

Nature Coast Regional Planning Area Addendum



Nature Coast Regional Planning Area Regional Plan Addendum

WIOA Workforce Services Plan • CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion, North Florida, North Central Florida, and Northeast Florida

Region:	Nature Coast Regional Planning Area (RPA)
Plan Period:	January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2028
Submission Date:	October 6, 2026
Participating LWDBs:	<i>CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion (CLM, Region 10)</i> <i>CareerSource North Florida (NF, Region 6)</i> <i>CareerSource North Central Florida (NCF, Region 26)</i> <i>CareerSource Northeast Florida (NEFL, Region 8)</i> <i>20 counties total</i>

Regional Plan Addendum: Nature Coast Regional Planning Area

- A. **Planning Process:** To draft and review the Regional Plan Addendum, the executive leaders, including CEOs, from each LWDB, held strategic planning sessions in May, June, August and September of 2026. This RPA leadership team will continue to meet, at least quarterly, to ensure the implementation of the plan, review progress, and identify areas for plan enhancements.

Please note this is the first Regional Plan for the Nature Coast Regional Planning Area; as such, this plan was created to determine steps that the RPA will take over the next two years as a newly established planning region.

B. **Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) Participation:**

- The CLEOs from each LWDB were engaged with the development of this plan. As part of the strategic planning sessions, the executive leaders from each LWDB provided insights as to the CLEO direction and priorities.
- During CLEO meetings, CLEOs were informed of the progress of the creation and planning of the RPA and asked for feedback to best meet the needs of the constituents that they represent.
- An action item at the next CLEO meeting to be scheduled by each LWDB will be review of the plan and obtain formal approval from the CLEO. Please note that this Regional Plan addendum is submitted contingent to CLEO and Board approval.
- The Regional Plan Addendum was published for public comment by each LWDB as part of the Local Plan for not more than 30 days.

A. Regional Economy and Labor Market

The Nature Coast RPA is a four-board regional planning area — CareerSource Citrus Levy Marion (CLM, Region 10), CareerSource North Florida (NF, Region 6), CareerSource North Central Florida (NCF, Region 26), and CareerSource Northeast Florida (NEFL, Region 8) — spanning 20 counties across northeast, north, and north-central Florida.

Counties	Population	Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
20	2.85M	1.36M (as of Dec 2025)	5.0% (weighted regional average)

Single Labor Market

The region encompasses four Metropolitan Statistical Areas — Gainesville MSA (Alachua, Bradford, Levy), Ocala MSA (Marion), Homosassa Springs MSA (Citrus), and Jacksonville MSA (Duval, St. Johns, Clay, Nassau, Baker) — plus the Lake City and Palatka micropolitan areas, forming an integrated labor market with strong cross-county commuting patterns.

- Jacksonville is the region's primary economic anchor, contributing nearly 39% of the total regional labor force.
- Gainesville (home to the University of Florida) and Ocala (a major manufacturing and healthcare hub) serve as secondary employment centers.
- Rural and micropolitan communities maintain significant commuting ties to one or more of these three hubs.

- The RPA includes North Florida, a fully rural workforce development area encompassing 3,896 square miles across Hamilton, Lafayette, Madison, Suwannee, and Taylor counties. To enhance service accessibility and reduce geographic barriers, the Suwannee County satellite office also services residents of the Lake City Micropolitan Area.

Industry Alignment and Targeted Industries

A review of employment concentrations and targeted industry priorities across all four CareerSource boards reveals substantial overlap:

- **Healthcare:** Healthcare and Social Assistance is the most consistently shared priority across the entire RPA. Every county identifies healthcare as both a top employer and a strategic growth sector, anchored by major systems such as UF Health/Shands, HCA Florida, Tampa General, and AdventHealth.
- **Manufacturing & Logistics:** Manufacturing and Logistics emerge as strong points of alignment across the rural and micropolitan counties — Columbia, Taylor, Suwannee, Marion, and Nassau — tying into Northeast Florida's deep-water port, rail infrastructure, and proximity to I-10 and I-95.
- **Agriculture:** Agriculture and Aquaculture represent a significant concentration in rural coastal counties, particularly Dixie and Levy, with notable location quotients exceeding 5.0 in several sub-sectors.
- **Military & Defense:** Defense and Military Transition drives a continuous pipeline of approximately 5,200+ skilled separating service members annually from installations in Duval and Clay Counties, with spillover workforce impact extending across the entire region.
- **Construction:** The construction demand across the RPA is fueled by several factors, including population growth, residential development, infrastructure investments, industrial expansion, and economic development initiatives. The Jacksonville, Ocala, and Gainesville metropolitan areas continue to experience residential and commercial growth, generating sustained demand for construction workers, electricians, plumbers, HVAC technicians, carpenters, and welders. In addition, rural counties throughout the region continue to invest in infrastructure, utility improvements, transportation projects, and industrial site development that require skilled construction labor.
- **Utilities:** The utilities industry plays a critical role in supporting economic growth, public health, and quality of life and is increasingly important as population growth, business expansion, and industrial development continue across the region. Labor markets centered around Jacksonville, Gainesville, Ocala, Lake City, Crystal River and surrounding rural communities require reliable utility infrastructure to support residential, commercial, manufacturing, healthcare and logistics operations.

Labor Force Conditions

The 20-county RPA has a combined labor force of approximately 1.36 million workers across a population of 2.85 million. Key indicators reflect a region with a strong urban core, rapidly growing suburban counties, and rural communities facing structural workforce challenges:

County	Labor Force	Unemp. Rate	5-Yr Emp. Growth
Duval (economic anchor)	528,739	4.7%	9.7%
St. Johns (fastest growing)	157,028	4.5%	26.1%
Alachua	142,237	5.3%	7.9%
Marion	161,307	5.6%	14.3%
Nassau	47,800	4.5%	18.6%

County	Labor Force	Unemp. Rate	5-Yr Emp. Growth
Clay	115,945	4.7%	11.0%
Taylor (highest unemployment)	5,697	9.1%	-12.0%

Source: JobsEQ® / LAUS, data as of December 2025.

Education & Training Infrastructure

The RPA is served by an extensive network of public and private training providers, ensuring that individuals can access education pathways aligned with the region's high-growth industries. Notable anchor institutions include:

- University of Florida (Alachua County) and UF Health/Shands, with satellite facilities in Duval and Marion Counties.
- Santa Fe College (SFC), a public community college in Gainesville, Florida, offering both associate and baccalaureate degrees. Locations Include Gainesville, Starke, Alachua, and Keystone Heights. SFC offers over 50 accredited programs and Bachelor's degrees.
- University of North Florida and Florida State College at Jacksonville, support Northeast Florida's healthcare, business, and technology sectors.
- Florida Gateway College (Columbia County), which also serves Baker County residents.
- Six technical colleges — Marion Technical, RiverOak (Suwannee County), Withlacoochee, Big Bend (Taylor County), First Coast, and North Florida.
- St. Johns River State College, with campuses in Putnam County.
- The College of Central Florida, with locations in Citrus, Levy and Marion Counties.
- North Florida College located in Madison County supporting Accounting Business & HR, Agri-business Management, Healthcare, Certified Production Technology, Commercial Driver's License, Emergency Medical Services, Electrician, HVAC-R, Industrial Machinery Maintenance, Welding, and Public Safety. Locations include Madison and Taylor Counties.

Commuting Patterns

Inflow/outflow data confirms strong interdependence between the Jacksonville MSA and its neighboring counties, and between Ocala/Gainesville and the surrounding rural counties. Selected top commuting relationships:

County	Largest Inflow (from)	Largest Outflow (to)
Baker	Clay Co. (372)	Duval Co. (2,287)
Clay	Duval Co. (4,186)	Duval Co. (30,981)
Duval	Clay Co. (30,981)	St. Johns Co. (5,497)
Nassau	Camden Co., GA (1,838)	Duval Co. (10,898)
Putnam	Clay Co. (740)	Duval Co. (1,259)
St. Johns	Duval Co. (5,497)	Duval Co. (25,310)
Alachua	Levy Co. (3,103)	Duval Co. (1,020)
Marion	Citrus Co. (2,349)	Sumter Co. (4,110)
Suwannee	Columbia Co. (454)	Columbia Co. (1,455)

County	Largest Inflow (from)	Largest Outflow (to)
Hamilton	Madison, Co. (349)	Valdosta Ga. (375)
Taylor	Madison Co. (131)	Leon Co. (158)
Lafayette	Suwannee Co. (116)	Suwannee Co. (192)
Madison	Suwannee Co. (134)	Leon Co. (370)

Full 20-county inflow/outflow data available in the CSNEFL RPA Inflow-Outflow Report.

Source: CSNEFL Regional Planning Area document — *Commuting Patterns*.

Industrial Composition & Location Quotients

Location quotients (LQ) compare an industry's regional concentration to the U.S. average (LQ = 1.0); values above 1.0 flag above-average concentration, helping pinpoint where sector-specific skill gaps and training investment are most needed across the RPA.

Industry	RPA	CSCLM	CSNF	CSNCF	CSNEFL
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	0.95	1.95	6.16	1.78	0.34
Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas Extraction	0.20	0.59	0.29	0.31	0.09
Utilities	0.75	0.88	1.60	0.51	0.75
Construction	1.23	1.58	0.97	0.86	1.24
Manufacturing	0.64	0.79	1.77	0.52	0.60
Wholesale Trade	0.80	0.78	0.55	0.56	0.86
Retail Trade	1.19	1.57	1.33	1.09	1.13
Transportation & Warehousing	1.25	0.87	0.50	0.73	1.49
Information	0.69	0.32	0.26	0.55	0.82
Finance & Insurance	1.23	0.49	0.42	0.55	1.59
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	1.03	1.09	0.35	0.94	1.07
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	0.83	0.54	0.28	0.66	0.95
Management of Companies & Enterprises	0.45	0.23	0.18	0.28	0.55
Admin/Support & Waste Mgmt & Remediation	1.01	0.88	0.65	0.75	1.11

Industry	RPA	CSCLM	CSNF	CSNCF	CSNEFL
Educational Services	0.91	0.84	0.93	1.82	0.72
Health Care & Social Assistance	1.05	1.04	0.76	1.38	0.98
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	1.03	1.13	0.61	0.72	1.09
Accommodation & Food Services	1.09	1.12	0.92	1.06	1.10
Other Services (excl. Public Admin)	1.03	1.06	0.90	0.85	1.06
Public Administration	1.07	1.19	2.86	1.48	0.88

Areas above 1.0 denote above-average concentration; a shared targeted sector between areas is a strong regional-alignment signal.

Source: CSNEFL Regional Planning Area document, derived from Chmura JobsEQ / QCEW (Bureau of Labor Statistics), data through 2025 Q3.

Notable concentrations include Agriculture (LQ 6.16 in CSNF), Manufacturing (LQ 1.77 in CSNF), and Finance & Insurance (LQ 1.59 in CSNEFL) pointing to where sector-specific training investment may close the largest workforce gaps.

Skills and Industry Needs

1. Knowledge and Skills Needed

Regional employers require a mix of credentialed technical skills and foundational service-sector competencies. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical occupations are concentrated above the national average in this region (location quotient of 1.22) and pay an average wage of \$107,400, underscoring continued demand for clinical and allied health credentials. Management occupations pay the highest average wage in the region (\$125,800) and are projected to add 7,196 jobs over the next five years, requiring supervisory and business operations training. Construction and Extraction occupations are also concentrated above the national average (location quotient of 1.14) and pay an average wage of \$55,400, reflecting steady demand for skilled trades.

The region's three largest occupation groups, Office and Administrative Support (147,727 workers), Sales and Related (121,252), and Food Preparation and Serving (114,753), carry comparatively low wages and higher unemployment, reaching 9.2% in Farming, Fishing, and Forestry occupations. These figures support continued investment in foundational employability skills, customer service training, and stackable credentials that allow workers to advance from entry-level positions. Occupations that typically require a postsecondary credential are projected to grow faster than those that do not: occupations requiring a master's degree are projected to grow 1.9% annually, compared with 0.5% for occupations associated with some college and no degree, the slowest-growing education tier in the region. Nearly 20% of the region's working-age adults fall into this category, slightly above the national rate of 18.9%, making credential completion and short-term certificate programs a priority for workforce development.

2. Emerging Sectors and Occupations

Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation is the fastest-growing industry sector in the region, projected to expand 1.6% annually over the next five years. Healthcare Support occupations, a category distinct from

higher-wage Healthcare Practitioner roles, represent the fastest-growing occupation group at 1.7% annually, including home health aides, medical assistants, and related mid-skill health positions. Healthcare is emerging not only because of population growth, but also due to the region's aging population, increasing healthcare utilization, and significant replacement demand as workers retire. By total job count, the largest five-year sector gains are projected in Health Care and Social Assistance (15,115 jobs), Accommodation and Food Services (8,051 jobs), and Construction (6,322 jobs). Construction demand is largely being driven by highway projects, site development, utility expansion and heavy civil construction. By occupation, the largest gains are projected in Food Preparation and Serving Related occupations (7,557 jobs) and Management occupations (7,196 jobs). Overall, specific emerging occupations include Nurse Practitioner, Registered Nurse, Physical Therapist, Electrician, First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades, Plumbers, Stockers and Order Fillers and Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers.

3. Targeted Industries

Health Care and Social Assistance should remain the region's primary targeted industry. It is already the largest employer in the region, with 204,733 workers and 16.4% of total employment, added the most jobs of any sector over the past five years (33,818), and is projected to add the most jobs of any sector over the next five years (15,115). Growth patterns in this sector suggest a shift toward outpatient care, ambulatory services and home-based care.

Freight Transportation is the region's strongest industry cluster, with a location quotient of 1.44, above the 1.25 threshold used to identify regional competitive advantage. The cluster employs 50,880 workers at an average wage of \$70,089 and is projected to grow approximately 1.1% annually over the next decade. Transportation and Warehousing carries the highest location quotient among all industry sectors in the region (1.25), reinforcing logistics as a targeted industry. Construction (location quotient of 1.22) and Finance and Insurance (location quotient of 1.20) also show above-average concentration and warrant consideration as targeted or priority industries.

4. Workforce Trends

Total regional employment declined 0.2% over the year ending in the first quarter of 2026, even as the five-year outlook remains positive, with 74,833 projected new jobs and 1.2% annual growth. This indicates near-term softening within a longer-term growth trend. The regional unemployment rate reached 5.2% in June 2026, above both the state rate of 4.6% and the national rate of 4.4% and increased from 4.4% one year earlier.

Average annual wages increased 4.2% to \$65,367 but remain below the national average of \$77,110. Adjusted for the region's lower cost of living, purchasing power narrows the gap but does not close it (\$73,512 compared with \$77,110 nationally). Educational attainment also lags the nation: 32.6% of the region's working-age population holds a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 37.3% nationally. Of the 779,160 job openings projected over the next five years, the majority stem from labor force exits and occupational transfers (312,893 and 391,875, respectively) rather than net new job growth (74,833). Replacement of retiring and turnover-prone workers, particularly in Food Preparation and Serving Related occupations (111,788 in total demand) and Office and Administrative Support occupations (82,582), will drive most future hiring needs.

5. Regional Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths: a large and growing health care sector that pays above-average wages; a competitive advantage in freight transportation and logistics; above-average concentration in construction and finance and insurance; diverse economic base with key strengths present across multiple industries, positive long-term job growth outlook, and a cost of living low enough to partially offset below-average wages.

Weaknesses: an unemployment rate that has risen over the past year and now exceeds state and national rates; average wages that lag the nation even after adjusting for cost of living; a bachelor's

degree attainment gap compared with the nation; a large share of residents with some college and no degree, a group at elevated risk of remaining in low-growth, low-wage occupations; and continued reliance on lower-wage, higher-turnover occupations, including food service, retail, and administrative support, for both current employment and projected future demand.

Source: JobsEQ, Economic Overview (RAP 2026), CareerSource Northeast Florida. Copyright 2026 Chmura Economics & Analytics.

B. Regional Service Delivery and Customer Experience

This RPA plan is strategically focused on strengthening a unified approach to service delivery. The RPA will deploy the following strategies:

Service Delivery Matrix

Service Delivery and Customer Experience	Service Gaps and Actions
Consistent Eligibility & Enrollment: Standardize processes so a job seeker or business encounters the same baseline experiences and rules regardless of which board's physical territory they reside. This includes:	• Develop a uniform eligibility form and process for all WIOA Adult, Dislocated and Youth Services. • Create uniform intake forms and worker agreements. • Launch a Secret Shopper Program across all counties which will identify inconsistencies of service delivery and best practices for improvement. • Implement the Shared Rapid Registration and share best practices regarding implementation and use of the tool.
Coordinated Support & Training: Align training provider offerings and manage the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) across borders.	• Coordinate services to individuals receiving WIOA training who may live across LWDB county lines. • Analyze ETPL list across the region to identify shared training, gaps, and opportunities to leverage training across the RPA.
Coordinate Supportive Services: Implement policies and procedures to promote coordination of supportive services delivery and to best meet the needs of individuals regardless of county residence to include:	• Develop an inventory/asset map of partner agencies that provide support services across LWDB counties. The RPA will utilize this inventory to coordinate with partners to best leverage the support services across the 20 counties. • Collaborate in meeting customer support service needs (such as transportation, uniforms, childcare), particularly when a customer may live in one LWDB but attending training in another LWDB. • Explore TANF funding expenditures across the RPA and identify innovative strategies to ensure all LWDBs utilize TANF funding to best meet the needs of individuals and utilize the flexibility that TANF funding provides.
Universal Services: Launch strategies for simplified universal services and consistent customer experience across local boards:	• Secret Shopper: Managers from each LWDB will "secret shop" services/centers in another LWDB to identify best practices, opportunities to improve the customer experience, and areas for consistent delivery of services. • RPA Navigator Meetings: These meetings will include Disability Navigators, MILSpouse, Hope and Apprenticeship Navigators across the regions to share best practices and leverage services. If there is a Navigator vacancy at one of the LWDBs, the existing Navigators will support each region during the vacancy. • Implement the coordinated supportive services and consistent eligibility and enrollment as stated above.

Service Delivery and Customer Experience	Service Gaps and Actions
Skilled Workforce: Replicate and expand programs for Youth and individuals with barriers, including accelerated/stackable credentials such as:	• Expand and replicate Youth program in Levy County which is a collaboration with the local colleges and school district focused on guiding seniors without a career plan. This program works to arrange short-term training to help youth quickly gain a skill to move into career path. The RPA will work to expand this program into other counties and LWDBs. • Replicate the Annual Youth Expo which includes an Apprenticeship panel. This will involve collaboration of business services to engage employers who serve multiple counties/LWDBs to attend and inclusion will be based on commuter patterns. • Conduct outreach regarding Targeted Sectors Career pathways for schools (Now, NEXT, LATER) – for instance CLM has created flyers with career pathways and education partners that show possible wages, career pathways, and training providers. The LWDBs will utilize similar materials to do outreach regarding the Career Pathways across the RPA. • Facilitate Rural County Meetings – Roundtable to focus on youth getting into career paths (starting in Dixie County). Expand to other counties. • Coordinate services for justice-involved individuals. For instance, for Baker County Correctional and Lowell County Corrections, the RPA counties will partner to help those leaving the prisons with hard hand-off for support regardless of which county they may be returning. This will involve creating a directory by county for returning citizen support.
Public Assistance: Implement strategies to transition Floridians off Public Assistance into sustainable careers and connect Perkins V/CTE with labor market demands. This includes:	• Explore TANF funding expenditures across the RPA and identify innovative strategies to ensure all LWDBs utilize TANF funds to best meet the needs of individuals and utilize the flexibility that TANF funds provide. • Develop an inventory/asset map of partner agencies that provide support services across LWDB counties. The RPA will utilize this inventory to coordinate with partners to best leverage the support services across the 20 counties.
Unified Business Services: Deliver unified business services, particularly for the target industries, this includes:	• Job Seeker/Employer Recruitment and Career Exploration Events: Coordinating cross-county events with those counties that experience the greatest migration across county borders. The four participating boards already coordinate several customer-facing activities that provide a foundation for regional service delivery. • The region's shared targeted industries — Healthcare, Manufacturing & Logistics— create a common framework for coordinated business services and sector partnerships across all four boards. • The business and education leadership of the four LWDBs will be engaged with all Industry and Education Consortiums (IECs) within the RPA. This will be done through attending meetings, sharing meeting notes in the Collaborate Digital Workspace, and creating a cross-cutting summary report of key insights. • Create a dashboard to best track changes in the economy across the 20-county region as well as progress against plan. CLM and CSNEFL will take the lead in developing and maintaining the dashboard. Each LWDB will review and provide input on the dashboard to ensure accuracy and insights beyond the data. The data will be stored in the Collaborative Digital Workspace. This data will drive how the RPA will support the targeted industries in a collaborative fashion.

C. Regional Operations and System Efficiencies

System Efficiencies Table

Systems Efficiencies	Agreements, Shared Tools and Efficiencies
Pooled Administrative Funds: The RPA has arrangements for funding regional initiatives or shared administrative overhead:	- Regional broadband infrastructure training grant, led by CLM and spanning 11 rural counties across Regions 6, 26, and 10, is expanding telecommuting capacity in the region's most rural communities. - CLM's management team supported CNCF's local governance transition over the years, assisting as its boards and management structures evolved. - NEFL managed the procurement of the WIOA Request for Qualifications (RFQ)/Intent to negotiate for CLM and NF. - Sharing Grant writing and management support across the RPA for grants that cross county lines
Shared Infrastructure: The RPA is and will continue to explore sharing costs or the deployment of administrative tools, technology systems, and shared regional staff. For instance:	- CLM serves as employer of record for NF staff, achieving healthcare cost efficiencies through consolidated group size, (and cost efficiencies for financial software and vouchering procurements) - NEFL has provided IT support to CLM and NCF, including cloud data migration, hardware replacement, network modernization, and IT management recruitment. - Joint procurement of the Rapid Registration tool at a cost savings at the RPA level. - NEFL created and is managing a Collaborative Digital Workspace for RPA planning and sharing. - NFL and CLM jointly procured auditing services and One-Stop Operator services through collaborative requests for proposals (RFPs), resulting in cost savings and increased operational efficiencies for both organizations. - CLM is financial entity, completes all state reporting, and serves as the Finance Director for CNF.
Economic Analysis: Building upon the information in this planning document, the RPA will create a dashboard to best track changes in the economy across the 20-county region as well as progress against plan.	- CLM and CSNEFL will take the lead in developing and maintaining the dashboard. - Each LWDB will review and provide input on the dashboard to ensure accuracy and insights beyond the data. The data will be stored in the Collaborative Digital

D. Regional Performance, Employer Engagement, and Apprenticeship

Performance and Talent Pipeline Matrix

Performance and Talent Pipeline	Action Items
Performance Negotiations. Letter Grades and Intervention Protocols: The RPA will track RPA performance, share challenges and best practices to meet performance measures. Each LWDB acknowledges that it remains responsible for its own performance; however, the LWDBs will work collectively to enhance performance across the RPA through the following methods:	• Create RPA performance reports (regional scorecards) that present performance across the RPA as well as potential areas of low performance and high performance. This will be available to all regions on a quarterly basis within the Collaborative Digital Workspace. • Hold quarterly RPA meetings that are focused on performance, plan implementation and progress. These meetings will be an opportunity to review the performance reports and discuss strategic opportunities across the RPA as well as increase performance in areas that are not meeting performance goals and discuss how to replicate the best practices of high-performing areas. • Share tools/Local Operating Procedures (LOPs) and updates across regions to leverage tools and update LOPs, particularly when there has been a change in state policy or inconsistencies in performance across the RPA. The Collaborative Digital Workspace document library will house the tools and LOPs for easy access and sharing.
MCL and LMEC Alignment: The four LWDBs will review the MCL and LMEC within the context of the entire RPA:	• The MCL Framework of Quality will be evaluated against the needs of all 20 counties to identify the top industry certifications, degrees, apprenticeships etc. The RPA will coordinate to ensure resources are being leveraged to support that list. • The Industry and Education Consortiums (IECs) across the RPA will inform the MCL and LMEC. The business and education leadership of the four LWDBs will be engaged with all IECs within the RPA. This will be done through attending meetings, sharing meeting notes in the Collaborative Digital Workspace, and creating a cross-cutting summary report of key insights from all IECs.
Employer Retention/Engagement/Market Penetration: Implement strategies to avoid "dual outreach" fatigue—ensuring business services teams across different boards collaborate rather than compete or duplicate contact with the same regional employers.	• Coordinated business engagement across the region is supported by shared representation in the North Florida Economic Development Partnership (NFEDP) and the Florida Economic Development Council (FEDC), both of which include members from across the RPA and provide a venue for aligned economic development and employer engagement strategy.

Performance and Talent Pipeline	Action Items
Shared Pipelines and Coordination: Work with regional economic development entities, state apprenticeship agencies (SAAs), and local education providers to build regional talent pipelines and Career Pathways.	• Apprenticeship/PreApprenticeship Expansion: Conduct a study to identify what apprenticeships currently exist within target industries. Apprenticeship Navigators will collectively work with SAA to identify opportunities to expand the apprenticeship opportunities within target industries across RPA to meet the needs of business and create Career Pathways for individuals. • Military & Veteran Talent Pipeline: NEFL hosts one of the largest military concentrations in the country. Combined with Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay just across the Georgia line, the region ranks among the top three military communities in the U.S., generating an estimated 5,200+ separations annually (median separation age ~40). Veterans make up roughly 12% of the regional workforce — about twice the national average — bringing transferable logistics, technical, security-clearance, and leadership skills that align directly with the region's targeted industries. This pipeline's impact extends beyond NEFL: many transitioning service members relocate to Gainesville, Ocala, and other communities across the broader RPA. CareerSource boards across north and central Florida coordinate with CSNEFL to ensure transitioning service members receive seamless employment services regardless of where they ultimately settle — a natural channel for regional apprenticeship and work-based learning strategies.

E. Strategic Vision: Regional Alignment with Florida's Five Pillars

The Nature Coast RPA's four-board strategy reflects each of the state's five pillars in both structure and intent.

Pillar I – Industry-Driven Strategies is embedded throughout the RPA's shared targeted-industry framework — Healthcare, Manufacturing & Logistics — which mirrors the state's cross-cutting and sector-specific priority lists. The region's coordinated Industry and Education Consortiums, MCL/LMEC alignment work, and apprenticeship expansion (including the 5,200+ annual military separations pipeline) directly advance the state's REACH Act goals and 2030 apprenticeship targets.

Pillar II – Worker Mobility is addressed through the RPA's Skilled Workforce and Public Assistance strategies: expanding youth and justice-involved-individual programming, coordinating TANF funding, and deploying shared Navigators (Disability, MILSpouse, Hope, and Apprenticeship) so services follow the customer rather than the county line — consistent with the state's emphasis on labor force participation and wage progression.

Pillar III – Integrated Systems aligns with uniform eligibility and intake forms, a Secret Shopper program, and cross-board ETPL/MCL coordination. This replaces a board-by-board process with one regional customer experience — supporting the state's ETPL performance standards and Perkins V/Workforce Pell alignment.

Pillar IV – Accountability is built into the RPA's governance model itself: quarterly performance reporting through the Collaborative Digital Workspace and shared letter-grade tracking. This operationalizes the state's LWDB letter-grade system and performance expectations at a regional scale.

Pillar V – Flexibility and Innovation is demonstrated through the region's shared administrative infrastructure — CLM serving as employer of record for NF, NEFL's IT support to CLM and NCFL and a jointly maintained economic dashboard. These arrangements push toward agile, technology-enabled delivery (FL WINS/WITS) while generating measurable cost savings the RPA can reinvest in service capacity.

Regional Strategy Summary Table

Priority Area	Shared Regional Strategy	Participating LWDBs / Partners	Measure of Success	Evidence / Attachment
Targeted Industries / Sector Partnerships	<i>Shared priority sectors across all four boards: Healthcare, Manufacturing & Logistics</i>	CSCLM (10) CSNF (6) CSNCF (26) CSNEFL (8), Industry Associations, Colleges, K-12, IECs, Chambers, Economic Development Organizations	<i>Job Growth in Sectors, Industry Customer Satisfaction, Repeat Business Engagement</i>	RPA Plan: A. <i>Regional Economy and Labor Market</i>
Coordinated Service Delivery	<i>Uniform WIOA Application, Secret Shopper Projects, Navigator Collaboration, Cross-County Career Exploration Events</i>	CSCLM (10) · CSNF (6) · CSNCF (26) · CSNEFL (8); Community Based Organizations; inventory of partners across RPA	<i>Customer satisfaction, job placement across counties.</i>	RPA Plan: B. <i>Regional Service Delivery and Customer Experience</i>
Supportive Services Coordination	<i>Develop an inventory/asset map of partner agencies that provide support services across RPA counties, identify innovative opportunities to use flexible TANF funding.</i>	CSCLM (10) · CSNF (6) · CSNCF (26) · CSNEFL (8); Community Based Organizations; inventory of partners across RPA	<i>Customer satisfaction, job placement across counties, decrease in welfare assistance.</i>	RPA Plan: B. <i>Regional Service Delivery and Customer Experience</i>
Administrative Efficiencies	<i>CLM provides financial management services and serves as employer of record for NF; NEFL provides IT support to CLM and NCF. All regions in the RPA share costs for the Rapid Registration tool, Employ Florida API tool.</i>	CLM (10) CSNF (6) NCF (26) NEFL (8)	<i>RPA ROI – cost savings, expansion of services available within same budget constraints.</i>	RPA Plan C: <i>Regional Operations and Systems Efficiencies</i>
Skilled Workforce	<i>Replicate and expand Youth Programs such as the Youth Expo in CLM; Create and implement a directory to aid returning citizens with immediate support upon release.</i>	CLM (10) CSNF (6) NCF (26) NEFL (8); K-12, Colleges, Training Providers, Operation New Hope, Correctional Facilities	<i>Youth: training and job placement, Returning Citizens: training, job placement and reduction in reincarceration.</i>	RPA Plan: B. <i>Regional Service Delivery and Customer Experience</i>
Coordinated Performance Improvement	<i>Create shared performance dashboard; share challenges, best practices and track improvement across the region, business services and pipeline collaboration.</i>	CLM (10) CSNF (6) NCF (26) NEFL (8)	<i>Meeting or exceeding performance measures and Letter Grade Requirements</i>	RPA Plan: D. <i>Regional Performance, Employer Engagement and Apprenticeship</i>
Apprenticeship / Work-Based Learning	<i>SAA coordination and an apprenticeship-inventory study to expand apprenticeship/pre-apprenticeship opportunities in target industries. Leverage the</i>	CSCLM (10) CSNF (6) CSNCF (26) CSNEFL (8), Industry Associations, Colleges, K-12, IECs, Chambers, Economic	<i>Increase in apprenticeships and diversification of industries utilizing apprenticeships across the RPA</i>	RPA Plan: B. <i>Regional Service Delivery and Customer Experience</i> RPA Plan: D. <i>Regional</i>

Priority Area	Shared Regional Strategy	Participating LWDBs / Partners	Measure of Success	Evidence / Attachment
	<i>region's transitioning military workforce, Work-Based Learning through shared H-1B Broadband Expansion Grant</i>	<i>Development Organizations</i>		<i>Performance, Employer Engagement and Apprenticeship</i>
MCL / Credential Alignment	<i>Alignment of business needs and training programs through local Industry and Education Consortiums, quarterly outreach to school partners</i>	<i>CSCLM (10) CSNF (6) CSNCF (26) CSNEFL (8), All County school districts, FCS partners, Tech schools, State Colleges, ETPL Training Providers</i>	<i>Job Placement and Retention, wages</i>	RPA Plan: D. <i>Regional Performance, Employer Engagement and Apprenticeship</i>
Coordinated Business Services	<i>Implement strategies to avoid "dual outreach" fatigue—ensuring business services teams across different boards collaborate rather than compete or duplicate contact with the same regional employers; Joint representation in the NFEDP and FEDC aligns business engagement strategy region wide; Coordinated business outreach for Broadband/Fiberoptic employers as part of shared H-1B DOL Grant</i>	<i>CSCLM (10) CSNF (6) CSNCF (26) CSNEFL (8), Industry Associations, Colleges, K-12, IECs, Chambers, Economic Development Organizations</i>	<i>Enhanced employer engagement, job placement and training.</i>	RPA Plan: B. <i>Regional Service Delivery and Customer Experience</i> RPA Plan: D. <i>Regional Performance, Employer Engagement and Apprenticeship</i>