



HCWDB Meeting

May 19th, 2026

Carver County, Hennepin County, Title I – IV Program Updates and Director’s Report

Carver County Updates:

Contact: Jen Kielas, jkielas@carvercountymn.gov

Carver County is progressing across several key workforce initiatives and continues to experience strong demand for services at the CareerForce Center.

Staffing Updates

- We have hired Betsy Mascorro for the Resource Specialist position. This role will support both the CareerForce Center and the Family Resource Center, splitting time evenly between the two locations.
- We are in second round interviews for an Employment Counselor who will focus on serving participants with work requirements tied to SNAP and Medicaid.

CareerForce Center Activity

- We are compiling the data from our self-serve hours pilot; initial data suggests that participants coming into the CareerForce Center have higher needs and require additional assistance.
- Daily traffic remains high with job seekers facing multiple barriers.
- MFIP caseloads are increasing, reflecting growing needs among families seeking employment support and stabilization services.

Programs and Initiatives

- Recruitment is underway for the Youth Summer Work Experience program, and we anticipate strong interest from youth and employers again this year.
- Demand for the Dislocated Worker Program remains elevated, and we continue to maintain a waitlist.
- The Trades360 project will continue to move forward over the summer, giving youth interns an opportunity to learn construction skills.

Youth Program Updates:

Contact: Bri Zaiss, Brianna.Zaiss@hennepin.us

- WIOA Young Adult (WIOA Youth)
 - Providers fully expended WIOA Youth PY24 funds by the end of the grant term (3/31/2026).
 - PY25 Monitoring has begun and is being conducted on a rolling schedule (1 or 2 providers every other month). Carver County is currently in the process of PY25 WIOA Youth Monitoring
 - DEED Data Validation is currently ongoing for WIOA Youth program. The final Data Validation report may be shared with Board members upon request once available.
 - PY26 Program funds have not yet been issued, but we anticipate receiving those funds within the next month. DEED has reported that the State has received more than a 13% increase in their WIOA Youth allocation for PY26.
- Minnesota Youth Program (MYP)
 - The SFY25 MYP report has been published by DEED and is available here: [Minnesota Youth Program SFY2025 Annual Report](#). Carver County’s section can be found starting on pg. 20 and Hennepin County’s section can be found starting on pg. 22.



Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board

- Hennepin County has again retained Outreach to Schools funds from the SFY26 MYP grant to support Hennepin GO Career Expos and other career exploration opportunities with the County. The Spring 2026 GO Expo took place on April 29 at the 625 building downtown Minneapolis.
 - 60 youth attended the event, which featured 10 career exploration stations, including Transportation Project Delivery, Hennepin County Libraries, Information Technology, Facility Services (Design and Construction), Environmental Health, Elections, District Court, County Attorney's Office, Communications, and Climate Resiliency.
 - Youth also heard from County Leaders May Xiong, Commissioner Fernando and Commissioner Lunde.
- MYP funds are also being used to support an upcoming Career Exploration Event in partnership with Hennepin County Libraries on May 14th at North Regional Library.
 - This event will feature the Big Ideas Lab, a Mobile Virtual Career Exploration lab, which includes Virtual Reality simulations for careers in Heavy Equipment operation, Drone Operation, Industrial Paint, and more.
 - The event is open to all and will take place from 3-7 PM.
- SFY26 Monitoring has begun and is being conducted on a rolling schedule (1 or 2 providers every other month) starting in April 2026. Tree Trust is currently in the process of SFY26 MYP monitoring.
- Youth at Work Competitive Grant
 - Hennepin County was awarded \$300,000.00 in Youth at Work Competitive grant funds to support youth career readiness and work experience activities during State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2026 and 2027.
 - Hennepin County is partnering with Brooklynk to host two Career Academies in February, one for younger youth (14-17), and one for older youth (18-24).
 - These Career Academies will be focused on key work readiness skill development using Brooklynk's Get Ready! Curriculum. Youth will earn a \$100 stipend for completing the Career Academy.
 - Due to the effects of Operation Metro Surge on our community, the Career Academies have been **rescheduled for May 2026. Updated dates included below:**

Career Academy for Younger Youth (14-17)
When: May 6th, 5:30 – 7:30 PM
Where: Brooklyn Park City Hall

Career Academy for Older Youth (18-24)
When: May 5th 2:00 – 4:00 PM
Where: Brooklyn Park City Hall
 - Hennepin County is also partnering with Brooklynk to provide summer work experiences for 5 youth this summer.
- TANF Youth Innovation Project





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- Hennepin County's 2026 TANF Youth Innovation Project allocation was reduced from \$50,000 in 2025 to \$35,000 in 2026.
- 2026 TANF Youth planning documents were submitted to DEED on 1/9/26. We are still waiting for funds to be allocated.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Updates

Contact: Nicki Hanson, Nicolette.hanson@hennepin.us

- Programs are meeting/exceeding performance measures.
- Priority of Service training is scheduled for June 3rd, all Career Navigators are mandated to attend the virtual session or watch the recorded session within two weeks.
- An all-provider leadership meeting is scheduled for May 19th.
- We are waiting to hear more details about PY26 funding.
- Program referrals continue to be paused due to over-enrollment. DWD continues to monitor numbers and provide technical guidance to providers.
- Performance negotiations are just kicking off.

Title II Adult Basic Education Program Updates

Contact: Emily Watts, wattse@district279.org

- Most ABE programs in our region will be closed for the summer, resuming classes in September 2026. Programs offering summer classes are often targeting grant partnership projects, including the upcoming partnership between Hired and Osseo ABE. The participants are part of Hired's Office Administrative Professionals training, and complete 12 hours of instruction from Osseo ABE to introduce them to medical phrases and terms that complement their other training modules and help prepare participants for office positions in the medical field.
- The impact of Metro Surge on ABE programs was significant for ABE programs in the region and across the state, erasing the 7% increase of overall state contact hours (time serving students in ABE authorized activities and programs) that programs were reporting through December. Contact hours for the program year, which ended on April 30, are virtually unchanged from 2025, with an estimated 4.3 million hours of service recorded statewide.
- All seven ABE consortium are connected to AirTable, and we have seen our first referrals from ABE to WIOA title partners take place. We are excited to have received our first referral from a WIOA partner to an ABE program as well and look forward to the partnership expanding when school resumes in the fall.

Title III Wagner-Peyser Program Updates

Contact: Cindy Larson, cynthia.larson@state.mn.us

Number of served, unduplicated through 1:1 appointments, and UI referrals, workshops and drop in services Feb -April 2026:

Bloomington 109 in person appointments, and 607 in Unemployment calls
Brooklyn Center 180 in person appointments, and 595 in Unemployment calls
Used the Bloomington Career Lab 223

Goodwill Easter Seal in partnership with the WIB held 2 Talent Accelerators training at Bloomington.

Bloomington is seeing more activity onsite now that we have our new MET partners there.



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Bloomington's lease expiration date 11-30-27. Looking for a new location has begun.

We want to thank Doug Muller for leading the Brooklyn Center Job Club on March 25, 2026! Doug's support for job seekers is amazing! And we really appreciated how he goes over and above as a WIB member. We are working on the next job club event in June.

Upcoming hiring events and updates:

On June 3rd TSA is holding an in person hiring event at Bloomington

June 10th Minnesotaworks.net is ending and careerforce.mn.gov will be the new labor exchange

June 10th Hennepin and CareerForce hiring event at the Bloomington CF office

July 13th Hennepin and CareerForce hiring event at the Brooklyn Center CF office

Updates regarding Minnesotaworks.net:

I wanted to share an update about events in Minnesotaworks.net as we get closer to the system cutover on **June 10, 2026**.

First, please make sure you do not have any active events scheduled **after** the cutover date. This includes all appointments. The last day any event should be active in Minnesotaworks.net is **Tuesday, June 9, 2026**. If you have events scheduled beyond June 10, please deactivate those as soon as possible.

Events and appointments will not be available on the website from **June 10-12**. On June 10, we'll be entering events into the new system, and staff will use June 11 and 12 to activate events for the following week.

A quick reminder: Starting **Wednesday, May 20**, UI applicants will no longer be required to register for Minnesotaworks.net. However, anyone who wants to attend workshops will still need to create an account.

In the next few weeks, we'll be sending out a form to collect all event information from you that will need to be added to the new system. This will help us ensure everything is transferred accurately and that your events are set up correctly after the cutover. We'll share more details soon so you'll know exactly what information to provide.

Thank you for your patience and flexibility as we work through the retirement of Minnesotaworks.net and transition fully to CareerForce.MN.gov. Your support during this process is truly appreciated.

Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation Program Updates

Contact: Sarah Gutzman, sarah.gutzman@state.mn.us

- No updates.

HCWDB Director's Report

Contact: Erik Aamoth, erik.aamoth@hennepin.us

- **MOU and IFAs**-The MOUS and IFAs are under review by Carver County. They will be reviewed and signed by required partners and by the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners.
- **Regional Plan**- The Metro Directors are having a Region 4 stakeholder remote meeting on June 5th from 830-10am to review the regional plan.
- **Local Plan**- Bri has developed a timeline for review and development of the updated Local Plan which will be completed by end of this year.



Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board

- **State Updates-** The 2026 Legislative Session is nearly complete. The Minnesota Workforce Board Association is focused on protecting the workforce development fund and the State Dislocated Worker Program.