



Hennepin-Carver Workforce Development Board

HCWDB Meeting

September 15th, 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 continues to make meaningful progress across multiple workforce development initiatives, with sustained and high demand for services at the CareerForce Center.

- **Staffing Updates**
 - The department is now fully staffed with the addition of our new CCAP Specialist, Corinne.
- **CareerForce Center Operations**
 - Effective October 19, 2026, public operating hours at the CareerForce Center will shift from 8:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Monday–Friday to 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. Monday–Friday. This adjustment provides administrative staff an additional 7.5 hours per week to support the increased workload associated with intake, eligibility determination, and case management. The change is designed to better meet operational needs while minimizing the need for additional FTE requests.
 - Customers who arrive outside of public operating hours will continue to receive direct assistance from an employment counselor.
- **Programs and Initiatives**
 - The Trades360 initiative successfully completed its first cabin, supported by youth participants involved in the summer work experience program. The cabin is scheduled to be relocated to Lake Auburn Campground, where it will be available for rental.
 - Carver County also completed DEED monitoring for the MYP program. The compliance monitor provided positive feedback, noting:
 - ***“The Carver County team continues to perform at an exceptionally high level. As always, I thoroughly enjoyed meeting with the team and hearing updates on the programming in your community. No issues to report, and it is evident the team is committed and good at what they do. Five stars for this team!”***

Hennepin County Updates

Contact: Nola Slagter-Johnson; Nola.Slagter-Johnson@hennepin.us

- No written updates.

Youth Program Updates:

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

- WIOA Young Adult (WIOA Youth)
 - PY25 Monitoring has begun and is being conducted on a rolling schedule (1 or 2 providers every other month). Carver County and Hired have completed PY25 WIOA Youth Monitoring and Avivo is currently in the process of their PY25 Monitoring.
 - PY26 WIOA Youth grant paperwork has been received by DEED and is currently being reviewed, approved, and signed by County Attorney, Clerk, and Admin. Funds should be able to be issued to subgrantees shortly. Hennepin-Carver received an approximate 32% increase in PY26 WIOA Youth funds over PY25.
- Minnesota Youth Program (MYP)



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- 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.
- SFY26 Monitoring has begun and is being conducted on a rolling schedule (1 or 2 providers every other month). Tree Trust has completed SFY26 MYP monitoring. Brooklynk will be undergoing SFY26 monitoring starting in the next month.
- TANF Youth Innovation Project
 - 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. Funding was received on August 12th.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Updates

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

- Adult WIOA, DW and State DW referrals are flowing. The conversation rate is a bit low from the wait however we are working quickly through the list and are starting to see more enrollments with folks.
- A modification for PY25 funds is in progress. A couple providers requested to move funds from one budget line to another to accommodate participant needs. Funds from DW were moved to WIOA Adult to support enrollment/programmatic needs.
- Hennepin-Carver received PY26 grants September 3rd. The grants are being submitted to the internal Hennepin County Grant Management Administration (GMA) process prior to obtaining the required signatures to accept.
- Hennepin County recently completed PY26–PY27 Adult and Dislocated Worker program performance negotiations with DEED. Our proposed levels aligned closely with DEED's targets, and the following PY26 and PY27 numbers have been accepted:
 - Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit
 - WIOA Adult: 70.90% (PY26 & PY27)
 - Dislocated Worker: 75% (PY26), 76% (PY27)
 - Employment 4th Quarter After Exit
 - WIOA Adult: 68.50% (PY26 & PY27)
 - Dislocated Worker: 73.4% (PY26 & PY27)
 - Median Earnings (2nd Quarter After Exit)
 - WIOA Adult: \$9,000 (PY26), \$9,500 (PY27)
 - Dislocated Worker: \$17,000 (PY26), \$17,500 (PY27)
 - Credential Attainment Rate (4th Quarter After Exit)
 - WIOA Adult: 73.6% (PY26 & PY27)
 - Dislocated Worker: 81% (PY26), 82% (PY27)
 - Measurable Skill Gains
 - WIOA Adult: 69% (PY26), 70% (PY27)
 - Dislocated Worker: 80% (PY26), 81% (PY27)

Title II Adult Basic Education Program Updates



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Contact: Emily Watts, wattse@district279.org

- No written updates.

Title III Wagner-Peyser Program Updates

Contact: Liz Jennings; Liz.Jennings@state.mn.us

Welcome Liz Jennings! 😊

Liz Jennings started on August 25, 2026 as Job Service Supervisor at the CareerForce Bloomington, Brooklyn Center & Woodbury offices. Working at DEED since 2018, she has extensive experience as Workforce Strategy Consultant for the metro, Employer Engagement Specialist and Supervisor for CareerForce statewide, and most recently as Program Monitor in the Employment and Training Programs Compliance team monitoring Federal Adult and Dislocated Worker, SCSEP, and Adult Career Pathways programs.

Liz will be dividing her time between all three offices each week.

Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation Program Updates

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

- No written updates.

HCWDB Director's Report

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

- **West Metro Manufacturing Career Exploration Event**
 - The West Metro Manufacturing Career Exploration event will take place on October 29th at HTC in Brooklyn Park, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Contact Adesewa from DEED if you are interested in participating.
- **Promising Practices Award**
 - The MN Skills-Based Talent Accelerator initiative won the 1st place Promising Practices award at the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB) conference in Duluth!
- **Legislative Update**
 - Securing consistent funding for the State Dislocated Worker Program.
 - Clarifying eligibility requirements for the State Dislocated Worker Program.
 - Advocating for full funding for MN Youth Program
 - The full MAWB platform is expected to be approved at the November 18th full meeting.
- **Regional and Local Plans**
 - Both the Regional Plan and Local Plan are currently moving through the approval process with the Hennepin County and Carver County boards. Submission of the finalized plans is expected by the end of November.
- **November Board Meeting**
 - A number of members have conflicts with the scheduled November meeting. A poll will be sent out soon to determine a new date for rescheduling the meeting.
- **Member Update**
 - Amanda Ruch and Christa Seaberg are leaving the board. Two private sector board seats will be available starting next year.
- **Staff Update**
 - Liz Jennings began her role on August 25, 2026 as Job Service Supervisor for CareerForce locations in Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, and Woodbury. Liz has been with DEED since 2018 and brings



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extensive experience, including roles as Workforce Strategy Consultant for the metro, Employer Engagement Specialist, CareerForce statewide supervisor, and Program Monitor for Employment and Training Programs Compliance overseeing Federal Adult and Dislocated Worker, SCSEP, and Adult Career Pathways programs.