



Montana Department of
LABOR & INDUSTRY

PY 2025 Workforce Information Grant
Montana Annual Performance Report

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Program Year

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Submitted By

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The Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Workforce Services Division administers the Workforce Information Grant to States to develop, maintain, and disseminate workforce and labor-market information for Montana's workforce system and the public. This report summarizes activities completed during Program Year 2025, from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. It describes the Workforce Information Database, employment projections, LMI training, and other workforce-information products and services. The report also summarizes customer consultation, customer needs addressed, and collaboration supporting these activities.

Section I: Core Program Deliverables

1. Populate the Workforce Information Database (WID) with state and local data

Montana updates monthly and quarterly data in all Core WID tables on schedule. Montana upgraded to WID Version 3.0 in June 2025. All tables are now populated and maintained in the 3.0 format.

The WID is the single, standardized data source behind Montana's LMI tools, including data search on lmi.mt.gov, Local Area Profiles, and the Montana Career Lab. It also feeds ETA's CareerOneStop. Through the WID, job seekers, American Job Center staff, employers, and economic developers get consistent state and sub-state data that they can compare with other states. Montana also populates these optional tables to meet specific customer needs:

- **Programs, program completers, and schools/training providers** power the MPSEOC program search tool, which students, parents, and career counselors use to connect training programs to occupations and outcomes.
- **License history** supports the Occupational Licensing dashboard used by the Business Standards Division (BSD).
- **Commuting patterns, demographics, population, and income** support regional profiles requested by economic developers and local workforce boards.
- **CPI, CPI Plus, and unearned income payments** support cost-of-living and income analysis for policymakers and the media.

Montana updated the occupational licensing data and submitted the license and licauth files to the Analyst Resource Center (ARC) before the June 30, 2026 deadline. Three Montana staff actively take part in ARC. Montana is also the lead state of the seven-state LMInformer Consortium, which maintains a shared WID-based data delivery platform (see Partnerships).

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections

The Montana Workforce Services Division (WSD) submitted the statewide 2024–2034 industry and occupational employment projections required for Program Year 2025 to the Projections Managing Partnership (PMP) by the applicable deadline. Montana separately publishes an annually updated 10-year projection series on its LMI website; the current public release covers 2025–2035. The one-year difference reflects the timing of the federal PMP submission cycle and does not represent different projection methods or a change in Montana's long-term projections program.

Customer consultation and response

Consultation with the Statewide Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB), local workforce development boards, and the Governor's Office identified a need for more timely projections that reflect changes in Montana's business cycle. SWIB and the Governor's Office also requested projections aligned with the high-demand sectors of the Governor's 406 JOBS Initiative.

In response, WSD discontinued short-term projections and now updates 10-year statewide and regional industry and occupational projections annually. WSD also expanded the available detail by publishing three-digit industry projections for economic development regions and four-digit industry projections statewide. This additional detail supports custom industry-sector groupings aligned with 406 JOBS. WSD uses occupational projections to identify workforce needs in these sectors and summarizes the results in sector reports presented to SWIB to inform workforce and training priorities.

WSD also developed population projections by age group to inform labor-force and employment projections. This analysis helps policymakers understand how Montana's changing age structure and labor-force availability may affect future workforce needs.

Methods and geographic details

WSD develops statewide and sub-state projections using PMP methodology, software, and guidelines. Sub-state occupational projections use Local Employment and Wage Information System (LEWIS) staffing patterns. Industry projections are developed at the two-, three-, and four-digit NAICS levels and reconciled across levels to maintain internal consistency.

WSD developed a supplemental self-employment staffing pattern using IPUMS microdata to better represent industries and regions where self-employment is significant. Economists estimate the occupational distribution of self-employed workers by industry and incorporate it as a supplemental input. This method complements PMP methods and LEWIS staffing patterns.

Customer needs met

Postsecondary planners use projections to assess training gaps and align program capacity with projected demand. American Job Center counselors, job seekers, and workforce partners use the Occupational Projections Explorer to identify in-demand occupations, projected openings, wages, and career pathways. Employers, economic developers, local workforce boards, and policymakers use the projections to support workforce planning, sector strategies, and investment decisions.

Projection resources

- Montana Employment Projections: lmi.mt.gov/Projections
- Occupational Projections Explorer: lmi.mt.gov/dashboards/OccupationalProjections
- Downloadable data: [Occupational Projections Data in Excel](#)

3. Employee development and LMI training for service delivery plus other non-required presentations

The WSD Economist team gave 23 presentations to nearly 1,400 customers this past year. The following list of LMI presentations/trainings were provided for WIOA staff, workforce consultants, case managers, service providers, or partners which include some MTDLI employees. The 406 JOBS sector trainings gave AJC staff sector-specific wage, openings, and training-pathway data to use when counseling job seekers and working with employers in target industries.

Table 1. Presentations and LMI Trainings Provided for Service Delivery

	Date	Training	Customer	Location	Attendees
1	6/17/26	406 JOBS Sector – Education and Child Care	Local AJCs, MTDLI staff	Virtual	75
2	6/16/26	Customized LMI for RESEA Plans	RESEA staff	Helena	35
3	5/20/26	406 JOBS Sector – Finance and Professional Services	Local AJCs, MTDLI staff	Virtual	75
4	3/18/26	406 JOBS Sector – Healthcare	Local AJCs, MTDLI staff	Virtual	100
5	2/18/26	406 JOBS Sector – Construction	Local AJCs, MTDLI staff	Virtual	100
6	10/1/25	Economic Update and Customized LMI	WIOA Project Managers	Virtual	75

Presentations and training were tailored to identified needs through ongoing consultation with external stakeholders and workforce-system partners. Employers, Chambers of Commerce, and HR professionals used localized labor-market, compensation, and childcare data to support recruiting, retention, compensation, and business-planning decisions. Industry partners, including health care stakeholders, used occupational supply, demand, retirement, and wage data for workforce planning and recruitment. Educators and education partners used graduate outcomes, occupational-demand, and wage data to guide program planning and student career decisions. Workforce-system partners, economic developers, researchers, and financial-sector stakeholders used customized economic and labor-market updates to assess regional conditions, identify workforce challenges, and inform policy, service delivery, and investment decisions.

Presentations were provided to external stakeholders and key partners, including Chambers of Commerce, SHRM chapters, the Federal Reserve Bank, the Montana University System, national associations of economic researchers, and industry-specific organizations. The following table summarizes additional presentations and trainings delivered during the program year.

Table 2. Presentations and LMI Trainings Provided to External Stakeholders

	Date	Presentation Topic	Audience	Location	Attendees
7	6/11/26	Child Care and the Montana Workforce	Kalispell Chamber of Commerce	Kalispell	35
8	5/21/26	Montana Business Survey on Child Care	Pacific Northwest Regional Economic Conference (PNREC)	Portland, OR	60
9	5/20/26	Labor Market Trends in Montana	PNREC	Portland, OR	60
10	5/20/26	Montana Economic Update	PNREC	Portland, OR	100
11	5/19/26	Customized LMI and Economic Update	Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, State Member Banks	Helena	20
12	5/14/26	Customized LMI and Economic Update	Missoula SHRM, Human Resource Professionals	Missoula	40
13	5/12/26	Data Sharing Through Functions in Snowflake	State of Montana Data Users Conference	Virtual	95
14	5/4/26	Status of Montana's Nursing Workforce	MT Healthcare Workforce Advisory Committee	Virtual	40
15	4/28/26	Child Care and the Montana Workforce	Montana Businesses, Private Employers	Helena	30
16	4/16/26	Career and Technical Education Graduate Workforce Outcomes	National CTE researchers	Virtual	40
17	2/18/26	Customized LMI and Economic Update	Great Falls Community College	Great Falls	20
18	11/6/25	Snowflake Listings Demo	State of Montana Data Users Conference	Virtual	90
19	10/21/25	Customized LMI and Economic Update	Manufacturing Industry, Chamber of Commerce	Virtual	50
20	10/17/25	Customized LMI and Economic Update	Career and Technical Education Providers	Bozeman	40
21	10/8/25	Customized LMI and Economic Update	Montana Hospital Association	Billings	30
22	10/7/25	Healthcare and Nursing Workforce Update	Montana Hospital Association	Billings	30
23	9/22/25	Montana Teacher Compensation Report	School Administrators of Montana	Bozeman	120

Section II. Encouraged Program Activities

4. Economic and Labor Market Reports, Products, and Activities

Statewide Annual Economic Analysis Report

The WSD published Montana's annual economic analysis report, the [2025 Labor Day Report](#), on September 1, 2025. Although the report is no longer a core WIGS deliverable, Montana continues to produce it because policymakers, WIOA partners, legislators, educators, and employers request it and use it as the state's annual reference on economic conditions. The report covers recent statewide and regional trends in employment, wages, unemployment, and industry performance measured by jobs, GDP, and income. The 2025 report covered:

- Montana's labor market, including:
 - Population, employment, and labor force growth
 - Unemployment rates and labor shortages
 - Labor force participation and characteristics of the unemployed
 - Wage growth
 - Industry performance
 - Labor market impacts of migration
 - Regional labor markets and tribal economies
- Recent economic growth, including:
 - GDP growth, by industry
 - New business formation
 - Personal Income
 - Inflation
 - Housing Market
- Workforce Topics of Interest, including:
 - Childcare availability
 - Labor force engagement among Montanans with disabilities
 - How AI is shaping work in Montana
 - Montana's 406 JOBS initiative's target sectors

The Commissioner of Labor and Industry released the 2025 report through a statewide press release, and the report is posted on lmi.mt.gov. The report's analysis of the 406 JOBS target sectors, labor force participation, and Montanans with disabilities gave the Governor's Office, the SWIB, and workforce partners a common baseline as the 406 JOBS initiative launched in August 2025.

After the program year ended, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry presented the 2026 Labor Day Report to Governor Greg Gianforte, who announced its findings in a September 10, 2026, press release. The release highlighted a record labor force of more than 577,800 and a record average annual wage of \$62,290 in 2025, and it connected the findings to the 406 JOBS initiative's workforce strategies.

- [2025 Labor Day Report press release](#)
- [Governor's press release on the 2026 Labor Day Report](#)

406 JOBS Sector Reports

The Montana Department of Labor & Industry (MTDLI) is producing an in-depth analysis of each of the six high-priority sectors identified by the Governor's 406 JOBS Initiative: Construction Trades, Health Careers, Professional and Financial Services, Education and Child Care, Hospitality and Recreation, and Advanced Manufacturing and Computing. The State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) requested the series through the consultation process described in Section 7. WSD economists supplied the occupational analysis at the core of each report, using WIGS-funded long-term projections and OEWS wage data. With that analysis, each report establishes labor market trends for the sector, quantifies its contribution to the Montana economy, and identifies key areas for workforce development — the highest-demand and fastest-growing occupations and the training and education needed to sustain the sector's growth.

The series delivers the industry-driven strategy that Pillar I of America's Talent Strategy places at the center of a working talent pipeline. The reports give employers, SWIB, and workforce partners shared evidence on hard-to-fill occupations, wage levels, credential requirements, and projected occupational demand. Customers are using the findings in two ways:

- **Workforce Pell.** Short-term training programs qualify for Workforce Pell only if they prepare students for high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand occupations, as determined by the state. The SWIB used the WSD job openings, wage, and educational attainment data to identify those occupations. It adopted Montana's Workforce Pell target occupation list at its July 27th, 2026 meeting, shortly after the program year ended.
- **Sector partnership work plans.** The SWIB and the regional sector partnerships use the analyses to select the priority occupations that anchor each partnership's work plan.

Reports published during PY 2025:

- [Construction Sector Analysis](#) (January 2026)
- [Health Careers Sector Analysis](#) (January 2026)
- [Financial and Professional Services Sector Analysis](#) (April 2026)
- [Education and Child Care Sector Analysis](#) (May 2026)

Montana's Non-Working Population Report

The Governor's Office needed to find untapped labor supply to address persistent worker shortages. To meet that need, the Economist team analyzed Montana's non-working population to identify who is outside the labor force and why. The [Montanans for Hire Report](#) summarized the most common barriers to employment for Montanans who are not in the labor force. It also profiled unemployed Montanans, including an analysis of labor market churn among the short-term unemployed. The analysis became the basis for the Governor's 406 JOBS initiative, which targets four pathways to work, removes barriers to employment, and supports six critical sectors of the state economy.

The information in this report was also displayed through a [dashboard](#) explaining the story of Montana's workforce shortage with data, text explanations, and graphics. Users scroll through the dashboard to understand reasons for Montanans who do not participate in the labor force.

Montana Status of the Nursing Workforce Report

At the request of the Montana Board of Nursing, the WSD Economist team updated and published the [Status of the Nursing Workforce Report](#). The Board's Director received survey data from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) and asked WSD to analyze and prepare a report on Montana nurses so the Board could better understand the status of its nursing workforce. The most recent edition uses the 2024 NCSBN survey to describe Montana nurses' work status, demographics, typical educational background, retirement intentions, and other labor market trends. Nursing is the largest occupation in the healthcare sector, so the report offers valuable insight into a critical part of Montana's workforce.

WSD presented the results to stakeholder groups, including the Montana Hospital Association and the Montana Healthcare Workforce Advisory Committee (MHWAC). Hospitals use the report to estimate how many nurses they will need to replace as staff retire and to guide recruitment and retention planning. MHWAC uses the findings to decide where to expand nursing education and training capacity.

Child Care Deserts: Supply and Demand Gaps in Montana Report

MTDLI economists, in collaboration with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) and Montana KIDS COUNT, annually produce [Child Care Deserts: Supply and Demand Gaps in Montana](#). The publication establishes a consistent statewide methodology for measuring child care supply, potential demand, and gaps in access. It provides the Montana Early Childhood Account (MECA) Board, legislators, local policymakers, employers, child care providers, and community partners with a current, geographically detailed assessment of child care shortages and unmet needs across Montana. These findings help partners target child care investments, inform policy and program decisions, and address child care access as a barrier to labor-force participation and employers' ability to recruit and retain workers.

Montana Apprenticeship Report

The WSD produced an updated [Montana Registered Apprenticeship Program Report](#) in 2026. The report describes activity in the Montana Registered Apprenticeship Program (MRAP) and its role in developing skilled workers for Montana employers. It provides information on the number and growth of apprentices and sponsors, apprenticeable occupations, and participant employment, completion, wage, and workforce-retention outcomes.

The report serves MRAP administrators, apprenticeship sponsors and employers, legislators, the State Workforce Innovation Board, and other workforce partners. These users rely on the information to support program administration and expansion, sponsor outreach, occupational targeting, policy development, and workforce investment decisions.

A key new accomplishment in the 2026 edition was the rebuild of the underlying data pipeline using a stint-based method to track individuals' distinct periods of apprenticeship participation. This improvement strengthens the accuracy of participation, completion, and wage-outcome measures. WSD economists also matched MRAP records to Unemployment Insurance wage data to analyze participants' employment, earnings, and retention following apprenticeship participation. This administrative-data approach provides a more reliable basis for assessing apprenticeship outcomes and informing program and policy decisions.

The report also expanded its discussion of apprenticeship's role in the Governor's 406 JOBS Initiative and implementation of House Bill 336. Effective October 1, 2025, HB 336 established Registered Apprenticeship as a pathway to licensure for specified Montana professions. Under the law, applicable licensing boards grant licenses to individuals who complete a relevant Registered Apprenticeship and meet the applicable examination and fee requirements. The report also describes the program's continued expansion into occupations beyond the traditional construction trades, including child care and other high-demand fields.

Office of Reentry Report

In 2025, the Montana Legislature enacted House Bill 718, establishing the Office of Reentry Services within the Montana Department of Labor and Industry. In June 2026, Workforce Services Division analysts published the [Montana Office of Reentry Report](#) to provide an initial assessment of Montana's reentry landscape.

The report describes labor-market conditions and barriers to employment facing justice-involved Montanans, documents the Office of Reentry's early activities, and identifies priority areas for future policy and program development. By bringing together available information on reentry services, employment challenges, and workforce outcomes, the report provides a foundation for continued coordination among state agencies and other reentry stakeholders.

The data partnership and consultation that informed the report are described further in Section 7, Coordination with the Montana Department of Corrections.

Informational Wage Rates by Occupation Report

The WSD publishes [Informational Wage Rates by Occupation](#), the annual wage publication built from the Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) program, produced in partnership with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The publication reports wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments covered by unemployment insurance, presented statewide and by substate region so users can compare local pay to the state as a whole. It is one of the WSD's most heavily used products: employers rely on it to benchmark compensation and structure job offers, job seekers and career counselors use it to evaluate occupations and set wage expectations, and WIOA and Job Service staff use it when advising participants on training and employment decisions. The same OEWS estimates underpin the wage detail in the WSD's projections products, sector analyses, and occupational dashboards, making the program a foundational input across the WSD's publication suite rather than a standalone report.

LMI Dashboard Products

The WSD continues to publish information about Montana's minimum wage and workers earning minimum wage using the Local Employment and Wage Information System (LEWIS) among other data sources. By statute, Montana's minimum wage is adjusted every January 1st, with the new rate made public the preceding October. A [minimum wage dashboard](#) is updated every January and available on demand for data users.

WSD economists update the [Migration Dashboard](#) annually, showing migration by state, county, and demographic. Migration has been a critical driver of labor force growth and a topic of concern for many local workforce and economic development boards.

The economist unit within WSD maintains the [Local Area Profiles dashboard](#), which provides county-level labor market information on employment and unemployment, wages, industry growth, and top employers. The dashboard combines data from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), and Current Employment Statistics (CES) programs to give local officials, employers, workforce partners, job seekers, and the public a consolidated source of county labor market information. Local Area Profiles was the third most-visited LMI webpage in PY2025, with 2,481 views, reflecting strong customer demand for local data.

The WSD economist team continues to maintain the [Job Tracking dashboard](#), which provides monthly labor force and employment statistics for Montana, counties, and reservations, along with monthly industry job-growth information. The dashboard uses LAUS and CES data and is updated according to the BLS release schedules. Based on feedback from Department administration, economists updated the Job Tracking dashboard in PY2025 to transition its focus from Montana's 2020 post-pandemic recovery to ongoing monitoring of current economic conditions.

5. Innovation in Modernizing Workforce Data and Systems

Talent Marketplace

Montana is one of ten states named a semifinalist in the U.S. Department of Education's Connecting Talent to Opportunity (CTO) Challenge, which the Department announced in June 2026. The Challenge is a \$15 million prize competition to help states build Talent Marketplaces that connect learners, education and training providers, and employers. Montana is now in a six-month incubation period, receiving technical assistance to refine its plan before the finalist implementation phase. Montana's Talent Marketplace will combine learning and employment records (LERs), the statewide credential registry, and AI skills-based job-description tools in one platform. Together, these will describe jobs and credentials in terms of the skills they require. Individuals and employers will be able to securely share, understand, and use verified skills and achievements to plan training and advance careers. The platform builds on the state's 406 JOBS initiative. Once developed, it will be free to students and educators.

Customer consultation is integrated throughout the three-year development process. Partner organizations representing the platform's primary user groups—SHRM for employers and HR professionals, JAG for students, and the Chamber Education Foundation for education and business partners—will review and provide feedback as features are designed, tested, and released. The WSD will also seek input from AJC staff and education and training providers. The CTO Challenge incubation period will provide an early, structured opportunity for review. Feedback will inform data presentation, feature prioritization, and usability for users with varying levels of experience.

Customer needs met:

- **Job seekers and learners** can see which skills and credentials local jobs require, compare them with their own verified records, and find training programs that close the gaps.
- **Businesses and employers** can write skills-based job descriptions, find qualified candidates by verified skills rather than degrees alone, and compare their wages with local market rates.
- **Education and training providers and program planners** can align programs and credentials with projected occupational demand and employer-requested skills.
- **Workforce intermediaries** (AJC staff and school counselors) get one platform that links career exploration, training, and job opportunities.

This project combines WIGS-funded data with partner-funded development. WIGS paid for the labor market information behind the platform: occupational projections, OEWS wage estimates, LMI data, and the education and training program availability data. The WSD produces all of these as core WIGS deliverables. Private funding organizations will also support development of the platform itself. No WIGS funds support platform development, so WIGS does not supplant other federal, state, or private funding. The state also worked through convening and philanthropic partners,

including the Montana Chamber Education Foundation, SHRM, and Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), rather than routing all funding through the Department of Labor & Industry. This structure keeps partners aligned on shared goals. The project responds to TEGL 04-25's encouragement to use WLMI to improve career navigation through technology and to explore AI tools. It also reflects the Workforce Information Advisory Council's (WIAC) recommendation for more open, actionable information through strong collaboration and data sharing among system partners.

Job Postings Data

Building on its existing monthly pipeline of Montana online job postings, the WSD is expanding its use of job-posting data to supplement LMI publications and products. The current pipeline, which uses NLx data and codes postings to the O*NET/SOC occupational classification system, supports job-vacancy analysis in WSD publications and dashboards.

In PY2025, MTDLI contracted with Lightcast to explore how its job-posting data and skills taxonomy can provide additional detail on in-demand occupations, skills, certifications, and other credentials requested in job advertisements across Montana and its regions. This work will help the department assess how enhanced job-posting data can identify emerging workforce needs, strengthen career-navigation resources, inform education and training alignment, and support employers and job seekers in making more informed decisions.

Job Comparison Tool

WSD developed an online self-service career-guidance dashboard using O*NET data to help job seekers explore occupations with similar work activities. Users select an occupation, and the dashboard identifies related occupations and compares the detailed work activities associated with each. The tool also provides wage information, projected employment, and links to O*NET for additional occupational information.

The [Job Comparison Tool](#) dashboard helps job seekers, including dislocated workers and UI claimants, identify occupations that use transferable work activities and support career exploration and reemployment planning. It also provides AJC staff with a resource to help customers compare career options and make informed career decisions.

Section III. Required Methods

This section elaborates on the methodological standards MTDLI uses when collaborating with partners and consulting customers. LMI website analytics are also provided, which are used by WSD to assess the reach and effectiveness of its outreach and engagement efforts. All WIGS-funded data collection, analysis, and dissemination activities follow applicable BLS, Projections Managing Partnership, and ETA requirements. WSD uses established research methods and credible data sources; documents sources and methods as appropriate; and publishes accessible LMI products on lmi.mt.gov.

6. Partnerships

The Workforce Services Division (WSD) maintained an ongoing partnership with the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) Executive Committee and staff during PY 2025. The WSD provided labor-market data, economic analysis, and technical support to inform statewide workforce planning and to support the Board's use and dissemination of LMI. Specific SWIB consultation activities and resulting products are described in Section 7, consultation with the SWIB. Additional partnerships included:

Montana Education and Workforce Data Governing Board

The Division participates in the Education and Workforce Data Governing Board (EDWG) and related workgroups, engaging with Montana's K-12 and Higher Education agencies to develop a research agenda and framework around the sharing of data for the purpose of researching secondary and postsecondary workforce outcomes. A summary of the board activities and the research agenda for the program year can be found in the [EDWG report](#) presented to the Education Interim Committee and the Education Interim Budget Committee.

Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE)

The Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Workforce Services Division continued to foster partnership with the state's higher education system through the development of a shared data function allowing OCHE access to administrative wage records for their students. WSD's provision of workforce outcomes data for graduates from the Montana University System (MUS) provides critical information to educators and students on the value of higher education and helps inform strategic planning decisions for the institutions. The results of this workforce outcomes analysis are made publicly available through the MUS [Student Success Workforce Dashboard](#).

Montana Tribal and Private Colleges

WSD established data-sharing agreements with Fort Peck Community College, Salish Kootenai College, and Stone Child College to provide customized labor market information and analyze workforce outcomes for their graduates. The analyses will help the colleges better understand graduates' employment and earnings outcomes and provide evidence to support program review, planning, and accreditation-related needs.

WSD also continued partnerships with the University of Providence, Carroll College, and Rocky Mountain College. Through these partnerships, the colleges provide student data to WSD, which produces customized analyses of graduate workforce outcomes.

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS)

WSD maintains an integrated data platform to share administrative wage records with the DPHHS Office of Research and Data Analytics for purposes of researching and improving program outcomes for individuals served by the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Medicaid programs administered by DPHHS.

Montana Healthcare Workforce Advisory Committee (MHWAC)

WSD economists continued to participate in the MHWAC, including contributing to a strategic planning session and providing feedback for an external study. MTDLI presented the Nursing Workforce report to the committee this spring. The WSD is charged with analysis of state labor market information, current and projected workforce needs related to health care.

Montana Early Childhood Account (MECA) Board

The Montana Early Childhood Account (MECA) was established by HB 924 during the 2025 Legislature. The MECA board is responsible for making funding recommendations and investment decisions based on the annual interest deposited into the account. The MTDLI WSD Administrator holds one of ten board seats, along with representatives from MT Department of Public Health and Human Services, MT Office of Public Instruction (K-12), Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education, two early childhood organizations, two Montana child-care providers, and one parent with a child in care. WSD works with these partners to provide data support and research on childcare availability in Montana and the impact on the workforce. The division has produced reports and given presentations on the childcare landscape and workforce impacts to several parties.

LMInformer Consortium

Montana leads the LMInformer Consortium, a partnership of Arkansas, Delaware, Michigan, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, and South Carolina. Formed in PY2011 to develop a successor to Workforce Informer, the consortium now jointly supports development and maintenance of a shared, WID 3.0-compliant labor market information platform.

The consortium leverages member states' workforce-information funding by pooling resources for a single data-delivery system. This approach gives each participating state access to a shared platform at a fraction of the cost of independently developing and maintaining comparable infrastructure. Montana's WIGS-funded development work therefore benefits all seven consortium states, while Montana also benefits from investments and improvements supported by other members.

The platform uses open architecture and shared software, consistent with TEGL IT requirements for states to make federally funded workforce-information technology available for federal purposes.

7. Customer Consultation

The following section describes how the Montana Workforce Services Division (WSD) consults with customers to ensure the state's workforce system provides relevant, integrated labor market information for state agencies and workforce development boards.

Statewide Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB)

The WSD consulted regularly with the SWIB director, Executive Committee, and staff through meetings, presentations, and ongoing labor market information requests. SWIB members identified a need for timely workforce intelligence and accessible performance measures to support statewide planning and investment decisions. In response, the WSD provided customized analyses and presentations and maintained public dashboards reporting WIOA Title I and III participation, Job Service office activity, and other workforce-program measures. These resources support transparent, data-informed workforce system planning.

As part of Montana's designation as the Headwaters Regional Technology and Innovation Hub, the SWIB directed the WSD to develop a TechHub Workforce Roadmap. SWIB consultation identified a need for a coordinated assessment of workforce capacity in Montana's photonics and LiDAR-related industries, including priority occupations, skill requirements, and education and training pathways. In response, WSD economists drafted the roadmap, which analyzes employment patterns, occupational and skill clusters, and short- and long-term training needs. The publication will provide recommendations to strengthen the talent pipeline, including internships, modular credentials, and scalable training in applied optics and sensor fabrication. The TechHub Workforce Roadmap is drafted and scheduled for publication in PY2026.

The WSD economist unit also worked with the SWIB director to support the 406 JOBS Initiative through industry-sector workforce analysis. The completed reports and their findings are described in Section 4 under 406 JOBS sector report. Four of the six sector reports were completed during PY2025. The Hospitality and Recreation report was released in September 2026, and the Advanced Manufacturing and Computing Sector Report is in development and will be published in PY2026.

- Data Resource Dashboard: [SWIB Data Dashboards](#)
- SWIB Metrics Dashboard: [SWIB Dashboard](#)

Department of Commerce Economic Development

WSD maintains a shared data platform with current labor market information that the Montana Department of Commerce uses in data visualizations and economic-development projects. In response to requests from Commerce business-recruitment staff, WSD also maintains a self-service [occupational wage tool](#) that enables economic developers to answer employer wage questions promptly rather than contacting WSD staff for each business prospect.

Montana Department of Corrections

The Montana Department of Labor and Industry continued to consult with the Montana Department of Corrections to conduct wage-record matches and assess employment outcomes for individuals involved with the correctional system. This ongoing collaboration provides information on workforce participation, employment retention, and earnings following release.

Following enactment of House Bill 718 in 2025, the Department of Corrections and MTDLI used this established data partnership to help inform the Office of Reentry Services' initial planning. Workforce Services Division analysts examined employment and wage outcomes for justice-involved Montanans and evaluated Montana Job Service case-management data to describe participation in MTDLI services and related outcomes. The analysis contributed to the Montana Office of Reentry Report, published in June 2026.

Montana Non-Profit Association

The WSD economist team consulted with the Montana Non-Profit Association (MNA) to produce an annual analysis of Montana's nonprofit sector, estimating employment, wages, and establishment counts for 501(c)(3) organizations by linking IRS and Urban Institute Business Master File records to Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) establishment data. The results give policymakers, funders, and nonprofit partners a consistent measure of the sector's size and contribution to Montana's economy, including detail for health care organizations and statewide estimates by nonprofit activity type.

Montana Unemployment Insurance Division

The WSD economist team maintains dashboards for public information about unemployment insurance payments by county, and demographic and economic data of claimants. In consultation with the UI Division analysts, the WSD economists maintain models to project UI trust fund balances using LMI and developed dashboards to assist with monitoring balances along with potential UI rate changes for employers.

Economists consulted with the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program to identify data needs for a randomized controlled trial evaluating new service-delivery strategies. The RESEA program needed rigorous evidence on which approaches improve participant outcomes and support the effective use of public funds. In response, WSD economists produced participant outcome data for the evaluation and partnered with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, which conducted and published the final evaluation report in December 2025. The findings support evidence-based RESEA service-delivery models.

Economists also developed new data views showing the services RESEA participants receive and the training programs in which they may later enroll. These views give RESEA staff more timely information to monitor service delivery and participants' subsequent connections to training.

- [Unemployment Claims Dashboard](#)
- [RCT Analysis of Enhanced Services Pilot of the Montana RESEA Program](#)

Montana Registered Apprenticeship Program

WSD economists consult with the Montana Registered Apprenticeship program unit in MTDLI to provide customized labor market information to improve the administration and expansion of apprenticeship training programs in Montana. Economists created projections estimates for occupations that are or can be apprenticed in Montana and analyzed workforce outcomes for apprenticeship participants compared to other educational programs in the state. Economists developed and currently maintain the [Montana Registered Apprenticeship Program dashboard](#) that visualizes apprenticeship utilization across Montana.

Montana Professional Boards and Licensing

WSD economists consult with the Business Standards Division (BSD) of the Montana Department of Labor and Industry to provide data and information on occupational licensing in Montana. BSD identified a need for accessible, up-to-date licensing data to support workforce planning and monitor the supply of licensed healthcare professionals across the state.

In response, WSD maintains the [Montana Occupational Licensing Dashboard](#). The dashboard provides workforce-development agencies and other partners with information on licensed workers by occupation and geographic area. WSD and workforce partners use these data to monitor the Rural Health Transformation Program and assess how licensing information supports the program's workforce objectives.

American Job Center (AJC) Operations/WIOA

For American Job Center operations and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs, WSD economists develop reports and Tableau visualizations on program services, participant characteristics, and customer outcomes. These tools make WIOA and related program information more accessible to Job Service staff, workforce-development boards, and partner agencies, allowing them to monitor services, identify customer needs, and support data-informed planning.

- [Job Service Clients Served Dashboard](#)

WSD also produces operational tools that help local offices connect customers and employers with workforce services. For example, economists developed outreach lists that identify Medicaid enrollees who may benefit from employment services, training, and work supports. Job Service offices can use these lists to conduct proactive outreach and coordinate assistance for individuals facing barriers to employment. WSD also automated the weekly New Employer Accounts List, which provides Workforce Consultants with office-specific lists of newly registered Montana employers for business engagement and outreach.

To support employer-demand analysis and workforce planning, the division maintains a monthly pipeline of Montana online job postings and codes the postings to the O*NET/SOC occupational classification system. The resulting data supports job-vacancy analysis in WSD publications and dashboards and provides a consistent source of information for state agencies, workforce-development boards, and local workforce partners.

- [Job Postings Dashboard](#)

Finally, division leadership surveys AJC staff about the communications and training provided by the WSD. Feedback from this survey is used to improve the delivery of labor market information and compliance training, helping ensure that staff receive information in formats that are useful, understandable, and responsive to operational needs.

8. Labor Market Information (LMI) Website Analytics

During PY 2025, the LMIInformer website received approximately 54,331 pageviews. WSD reviews web analytics to assess use of individual pages and overall site traffic. These statistics help identify customer needs and guide improvements to existing online LMI products.

The Montana Career Lab was the most-visited page, with 3,835 views, indicating strong demand from job seekers, students, counselors, and educators for career-exploration information. Local Area Profiles, with 2,481 views, and Top Private Employers, with 1,233 views, demonstrate demand for local labor-market information among employers, economic developers, workforce partners, and community planners. These usage patterns help guide updates to online tools and inform outreach and product-development priorities

Table 3. Top 10 Most-Visited LMIInformer Pages, Program Year 2025

Webpage	URL	Estimated Views
Montana Career Lab	lmi.mt.gov/career	3,835
LMI Publications	lmi.mt.gov/Publications/index	2,959
Local Area Profiles Dashboard	lmi.mt.gov/LocalAreaProfiles	2,481
Data Dashboards Page	lmi.mt.gov/dashboards/datadashboards	2,305
LMI Dashboard	lmi.mt.gov/index	1,951
OEWS Resources	lmi.mt.gov/Occupation	1,356
Projections Resources	lmi.mt.gov/Projections	1,236
Top Private Employers	lmi.mt.gov/employment/qcewtop	1,233
EAG Articles	lmi.mt.gov/Publications/Articles	1,127
Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics	https://lmi.mt.gov/oewsdashboard	1,058

Section IV. Recommendations

Montana recommends that ETA continue to work closely with states and evaluate areas of collaboration and/or improvement in adjustments to the grant deliverables by using the BLOC, WIAC, the NASWA WLMI Committee, BLS Policy Councils, or other appropriate entities to propose and discuss potential changes.