



TONY KNOWLES
GOVERNOR

STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

June 3, 1999

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 182

I, Tony Knowles, Governor of the State of Alaska, under the authority granted by art. III, secs. 1 and 24, of the Alaska Constitution and by AS 44.19.145(c), hereby order the following regarding employment and training of Alaska's workforce and the federal Workforce Investment Act.

BACKGROUND

In 1995, by creating the Alaska Human Resource Investment Council (AHRIC), the Alaska Legislature consolidated three employment and training councils in order to develop a more efficient and cost-effective employment and training system for Alaska's employers and job seekers. In 1998, Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), which reformed the nation's employment and training system and which requires the State of Alaska to implement many changes for the administration of programs and the delivery of services. Among the changes to occur under the WIA are the repeal of the federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and the end of Private Industry Councils (PICs). The WIA requires the governor to establish a State Workforce Investment Board, and to designate local workforce investment areas that will be governed by plans developed by Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs).

The WIA also requires states to submit, no later than April 1, 2000, an implementation plan to the secretary of the United States Department of Labor, with operation of the WIA under the plan to begin on July 1, 2000. In order to complete Alaska's WIA plan and consequent local Workforce Investment Area plans expeditiously, the AHRIC should be designated as the State Workforce Investment Board and the Anchorage/Mat-Su Service Delivery Area (SDA) and the Statewide Service Delivery Area (SDA) should be designated as local Workforce Investment Areas.

The WIA also mandates the establishment of a one-stop career system in all states. Alaska has been a voluntary participant since 1996 when it established its one-stop system.

FINDINGS

Finding 1: The growing demand for skilled and knowledgeable workers in Alaska who must compete in a global economy and the competition between existing programs for the limited resources available to provide effective employment and training services require reform of our existing workforce investment system.

- 1.1 Alaska Statutes advance equal employment opportunity for all Alaskans.
- 1.2 All levels of government must strive to coordinate efforts, amongst themselves as well as in cooperation with business and industry, for a more effective workforce investment system.
- 1.3 The WIA repeals the Job Training Partnership Act and amends the Adult Basic Education Act, thereby consolidating over 60 federal employment and training programs and providing block grants to states for training and employment for adults, youths, and dislocated workers
- 1.4 The WIA requires states to create a State Workforce Investment Board, designate local Workforce Investment Areas, and establish corresponding Local Workforce Investment Boards.
- 1.5 The WIA mandates one-stop career centers where all employment and training services under the WIA are co-located or are part of a one-stop career center network to provide universal services and increased customer access, or both.
- 1.6 The WIA requires the reporting of service provider performance and increased customer choice, along with core system performance and accountability measures for evaluating the effectiveness of programs and services.

Finding 2: The AHRIC has begun work to develop a coordinated and accountable workforce investment system that focuses on the demands of Alaska's industry and employers for skilled workers and the capacity for developing the knowledge and skills of Alaska's workforce.

- 2.1 Society pays an unacceptably high price in human suffering and social welfare costs when it fails to address the special needs of those who have barriers to employment.
- 2.2 An identifiable, trained, and available Alaska workforce is an essential state resource and a critical element that shapes the hiring and location decisions of industry and commerce.
- 2.3 The investment of public resources in the development of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce provides tangible returns to the state in the form of greater employment opportunities for Alaskans and reduces the need for the importation of workers from outside the state.
- 2.4 The current employment and training system could be improved by providing more regional involvement and responsibility for the design of service delivery at the local level and development of local resources such as employment and economic development opportunities.

Finding 3: The success of Alaska's economic development strategies requires a comprehensive and aligned workforce investment system that meets the requirements of the WIA.

3.1 Public assistance reform, which has been effective in meeting federal and state performance measures through a work-first approach that has led to the increased employment of Alaska Temporary Assistance Program clients and ongoing coordination with other employment, education, and training programs, must continue to ensure future success.

3.2 Alaska has developed a one-stop career center system through the Alaska Job Center Network where employment, training, and support services have been co-located. Further integration of services must continue in order to provide equitable delivery of services and more access for Alaskans through local offices or technology.

3.3 The involvement of employers in schools through School-to-Work Partnerships has provided work experience and applied learning for students while bringing reform to the education system. These partnerships help prepare students for the world of work and further assist in meeting employers' demands for educated and skilled workers while building the capacity of local schools to prepare workers.

3.4 The AHRIC and state program partners have created a workforce investment program assessment and system evaluation process, which is reported to the Governor and Legislature on an annual basis. Under state statute, the AHRIC is authorized to advise the Governor and Legislature in implementing new federal and state laws related to employment and training, which would include federal block grants to states as created under the new WIA.

3.5 The AHIUC has produced two reports to the Governor and Legislature in which issues concerning LWIBs were addressed: Report to the Governor on Private Industry Councils (1996) and Consolidation of Alaska's Human Resource Programs (1997). In both reports, the AHRIC recognized that JTPA PICs provide a significant service and contribution to building Alaska's workforce, and recommended that the existing PICs be allowed to evolve into Local Workforce Investment Boards. The WIA allows the PICs to transition into the new role of LWIBs as long as they meet criteria in the law.

DESIGNATIONS AND DIRECTIVES

In order to meet WIA requirements and to meet the needs of Alaska's workers and employers:

1. The Alaska Human Resource Investment Council is designated as the State Workforce Investment Board required by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
2. The Anchorage/Mat-Su SDA, and its administrative body, are designated as the Anchorage/Mat-Su Workforce Investment Area and the Anchorage/Mat-Su Workforce Investment Board, respectively. The Statewide SDA, and its administrative body, are designated as the Balance of State Workforce Investment Area and the Balance of State Workforce Investment Board, respectively.
3. The AHIUC shall develop a plan to provide adequate regional representation on the Balance of State Workforce Investment Board through a consortium agreement and establish criteria for regions that apply to be designated as Workforce Investment Areas.

4. The Alaska Job Center Network shall serve as the state's one-stop career center system required under WIA. The AHRIC will provide oversight for Alaska's one-stop career center system, with Local Workforce Investment Boards providing oversight for Job Centers in their respective Workforce Investment Areas.

5. All state agencies that are mandated partners in the one-stop system shall develop the agreements and understandings necessary to meet WIA requirements, including the involvement of mandated and volunteer one-stop partners.

6. In accordance with law, the AHRIC shall develop a Unified Strategic Workforce Investment Plan for all state-operated programs that require plans under the WIA.

This Order takes effect immediately.

Dated this 3rd day of June, 1999.

S/S Tony Knowles
Tony Knowles
Governor

