DIRECTIVE

Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County
Date: August 12, 2026

TUL 26-02: EMPLOYMENT CONNECTION ONE-STOP SYSTEM MARKETING AND CO-BRANDING GUIDELINES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This policy guides Employment Connection One-Stop System marketing, branding, and co-branding efforts with America's Job Center of California[sm], the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County (WIB), youth@work, and special grant initiatives.

This Directive outlines the policies and procedures that all WIB Subrecipients and Employment Connection partners must follow for communications and branding of WIB-funded Employment Connection System programs and services.

This Directive applies to all Employment Connection, youth@work, and One-Stop System programs funded under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title I, and other WIB-funded special grants. This Directive takes effect on the date of issuance.

WIB-specific requirements are identified in bold italics.

This Directive supersedes WIB Directive TUL 22-02 dated July 13, 2022. Retain this Directive until further notice.

REFERENCES:

- Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 16-16: One-Stop Operations Guidance for the American Job Center Network
- America's Job Center of California Organizational Identity and Style Guide

- American Job Center – Graphics Style Guide for Partners
- Code of Federal Regulations; 200.421 Advertising and public relations
- Federal Grant Funding Disclosure: Stevens Amendment

BACKGROUND:

Branding helps companies identify their primary role, purpose, and identity. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), a brand is a "name, term, sign, symbol, a design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and differentiate them from those of other sellers."

Brand building in the public workforce development system is similar to the private sector. Our customers need to understand our mission, the value of our services, and how to access them. To develop a comprehensive brand strategy, all partners and staff must understand their role in communicating and delivering products and services to customers, which is crucial for providing excellent customer service. Our responsibility is to have a solid brand that enables our customers (job seekers, young adults, and businesses) to access the services available to them.

An effective brand will:

- Deliver the message clearly
- Confirm your credibility
- Connect with your target customers emotionally
- Motivate customers to use your services

POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

Publications and advertisements are vital tools for establishing a clear brand identity for Employment Connection (and its related sub-brands such as youth@work and special grant initiatives), a partner of the America's Job Center of California℠ (AJCC) network. To be recognized and positively associated with our customers, the brand must be presented consistently and uniformly across all materials.

In 2021, Employment Connection completed a system-wide rebranding effort to refine its mission, vision, and visual identity. That work resulted in the Employment Connection Brand Guide, which provides standards for using the Employment Connection name, logo, and co-branded materials in coordination with the AJCC identity. The Brand Guide ensures visual consistency across branded products, reinforces our connection with the AJCC network, and serves as a resource for staff and partners in presenting a cohesive, customer-focused identity.

This Directive summarizes key elements of the Employment Connection Brand Guide and provides additional guidance on marketing and branding practices that go beyond mission, vision, and visual identity, including requirements for Subrecipients and partners.

Failure to adhere to the standards described below may result in the need to revise or withdraw materials.

1. **WIB MARKETING CONTACT**
   If Employment Connection staff and partners have questions about this directive or any other marketing policies and procedures, they should contact the WIB Communications Coordinator at (559) 713-5200.

2. **ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY**

   A. American Job Center Network and America's Job Center of California Network
   In June 2012, the Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration (DOL ETA) announced the American Job Center Network, a unifying name and brand that identifies virtual and in-person publicly funded workforce development services as part of a single national network. To increase job seeker and employer awareness of workforce development resources available across the country, the DOL ETA strongly encourages states and local workforce investment areas to implement the American Job Center brand in accordance with state guidelines. In July 2013, the Employment Development Department (EDD), under the auspices of the California Workforce Investment Board (CWIB), announced the rollout of the universal branding of California's one-stop centers as America's Job Center of California (AJCC) network. Since many local areas and individual entities had already established their own brand identity, this effort did not require those pre-existing brands to be abandoned in order to adopt the America's Job Center of California[sm] brand. Instead, it is expected that the AJCC logo is used in conjunction with the logo or mark of another entity.

   B. Employment Connection of Tulare County
   Employment Connection is the customer-facing brand for the workforce development system in Tulare County. It is the name we use when referring to the organization, sites, offices, and services.

   When referring to the organization, we should be called "Employment Connection of Tulare County" or "Employment Connection," but never "Tulare County Employment Connection."

   When referring to a location, follow these examples:

   - ***Employment Connection Center***
   - ***Employment Connection Center in Visalia***
   - ***Visalia Employment Connection Center***

C. Brand Guidelines

Employment Connection and America's Job Center of California℠ are part of the same system and work together to support our customers' needs. To reflect this relationship, Employment Connection and AJCC are often co-branded in marketing and outreach materials.

I. ***The America's Job Center of California Organizational Identity and Style Guide outlines the organizational identity of the AJCC.***

II. ***The Employment Connection Brand Guide outlines the organizational identity of Employment Connection. The Brand Guide outlines when, how, and in what format the logo should be used. Staff can access logos, documents, and templates related to the branding efforts using the Employment Connection System Shared Google Drive.***

III. **Sub Brand Guidelines**

a. ***The youth@work Brand Guide outlines the organizational identity of the youth@work program, a sub-brand of Employment Connection. The youth@work Brand Guide outlines when, how, and under what graphic standards the youth@work logo should be used and co-branded. It also provides direction for youth@work staff and partners around branding that may differ from the Employment Connection Brand Guide.***

b. ***The Special Grant Initiative Brand Guide outlines the identity of "special grants" as a sub-brand of Employment Connection or youth@work. The Special Grant Initiative Brand Guide outlines how and when special grant Initiative brands should be used and co-branded. It also provides direction for Subrecipient staff and partners around branding that may differ from the Employment Connection or youth@work Brand Guides.***

3. LOGO AND BRANDING USAGE GUIDELINES

A. Use of Employment Connection and youth@work Logo(s)

To promote a seamless delivery system, all Employment Connection and youth@work documents, including but not limited to marketing materials, business cards, forms, and other WIB-funded activities, must be identified with the Employment Connection and/or youth@work logo(s). Subrecipients may not use their agency logo in conjunction with the Employment Connection or youth@work logos on marketing materials produced for WIB-funded activities.

B. Co-Branding: AJCC and Employment Connection

As a partner of America's Job Center of California℠ (AJCC), the AJCC logo will be used in conjunction with the Employment Connection logo. When the AJCC logo is used in a co-branding situation, the logo must print at least one-third the size (or larger) than

the Employment Connection logo, but never smaller than one inch (1") minimum size required by AJCC guidelines. For example:

Another option is to use the tagline "A proud partner of America's Job Center of California network" in conjunction with the EC logo, as shown here:

The slogan, which is to be printed in Arial typeface, shall appear immediately adjacent to the logo and can be proportional to the size of the logo; however, in no case shall the text be smaller than 8 points. It is also permissible to use the slogan "A proud partner of America's Job Center of California℠ network" without the logo.

Employment Connection and AJCC co-branding should appear in the following places:

- ***Employment Connection website, all documents, and collateral that describe projects, programs, or services funded by the WIB (all enrollment forms, agreements, reports, electronic newsletters, flyers, fact sheets, explainers, letterhead, presentation materials, marketing/outreach materials, websites, and data, etc.)***
- ***Career services staff business cards, name badges, and email signatures***
- ***Social media platforms and posts***

C. Co-Branding: Employment Connection and WIB

The WIB utilizes the Employment Connection to deliver coordinated career and employer-focused services. When services are delivered collaboratively, marketing and informational materials must reflect this partnership through co-branding.

Co-branding reinforces system alignment, ensures consistent public messaging, and communicates that services are supported through a coordinated workforce network. It strengthens brand recognition for both entities and presents a unified approach to serving businesses and the broader community.

All marketing and informational materials developed to promote joint business services, events, or workforce system initiatives must be co-branded with both the WIB and Employment Connection logos.

Examples of co-branded materials may include:

- ***Recruitment and job fair event flyers and signage***
- ***Labor market data reports***
- ***General business services outreach materials***
- ***Website footers***
- ***Social media***
    - ***When a social media post is developed on behalf of a business to promote a job opening, and no other business service is being utilized, the post does not need to be co-branded with the WIB and Employment Connection logos.***
    - ***If a social media post is developed to promote a business service like a recruitment event, it must be co-branded.***

When the WIB logo is used in a co-branding situation, it must print at the same size as the Employment Connection logo.

For example:

WIB
Workforce Investment Board
OF TULARE COUNTY
Driving Economic Success

Employment Connection
Your Workforce Resource

The WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD of TULARE COUNTY

Employment Connection
A proud partner of America's Job Center of California℠ network.

When the AJCC, Employment Connection, and WIB logos appear together, their placement and size must comply with both the AJCC state guidelines and the WIB co-branding standards.

D. Co-branding: youth@work

The youth@work logo shall be used when referencing any programs, services, or events funded through the Youth Services Division of the WIB. The logo may be co-branded with the Employment Connection, WIB, or Special Grant Initiative logos when appropriate.

For example:

The youth@work Brand Guide provides additional language and marketing guidance for youth@work programs and services.

E. Co-branding: Special Grant Initiatives

Special Grant Initiative logos may serve as the primary visual identifier on customer-facing materials when outreach is targeted to a specific population or industry supported by WIB-funded specialized grants. Employment Connection or youth@work branding must remain clearly visible as the system of record.

When multiple logos appear together, initiative branding may lead visually; however, Employment Connection or youth@work branding must remain clearly visible and legible and may not be reduced in size, placement, or prominence in a manner that obscures the system identity or required compliance.

The Special Grant Initiative Brand Guide provides additional language and marketing guidance for Special Grant Initiative programs and services.

F. Co-Branding: Employment Connection and System Partners

Employment Connection System partners may include the Employment Connection and AJCC "A proud partner of the America's Job Center of California℠" network" branding on any products or materials used to promote programs or services supported by the Employment Connection System. When a partner uses the Employment Connection, WIB, or youth@work logos, the materials must be approved by the WIB before distribution. Examples of co-branded materials include, but are not limited to, websites/webpages, presentations, data, reports, and social media.

4. REPRESENTING EMPLOYMENT CONNECTION AND YOUTH@WORK

When staff time is charged to a WIB-funded contract, in whole or in part, Subrecipient staff shall represent themselves as Employment Connection or youth@work staff members when interacting with customers, partners, and the public. Staff with blended funding streams must use Employment Connection or youth@work identifiers when providing services or attending WIB-funded events. To help clarify staff roles, all

staff should be issued the following items to help identify them as Employment Connection or youth@work staff.

A. **Name badges**
Name badges should clearly identify staff as working for Employment Connection or youth@work and must be worn at all times. Subrecipients are responsible for printing and distributing name badges to all Employment Connection and youth@work staff.

B. **Email addresses**
Employment Connection and youth@work staff shall use the provided employmentconnect.org email addresses when representing Employment Connection or youth@work. Each Subrecipient is responsible for issuing employmentconnect.org email addresses to all Employment Connection and youth@work staff. Email addresses should be issued in accordance with the email naming convention guidance.

C. **Email signatures**
Employment Connection and youth@work staff shall include email signatures on all employmentconnect.org emails. The email signature template is provided in section nine of this Directive.

D. **Business Cards**
Employment Connection and youth@work staff shall use Employment Connection or youth@work branded business cards. Subrecipients are responsible for printing and distributing business cards to staff members. The business card templates are provided in section nine of this Directive.

E. Outreach Events
When attending community/networking events, Employment Connection and youth@work staff must clearly identify themselves as representatives of Employment Connection or youth@work and not as representatives of a Subrecipient or other entity or business.

5. WIB MARKETING PROCESS

A. WIB Approval is Required for All Marketing and Outreach Materials
To provide transparency and consistency for Employment Connection and youth@work customers throughout Tulare County, the WIB will design and approve all customer-facing materials. Pre-approved templates may be used without additional approval if no modifications are made. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- ***Program and services flyers***
- ***Posters and signage***

- ***Social media images and posts***
- ***Presentation slide decks***
- ***Outreach materials***
- ***Forms***
- ***Website content***
- ***Digital media***

If Subrecipient staff or Employment Connection partners are not using a pre-approved template or document, they must send all marketing and outreach materials that contain Employment Connection or youth@work logos or branding to the WIB Communications Coordinator for approval before public distribution.

B. Accessing WIB Approved Materials

All Employment Connection, youth@work, and special grant initiative customer-facing marketing and outreach materials can be found in the Employment Connection Shared Google Drive. All Employment Connection, youth@work, and partner staff will be granted access to this drive and are encouraged to use it to locate WIB-approved templates, slide decks, marketing materials, and forms that adhere to the brand guidelines.

C. Requesting Marketing Materials

If the need arises for new marketing and outreach materials to be developed, Subrecipients and Employment Connection partners will follow the marketing request process outlined below:

I. Subrecipient and Employment Connection partners will evaluate the need for new marketing and outreach materials and review the existing materials in the Employment Connection System Shared Google Drive.

II. Subrecipient supervisors or Employment Connection partner leadership will email the WIB Communication Coordinator to request that new materials be created. Subrecipient team members and Employment Connection Partners will work with the WIB Communications Coordinator to develop the new materials and provide timely feedback.

III. Once materials are finalized and approved by the WIB, the new materials will be uploaded to the shared drive by the WIB Communications Coordinator. All relevant team members will be notified via email that the materials are available.

IV. When new materials are made available, Subrecipient staff and partners shall stop using and discard all previous versions of the materials and download/print the new materials.

D. Purchasing Marketing Materials

When purchasing marketing and outreach materials, the WIB, Subrecipient staff, and Employment Connection partners must ensure that the materials meet the

standards for allowable costs as outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 200.421, Advertising and Public Relations.

6. MEDIA GUIDELINES

A. Social Media

Social media platforms build brand awareness, promote services, provide resources to the community, and help connect job seekers and employers. The WIB Communications Coordinator manages the official social media platforms associated with Employment Connection. Social media content for youth@work and special grant initiatives will be posted to the Employment Connection social media platforms.

Staff and partners may request information to be posted on a social media platform by contacting the WIB Communication Coordinator. Social media posts are developed on a first-come, first-served basis. Since there is a limited number of post slots available, not all content may be posted. The WIB Communications Coordinator will collaborate with staff and partners to develop the most effective promotional plan to address requests.

I. ***Personal social media pages:*** ***WIB, Employment Connection, youth@work staff, and partners may post content about Employment Connection and youth@work services, programs, and job postings on their personal accounts as long as it is shared directly from the Employment Connection's official platform(s). This will ensure that the Employment Connection brand identity and voice are consistent across all platforms.***

B. Website

The WIB will maintain the Employment Connection website at www.employmentconnect.org to provide outreach, education, and information to the public about WIB-funded programs and services. The WIB is responsible for adding and updating content (e.g., events, videos, services), maintaining style, grammar, and punctuation, and implementing quality assurance processes. Employment Connection and youth@work staff, as well as partners, should contact the WIB Communications Coordinator to request content changes to the website.

C. News Media

The goal of the WIB is to establish and maintain an ongoing working relationship with local and regional media. Should Subrecipient staff or Employment Connection partners be contacted by the media about WIB-funded activities, they should alert the WIB Communications Coordinator. Both the subject of the request and the media contact must be provided to the Communications Coordinator promptly.

Partners involved in the referenced program or event shall be copied when communicating with the press, television, radio, or any other form of media regarding the operation of the Employment Connection. Each partner's public relations policies will determine each party's participation in press/media presentations.

In the event that a reporter arrives at an Employment Connection Center or event unannounced, staff should be courteous but firm in referring the reporter to the WIB and must obtain authorization from the WIB before making any comment.

7. <u>REQUIRED LANGUAGE</u>

A. Equal Employment Opportunity

All printed materials, internet, social media platforms, press releases, television spots/interviews, and audio publications that are fully or partially WIB-funded must include the standard WIB equal employment opportunity boilerplate language.

This project is funded by the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County, an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities."

B. Stevens Amendment

When sharing information about a federally funded project or program, the disclosure statement must clearly state:

- ***The percentage of total costs paid by federal funds.***
- ***The dollar amount of federal funding.***
- ***The percentage and dollar amount of costs covered by non-federal sources (if any).***

This statement must be included in:

- ***Public announcements and press releases***
- ***Requests for proposals and bid solicitations***
- ***Websites and social media posts***
- ***Flyers, brochures, and presentations***
- ***Toolkits and resource guides***

The rule does not apply to internal documents, invoices, or program applications.

For example, if a flyer is promoting career services, the disclosure should state:

"This project is funded by the Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County, an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available

upon request to individuals with disabilities. Career Services at the Employment Connection are 100% funded by federal funding in the amount of $XXX.XX.

Funding percentages must be adjusted to reflect the program's actual funding structure.

This text can be as small as an 10 pt font in the document's footer.

8. ADA ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

WIB Subrecipients and Employment Connection Partners will ensure that their policies, procedures, programs, and services comply with WIOA Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, to provide equal access to all customers with disabilities. The WIB also encourages adherence to the following guidance when communicating with and serving individuals with disabilities.

- ***California Department of Rehabilitation Accessibility Standards 1.0***
- ***Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA***

A. Accessibility Testing

Accessibility testing should be conducted on all documents and forms distributed to the public. Document creators should ensure that all materials are accessible. Testing tools can include Microsoft Office Accessibility Checker, Adobe Accessibility Checker, Color Contrast Analyzers, and Screen Readers. Microsoft Office 2010 and later versions have a built-in Accessibility Checker.

B. Proofreading

Proofreading/review of documents is needed during testing to ensure that font and color issues are addressed, the appropriate alternative text is applied, and the logical reading order is maintained. Testing tools can perform many practical tasks. Screen readers will read the relevant information in the Help Text in Word forms and Tooltips in PDF forms.

C. Plain Language

Communication must be written in plain language to ensure all customers understand and benefit from the information being disseminated. Plain language means that a reader can find what they need, understand it, and use the information to meet their needs.

D. Font Style and Size

Employment Connection font style and size guidelines are documented in the Employment Connection Brand Guide.

E. Hyperlink Text

Hyperlink text by itself must provide enough meaning to describe where the hyperlink leads the reader. The surrounding text may not be available to people using Assistive Technology. Non-meaningful text, such as Click Here, More Information, etc., should not be used.

F. Abbreviations and Acronyms

For the first occurrence in a document of the abbreviation or acronym, provide the expansion or explanation of the abbreviation or acronym.

G. Virtual Meetings

When hosting a virtual meeting, staff should be aware of individuals with disabilities who might be attending and should take measures to make the meeting as accessible as possible. The following language should be included in materials announcing or promoting virtual events and meetings:

"In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this (meeting/workshop), please contact (host's name) at (phone number) no later than 24 hours before the (meeting/workshop)."

9. EMPLOYMENT CONNECTION AND YOUTH@WORK TEMPLATES

A. Email signatures

Subrecipients shall use the following format to ensure a consistent and professional appearance.

Name, Title Employment Connection (location) Street address City, state, zip Phone Mobile – if applicable Email www.employmentconnect.org Employment Connection A proud partner of America's Job Center of California℠ network.
Name, Title youth@work (location) Street address City, state, zip Phone Mobile – if applicable

Email
www.employmentconnect.org

For example:

Joe Smith, Career Coach
Visalia Employment Connection
4025 W. Noble Ave. Suite B.,
Visalia, CA 93291
559-713-0000
jsmith@employmentconnect.org

Employment Connection
A proud partner of America's Job Center of California℠ network.

B. Business Cards

Subrecipients shall use the following format to ensure a consistent and professional appearance. The business card template is a CANVA file. Subrecipient marketing teams will be provided with access to the business card file.

Jane Smith
Career Coach
jsmith@employmentconnect.org

Visalia
4025 W. Noble Avenue Suite B
Visalia, CA 93277
Monday - Friday · 8:00am - 5:00pm

O: (559) 713-5000
D: (559) 713-5177
F: (559) 713-5111

www.employmentconnect.org

C. Voicemail Recordings

I. ***Employment Connection: "Hello, you've reached (insert your name) with Employment Connection, a proud partner of America's Job Center of California. Please leave your name, phone number, and message at the tone, and I'll return your call promptly. You can also find information about our services at employmentconnect.org. Thank you."***

II. ***youth@work: "Hello, you've reached (insert your name) with the youth@work program. Please leave your name, phone number, and message at the tone, and I'll return your call promptly. You can also find information about our services at employmentconnect.org. Thank you."***

D. Virtual Meeting Backgrounds

Employment Connection and youth@work staff should use the provided Zoom backgrounds when attending virtual meetings. The backgrounds are available on the Employment Connection Shared Google Drive.

10. ADDITIONAL REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- ***About America's Job Center of California: Overview of America's Job Center of California℠ system, including mission, vision, goals, and locations.***

ACTION:

Bring this Directive to the attention of all WIB Subrecipients, Employment Connection Partners, and WIB Staff.

INQUIRIES:

Please direct questions concerning this directive to the WIB at (559) 713-5200.

Jennie C. Bautista (Aug 17, 2026 06:25:49 PDT)

Jennie C. Bautista
Executive Director

APPROVED BY
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
MINUTES OF 08-12-2026

ATTACHMENTS:

The Workforce Investment Board of Tulare County is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

WIB Directive TUL 26-02 EC One-Stop System Marketing and Co-Branding Guidelines

Final Audit Report 2026-08-17

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