

Local Workforce Development Area Designation Application

I. Point of Contact

Fill in the information below regarding the individual who is completing this application on behalf of the chief local elected official who will serve as the point of contact for future correspondence.

Chief local elected official	Glenn Adams (Cumberland County Board of Commissioners)
Contact Name	Justin Hembree
Title	Executive Director, Mid-Carolina Regional Council
Address	6205 Raeford Rd, Fayetteville, NC 28304
Email Address	jhembree@mccog.org
Date of Application	April 8, 2022

II. Additional Information Regarding Designation/Transfer Request

Is the request for a new Local Area? Yes No

Is the request regarding the transfer of county(ies) of an existing Local Area by a unit (or group of units) of local government? Yes No

III. Participating Counties

List all counties that will form the reorganized Local Area.

County of Cumberland

County of Harnett

County of Sampson

IV. Adding or Removing a County(ies)

Indicate the names of each county requesting removal from their currently designated Local Area and addition to a reorganized Local Area. Please indicate which Local Area the county is being removed from.

County of Cumberland: Cumberland County Local Area

County of Harnett, County of Sampson: Triangle South Local Area

V. Circumstances for the Request

Attach a summary which clearly states the circumstances for the request of transfer of county(ies)/reorganization.

Reference "Circumstances for Request" attachment

VI. Impact of the Withdrawal County(ies) to the Withdrawing Area

Attach a summary that clearly states how the proposed transfer of county(ies) will impact those Local Areas from which it is withdrawing, such as impact on service delivery, economic development regions, commuting patterns, availability of educational and training providers, needs and services related to the business and employer community, and other community-based needs.

Additionally, please indicate the impact of the move to the restructured Local Area the county wishes to be included in, if applicable.

The request for a new Local Area is part of the planned dissolution of the Triangle South Local Area; Cumberland County was a single-county Local Area which has agreed to be part of a newly formed Local Area.

VII. Local Area Designation Criteria

Attach a summary to address each of the specific considerations that follow, as well as any additional information or evidence to support the claims.

1. Impact on service delivery in the proposed reorganized Local Area;

Cumberland, Harnett, and Sampson Counties have worked together on regional projects and share many of the same labor market characteristics and employer needs. Job fairs and hiring events often include businesses across county lines and many job seekers are referred to employers within the proposed Local Area. By formally reorganizing into this new Local Area, we will be able to enhance what has already been naturally occurring throughout the region and identify opportunities for renewed engagement among employers and job seekers alike. Collective effort is especially imperative given the limited funding and staff resources available.

2. Costs and benefits of a potential reorganization including, availability of educational and training providers (such as institutions of higher education and career and technical education schools in the area), needs and services related to the business and employer community and other community-based needs;

Institutions of higher education within the proposed local area include Fayetteville Technical Community College, Sampson Community College, Fayetteville State University, Methodist University, and Campbell University. Harnett County Department of Workforce Development is currently located on the Central Carolina Community College campus. There are currently three NCWorks Career Centers within the proposed local area. The challenge statewide continues to be how we can most effectively provide service delivery across an extended region with continued reductions in funding and staff resources. This will require innovative collaborations with system partners as well enhanced methods for implementing and providing virtual service delivery that meet both our employer and job seekers customers where they are both literally and figuratively. As more systems are available virtually, we must be flexible in our ability to provide services to anyone from anywhere. This may lead to pilot locations throughout the proposed local area through the support of partner agencies and/or a call center approach to conducting service delivery on a more widespread virtual scale that allows for staff to provide enhanced services for employer and job seeker customers as deemed to be applicable.

3. Consistency with natural labor market areas and commuting patterns;

Employment in the region is highly concentrated, with roughly a third of all jobs in the region in Health Care & Social Assistance and Retail Trade. With the inclusion of Accommodation & Food Services and Public Administration, more than half of all jobs are accounted for at a rate significantly higher than the state's average for these industries.

The region has seen a decrease in the labor force over the past ten years with unemployment rates following a similar trend to the state. Currently, employers in the three counties fill more than 55% of all jobs with residents of the three counties; this may be a result of wages in the region being lower than the statewide average. The region has a smaller percentage of individuals with an educational attainment of a Bachelor's Degree or higher, which may affect wages offered by the region's employers, although eight of the MSA's 25 largest occupations have no education requirements and only four require a bachelor's degree. The region needs more jobs overall at a higher wage for its residents.

4. Consistency with regional economic development areas;

One of the main economic drivers in Cumberland County and the region is highway infrastructure. With Interstate 95, Highway 401, and Highway 24, respectively; the expanded MCRC Local Area is easily connected to both Sampson and Harnett Counties from an economic development perspective. The recruitment of new

companies or expansion of existing companies allows for the commuting patterns of these highways to easily connect workers to jobs. Quite often, workers in the region follow one of these highways regardless of where the worker lives, and the continued improvements to this highway infrastructure (e.g. I-95 expansion to 8-lanes, Hwy 24 expansion to 4-lanes from Downtown Fayetteville to Downtown Clinton, and more) will make connectivity to new and existing employers easier in the future.

According to the most recent commuting patterns data by LEAD, there were 61,724 people that live and work in the 3 counties (this excluded Fort Bragg) out of a total worker population of 210,345 people. Many of the near 150,000 people that do not currently live and work in the proposed 3-county region could be the future workforce for new and existing companies while working in partnership with local, regional, and state economic developers.

5. Local backing by county commissioners, municipal elected officials – including mayors and/or city council members, where appropriate – and business or community leaders within the area of the implementation strategies to provide quality services to employers and individuals; backing may be demonstrated by meeting minutes, letters of support, resolutions or a vote of support by a commission, council, or other applicable board; and

Reference signed resolutions

6. Local capacity to manage funds, provide oversight of programs, and provide for the proper stewardship of public funds.

Cumberland, Harnett, and Sampson County all fall under the Mid-Carolina Council of Governments (MCRC), which is the current administrative agent for the Cumberland County workforce local area. The MCRC serves to provide cooperative planning, coordination, and technical assistance on issues of mutual concern across the regional context, with a strategic emphasis on economic and workforce development priorities.

VIII. Signatures of Representatives from each County in the Proposed Reorganized Local Area

The chief local elected official from each county to be named on the Local Area's Consortium Agreement in the proposed Local Area must sign the attached signature sheet to show their approval. If necessary, a separate signature page from each representative may be attached. Additional signature lines may be added as needed.

Per the consortium agreement, the applicable representatives will be meeting shortly to select the Chief Elected Official and will sign this application at that time. In the meantime, please refer to signatures on the attached resolutions.

IX. Approvals on Proposed Reorganization of WDB(s) (Optional)

Have the WDB(s) impacted by the transfer of county(ies)/reorganization approved?

Yes No

If yes, attach Board resolution(s), meeting minutes, or letter of support.

If no, explain why not.

X. Email the Application

Send the completed application with the attachments to: AssistantSecretary@ncworks.gov. The subject line of the email should contain "Local Area Designation."