

AJC Operating Model Review Assessment

Questions for state and local workforce leaders following DOL ETA TEN 02-26

Start with the operating model.

The rule gives states greater flexibility in who may deliver Wagner-Peyser Employment Services. Use this checklist to identify whether the current structure is creating friction in American Job Center (AJC) operations and whether the current staffing model supports the best operating model for service delivery.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, TEN 02-26; Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Staffing Final Rule, 91 FR 54024 (Aug. 20, 2026).

1. Governance and accountability

For each question, rate 1–5: **1 = NOT AT ALL** • **5 = WORKING VERY WELL**

Questions to Consider	1	2	3	4	5
Are roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority clear and aligned across the organizations responsible for AJC performance and customer experience?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Are Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I staff working toward aligned service expectations and performance priorities?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Can cross-program service issues be resolved locally without requiring navigation through separate state and local chains of command?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. Customer experience

Questions to Consider	1	2	3	4	5
Can job seekers move across Wagner-Peyser, Title I, and other AJC services without duplicate intake, avoidable referrals, repeated information requests, case handoffs, or other barriers?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Can customers move through services based on need without program boundaries determining which staff member can help them next?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Does the customer journey minimize delays, confusion, or inconsistent service caused by organizational structures or processes?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Functional integration & staff deployment

For each question, rate 1–5: **1 = NOT AT ALL** • **5 = WORKING VERY WELL**

Questions to Consider	1	2	3	4	5
How effectively does the current structure support coordination of program functions (e.g., intake, career counseling, reemployment, and placement) across AJC programs?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When customer volume changes, a major layoff occurs, or a regional priority emerges, can workforce system leaders quickly realign staff and responsibilities?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Do staffing schedules, roles, and coverage reflect customer demand across the AJC and meet programmatic and funding requirements?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Employer engagement

Questions to Consider	1	2	3	4	5
Do employers experience a single, coordinated business services team and approach, with clear account ownership and shared regional priorities?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How effectively are Wagner-Peyser and WIOA Title I employer outreach, job development, and sector strategies coordinated across the workforce system?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Are employer-facing staff deployed around emerging sector needs, major hiring opportunities, and Rapid Response without organizational barriers?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Pinpoint what's driving friction.

Not every integration problem requires a staffing-model change. Use these questions to distinguish structural staffing barriers from issues that can be addressed through process, policy, technology, or management improvements.

1. Workforce operations & management

Questions to Consider	1	2	3	4	5
Do current hiring, job classification, scheduling, supervision, training, and performance-management arrangements support the ability of staff and partners to work effectively across the AJC?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Can specialized roles and critical vacancies be filled in a timely way within the current staffing and classification structure?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Do staff and partners have appropriate access to the training, tools, information, and resources needed to effectively perform their roles and support an integrated service delivery system?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. Data, technology & visibility

For each question, rate 1–5: **1 = NOT AT ALL** • **5 = WORKING VERY WELL**

Questions to Consider	1	2	3	4	5
Do key staff and partners have the system and data access needed to serve customers without unnecessary handoffs or workarounds?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Can AJC and workforce system leaders see performance and workload across programs well enough to manage the center as one operation?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Do technology and data access arrangements support integrated service delivery without staffing-related barriers or workarounds?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Apply the root-cause test before considering a new model.

- ☐ Is the identified issue materially affecting customer service, employer service, staff effectiveness, responsiveness, or performance?
- ☐ What evidence or data demonstrates the nature and extent of the issue(s)?
- ☐ What are the primary causes (e.g., governance, policy, technology, funding, management, staffing, or other factors) and could they be addressed within the current staffing model?
- ☐ If staffing structure is a contributing factor, would an alternative arrangement materially improve service delivery, accountability, responsiveness, and/or performance?

Safal Partners. For Solutions.

Safal workforce experts have decades of experience delivering data-driven, implementable solutions for state and local workforce boards and stakeholders. We can help assess your current AJC's operating model impact on service delivery results and how to evaluate potential options presented by the new DOL final rule on Wagner-Peyser Employment Service Staffing.

Start a Conversation – [Visit us at safalpartners.com](https://www.safalpartners.com)