial Census (2020)

33 percent of Passaic County's population is under 25 years of age. Combined, the age groups 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54 make up 38 percent of the county population. 14 percent of the population is over the age of 65 (see Figure 3.40).

Figure 3.40: Population of Passaic County, by Age

	Number	Percent
Total Population	513,936	100%
Less than 25	167,994	32.69%
25-34	69,071	13.44%
35-44	65,352	12.72%
45-54	64,003	12.45%
55-59	33,925	6.60%
60-64	31,780	6.18%
65-74	47,136	9.17%
75-84	25,271	4.92%
85 and over	9,404	1.83%

Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2022)

In the Northern New Jersey region, consisting of ten counties, Passaic County is overrepresented in the under 25 years of age demographic and underrepresented in the 35-44 years of age demographic (see Figure 3.41).

Figure 3.41: Passaic County Age Distribution as a Percent of the Northern New Jersey Region

<b>Passaic County Resident Population</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of Passaic County</b>	<b>Percent of NNJ</b>
Total Population	513,936	100%	10.6%
Less than 25	167,994	32.69%	11.7%
25-34	69,071	13.44%	10.7%
35-44	65,352	12.72%	9.7%
45-54	64,003	12.45%	10.0%
55-59	33,925	6.60%	10.1%
60-64	31,780	6.18%	10.2%
65-74	47,136	9.17%	10.5%
75-84	25,271	4.92%	10.2%
85 and over	9,404	1.83%	10.6%

Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2022)

In the North New Jersey regional population, Passaic County makes up a greater share of the population that has earned a high school diploma or less (see Figure 3.42).

Figure 3.42: Passaic County Education Attainment Distribution as a Percent of the Northern New Jersey Region

<b>Passaic County Resident Population by Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of Passaic County</b>	<b>Percent of NNJ</b>
Population 25 years and over	345,942	100%	10.2%
Less than 9th grade	28,117	8.13%	14.9%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	22,534	6.51%	14.1%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	115,995	33.53%	14.6%
Some college, no degree	50,687	14.65%	10.6%
Associate's degree	22,456	6.49%	10.9%
Bachelor's degree	70,292	20.32%	7.6%
Graduate or professional degree	35,861	10.37%	5.6%

Source: American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (2022)

## Labor Force Changes

Between 2019-2024, the labor force in Passaic County is expected to grow 1.6 percent, between 2024-2029 3.3 percent, and between 2029-2034 1.94 percent. This growth rate trails that of the North New Jersey region between 2019-2024 and 2029-2034 (see Figure 3.43).

Figure 3.43: Northern New Jersey Projection of Labor Force Changes

County	Change 2019-2024		Change 2024-2029		Change 2029-2034	
<b>Passaic</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>1.60%</b>	<b>8,500</b>	<b>3.34%</b>	<b>5,100</b>	<b>1.94%</b>
Bergen	15,700	3.18%	20,000	3.93%	16,100	3.04%
Essex	7,000	1.76%	11,700	2.88%	7,300	1.75%
Hudson	6,100	1.59%	21,800	5.58%	14,900	3.61%
Hunterdon	0	0%	-600	-0.93%	-200	-0.31%
Morris	9,900	3.62%	8,500	3.00%	4,500	1.54%
Somerset	6,600	3.64%	6,900	3.67%	4,000	2.05%
Sussex	-800	-1.03%	-1,500	-1.96%	-1,100	-1.47%
Union	10,400	3.46%	15,600	5.01%	10,300	3.15%
Warren	-200	-0.36%	-600	-1.09%	-400	-0.73%
<b>Northern New Jersey Region</b>	<b>58,700</b>	<b>2.37%</b>	<b>90,300</b>	<b>3.56%</b>	<b>60,500</b>	<b>2.30%</b>
<b>New Jersey</b>	<b>114,600</b>	<b>2.48%</b>	<b>154,600</b>	<b>3.26%</b>	<b>119,400</b>	<b>2.44%</b>

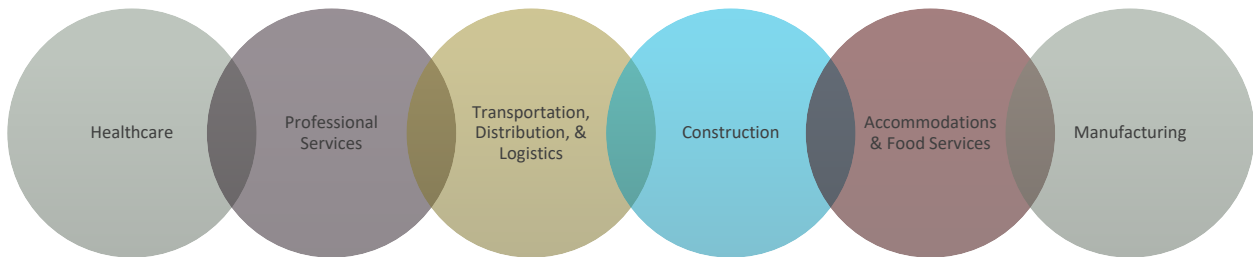
Source: NJLWD, 2014-2034 Labor Force Projections

## 4. Target Sectors, Recommendations and Regional Strategies

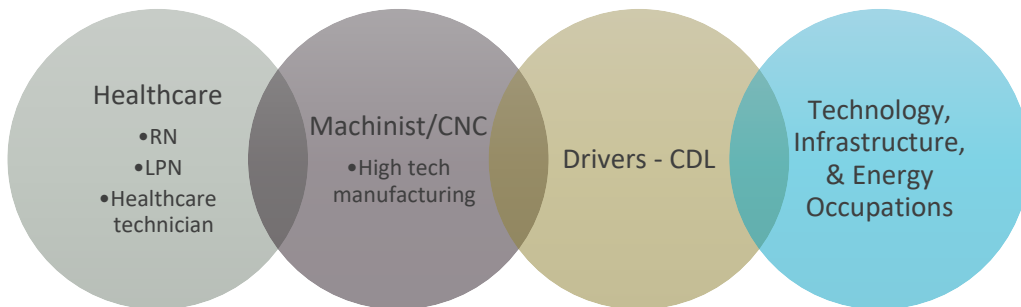
### 4.1. Target Sectors

Concentrating on pivotal sectors in workforce development entails allocating attention and resources to specific industries or fields critical for economic growth and employment opportunities. This focused approach empowers Passaic County to craft a nuanced and effective strategy that addresses the distinctive needs, skill requirements, and expansion potential within these identified sectors. The prioritization and detailed description of the region's industries and occupations presented in the preceding section inform this targeted strategy.

## Target Sectors



## Target Occupations



### 4.2. Regional Joint Work to Meet Needs of Sectors and Occupations

The Passaic County Workforce Development Board's strategic plan strikes a balance of working with regional partners and considering the unique assets and challenges of Passaic County. This strategy allows us to effectively work with regional partners to help customers find meaningful employment beyond county boundaries, while strengthening workforce development infrastructure to enhance both customers' and employers' experiences.

Mirroring the 2023 North Regional Plan, Passaic County will work with regional partners to better understand employer's needs and provide strategies for better adaption to fast paced changing environments, demonstrated by and continues to exist post COVID-19 pandemic.

Passaic County shares similar view in regards to the current and projected labor needs of the region, low/declining workforce participation, and employers' inability to fill openings, a priority at the regional level will be to focus on expanding the labor supply by tapping on populations with barriers and providing the appropriate support so that the working poor can continue to stay in the workforce and not fall back on welfare services.

Regardless of the sector, all occupations will require soft skills, enhanced computer literacy, an overall comfort with using and adapting to technology's impact on the work, and an understanding of the Future of Work (e.g., continuous learning of new skills).

While the region has a high level of educated residents, many occupations do not require a college degree. Even many in-demand and emerging "technical" occupations do not require a college degree. The region will work to more specifically identify the requirement for the emerging industries (e.g., Energy/Infrastructure) and ensure programs are available to prepare the workforce to meet employer needs.

With the appropriate training and supportive services, individuals with "barriers to employment" may become "job-ready" to fill many of these positions and start on a career pathway.

The region's LWDBs will work jointly to meet the demands by taking a regional approach to outreach and engagement of prospective employers and ensuring the availability of required training programs:

- All jobs will require basic digital/computer literacy. This requirement is much broader than several years ago and includes MS Office. The region will ensure that programs are available so that all jobseekers have these basic skills or acquire them.
- While many "technical jobs" do not require a college degree, they require basic math literacy. Programs will be developed to bridge the gap in basic math literacy. These programs will be useful to more than the above-mentioned target populations. The Newark "bridge" program will be deployed regionally to get trainees to become "training-ready" for these occupations. (e.g., program currently being developed by Newark WDB)

### 4.3. Passaic County Recommendations

Crucial for cultivating a skilled and adaptable workforce are workforce development strategies that facilitate skill enhancement and eliminate barriers. The Workforce Development Board of Passaic County is poised to implement the ensuing recommendations, designed to address the unique needs of the County while aligning with Regional Partner Strategies.

#### Key Priorities

**Health and Wellness:** Focusing on the well-being of individuals is paramount, as it influences their ability to handle stress, work productively, and achieve their utmost potential. Research underscores that employees in good health tend to deliver optimal workplace performance. To foster this, the Board recommends establishing community partnerships with organizations supporting health and wellness.

**Immigration Policy:** Adapting to the evolving political climate surrounding immigration is crucial. The Board acknowledges the challenges posed by immigration policies affecting the recruitment of foreign

workers, particularly in technology and agriculture. To address this, the Board will continue implementing policies that align with the current immigration landscape, recognizing its impact on the ability of industries to find qualified workers.

**Older Workers:** Bergen County anticipates a growth in its older demographic over the next four years. Despite a desire to work among individuals aged 55 and above, age discrimination remains a barrier to their employment. The Board recommends a survey and review of online programs and services available to this population. Additionally, the creation of a special task force within the BCWDB is proposed to assess the skill needs of workers aged 55 and above, subsequently developing programs to enhance their skills and employment readiness.

**Literacy and Language:** Addressing the growing issue of low literacy levels and non-English speaking job seekers in Passaic County is imperative. The Board plans to enhance Learning Link resources by allocating an additional staff person to focus on workplace literacy. A survey of literacy providers and services, along with a review of online resources, will be conducted by the BCWDB Youth and Education committee to assist job seekers effectively.

**Youth:** Prioritizing multiple pathways for young people aged 16-24 through WDBPC services, publicly procured vendors, and additional youth program models is recommended. The Board emphasizes the importance of supporting individuals in demographics with perceived or real barriers to employment as a strategic workforce benefit.

By addressing these priorities, the Workforce Development Board of Passaic County aims to create a dynamic and inclusive workforce, ensuring the region's economic vitality and the well-being of its residents.

#### 4.4. Region Joint Work to Target Jobseekers to Meet Industry/Occupation Needs and Support Skill Development and Barrier Removal

Overall, regionally, we have observed more job seekers with barriers to employment, including mental health sometimes caused by long-term unemployment. The stressors caused by low-income and lack of child-care are also a barrier to participation in the workforce. The regional approach will be to focus on the “human side” and assist with “barrier removal” to ensure that those enrolled in training programs truly have the “ability to benefit” and enter and stay in the workforce. To this end, we will identify partners for the “wrap-around” services that will be required by many.

Passaic County, along with the region, plans to meet jobseekers and prospective jobseekers “where they are” physically and psychologically through:

- Establishing More Mobile/Satellite One-Stop Career Centers
- Programs offering “full support”, including empowerment training, financial literacy, comfort with technology, comfort with learning new skills (Details in the section on OSCC Operations)
  - Continue to seek partners and funding (e.g., Needs Based Work Supports) to facilitate access to transportation.

- Continue to host outreach events for the target populations both within the County and in partnership with the region.
- In conjunction with the region, create a repository of resources for the community.
- Continue to provide “Priority of Service Populations,” which includes veterans and their family members as well as low-income individuals.

### Target Populations and Priority of Service

The office of DVRS co-located in the One-Stop Career Center, and if during counseling and assessment, a disability is discovered, there is immediate attention and services. DVRS provides full-service employment, counseling and training services to the target population as well as job coaching, specific accommodations and transition services for youth. The One-Stop Career Center building is also barrier free, wheelchair accessible, with elevator services. There are also special screens for sight impaired customers, and sign language translators available for the hearing impaired.

The One-Stop Career Center guarantees “priority of service” for adult career and training services be given to the following categories of “high needs” adults who:

- Receive public assistance
- Qualify for low income
- Are basic skills-deficient
- Are Veterans of the US Armed Forces (and spouses)
- Out of School Youth
- Individuals with Disabilities
- Returning Citizens (Ex-Offenders)

During the initial counseling and assessment phase, customers are screen for eligibility requirements and prioritized according to their level of need.

Required Veterans signage is posted in appropriate places. Staff are also trained on the order of priority and One-Stop Management ensures its compliance through policy, meetings and continuous quality improvement exercises. The One-Stop Career Center addresses priorities of services through operational procedures that will identify customers by funding needs and demographics to ensure service priority in the event of funding limitations.

## 4.5. Regional Approach to Ongoing Analysis and Review of LMI Data

The Workforce Development Board of Passaic County will continue to provide ongoing analysis and review of LMI data by regular attendance and participation at the Northern Regional LWDB Director’s meeting as well as review and feedback at regular WEBPC Board Meetings that provides analysis done by staff.



## 4.6. Strategic Priorities

in alignment with the 2023 Northern Region Plan , the Strategic Priorities for goals the Workforce Development Board of Passaic County have been developed and align with the vision and mission of the organization:

- Expand outreach to residents and access to support services, including and especially in overburdened/underserved populations; These are the same communities, especially communities of color that were most impacted by the pandemic and who have had lasting impacts and are still struggling to recover. NJDEP | Environmental Justice | What are Overburdened Communities (OBC)?
- Expand support services to ensure continued workforce participation by the working poor and identify career pathway initiatives and other similar training programs to help incumbent workers transition to living-wage occupations.
- Increase efficiency of the services provided to residents/jobseekers and businesses by strengthening the integration of Stop Career Centers partners and services, expanding relationships and functional alignment/seamless transition/coordination through co-enrollment and, for effective communication, through use of technology (e.g., texting apps for Youth).
- Ensure alignment of workforce training with Industry Needs by customization of services (for employers and jobseekers); focus on Career Pathways, Industry-Valued Credentials, Apprenticeships program for non- college-bound students; Raise awareness of opportunities in skilled trades and other traditional vocational and technical programs.
- Continue to identify workforce needs at every level and provide services to help develop regional businesses, and convene partners to promote/enhance the adequate flow of information between partners.
- Develop deep, strong and effective partnerships with the business community, and a thorough understanding of their workforce needs; Support the state Industry Partnerships and their connection to educational institutions, workforce development, economic development, and community partners.

## 5. One Stop Career Center Regional Support, Joint Efforts, Common Models

### 5.1. One-Stop Delivery and Flow

#### Leadership

The leadership strategies of the Passaic County Workforce Development Board and the Passaic County One Stop, has a shared vision to work as a team and leverage each other's strengths. The Passaic County Workforce Development partners meet quarterly to address issues and ensure quality assurance for all customers. The Passaic County Workforce Development Board Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) demonstrates the partners commitment to developing joint processes and coordinating resources to achieve both short and long-term community goals. The agreements also indicate that efforts are not limited by governmental or political boundaries. The partners actively participate in a variety of committee meetings, where they provide feedback and discuss challenges and opportunities. Regional planning and resource sharing are key elements of our strategy. The Passaic County Workforce Development Board oversees the planning and provision of one-stop services, holding committee meetings as per the By Laws. Detailed notes are taken during these meetings to document discussions and processes. The WDB also maintains documentation for all public and committee meetings, including attendance records. Community partners are educated to participate in discussions about the Passaic County One Stop's model and management. Quality assurance is a key focus, with the process taking place in the One Stop Oversight and Monitoring committee.

#### Strategic Planning

The strategic planning approach of the Passaic County Workforce Development Board and Passaic County One Stop all required partners are involved in strategy development and have representation. The organization is fully staff integrated and all partners contribute to the operational and strategic development of the Passaic County One Stop. Partners are regularly asked for feedback and input regarding quality assurance for programs and services. The WDB maintains processes to document expectations of partners, staff, and clients. Orientations are held annually for all partners. New board members receive an orientation meeting to familiarize themselves with the WDB and Passaic County One Stop operations and their expected contributions. The WDB's local certification plans are available to all stakeholders. The Passaic WDB uses State data and NJ performance metrics for measuring performance and making decisions. We also use local data to address issues with job placement and retention rates that aren't matching data from AOSOS. The full Board and various committee members review client outcomes and rely on staff to understand the Eligible Training Provider List, Consumer Report Card, performance data, and evidence-based results, which are used to make WDB plan and program decisions. The Passaic County Workforce Business Resources meets with industries and county economic development board to share information on job openings, and community resources for clients. Counselors in the Passaic County One Stop have access to resources to help clients make career decisions for sustainable employment in growing industries. Training opportunities align with career

pathways and industry-based credentials based on individualized comprehensive assessments, and the system builds upon client's skills throughout their careers.

The Passaic County One Stop is committed to Employment First for qualifying clients. Placement and wage data are entered into AOSOS and an electronic client file on the agency server. The Reemployment-Orientation Sessions outline who would be eligible for priority services and they these clients will receive additional outreach from the Job Center offering services and career opportunities.

### Customer and Market Focus

The customer and market focus of the Passaic County Workforce Development Board and Passaic County One Stop, although public hearings and focus groups are not used for customer input, feedback from exit interviews and ongoing follow-up meetings are utilized, with feedback from clients regularly. The Passaic County One Stop has established a single point of contact for both business and client customers. For businesses, the Business Service Representative is the point of contact, for job seekers. Customers are then referred to appropriate staff based on their needs. Customer satisfaction data is used to justify services and document continuous improvement. Periodic customer satisfaction surveys are shared with the WDB and the One Stop Oversight and Monitoring Committee. Partnerships within the WDB, One Stop Committees, and Passaic County One Stop staff are diverse and representative of the community, ensuring access to a broad range of individuals and greater opportunity for client success. There are regional groups that facilitate access to resources and cross-training. Workforce development investments focus on industry-specific efforts in Healthcare, Retail/Hospitality, Manufacturing, Life Science, and Professional services. The WDB and Passaic County One Stop staff collaborate with Business Services Reps as needed and work with other community and economic development entities when customer needs dictate. Through the One Stop Oversight and Monitoring Committee, a regular review of local services is conducted, including programs, services, ITAs, and customer flow. The committee adjusts to findings as a step towards continuous improvement. Quality assurance and service enhancement recommendations often come from staff, who also provide feedback on potential improvements. The Passaic County One Stop Operator gives insights on service areas that may need support, and the One Stop Oversight and Monitoring Committee reviews and makes recommendations.

### Information and Analysis

The Passaic County One Stop uses information and technology to enhance customer service and staff effectiveness. Its MIS Department interfaces with all data systems used by the agency, supervises client follow-up processes, and provides reports to counselors, staff, and management. The MIS staff participate in regional and state meetings and provide training to other staff as needed. The Center also conducts local service audits to identify areas for improvement and the results are shared with the executives and board members for implementation of recommendations. The Passaic County WDB has a system-wide method for data collection, analysis, and usage. The Passaic County One-Stop Career Center compiles and analyzes data from AOSOS, and employment trends from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. These reports are shared with the WDB Executive Committee and the full Board quarterly.

## Human Resource Focus

The Passaic County One Stop hold WIOA staff to all Human Resources standards. Staff are evaluated annually, and the organization has a plan for continuous capacity building, with training provided as needed to ensure high-level, customer-oriented services. WIOA and Employment Services staff have been cross-trained for better service provision, and partners are being trained to certify clients for WIOA-funded services, providing access to multiple funding streams. The Passaic County One Stop has methods to identify and conduct necessary training for all staff and program/service suppliers. The management team regularly participates in training sessions and review policy guidance offered by the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development. They also provide contracted Professional Development, with the curriculum available to all staff. The information systems and work processes are designed to promote collaboration and sharing across multiple partner organizations and work units. Data is used for performance review, and they operate as a fully integrated Passaic County One Stop with staff working at cross-functional jobs.

## Process Management

The process management of the Passaic County Workforce Development Board has established a certification process based on quality criteria and has implemented quality assurance for product and service suppliers. The WDB also has a documented service flow for the local Job Center, which includes timelines and methods for referral and management of the Eligible Training Provider list and Consumer Report Card.

The Passaic County One Stop has an administrative agent, provides processes for handling poor performance by operators, partners, and service/product providers. Feedback is gathered from customers and staff through surveys, and changes to programs are made based on this feedback. Services and programs in Passaic County are organized functionally rather than by funding source, program, or staff.

## Business Results

The Executive Director seeks out new prospective board members and has strong relationships with industry partners. Business results are defined in terms of improved service quality for customers and systems, and the WDB aims to guide the work of Business Service representatives. A survey of each employer is taken at the ending of each hiring events to gather feedback from business clients.

This feedback allows WDB to hear and respond to the need of the business community which allows for informed process changes. The purpose of In-Demand Industry Council is to advise the best means of matching good paying jobs with benefits to participants at Passaic County One-Stop. Where possible we would offer advisement to assist with generating advantageous career pathways for Passaic County residents. In the spirit of a true partnership, our meetings will be open to representatives from the public, local government, private employers, and the labor community. Through meaningful work, our goal is to improve the lives of Passaic County workers and residents.

## 5.2. Operational Priorities

Regionally, operations/ services priorities include ensuring equitable access to services and serving as many individuals as possible; increasing internal One Stop Career Centers (OSCC) efficiency; prepare individuals for sustained employment, beyond their next job, through partnerships (e.g., financial empowerment, coping skills); increase business engagement; and establish quality control of training providers at the regional level.

While the region does not offer specific funding for these service priorities, regional staff training for these programs will occur in partnership with GSETA or Workforce180. Specific programs, like staff training and regional recruitment events, will occur at the regional level. Regional service delivery will also be approached with several techniques designed to increase efficiency of the training contracting process. These include the ability to use each other's contracts across programs, developing a regional/ articulation agreement with community colleges, and a repository of commonly required documentation from vendors.

## 5.3. Service Expansion and Accessibility in One-Stop Career Centers (OSCC)

The local workforce development board will guarantee ongoing developments to the One-Stop Career Center and its service providers through the collaborative efforts of the Business Resource Center (BRC) team. This highly integrated and interdisciplinary team meets regularly to exchange information regarding job opportunities and employer requirements. Comprising members from various entities, such as the County Economic Development Office, WIOA, State Business Services, Welfare, NJLWD representatives, Veterans Services, and Employment Services, the BRC meets on a regular basis and holds formal monthly sessions to address significant concerns and signal the necessity of a Rapid Response Team from employment services and the One-Stop Career Center.

Identified best practices will be expanded across the Passaic County and the region. In order to facilitate the expansion with diversity, equity, and inclusion in mind, particularly for individuals with disabilities, a few practices will be implemented. Employer engagement with individuals with disabilities, partnering with disabilities-based organizations, collaborating with DVRS Business Outreach Team's Regional Program Development, and expanding Project SEARCH beyond Bergen and Morris-Sussex-Warren counties, can allow for more comprehensive inclusion efforts.

Northern New Jersey's workforce development board directors will play a primary role in expanding OSCC efficiency, specifically through regional director meetings with a structured standing agenda item for a planned initiative. Initiatives may include regional joint development of a program/ policy/ practice, sharing of best practices across region LWDBs, and regional staff training programs.

## 5.4. Detailed Partnership and Service Integration

Exploration of regional informal agreements with potential partners will involve inviting them to the Region's LWDB Directors' meetings, such as HUD and HHS. Additionally, efforts will be made to establish partnerships with organizations capable of delivering supportive services for the working poor. An example of such an organization is NORWESCAP, which provides financial empowerment programs, including a savings-match initiative, exclusively to residents of Warren County. Partnering with the

Community College Consortium, the feasibility of a Regional Training agreement will be investigated, as well as the potential joint-use of each other's LWDB contracts. This approach will streamline the enrollment process, especially in cases where a single individual from one county intends to enroll in a program offered in another county's Community College that isn't available elsewhere. It is important to remember that when best practices are shared across the region, all staff receives the necessary training.

## 5.5. Employer Engagement

Regional-level programs encompass regional recruiting events, forums, and a centralized business resource repository. Additionally, the Region and LWDBs have outlined several strategic objectives. They aim to establish a platform for engaging businesses in conversations about adopting loyalty as an innovative business model, with potential speakers from an organization called Mercer. They also intend to offer educational resources to challenge the misconception of an unlimited supply of inexpensive labor. There are also plans to conduct research to identify entities that assess businesses for fostering a positive employee culture. Work-based learning initiatives, such as Apprenticeships, Incumbent Worker Training, OJTs, and Transitional Jobs, inspired by the successful Essex model, will be promoted. Their strategy additionally involves transitioning businesses from a survival-oriented mindset to a more forward-thinking approach to employee retention, with offerings like remote work options, childcare support, gym memberships, and more.

In the One-Stop Career Centers within the Region, staff members are actively collaborating to form region-wide business services teams, composed of various Business Service Representatives. What initially began as isolated partnerships for significant employer hiring initiatives has evolved into a more comprehensive approach. When a One-Stop brings a substantial employer or any company with substantial hiring or training needs to the NJP, they assume the role of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for that firm. This entails disseminating job orders and relevant information to all Business Service Representatives (BSRs) in the region, in turn, enhancing the system's capacity to serve the employer's requirements and connect candidates from across the region with the employer. This process has demonstrated success and will be expanded. Closer collaboration with the New Jersey Community College Consortium and other education partners, will also be implemented to help address business needs.

Expanded coordination with the NJ Office of Apprenticeship will help to foster interactions among various stakeholders, diversify and broaden participation in statewide registered apprenticeship programs, create formal connections with employers and educational systems, support apprentices in earning college credits, offer robust career counseling for middle- and high-school students, and further promote diversity and inclusion in apprenticeship programs across the state.

## 6. Local WDB Structure and Functions

### 6.1. Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Structure

Each member of the Workforce Investment Board of Passaic County is appointed by the Board of Chosen Freeholders for a three-year term and are volunteer positions with the majority of the seats having to be occupied by representatives of the private business sector. The Workforce Investment Board of Passaic County is charged with integrating publicly funded services and training into a seamless, flexible, and responsive workforce system that meets the needs of employers, as well as jobseekers. The current Passaic County Workforce Development Board is robust, experienced, and diverse, enabling the workforce development system to be demand-driven and responsive to the needs of both workers and employers.

### 6.2. Procurement of Operator and Services

Every Local Area Workforce Development Area (LAWDA) holds the responsibility of competitively procuring the One-Stop Operator, One-Stop Career Services, and Youth Services providers. EDSI/GSETA provides procurement training, and challenges are routinely discussed at the monthly regional Workforce Development Board (WDB) directors' meetings. Of relevance, both the Region and LWDBs will consider the establishment of a Northern Region Procurement Committee to address contracting issues, including the contract limits imposed by Pay-to-play on OJT and Incumbent Worker Training contracts.

The primary regional goal is to streamline the contracting processes and remove internal obstacles by collaborating with relevant state representatives and agencies. A regional approach and/or articulation agreements will be explored. Particularly, as it relates to encompassing regional contracting for services such as Metrix, LinkedIn, Workforce180, GSETA, as well as regional grant applications, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with regional partners, and the potential streamlining of training vendor agreements.

### 6.3. Oversight and Monitoring

Currently, each Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) independently handles Oversight and Monitoring functions, with an informal sharing of training provider monitor reports when necessary. Although there is no formal Northern Region Monitoring Committee, LWDB representatives actively participate in GSETA's Monitoring Committee, helping to exchange best practices.

In an effort to facilitate real-time access to information regarding training providers and programs, both the Region and LWDBs are exploring the establishment of a more structured process for sharing monitoring data, encompassing schedules, reports, and tools through the creation of a regional repository.

A Northern New Jersey report card, in addition to the ETPL report card, may also help to address uncovered issues. For instance, the inclusion of vendor performance and an assessment of their commitment to serving all populations.



## 6.4. Performance Measures and Accountability

Passaic County follows goals set by the New Jersey Department of Labor of Workforce Development Assumptions.

### Enrollment of WIOA Title I and Title III Participants

Passaic County will ensure all WIOA Title I and WIOA Title III (Wagner-Peyser) participants will be co-enrolled in both programs; this is reflective of the new One-Stop service integration and will be reflected in the performance outcomes of both programs.

Passaic County will apply the WIOA Title I Primary Indicators to the WFNJ program; this will be included in future SNAP and WorkFirst Employment and Training Plans.

### Credential Attainment Rate

LWD assumed that the denominator contained only those participants who were enrolled in education or training. This allowed LWD to submit a proposed goal for Title I Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth populations.

### Additional Measures of Performance

Measures for WIOA Title I, WIOA Title II and WorkFirst New Jersey

1. Number of program participants served by the program
2. Number of program participants exited from the program
3. Percentage of program participants served with the following barriers to employment:
  - a. Disability
  - b. Ex-offender
  - c. No high school diploma
  - d. Previously or currently in foster care
  - e. Homeless
  - f. Limited English Proficiency or Low6level Literacy
  - g. Long-term Unemployment (continuously unemployed for at least 12 consecutive months)
  - h. Public Assistance customer
4. Percentage of program participants responding to survey who are satisfied with their training/counseling after exiting the program

Measures for WIOA Title I ONLY

5. Workforce Development Board (WDBPC) Certification

The State will evaluate the WDBPC's local area achievement based on its ability to meet all WDBPC certification requirements.

6. Number of High-Quality Partnerships Established

High-Quality Partnerships are those workforce and education efforts which are employer driven and have developed a clearly defined mission and vision statement, with defined roles, responsibilities, and impact measures for all partners. All programs will integrate the use of



career pathways and provide both interim process measures as well as outcome measures, which will be particularly focused on industry-valued credentials, employability skills, and experiential learning.

#### 7. Regional Coordination

Three workforce planning regions are designated in New Jersey: North, Central, and South. The State will evaluate if each region has effectively administered their activities under WIOA, which requires that each region engage in a planning process that results in specific outcomes.

### 6.5. Training and Development

The One-Stop Career Center prioritizes job training and development of critical skills and uses metrics from WIOA through the outcome measurements provided by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development in combination with data from NJ Performs to assess the status of their workforce. The Center closely tracks all sub-recipients and ITA providers to ensure that the minimum standards for work readiness, employability skills, and training-related employment are met and applied to contracted services.

Training offered by the One-Stop Career Center aims to align with nationally recognized certifications that enables workers to be eligible for a greater number of jobs. Common credentials required include health-based credentials such as: Certified Nursing Assistant, Patient Care Technician, Certified Medical Assistant, Phlebotomist, Pharmacy Technician, Surgical Technician, Emergency Medical Technician, and Dental Assistant. Other common credentials outside of health care include: Commercial Driver's License, Microsoft User Specialist, Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning, CAD/CAM (Computer Aided Drafting/Manufacturing), National Retail Foundation Certification, and Paralegal.

## 7. Appendix

### About Econsult Solutions, Inc.

This report was produced by Econsult Solutions, Inc. (“ESI”). ESI is a Philadelphia-based economic consulting firm that provides businesses and public policy makers with economic consulting services in urban economics, real estate economics, transportation, public infrastructure, development, public policy and finance, community and neighborhood development, planning, as well as expert witness services for litigation support. Its principals are nationally recognized experts in urban development, real estate, government and public policy, planning, transportation, non-profit management, business strategy and administration, as well as litigation and commercial damages. Staff members have outstanding professional and academic credentials, including active positions at the university level, wide experience at the highest levels of the public policy process and extensive consulting experience.



**economics | strategy | insight**

1435 WALNUT STREET, 4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19102

ECONSULTSOLUTIONS.COM | 215-717-2777