MetroCommon × 2050
Policy Recommendations

Equity of Wealth and Health
Prepare workers for quality jobs across a changing set of opportunities
**Action Area: Equity of Wealth and Health**

**Recommendation:**
Prepare workers for quality jobs across a changing set of opportunities

---

**Strategy 1**
Increase investment in the workforce development system structure.

- **Action 1.1:** Convene a task force to recommend revisions to the Commonwealth’s Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding formula and other federal funding sources that support workforce development, such as Wagner/Peyser, in order to target areas of high need. Additional criteria to consider may include proportions of discouraged workers (those no longer seeking work or unable to find work after long-term unemployment), continued unemployment claims, and concentrations of non-English speakers.

- **Action 1.2:** Commission a task force to review the current geographical designations for MassHire Workforce Boards and evaluate alternative or supplemental designations that would provide more effective programs in underserved communities.

- **Action 1.3:** Allocate state funds to upgrade digital capacity for the MassHire Workforce Boards and Career Centers to provide remote services.

---

**Strategy 2**
Address upstream barriers to skill building in the workforce system network.

- **Action 2.1:** Restructure the Governor’s Workforce Skills Cabinet as the Economic Resilience and Recovery Cabinet and add the Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Environment, and Transportation. The cabinet should develop inter-departmental recovery and resiliency strategies responsive to both upstream issues that impact economic mobility and downstream needs of individuals and businesses.

- **Action 2.2:** The Commonwealth should require Regional Workforce Blueprints to specify how partners will identify and address upstream barriers, such as transportation access, housing stability, childcare, and digital access. The Commonwealth should allocate funding to support implementation.

- **Action 2.3:** Convene community colleges and state and local actors to evaluate how to provide options for housing, childcare, and digital access for students in need.

---

**Strategy 3**
Integrate MassHire Workforce Board activities into economic development efforts.

- **Action 3.1:** The Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development should create independent regional economic development authorities across the Commonwealth. The mandate of these authorities should be to advance strategic economic development initiatives that build an equitable, cohesive, and sustainable regional economic system with a focus on supporting quality job development in the region.
Action 3.2: Provide additional funding to incentivize municipalities and MassHire Workforce Boards to collaborate on updates to the Regional Blueprint planning documents as a way to develop concrete workforce development plans integrated with local economic development efforts.

Action 3.3: Require partners to integrate sector based and private sector driven partnerships as components of Regional Workforce Blueprints to make the blueprints more actionable and aligned with ongoing economic development efforts.

Strategy 4
Continue to expand workforce development and career pathways in the current K–12 system.

Action 3.1: The Commonwealth should revise regional vocational technical school district areas to better serve communities with greater need.

Action 4.2: Increase funding for Early College programs and ensure that high schools, local governments and the workforce community have a role in shaping the infrastructure and long-term goals of these programs.

Action 4.3: Expand incentives for employers to participate in summer youth jobs programs.

Action 4.4: Address funding disparities between the Commonwealth’s community colleges and state universities.