



June 23, 2022

Wendi Secrist and One Stop Committee  
317 Main Street  
Boise Idaho

Re: Comprehensive One Stop Certification Site Visit – Lewiston

Dear Wendi,

Attached is my written report based on my on-site visit of Lewiston's' Comprehensive One Stop Center and my review of the center's self-certification. I have based my comments on the information contained in the self-certification as well as information gleaned from our discussion on site, and my own observations.

Since this is a review of a comprehensive center, I have put more detail into this written review about the standards that are contained in the minimum criterion set forth by the USDOL. I have commented on each criterion as identified in the certification worksheet, and then followed these with my opinion of promising practices, suggestions for continued improvement that were identified during our visit, and finally my perception of the center's performance of USDOL standards necessary to be certified as a comprehensive American Job Center. My observations suggestions and opinions are italicized.

Hopefully, this information will aid the One Stop Committee in making certification decisions regarding this Comprehensive American Job Center and the AJC's level of implementation of the identified standards. If there are any questions regarding this review or visit, please feel free to call me at (208) 589-3836 ext. 1.

Sincerely,

*Terry Butikofer*

Terry Butikofer  
Managing Director

## **Comprehensive One Stop Certification – Review and On-Site Interview – Lewiston**

Kellye Sharp, Sarah Nash, and I visited the Comprehensive American Job Center (AJC) in Lewiston, Idaho on April 20, 2022. This is the second certification activity that Lewiston has completed with Kellye and me. We met with Misti Sullivan the center manager in Lewiston. We talked to Misti about the certification standards that have been identified by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Workforce Development Council's one stop committee as important in operating a comprehensive one stop center. Kellye, Misti, Sarah, and I went through the self-certification that had been completed for this comprehensive center.

My observations and comments are as follows.

### **Effectiveness**

Misti and Kellye report that the Lewiston office and their mandatory partners are working closely to integrate their services regardless of location. Client services are aligned to common goals and the partners are moving toward serving the customers in a seamless fashion where partners will regard each customer as a shared customer with all system staff having a personal stake in that customer's success.

Misti has been actively recruiting, hiring, and training new staff members during this past year. Seven of her nine full time staff members have been in their positions for a year or less. Obviously, this poses opportunities for appropriate training and relationship building to maximize the center's effectiveness.

The Lewiston American Job Center seemed to handle lock down and remote pandemic requirements effectively through appointments, remote communication, and staggering physical one stop coverage. As COVID requirements relax, the Lewiston AJC is poised to continue to improve their one-stop partnerships in serving their communities. Based on the criteria identified, the Center has deemed their efforts in this area to rate a five (5) which is defined as achieving the standard and excelling in this area and Misti should be commended for getting seven new team members up to speed and well trained.

### ***Program Services***

The Lewiston Comprehensive AJC has several new staff members who have recently or are currently being trained to provide job seekers and employers program services through Wagner-Peyser (ES), and WIOA Title IB programs, veterans programs, and other available programs through the one stop center. I found that AJC staff from the partner agencies are working closely together to provide direct program services to one stop customers. Lewiston has scheduled their annual staff training and are preparing for this opportunity. The AJC has been creative in providing these services remotely and in person especially during this past year during COVID while on-boarding new staff members which I am sure has added a level of complexity to service provision. Lewiston seems to be meeting their customers' needs in providing direct services and are also as active with their partners as COVID requirements have allowed.

The AJC partnership has found that remote service provision has improved enrollment and service in the Reemployment Service Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program, and that customers who were having difficulty coming in to enroll in person were more willing and able to do so remotely.

## *Labor Market Information Availability and Usage*

The Idaho Department of Labor has a vast wealth of Labor Market Information available to partners, employers, and communities both online and via a Regional Labor Economist located in the Lewiston AJC. The Regional Economist is available for in person appointments, by email and phone or instant messaging if needed, and is active in providing information to communities, businesses, and individuals to assist them making informed decisions regarding career or training choice, the feasibility of economic development projects or the expansion and growth of their business.

### *Access to additional programs and activities conducted by partners through referrals*

Several AJC staff members are new this past year but have been or are being trained in the programs and services available to their customers through the one stop partners and can connect them to these various programs and services as appropriate. Lewiston continues to conduct annual front line center staff training and the partners work together quarterly to ensure quality referrals are being made so that customers are appropriately served. Misti reports that they work especially well with Vocational Rehabilitation in arranging referrals and making warm handoffs. She reported that Maximus continues to be very involved with their coordination efforts.

The Lewiston partners also participate with local community groups including human resource employee groups to ensure quality service. Misti and other center staff also participate with local community groups like the Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed (ALICE). Many community partners including representatives from the AJC meet monthly in person or remotely to discuss and work with the unemployed, the underemployed, and working poor to look at employment, affordable housing and coordinate other social services. Lewiston has developed a resource book that staff members can refer to access available program information and resources. AJC Center staff accepts referrals from their network and community partners and are committed to making appropriate referrals to the network partners as needed.

➤ *Observation of promising practices, suggestions for continued improvement or level of compliance with affiliate requirements.*

*I found the center's involvement with the ALICE group to be promising and leads to better more coordinated customer service. In my estimation this type of coordinated customer service lends itself to more customer success when all types of needs are being met.*

*I would suggest that Lewiston will need to continue to engage in training for their new employees to ensure that they continue to develop effective working relationships with AJC mandatory and voluntary partners as staff becomes more seasoned.*

*I believe that the Lewiston Comprehensive AJC is committed to working as a one stop partnership and are being flexible as business and industry needs change as they transition away from COVID and into what seems to be a new economy. Misti is aware that her new staff require continued training and are getting to know their one stop counterparts as they work together for the benefit of their customers and will continue to work with partners to provide continued training. Partners have used remote contacts to their advantage in those programs that now allow remote eligibility determination and sign-up. The AJC is being effective in providing services to both their job seeking and business customers as expected by the U.S. Department of Labor and Idaho's Workforce Development Council.*

## *Service Delivery*

Misti reported that all AJC staff work closely together to provide Business Services to employers through Wagner-Peyser (ES), WIOA Title 1B programs, veterans programs and other programs available through the center aimed at assisting businesses. During the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting disruption to the labor force, the one stop center has experienced an increase of new businesses who have turned to the center to help them identify and hire willing employees.

*Physical location and available program information is online*

Although “Live Better Idaho” is no longer available to the system, One Stop Center partners have access to the IDOL website and other partner sites that provide information about available services, program information and their locations online.

## *Staff Availability*

Both ES Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title 1B IDOL and Equus staff are in the center full time during the Center’s hours of operation.

## *Customer Service*

Customers who visit this center may receive direct services from Lewiston’s staff on their first visit to include any basic career service. Basic career services include assessment and other services that result in an actionable next step to include referral to partner programs as appropriate. The AJC has a resource/lobby area with 22 computer workstations accessible to the public, with two additional ADA accessible computers along with ten computers in the training lab that are utilized by employers or staff for staff training or workshops. All front-line staff can perform an initial review of the customer's needs and programs that may meet those needs. This includes both IDOL and other one-stop partner programs. The center manager indicates that the various partners have an expectation that front line staff know where and how to refer clients and participants.

➤ *Observation of promising practices, suggestions for continued improvement or level of compliance with comprehensive center requirements.*

*The Lewiston AJC has joined with partners to develop a resource guide that list partner services and provides some information on those services which aids coordination of services among partners. Although not a practice that can necessarily be duplicated, the close physical proximity of many of the partners in Lewiston lends itself to coordinated customer service to both individuals and business.*

*I would suggest that the Lewiston AJC should continue to engage in partnership training opportunities for new staff members and continue to work together to coordinate and refine business outreach efforts.*

*It is my opinion following my visit that the Lewiston is efficient and effective in delivering the program services as expected by the U.S. Department of Labor. They have formed effective partnerships locally and work well together. They relate success in making appropriate warm referrals as envisioned by the U.S. Department of Labor, and in my opinion are eligible to be recertified as a comprehensive One Stop American Job Center in Region II.*

## ***Common Branding***

All printed and electronically generated program materials in the AJC are branded in conformance with the Council's AJC Branding Policy.

*Observation of promising practices, suggestions for continued improvement or level of compliance with comprehensive requirements.*

*Lewiston AJC partnership will need to continue to coordinate with the Workforce Development Council's One Stop Committee to update their center branding if changes or modifications are made to the branding policy.*

*I believe that Lewiston is meeting the common branding criteria as required by the USDOL for comprehensive American Job Centers.*

## ***Partner Coordination***

*The One Stop Partners coordinate Employer/Business Services according to a locally developed business outreach plan*

I have found that the one stop partners coordinate their employer/business services, although they have not developed a business outreach plan per se. The partners have used a spreadsheet as a clearinghouse in the past to track business outreach. They are participating with their partners and economic development groups as they reach out and visit employers/business. Like many of the AJS centers, the partners have developed ways to work together as they are conducting their own outreach programs but are looking for and working on more coordinated ways to conduct business outreach together as partners. As a new service provider and one stop partner, Equus also brings outreach desires and capabilities to the business service equation and coordination between partners becomes ever more important.

Sara Nash indicated that plans to better describe outreach to business and employers is being worked on. Locally AJC staff are trained to provide Business Services to employers through Wagner-Peyser (ES), WIOA Title 1B programs, veterans programs and other programs available through the center aimed at assisting business, but still are trying to devise best practices in coordinating partner outreach.

*Participant outreach is coordinated among the partners*

AJC partners are coordinating participant outreach by talking to each other and making appropriate referrals with warm handoffs. There is limited co-location of partner agencies, but the partners are in close physical proximity and do have frequent interaction with each other and are effectively serving their clients/customers. They do some co-enrollment when it makes sense but realize that co-enrollment efforts could improve.

As reported above, One Stop Partners are active with other social service community groups and coordinate closely with these groups to provide clients/customers with the necessary assistance to help them succeed in training.

*Observation of promising practices, suggestions for continued improvement or level of compliance with comprehensive requirements.*

*The close communication and coordination of customer services seems to be a hallmark of Lewiston's Comprehensive American Job Center. This coordination may be aided by the close physical proximity of center partners to one another.*

*The Lewiston Comprehensive Center will need to work closely with Sarah Nash as she works on employer/business outreach methodologies.*

*I would suggest that the Lewiston AJC meets USDOL expected performance for a comprehensive center as they coordinate with one stop partners in Region II.*

## ***Cost Effectiveness***

The Lewiston AJC operates in a cost-efficient manner, as defined by the funding.

*Observation of promising practices, suggestions for continued improvement or level of compliance with affiliate requirements.*

*I believe that the Lewiston AJC is meeting the USDOL requirements for cost effectiveness.*

## **Accessibility**

This Comprehensive American Job Center extends services and outreach to all customers who walk through the door and those who have become disengaged in the labor force. Integrated, quality services are provided to all customers within the center and via technology through online or phone access.

### ***Programmatic Accessibility***

*Reasonable Accommodations are available for individuals with disabilities*

The AJC offers accommodations based on requests from customers seeking services and accommodate their own employees based upon requests. They deliver their services in the most integrated setting appropriate. AJC management assesses their programmatic practices and processes annually and ensures that all programs and related materials are accessible to all customers.

*Electronic Materials are 508 compliant*

The Department of Labor participates on a committee working toward complying with Section 508. This committee has been actively working on building section 508 compliant web pages and have been testing color schemes and sizing fonts. All web pages are being pre-tested for accessibility, are built with a clear syntactical hierarchy for screen readers to understand. Content is written for a general audience reading level to accommodate diverse cognitive abilities. Images contain descriptive meaningful alt text. All public facing web pages are built by personnel trained in web accessibility.

The Department and AJC use a NVDA Screen reader to verify accessibility to those with visual impairments and use browser testing tools to correct accessibility issues before publishing.

### *Assistive technology available*

The AJC in Lewiston has two computers dedicated to assisting customers with special needs. This computer has a multitude of software and functions designed to provide customers with special needs with assistive technology aides. These computers have a large screen monitor, and appropriate keyboards and mice. One of these computers is located in a individual office in case privacy is required.

### *Materials are printable and available in English and Spanish and Translation Services are available*

All IDOL vital program printable documents are currently available in both English and Spanish. Partner printed materials may not be available in both languages.

Assistance with translation is available anytime through Language Link Services that provide interpreters in multiple languages over the phone. For people with hearing impairments, they use licensed sign language interpreters as listed on the IDOL website. Some staff members in the comprehensive center are fluent in Spanish and help with translation services when needed.

### ***Physical Accessibility***

The Lewiston One Stop Center is accessible to persons with disabilities, and they have corrected any deficiencies identified when the accessibility audit was first conducted. An accessibility audit is conducted/updated annually.

### ***Other Building Requirements***

#### *Signage and Accessible Conference Rooms*

The signage at the AJC is highly visible and includes the AJC logo on the entrance doors and/or windows. A conference room with audio/video technology is located in the building and can be used by employers and individuals if they need them for accommodations.

#### *Co-Location of WIOA Title 1B and Employment Services*

The Lewiston AJC is coming off COVID masking, distancing, and rotation requirements and have both ES and WIOA Title 1-B staff available on-site during center hours of operation. None of the other mandatory partners are co-located in the center but are located across the street or nearby and maintain close contact.

#### *Center on or near public transportation route*

The Lewiston Regional Transit bus stop is located just outside of Lewiston's parking lot.

#### *Hours of Operation*

AJC staff are available during normal business hours, via in person, phone, or email.

➤ *Observation of promising practices, suggestions for continued improvement or level of compliance with comprehensive American Job Center requirements.*

*The Lewiston AJC is meeting the USDOL standards for programmatic and physical accessibility. They have highly visible signage, appropriate materials, conference room availability with audio/video technology, are open appropriately and are located on a public transportation route.*

*The physical facility is externally and internally accessible and is useable to individuals with disabilities. The building is a single-story facility with plentiful parking that leads to an entrance that is easily accessible. The interior of the building is easily navigable with accessible restrooms, drinking fountain and a customer service desk that is appropriate for all customers. The workstations are adjustable, and the signage is appropriate and meets multilingual needs common to the specific region of the State. The One Stop Center has completed an ADA checklist evaluation provided by the Statewide Equal Opportunity Officer and has corrected any deficiencies that were identified at the time of the assessment. This assessment is updated annually.*

*I believe based on my observations that the Lewiston AJC has complied with the USDOL requirements for accessibility necessary for a comprehensive American Job Center.*

## **Continuous Improvement**

The Lewiston Comprehensive One Stop Center has met their service delivery goals which reflects the effectiveness of the systems performance and service delivery. The center has been innovative in taking advantage of COVID impacted programs to implement more efficient practices such as remote enrollment and the use of DocuSign for some documents that used to require an onsite visit which at times proved difficult for customers in the past.

The center is always interested in improving their performance and service to their customers. Misti recognizes that there is always room for improvement, but she feels that job fairs continue to improve, and they are talking to and reaching out to more businesses and have a good reputation among the local business community.

### ***Customer Feedback***

#### ***Complaints***

Comprehensive center staff utilizes an Idaho Department of Labor online complaint system that tracks and routes any complaints to the appropriate parties. Misti reports that they normally receive more praise than complaints and that if they do receive complaints that these complaints are referred to the appropriate staff member or manager to correct.

### ***Staff Development***

#### ***Cross training and referral resources***

AJC staff receives at minimum annual training that provides information on all one stop partner programs and those services provided by network partners. Lewiston has a lot of new staff members and are taking the opportunity to provide these new staff members with partner training and training regarding community resources available to assist business and individual customers. ACJ management also invite partner staff to participate in joint staff meetings and often are engaged in

some form of training. They are active in other community groups and have a great relationship with their regional economic development groups.

### ***Continuous Improvement Evaluation***

*Program performance outcomes are made publicly accessible*

One Stop staff and management review performance data regarding service to individuals with barriers to employment and reviews customer feedback and any complaints submitted. The One Stop Comprehensive Center follows Idaho Department of Labor practice and makes program performance outcomes accessible to the public through the IdahoWorks.gov site.

*Program performance meets or exceeds negotiated performance expectations.*

The Lewiston AJC reports that they have met their negotiated program performance goals.

### ***Infrastructure Cost-Sharing Agreement***

An infrastructure cost sharing agreement has been developed and signed.

➤ *Observation of promising practices, suggestions for continued improvement or level of compliance with affiliate requirements.*

*The Lewiston AJC makes a great deal of effort to ensure that their center and partnership are continuously improving. I am impressed with Misti's efforts and achievements in developing many new staff members and ensuring that they are working in concert with the core center partners to serve individual and business customers. They continue to meet or exceed their performance goals and garner more praise than complaints about their level of service.*

*I would recommend that Lewiston stays engaged with the One Stop Committee and One Stop Operator to implement any new customer feedback initiatives that the One Stop Committee identifies as important. I believe that opportunities for business customer feedback will increase as One Stop Center partners implement new ways to reach out to business customers.*

*In my opinion, the Lewiston AJC is meeting the criteria for customer feedback sufficiently to be recertified as a comprehensive One Stop Center.*

### ***Final Comments***

*Based on our visit, interview with Misti and my observations, Lewiston does a good job in striving to meet all the identified standards to be certified as a Comprehensive One Stop Center. I believe that although Misti has onboarded seven new staff members during the past year, she has done a great job in getting new staff members up to speed and is operating the Comprehensive One Stop Center effectively. I applaud the Lewiston AJC and all of the center partners in being flexible and creative in serving employers and job seekers in their service area during and coming out of COVID.*