



September 15, 2020

## **WIOA POLICY 4.2.3**

### **CAREER PLANNING**

#### **I. POLICY**

##### **4.2.3.1 Obtaining Services**

The flow for an individual obtaining WIOA services should occur as follows:

1. An individual enters the system, via an Illinois workNet center, partner referral or through virtual services (i.e., Illinois workNet system).
2. An individual receives self-service or informational activities (including virtual services) and/or seeks staff-assistance.
3. If an individual requests ONLY self-service or informational activities, no registration is required. However, for tracking purposes these individuals and the basic career services that they receive are reported to USDOL. These individuals are not participants and thus, are not included in performance calculations.
  - a. The career planner should request identifying information such as their Name, Address, and Social Security Number. This approach would allow for counting self-service system utilization or those who received only informational services/activities as well as other services that may occur prior to an individual meeting all of the established benchmarks for participation.
  - b. Further guidance on Reportable Individuals was provided by USDOL in TEGE 14-18 *Aligning Performance Accountability Reporting, Definitions, and Policies Across Workforce Employment and Training Programs Administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)* (March 25, 2019).
4. If an individual seeks and receives any service beyond self-service, they are subject to performance calculations.
  - a. For WIOA youth, reportable individuals who are determined eligible, receive an assessment, and receive a program element (a staff-assisted service) would be considered participants and, thus, be included in performance calculations.

- b. For WIOA adults, reportable individuals determined eligible and receive staff-assisted services would be considered participants and thus, be included in performance calculations.
- c. For WIOA dislocated workers, reportable individuals who are determined eligible and receive a staff-assisted service would be considered participants and thus, be included in performance calculations.

#### **4.2.3.2 Application for Services**

- 1. Individuals seeking services beyond self-service must complete a WIOA application.
  - a. The career planner enters the application information into the appropriate case management system.
  - b. Career planners then determine eligibility for WIOA using IWDS which takes the responses put into the application and displays all titles for which the applicant might be eligible.
    - 1) The eligibility determination date must be within 30 days of the application date.
  - c. Career planners must have the required documentation to support answers given to the questions within the application, to certify the applicant in any title (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth).

#### **4.2.3.3 Eligibility Determination**

- 1. An individual could meet WIOA Eligibility criteria under several different WIOA titles (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth), but would only be required to have the eligibility certified under the title(s) that the client will be enrolled in services.
  - a. The applicant's certification date must be within 30 days of the application date.
  - b. If more than 30 days, career planners will have to update the system with any changes.
- 2. Career planners must certify an applicant eligible under WIOA before they can enroll an individual in various activities and services within IWDS.
  - a. An applicant must be registered into a WIOA service within 45 days of the application certification date.

#### **4.2.3.4 Assessments**

1. Youth are required to have a comprehensive objective assessment including the assessment of basic skills, as well as the service needs and strengths during intake prior to certification of the youth being determined eligible.
  - a. The comprehensive objective assessment also includes considering the abilities, aptitudes, interests, and occupational and employability skill levels of each youth.
  - b. A Basic Skills Assessment administered within six months of intake may be used.
  - c. The initial assessments create the foundation for the development of the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) which is done prior to the Youth being determined eligible.
  - d. Youth funds can be expended on outreach and recruitment or assessment for eligibility determination (such as assessing basic skills level) prior to eligibility determination, but they cannot be spent on youth program services, such as the 14 program elements.
  - e. The ISS must include the services that will best enable the youth to seek and retain self-sufficient employment.
2. For the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, once eligibility is determined and certified, career planners must begin assessing the participants.
  - a. Participants entering Training Services require a complete assessment that includes an Individual Employment Plan (IEP); and
  - b. Participants receiving only Career Services may undergo an abbreviated assessment process.
3. Assessment is the foundation of identifying the appropriate services that are needed to meet the participant's goals. Assessment is an ongoing extension of the intake process and guides the career planner's development of the IEP or ISS and is not a one-time, up-front activity.
4. The assessment process should use a variety of mechanisms to evaluate and identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and the needed combination of services to address barriers.
5. The Basic Skills Screening Tool found in the Basic Skills Deficiency section of the policy manual will help identify if an individual is basic skills deficient for the purposes of priority of service and is to be given prior to conducting any assessment test.

- a. The tool is to be used for referral purposes and for the identification of priority of service. If the screening tool identifies an individual as basic skills deficient, career planners are to:
  - 1) Refer the individual for adult basic education services; or
  - 2) Conduct further basic skills deficiency assessments using the approved Illinois Adult Education Assessments identified in the Assessment Criteria section of the Basic Skills Deficiency section of the policy manual to determine the educational needs of the customer.
6. Career planners are required to provide facilitated referrals to appropriate WIOA partners and other programs within the community that offer services that can assist the participant in eliminating barriers. This will provide seamless, customer-focused, integrated service delivery across all programs and enhance access to the programs' services.
7. Assessments should follow procedures as outlined in the Basic Skills Deficiency section of the policy manual. Assessments that may be utilized to develop a comprehensive career plan may include, but are not limited to, strengths, assets, interests, aptitudes, developmental needs, employability, supportive service needs, and career goals.
8. An academic assessment is given to determine if the reading, math, or language levels meet the enrollment requirements of a training program. A full assessment of the suitability of the training program must occur in coordination with the participant and case manager as outlined in the local workforce area's training policy.

#### **4.2.3.5 Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and Individual Employment Plan (IEP)**

1. The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and Individual Employment Plan (IEP) are to be jointly developed with the career planner and the participant.
  - a. The IEP or ISS should be developed and updated as necessary when there are changes in services, objectives and goals. The IEP/ISS should directly link the performance objectives for the program, identify career pathways that include education and employment goals, consider career planning and the results of the objective assessment including whether the program is suitable for the participant, and prescribe achievement objectives and services for the participant.
  - b. The IEP or the ISS is an on-going process which requires a routine review and update as additional needs are identified or goals achieved. It is a proven best practice and expectation that the review should occur, and a case note should be entered at a minimum of once every thirty (30) days.
    - 1) The expectation is the career planners remain in regular contact with the participant during that timeframe to address any problems, challenges, or difficulties the participant may have.

- 2) The regular contact should be customized based on the individual needs of the customers and can include phone, e-mail, text or other methods of communication.
- 3) Career planners must also maintain contact with their peers in other programs in which the participant is co-enrolled to ensure holistic alignment and coordination of services across programs.

#### **4.2.3.6 Service Documentation**

1. The assessment and development of a plan or strategy will begin the determination of career, training, and supportive services needed by the participant to reach their education or employment goals.
  - a. The career planner should utilize the WIOA Services Matrix to tailor services to address the unique strengths, challenges, and needs of the participant.
  - b. Each career, training, and supportive service must be entered into the appropriate case management system.
  - c. The entry of services should be combined with case notes to describe each service and provide any other notable information.
    - 1) The case notes for “open” active service must document an on-going two-way communication between the career planner and participant that describes how the service or activity is moving the participant toward their goals.
    - 2) Case Notes should also indicate cross-program coordination of services and contacts with staff in other programs.
2. All services provided to a participant, including outcomes such as successful/ unsuccessful completion and credentials and/or Measurable Skill Gains attained, must be entered into the appropriate career planning system within ten (10) calendar days of the service delivery, completion, or attainment.
3. All documentation, should be contained in the participant’s case file and be available for review, as requested during compliance monitoring.
4. Career planners are to upload all relevant documentation contained in the participant’s physical file into the case management system/IWDS for potential remote monitoring and data validation purposes as directed.

## **II. INQUIRIES**

Inquiries should be directed to OET, Paula Barry, (217) 524-5500 or [Paula.Barry@illinois.gov](mailto:Paula.Barry@illinois.gov).

**III. ATTACHMENTS**

WIOA Service Definitions

Sincerely,

Julio Rodriguez, Deputy Director  
Office of Employment and Training

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