

**INSTRUMENT 3**

**AJC DATA COLLECTION MASTER PROTOCOL**

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## AJC DATA COLLECTION: MASTER PROTOCOL

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Thank you for meeting with me/us today. As you know, my/our organization, Mathematica Policy Research—along with its partners Social Policy Research Associates, Capitol Research Corporation, and George Washington University—is conducting the Institutional Analysis of American Job Centers, or AJCs, on behalf of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). The study’s purpose is to provide information to policymakers and administrators that can be used to accurately describe the full range of institutional features that shape AJCs’ day-to-day operations and customer experiences.

As part of this national study, members of the study team are visiting 40 AJCs around the country. We will speak with a variety of AJC and local workforce investment board (LWIB) staff, conduct a network analysis survey of each AJC’s partners, and interview state workforce agency administrators from each state in which there is a participating AJC. During this meeting, we hope not only to learn from you about how AJCs operate in your state, but also to identify challenges and to hear your ideas about system improvements.

The sole purpose of this interview is to collect information to use to increase and deepen understanding of the AJC system; it is not a monitoring effort. Everything that you say will be kept strictly private within the study team. The study report will include a list of the AJCs and their LWIBs and states included in the study, as well as a description of the method by which AJCs and states were selected to participate in the study. All interview data, however, will be reported in the aggregate and, in our reports, we will not otherwise identify a specific person, AJC, partner agency, or state unless we are highlighting a promising practice.

This discussion should take about <duration> minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin? Do you consent to participating in this discussion?

<If recording interview>: I would like to record our discussion so I can listen to it later when I write up my notes. No one outside the immediate team will listen to the tape. If you want to say something that you do not want taped, please let me know and I will be glad to pause the tape recorder. Do you have any objections to being part of this interview or to my taping our discussion?

*[The research team will not ask all questions of all respondents. For example, some questions pertain only to the work of certain partner agencies (such as the state agencies responsible for administering the programs funded by the Workforce Investment Act, Employment Services, and so on). Protocols will also be customized before interviews, based on each respondent’s job duties and knowledge.]*

**Public burden statement.** An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to take an average of 1.5 hours with no single interview to exceed 2 hours, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to [mailing address for DOL Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration Management]. The OMB control number for this project is <OMB control number>; expiration date <date>.

## I. Administrative structures

Questions in this section are intended to gather information about the AJC operator, AJC partners and stakeholders, and the locus of decision making. Note that questions related to state and LWIB influences on AJC administrative structures are in section 10.

### Operator (entity responsible for the running of the AJC)

1. What entity or consortium of entities administers or operates the AJC? *Which organization holds the lease for the AJC's space? Which organization employs the AJC manager? What type of organization is it (for example: nonprofit, government, or private)? How long has the organization operated the AJC? Does it operate any other AJCs in the local area? In addition to serving as the AJC operator, what are the organization's other areas of expertise and/or lines of business?*
2. What are the responsibilities of the AJC operator? *Where are these responsibilities delineated (for example, operator contract or annual plan)?*
3. In what ways does the AJC operator interact and work with the LWIB and its administrative staff? *How has this relationship evolved over time? What are the strengths and challenges of the relationship?*
4. What elements of AJC operation are at the discretion of the AJC operator? *For example, does the operator have discretion on hiring? Which staff? Can the operator identify and involve additional AJC partners?*
5. What functions, if any, does the LWIB operate centrally that are not the responsibility of the operator and/or AJC? *Does the LWIB conduct public outreach to individuals and employers? Does the LWIB operate business services centrally? If so, how do LWIB business services staff work with AJC staff?*

### AJC structure and management

6. What is the mission of the AJC? *How do the staff and program support that mission? In what way does the mission pose challenges for the staff and programs?*
7. What is the management structure of the AJC? *What are the AJC manager's interactions and working relationship with the operator and the LWIB? Who is the manager's supervisor?*
8. What are the responsibilities of the AJC manager? *Is he or she involved in day-to-day operations? What role does he or she have for managing the AJC budget? What oversight role does the manager have relative to partner staff working in the center? Are state staff permitted to supervise nonstate staff and vice versa? Does the manager also oversee one of the AJC partner programs (for example, WIA/WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker, Youth, or NEG; UI, or Wagner-Peyser)?*
9. How, if at all, are AJC management responsibilities shared with other partners? *How, if at all, are the different partners involved in the management of the AJC? Please describe their different roles and responsibilities. How are management decisions made and communicated between managers? Is there a regular meeting of partner managers to discuss AJC operations? <If not obtained during previsit planning, request organizational chart.>*

10. What is the AJC's relationship with the LWIB's satellite and/or affiliates (if any) in the local area? *Does the AJC manager have any management responsibility for these centers? Are there shared staff and customers?*
11. Has the AJC been part of any AJC consolidation or restructuring in the past three years (for example, has the AJC merged with another one recently, or have other nearby AJCs closed that would affect the AJC)? *What was the impetus for consolidation or realignment? How were these decisions made and by whom? Did the consolidation or realignment cause any changes to staff, services, or other AJC operations?*
12. What challenges does the AJC face in its current administrative structure? *How has the AJC addressed these challenges? Why have these efforts been successful or not?*
13. Has the AJC implemented any initiatives or changed practices or policies to enhance center administration? *In what ways has AJC administration practices or policies changed in response to WIOA? What changes are being planned?*

## **II. Partnerships**

1. What formal and informal partnerships among organizations does the AJC have? *What distinguishes a formal partnership from an informal one, and what are the practical differences between the two? How did this set of partners become involved in the AJC (for example, mandated by federal or state agency, or by the LWIB; sought out by LWIB or AJC)? What form does each partnership take (for example, contractual, memorandum of understanding (MOU), or informal)?*
2. What is each partner's involvement in the AJC? *What are their roles and what services do they provide? How long have they been involved? What contributions does each of the partners make to the AJC (funding, services, referrals, mgmt/oversight, and so on) through its off-site and on-site services? If partner staff are colocated at the AJC, for what hours and where within the AJC are they located?*
3. How are contracts for the partners within the AJC structured? *Are these contracts executed at the center, LWIB, or state level? Are they structured as cost reimbursement, pay for performance, or some other payment structure? What benefits or drawbacks have been experienced with these different types of contracts? Are existing contracts renewable without being required to be opened for competition?*
4. What is the AJC's relationship with other AJCs within or outside of the local area? *Does the operator of the AJC also manage one of these other AJCs? Is this relationship based primarily on referrals? Does it vary by center or organization type, or by whether other AJCs are operated by the same entity? Where are the other AJCs located relative to the AJC?*
5. What is the AJC's relationship with other facilities providing employment-related services, including those run by the state- or community-based organizations? *Is this relationship based primarily on referrals? Does it vary by center or organization type? Where are the other facilities located relative to the AJC?*

6. To what extent do staff (ask of senior/management and line staff) from each of the AJC programs/partners interact with one another? *How frequently? In what form (in person, email, or telephone) and for what purposes (referrals, to discuss common customers, or funding-related issues)?*
7. Does the AJC have its own centerwide performance goals? *If so, what are these goals? Who sets them? Are they formal or informal? To what extent do AJC partner organizations share these goals? If they do not share these goals, how do their goals differ? What policies and practices have been employed to promote a sense of shared goals despite (or in response to) these differences?*
8. What challenges exist in working across partners within the AJC? *What, if any, challenges have arisen in working with program partners to serve the same customer? How have these challenges been addressed? Have these efforts been successful?*
9. What practices or policies has the AJC implemented to facilitate and enhance relationships across programs/partners? *In what ways has AJC partnership arrangements and communications changed in response to WIOA? What changes are being planned?*

### **III. Management and performance**

The goal of this section is to understand AJCs' performance and management. Questions focus on the type of performance data collected and used. Site visitors will identify the data required and the different data collected, by whom, for what purpose and how it is used. In addition, the questions aim to understand how performance management influences decisions on policy, procedure, and practice at AJCs.

1. How does planning for this AJC occur around particular aspects of operations (such as around customer services, staffing, performance measures)? *To what extent is there a defined process for planning, and at what level does it occur (regional level, LWIB, operator, or AJC)? What partners and staff are involved in the process? How frequently does it occur (for example, annually or biannually)?*
2. Does the AJC/LWIB have a strategic plan? *If so, what key goals are included in the AJC's strategic plan, and what are the plans for achieving them? Is the plan specific to the AJC or for the LWIA's AJC network as a whole? Is the plan aligned with the state WIB plan? <If not obtained during previsit preparation, request copy of strategic plan>*
3. How is the overall performance of the AJC monitored and assessed? *What types of performance information, if any, are collected about the AJC as a whole—across partners and programs?*
4. What types of customer measures/outcomes other than the common measures are collected and assessed? *How are they used to gauge performance?*
5. What types of measures are used at the staff, program, and management levels to gauge performance? *How are these measures produced, by whom, and with what frequency?*

6. What are funders' requirements for reporting performance (by funder, we mean federal, state, or city funds, grants, and so on)? *To what extent are data collection and procedures for monitoring the AJC's performance the result of funders' requirements?*
7. What strategies and initiatives are in place to address any particular weaknesses or performance issues identified in the data? *Do these strategies involve multiple AJC partners and programs? How are partners involved in addressing these issues?*
8. What management information system(s) are used by the AJC for management purposes? *To what extent do different partners or programs use these AJC systems, or do they use their own program or partner-specific ones? How, if at all, do multiple systems interface? Is the system aligned with the state system?*
9. What cross-program/partner data reports are available, and for what purpose? *How are the data used? For example, are cross-program data used for case management, ongoing monitoring/performance management, informing decision making on policies or procedures, or evaluation?*
10. What types of reports are used to help monitor AJC performance? *What information do they provide? How frequently are they produced or disseminated? What programs are included in these reports? Who produces them? Who uses these reports, and how? <If not obtained during previsit preparation, request copies of reports>*
11. What, if any, performance data are not collected or tracked and should be? *Why are these performance data collected? Why aren't they being collected?*
12. How does the AJC use performance data to inform policies and procedures? *How are partners involved in this process?*
13. How are business services monitored and assessed? *What, if any, measures have been developed to measure success? What data are collected? What is the role of the AJC operator and other AJC partners in collecting data and assessing performance?*
14. What challenges does the AJC face in managing the AJC and monitoring performance? *How has the AJC addressed these challenges? Have these efforts been successful?*
15. What practices or policies has the AJC implemented to facilitate and enhance its management and performance? *In what ways has AJC planning and management practices changed in response to WIOA? What changes are being planned?*

#### **IV. Management information system (MIS) and technology tools for service delivery**

Questions in this section aim to identify how the AJCs use MIS and technology tools—the degree to which the AJC has employed technology to serve customers and create efficiencies for staff.

1. What management information system(s) are used in the AJC to track services provided to individual customers? *To what extent do different partners or programs use these AJC systems, or do they use their own program-/partner-specific ones?*

*How, if at all, do multiple systems interface? What are the characteristics (coverage, availability, access, and linkages) of the key data systems that are in use? What are the successes and limitations in supporting cross-program service delivery and management?*

2. *To what extent does the AJC and its partners have any discretion regarding which systems are used? Are any systems developed or purchased for this particular AJC? Are decisions about the use of systems the purview of the LWIB?*
3. *What types of electronic tools and resources are available to staff to facilitate their provision of customer services? For example, is there an online interface that staff can access to update information? Does the system customize for each customer?*
4. *What tools and resources developed by AJC/LWIB/state are available to customers? What electronic tools and resources are typically used by customers or recommended by staff? For example, is there an online interface that customers can log into for resources? Does the system customize for each customer? What resources can be accessed online? How many customers access information and services on-line?*
5. *Do employers have access to an online interface or labor exchange? For example, are they able to upload information about job openings or review job-seekers' applications?*
6. *How are customer data entered into systems? Do multiple staff enter data or is a single staff member assigned to enter data? What data, if any, can customers enter on their own? How often are data entered? Do any data have to be entered into multiple systems?*
7. *What data are readily available about the characteristics of customers served by the AJC (individual job-seekers and employers) and the services they receive? Are these data available through standardized reports or ad hoc queries, and with what frequency can they be accessed?*
8. *To what extent is information shared across partners or programs about services that the customer is receiving? How does information-sharing occur? How have any challenges to sharing information, such as privacy concerns, been overcome?*
9. *To what extent, if at all, are program data systems linked? What are the linkages, if any, among the systems of the AJC, AJC partners, LWIB, and state workforce agency? What are the linkages, if any, among the systems of different partners? How long have these linkages been in place?*
10. *How often does data-linking occur? Does it occur automatically or are staff required to run the linkages? Are some fields automatically populated across programs or from other databases?*
11. *How does the linked/shared data system affect the AJC? How does it affect staff members' work? The customer experience? To what extent does the AJC realize efficiencies across partners and programs through the use of linked/shared data?*
12. *How flexible is the linked/integrated system to adapt to new requirements or data requests? What is involved to modify data elements to meet any new program*

*requirements or priorities? How labor-intensive or costly are any changes to the system?*

13. What types of measures are used at the staff, program, and management levels to track and manage service delivery with the AJC? *How are these measures produced, by whom, and with what frequency?*
14. What challenges and successes has the AJC experienced in its use of data to track and manage services to customers? *How has the AJC worked to overcome these challenges?*
15. What best practices or innovations has the AJC implemented to improve staff and/or customers' experiences with the MIS and other technology tools?
16. In what ways has AJC MIS or use of technology tools changed in response to WIOA? What changes are being planned?

## **V. Funding and resource sharing**

The goal of this section is to understand the different sources of funding for the AJC, how partners share the costs of operating the AJC, and whether and how partners track and report financial information.

### **AJC funding and cost-sharing**

1. What sources of funds support AJC infrastructure, management and administration, and service delivery (such as WIA/WIOA formula funding, Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance (UI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), federal competitive grants, state or local funds or grants, and foundation grants or funds from other private entities)? *What is the relative share of each of these sources of funding?*
2. To what extent does the state dictate how LWIBs/AJCs should use their WIA/WIOA and other allocations? *For example, are there policies—explicit or implicit—on using funds to provide training rather than intensive services, or vice versa?*
3. What are the LWIB's policies regarding the distribution of its WIA/WIOA and other allocations? *How does the LWIB determine distribution of funds to the different AJCs? To what extent does the LWIB reallocate funds across AJCs during a program year to reflect varying demand?*
4. Does the operator receive funds that are specifically set aside for AJC operations in the budget? *What is (are) the source(s) of these funds? Is this amount sufficient to cover the costs of the AJC?*
5. Are there funds in the LWIB/AJC operator budget for system support/infrastructure at the AJC (includes software, internet connectivity, and hardware)?
6. Does the AJC operator and/or manager have any discretion over how to use the funding specified for AJC operations (for example, can the operator make renovations or buy equipment without approval from the WIB/state)? *In what ways does the AJC have discretion? In what areas does it not have control? Can the AJC*

- move funds between partners? How much, if any, oversight does the AJC have over partner spending?*
7. *Can the AJC operator apply for grants for the AJC? Who makes these decisions? What are the barriers, if any, for applying for grants? To what extent do AJC partners apply for funds or grants together? Which partners tend to be involved?*
  8. *What grants does the AJC currently hold, either as sole grantee or with the LWIB or other AJCs? Who awarded the grant(s) and for what purpose(s)? To what extent have these grants enabled the AJC to expand services to job-seekers, in particular underserved populations?*
  9. *How does the AJC share costs? How are costs defined? What costs are shared? What programs participate in cost-sharing? What methods are used? How have cost sharing practices changed with WIOA?*
  10. *What sources of funding do partners use to support the AJC (such as WIA/WIOA formula funding, Wagner-Peyser, UI, TANF, federal competitive grants, state or local funds or grants, and foundation grants or funds from other private entities)? What is the relative share of each of these sources of funding?*
  11. *What entity receives the funding provided by partners? For example, the WIB? The operator? The lease-holder or owner of the AJC facility?*
  12. *How did the AJC determine this cost-sharing arrangement or structure? How is it executed (for example, do partners contribute to a pool that is used to pay for shared resources)? What funding sources do AJC partners use to pay for the resources that they share? How much money does each partner contribute to the costs of each shared resource? How is the cost-sharing arrangement monitored? How has it changed with WIOA? What changes are being planned? <If not obtained during pre-visit preparation, request copies of AJC operating budget, cost-sharing documents, and so on.>*
  13. *What has been successful about the cost-sharing structure? What is challenging? In what ways, if any, were challenges overcome?*
  14. *Has the AJC recently made any changes to its cost- or resource-sharing? If so, why and how has the cost- or resource-sharing changed?*
  15. *What, if any, resources do partner programs share that are not included in cost-sharing? What resources do staff and customers from across partners use, but (a) only one partner pays for; or (b) none of the partners pay for (for example, in-kind resources, such as volunteers or donated space, and so on)?*
  16. *What are the major service delivery or operations requirements of the different AJC funders or programs? What are the service delivery requirements of each? Staffing requirements? Performance requirements (tracking and targets)? Enrollment targets? How do the requirements affect AJC operations?*
  17. *Has the AJC experienced any unique funding situations in the past three years? Were there any substantial budget cuts in the past three years? Was the AJC affected by sequestration or other federal or state budget reductions?*

18. How does the AJC manage fluctuations in funding levels? *How have budget changes influenced staff, services, or other AJC operations?*
19. How has the AJC handled the need to make unexpected purchases or expenditures in the past year (for example, new printers, office equipment, or facility)? *Were costs shared across partners? If so, how were the costs shared or allocated across partners or programs? Was the cost-sharing agreement amended to include these additional costs? How is the customer experience affected by the availability (or lack of) funding through different program and revenue sources? Are customers aware of the connection between the services they receive and funding sources, or is it largely invisible to the customer? What role does the level of available funding play in determining what services an eligible customer may receive? What strategies are used to prioritize the availability and receipt of services?*

### **Fiscal monitoring and systems**

20. What is the process for collecting, reporting, and monitoring financial information related to the AJC? *What is the AJC's responsibility? How does the responsibility vary by partner? What is the LWIB's responsibility?*
21. *What fiscal monitoring and reporting systems are used? Does the AJC have a single, integrated financial reporting system shared by multiple partners, or does each partner use its own system? If multiple systems, how do those systems interface? What is the quality of the data? How complex or easy to use are the single or multiple systems? What information is shared and what is not?*
22. What reports does each fiscal system provide? *Can each provide ad hoc reports if requested? Does the AJC use multiple systems to produce a single report? How do these systems interface? Which reports are most useful? What data would be useful for center management but are not contained in the reports? <request copies of reports, if not already provided>*
23. What are the challenges to the AJC's fiscal monitoring and reporting processes and systems? *What are best or innovative practices?*
24. How have AJC's fiscal monitoring and reporting processes and systems been affected by WIOA? *What changes are being planned?*

### **VI. Staffing**

Questions in this section aim to provide information regarding hiring, recruitment, and retention of AJC staff.

1. What is the staffing structure of the AJC? *Are staff functionally aligned (organized by job function)? Are staff organized by funding stream? Are job seeker and/or employer staff organized by industry sector and, if so, why and how is this operationalized? Are any staff employed by the AJC itself (if the AJC is a separate entity?) How are staff distributed across types of staff—for example, merit staff, county staff, and local provider staff? What factors account for using this particular staffing structure as opposed to alternatives?*

2. What is the total number of paid staff from across all partners or programs that work at the AJC? *How many AJC staff members are full-time? How many AJC staff members are part-time? Which, if any staff, work off-site, for how many days, and from when to when? How does this break down across programs or partners? How are these staff deployed throughout the day (for example, are more staff available during the AJC's busiest hours of the day or busiest days of the week?)*
3. Are any staff shared across different partners (for example, between the SWA and WIA/WIOA provider)? *If so, what are these staff members' roles? Is the cost of supporting them covered through cost-sharing? To whom do these staff report? Who is their employer of record?*
4. How do the different types of staff (merit, county, local provider) interact? *What challenges, if any, does the AJC face in working with these different types of staff? What strategies have been implemented to address any challenges?*
5. Do any volunteer staff work at the center and, if so, what are their roles? *How are these volunteers recruited and supervised? How often do they work at the center? For what duration?*
6. Do any AJC partner program participants work at the AJC (such as Senior Community Service Employment Program or TANF participants) and, if so, what are their roles? *How often do they work at the center? For what duration? How are they supervised?*
7. How are staff physically located within the AJC? *Are staff integrated across programs? Does each program or partner have designated space within the AJC?*
8. What are the positions and responsibilities of AJC staff across partners or programs? *Which provide direct services to customers? Which staff provide business services? Are these positions and responsibilities determined by the partner or program, or does the AJC have a role in determining or structuring the staffing positions and responsibilities?*
9. What is the process for hiring staff who work at the AJC? *Who is responsible for hiring particular staff? How do hiring requirements vary by program or partner for similar types of staff? What role, if any, does the AJC manager have in the hiring of partner staff working at the center?*
10. To what extent does the AJC staff reflect the community's demographics? *What percentage of the staff are women? What percentage are African American? Hispanic?*
11. What kind of guidance do staff members receive regarding their roles and responsibilities? *In addition to specific job training, do staff receive cultural sensitivity training? Training on working with different populations? Training on women's unique issues? How does this guidance vary across programs or partners? Who provides guidance, and in what form (written or verbal)?*
12. What are the qualifications and background of the AJC manager? *How long has he or she been in the position?*

13. What are the listed qualifications for positions at the AJC, especially those positions that are similar across programs or partners (such as case managers)? *How, if at all, do qualifications vary by program/funding source?*
14. How are AJC staff members supervised? *Who are staff members' direct supervisors? What are the responsibilities of the different program managers? What are the AJC managers' responsibilities?*
15. For which positions, if any, is turnover considered a problem within the AJC? *Does the AJC have open positions? What are likely causes of turnover across positions within the AJC? Do staff leave positions for other positions within the AJC or within their program? Are any efforts currently underway within the AJC to address these issues?*
16. Does the AJC offer opportunities for cross-training? *Which staff are offered cross-training? What other types of AJC-specific training are provided to AJC staff?*
17. Do staff receive ongoing career development opportunities? *Do staff development activities vary by program or partner?*
18. What staffing-related challenges have the AJC and its partner programs faced? *How have they worked to overcome these challenges?*
19. What, if any, innovative staffing strategies have the AJC and its partners program implemented?

## **VII. Physical environment**

This section addresses the AJC's overall accessibility. These questions are also intended to provide an understanding of how accessible the AJC is to specific populations, including the people with physical disabilities and those with limited English proficiency. Site visitors will also complete an observation matrix that includes a description of the AJC's physical layout (including the waiting area, the resource room, and the availability of private meeting spaces) and its accommodations for disabled populations (including ramps and accessible computers in the resource room). Additionally, site visitors will observe use of the resource room to see what resources customers seek and use.

1. How are the AJC's services marketed? *Does the AJC have a brand that is displayed on marketing materials? To what extent does the AJC have flexibility in designing outreach materials and other strategies? How much is the brand guided by the state, LWIB, or operator?*
2. What information is available online for the outside customer? *When was the last time information about the AJC was updated? What kind of resources are used to share events: FaceBook, Twitter, Instagram?*
3. How do customers typically get to the AJC? *Is the AJC accessible through public transportation? If visitors drive to the AJC, do they have to pay for parking? Is parking typically available?*
4. Does the AJC offer any services to increase access by specific populations? *What kinds of services or accommodations are available for the physically disabled? How does the AJC serve customers with limited English proficiency? What*

*accommodations are available for job-seekers with children? How does the AJC serve or triage veteran customers?*

5. *What are the AJC's hours of operations? Is the center open during nontraditional times (for example, evenings or weekends)? If not, has it ever had extended hours in the past and, if so, why did the AJC stop offering those extended hours? When is the AJC typically the busiest?*
6. *Does the AJC provide dedicated space for employer activities, such as job interviews or training activities? Is private meeting space available, when required to ensure customer confidentiality? Can nonemployers use the dedicated space when employers aren't using it?*
7. *How well does the resource room provide the employment-related services that customers seek? To what extent is the resource room used? What resources are used the most? What resources are used the least? What additional resources are needed?*
8. *Does the AJC face any particular challenges with regard to its facility? Please describe.*
9. *Has the AJC implemented any innovations with regard to its physical environment? Are there any innovations with regard to the facilities and/or layout of the facilities? Please describe.*

## **VIII. Service delivery structure and linkages**

The goal of this section is to identify the AJC service delivery structure and linkages. The site visitors must understand the customer flow for all customers, including target populations, and all possible pathways and connections between programs or partners. If available, the site visitor should request copies of intake forms, assessment tools, and orientation information packets.

### **Service pathways and client flow**

1. *What service delivery pathways or models, if any, have been developed? Are there clear pathways for customers participating in certain programs or with partners? If yes, how and by whom was the pathway designed? If no, how did the AJC develop a unified pathway? How, if at all, has WIOA affected pathways or models?*
2. *How is the customer's path through the AJC determined? What factors influence the path? Factors could include the customer's characteristics, preferences, or reasons for being at the AJC (such as requirement for UI receipt or interest in training).*
3. *How does the AJC use labor market information to design pathways and services?*
4. *How many customers does this AJC serve in total, by program, and online?*

### **Initial entry**

5. *What happens when a customer enters the AJC? Which staff does he or she meet upon entering? If interested in multiple services, does the customer have to complete a single intake form or multiple intake forms? What paperwork, if any, does the customer need to complete?*

6. How does the AJC inform customers of available services? *Are AJC materials available in multiple languages and formats? How knowledgeable are front-desk/greeter staff about the different program/partners opportunities at the center? How are they kept informed?*
7. What kind of orientation is provided to a new AJC customer? *Does the AJC provide a single orientation or does each partner or program provide its own orientation? Is the orientation conducted in person, by video, or on a computer? Do all new customers receive a general orientation, or do certain customers (for example, specific target populations such as veterans or women) receive different orientations?*
8. What are the next steps for the customer after an orientation? *How and by whom are these next steps determined?*
9. How, if at all, do any of these initial steps differ for different types of customers? *For example, do the initial steps for veteran customers differ? For UI claimants? If so, how?*

### **Assessment**

10. What assessment tools are available? *What is the purpose of each? Who conducts these assessments? How is it determined which assessment tools the AJC and its partners can use? Do staff and management think that these are useful tools that help them achieve their intended goals?*
11. How, if at all, do assessments and the assessment process differ for different customer groups? *When and how are the needs of veterans assessed? When and how are the needs of customers with disabilities assessed? Youth? UI claimants? Long-term unemployed? Dislocated workers? Others?*
12. How does the AJC determine which customers should receive particular services? *Is this information shared across partners or programs?*
13. How does the AJC determine or assess what other services the customer is receiving through AJC partners? *In what ways, if any, are partners able to identify common customers and communicate/share information about them?*

### **Service delivery strategies**

14. What, if any, innovative or promising practices does the AJC use to deliver services? *For example, does the AJC use social media or the Internet to provide or enhance service delivery? If so, please describe.*
15. What major barriers or challenges, if any, have the AJC identified in providing services? *Which services? How has the AJC worked to address them? How successful has the AJC been? How, if at all, has WIOA affected the challenges?*

### **Partner services and communication**

16. How are customers connected with different programs or partners? *Is there a formalized referral process? If yes, what does it entail? Does this differ depending on whether partner staff are located on or off site?*
17. What partner services, if any, are provided to AJC customers outside the physical location that houses the AJC? *How do customers access these services (through a mobile van, kiosk, or at another location)? What partners provide those services? Does the AJC monitor use of these services?*
18. How do the line staff of the various programs and partners communicate with one another, and about what issues (such as case conferencing)? *How often do they communicate across programs or partners? Does this differ depending on whether partner staff are located on or off site?*
19. In what way, if any, has the AJC improved communication between different program and partner staff in specific ways? *Has the AJC developed specific initiatives or procedures to foster communication? Has the AJC solicited staff feedback to improve the process or increase efficiency?*

### **Employer engagement**

20. In what ways do business services staff of different programs (for example, WIA/WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and VETS) communicate and coordinate their work with employers? *What are the respective roles of the business service representatives, LVERs, and other related staff? How many partners, and which staff, have direct contact with the business community?*
21. In what way, if any, has the AJC improved communication between business services staff at different programs in specific ways? *Has the AJC developed specific initiatives or procedures to foster communication (such as shared partner meetings or management information systems, and so on)? Has the AJC solicited employer feedback to improve the process or increase efficiency?*
22. What, if any, is the effect of these activities? *How has it affected the AJC, employers, and/or the broader community?*
23. Is there a process in place to solicit, measure, and use employer feedback? *If it is measured, how is it measured? If used, how is it used? Who is responsible for collecting this information?*
24. In what areas of business services has the AJC made the greatest improvement over the past three years? *What contributed to this progress? What has been the role of WIA/WIOA?*
25. What practices do you use in working with the business community that are particularly successful?
26. What are the major barriers or challenges in working with the business community?

### **Community role**

27. Are there specific ways (such as participating in associations, committees, and so on), in which the AJC has worked within the broader community? *Has the AJC been the*

*initiator of these activities, or has the AJC been a participant? What are the AJC's goals for these interactions?*

28. Is there a way for the broader community to provide feedback on AJC operations and services? *What impact has this feedback had?*

## **IX. Programs and service mix**

In this section, site visitors will obtain information about the range of programs and services available to all customers, including individuals and employers. The site visitors will also explore how services are delivered to customers, including different target populations, across AJC programs or partners.

### **Job-seeker services**

1. How do customers hear about the AJC within the community and come in to access its resources? *What is the role of the AJC, its partners, and the LWIB in activities to raise customer awareness? What outreach and public awareness approaches are used and by whom? What outreach activities are perceived as most effective? How are outreach efforts tracked and measured? What misperceptions or misinformation about the AJC exist?*
2. What, if any, initiatives or activities promote partners providing services at the AJC? *Who is responsible for their promotion: each program partner? To what extent have any initiatives or activities been successful?*
3. Who decided what services—such as job search, job placement, job readiness training, or training—are available to customers? *How was this done? How, if at all, have services changed recently? What AJC services do job-seekers access most frequently?*
4. How does the mix of programs and services that a customer receives vary by customer group? *What kinds of specialized services, if any, does the AJC offer to veterans, women, UI claimants, farm workers, people with disabilities, older workers, dislocated workers, low-income customers (including TANF and SNAP recipients), ex-offenders, long-term unemployed, and youth? How, if at all, has this changed with WIOA?*
5. How are different customer groups connected to their specialized services? *For example, how are UI claimants connected to reemployment services? How are veterans or ex-offenders connected to any targeted services?*
6. Has the AJC planned for and/or implemented career pathway and/or sector initiatives? *What career pathway initiatives are available? What sector-based strategies might be available to job seekers interested in employment in particular sectors? How does the mix of programs and services that a customer receives vary by the customer's career and/or sector interests?*
7. What are the AJC's policies for co-enrollment? *To what extent are these policies influenced or dictated by the state and/or LWIB? In what instances, if any, does the AJC provide cross-program service delivery in which programs jointly fund customers' services? How does joint funding affect service delivery? Do customers*

*know when they are being served by multiple programs rather than by a single program? Do customers work with multiple AJC staff members? How is co-enrollment tracked? What are the benefits and challenges associated with co-enrollment?*

8. What training options are available (such as classroom occupational skills, on-the-job, or customized training, and so on)? *Which program or partner funds or administers each of the training options? Which training providers are used most commonly, and why?*
9. To what extent is Registered Apprenticeship offered as a training option to participants? *If not offered, why not? If is offered, how do you make apprenticeships available to participants? What challenge have you encountered, and how have you overcome them?*
10. How do AJC staff determine the appropriate customers for occupational training? *What are the eligibility criteria for who gets job training?*
11. How does the AJC determine the appropriate types of occupational training? *To what extent does the AJC use LMI? Who determines which available opportunity is the right option or program for each customer? To what extent do counselors consider non-traditional gender-based occupations for their customers?*
12. How does the choice of occupational skills training relate to customers' needs and career goals? *What kind of information (for example, about earning potential or job opportunities) is available to customers to allow an informed training choice? To what extent do customers enroll in training to become employed, to move ahead in their existing career path, or to retool their skill set of a new career trajectory?*
13. How do AJC staff share and receive information from training providers to ensure effective services, case management, and continuing participant eligibility (such as attendance records and grades)? *What barriers have you faced, and how have you overcome them?*
14. What services are provided to customers to support them during training? *What case management or counseling is provided? What support services are provided?*
15. What placement services are provided to customers following completion of training? What follow-up services are provided to AJC customers? *How frequently are follow-up contacts made, and by whom?*
16. What challenges has the AJC faced in identifying the menu of services for job-seekers? *How has the AJC been able to overcome them?*
17. What innovative services has AJC offered to job-seekers? *Please describe.*

### **Services to employers**

18. What menu of AJC services is available to employers? *Does the AJC offer job matching services? Job seeker screenings? OJT opportunities? Registered Apprenticeships? Customized training?*

19. *How was the menu of services that should be available to employers determined, and by whom? How, if at all, has this menu of services changed recently? With WIOA? What AJC services do employers access most frequently?*
20. *Where and how do AJC staff provide services to employers? Do employers typically access AJC services at the AJC itself? Are there specialized business services centers or offices separate from the AJC? Do AJC staff provide employers with services at the employer's place of business? Do employers contact the AJC directly, or are services initiated by business services staff contacts?*
21. *What steps or actions have been taken to increase employers' awareness of AJC services and how these might benefit employers? What is the role of the AJC, LWIB, and state in increasing awareness? How, if at all, is it determined which employers or industries to target for the AJC's employer services?*
22. *What steps/actions have been taken to connect and establish ongoing relationships with employers? What particular actions are undertaken by the state, LWIB, and AJC?*
23. *What, if any, has been the role of sector strategies in developing relationships with employers of particular sectors?*
24. *In which areas of business services has the AJC made the greatest improvement over the past three years? What contributed to this progress?*
25. *What challenges has the AJC faced in providing each of the service options to employers? What strategies have been implemented to overcome them?*
26. *What challenges have AJC partners faced in providing employer services?*
27. *What innovative approaches to service delivery and/or special initiatives are being operationalized by the AJC? How are these approaches or initiatives funded? Are these AJC-wide approaches or initiatives? Are they program/partner-specific?*

## **X. AJC Administration and oversight**

The goal of this section is to understand how the federal, state, and local guidance and requirements affect AJC operations. In particular, site visitors will seek to understand how guidance related to WIOA has affected AJCs' operations and planning.

1. *How has WIOA and any other recent changes in federal policy, guidance, and reporting requirements affected AJC operations? <determine specific changes to ask about>*

### **State**

2. *To what extent do state guidance and regulations affect the administrative structure and operations of the AJC? (For example, does the state require the operator's contract to specify particular performance goals? Does the state have requirements as to the set of partners that should operate out of the centers?) In what ways do the state's AJC certification requirements and processes affect the structure of the AJC?*
3. *What policies or guidance has the state initiated to facilitate coordination and/or integration of services to all AJC customers?*

4. What state policies affect the location of state workforce staff? *Do particular policies or regulations require locating state staff at AJCs or stand-alone state offices?*
5. What, if any, technical assistance does the state provide to the AJC?
6. How does the AJC receive guidance from the state regarding new federal policy (for example, when DOL releases new guidance) or new state policy? *How is it disseminated from the state?*

## **LWIB**

7. To what extent do LWIB guidance and regulations affect the administrative structure of the AJC? *Does the LWIB require the operator's contract to specify particular performance goals? Does the LWIB have requirements as to the set of partners that should operate out of the centers?*
8. What LWIB-level policies, guidance, and partner agreements shape the AJC's relationships and operations? *How has the LWIB facilitated the AJC's ability to provide integrated and quality services to all customers?*
9. What are the LWIB's standing committees and what are their roles in shaping the local area's AJCs' structure and services, including partnerships? *Are any topic specific?? Services to individuals with disabilities?*
10. What, if any, technical assistance does the LWIB provide to the AJC?

## **XI. Community contextual factors**

The goal of this section is to understand the community contextual factors that influence services and operations at AJCs.

1. What local political factors affect the operations of AJCs and how?
2. What economic factors currently affect AJC's operations and service delivery? *How? Has the state or local government experienced funding cuts (beyond sequestration and reductions in WIA) that have influenced the AJC budget or operations? How, if at all, have these cuts affected available services? Staffing? Management? Program outcomes?*
3. What are the local labor market and community conditions, such as the unemployment rate; high-growth industries; and availability of employment, education, training, and social service organizations? *What are the unemployment rates of different populations (such as people with disabilities, veterans, and women)?*
4. In the past three years, what changes, if any, has the AJC experienced in the demographics of the customers that it serves?