



## THE OZARK WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA

# Training Policy

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## Introduction

The following Training Policy addresses occupational skills training and is intended to be a guide for Ozark Region training and service providers.

## Eligibility

All individuals receiving training benefits must first complete an enrollment and eligibility process according to established policies and rules set forth by the local Workforce Development Board in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and any other funding authority.

## Targeted Populations

<sup>1</sup>WIOA focuses on serving individuals with barriers to employment as defined in WIOA section 3 (24) and includes:

- a. Displaced homemakers (as defined in WIOA sec. 3 (16))
- b. Low-income individuals (as defined in WIOA sec. 3 (36))
- c. Indians, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiians (as defined in WIOA sec. 166 (b))
- d. Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities (as defined in WIOA sec. 3 (25) (includes individuals who are in receipt of Social Security Disability Insurance))
- e. Older Individuals (age 55 and older) (as defined in WIOA sec. 3 (39))
- f. Ex-offenders (offender as defined in WIOA sec. 3 (38))
- g. Homeless individuals or homeless children and youth
- h. Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system
- i. Individuals who are
  1. English language learners (WIOA sec. 203 (7))
  2. Individuals who have low levels of literacy (an individual is unable to compute or solve programs or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, or in the individual's family, or in society) and
  3. Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
- j. Eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers (as defined in WIOA sec. 167 (i)(1-3))
- k. Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility
- l. Single parents (including single pregnant women)
- m. Long-term unemployed individuals (unemployed for 27 or more consecutive weeks and
- n. Such other groups as the Governor involved determines to have barriers to employment

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<sup>1</sup> Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA No 19-16

## Underemployed

<sup>2</sup>WIOA defines underemployed as:

- Individuals employed less than full-time who are seeking full-time employment
- Individuals who are employed in a position that is inadequate with respect to their skills and training.
- Individuals who are employed who meet the definition of a low-income individual in WIOA sec. 3 (36)
- Individuals who are employed, but whose current job's earnings are not sufficient compared to their previous job's earnings from their previous employment.

Underemployed Individuals, as defined through other grants and customized programs, may be eligible.

## Priority of Service

Veterans and Adult Priority must be provided in the following order:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA Adult formula funding. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient would receive first priority for services with WIOA Adult formula funds for individualized career services and training services.
2. Non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA Adult formula funds.
3. Veterans and eligible spouse who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
4. Priority populations established by the Governor and/or Local WDB.
5. Non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

## Tuition

A direct pay letter must be issued to the training provider before an individual can start training.

Before tuition for a participant can be obligated, the following are required:

- Based on assessment and local labor market information, staff may request a letter of intent to hire before training has started.
- To ensure that individuals seeking training are prepared and committed to training, the participant will undergo assessment as outlined in the testing and assessment policy.
- All approvals for training are based upon individual need, assessment, allowability, and the availability of funds.

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<sup>2</sup> Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA No 19-16

- Training shall not exceed a two-year period or its equivalency of hours without the Director, Assistant Director or designee approval. There is a \$15,000 limit for ITA that includes tuition, fees, books and required supplies. (excluding shipping and taxes). Any exception to this limit must have prior approval by the Director or their designee.
- The cost of a program that expands over multiple sessions/semesters may be subject to having tuition being pro-rated to allow funding to be available more than one session/semester. (e.g. nursing programs). This shall be based on funding availability, need, and resources available. This also allows for review of participant progress in specialized programs.
- Training funds will not pay for non-approved classes, prerequisite classes, classes not part of the degree/certificate program, classes started prior to enrollment and classes completed prior to enrollment, and repeat classes funded by the same funding source. As stated within this policy, WIOA is the payer of last resort.
- Eligible fees that are not included in the ETPS system must be paid through supportive services. Examples may include, but not limited to, HiSET, Hazmat, etc. and other fees not included in tuition costs, but necessary to complete the training program. Questions regarding fees should be directed to the appropriate staff supervisor.
- Students will be required to complete the FAFSA as part of the enrollment process. Pell grants, other grants, and scholarship awards will be taken into consideration when determining the amount of the WIOA funds to be awarded to the student. WIOA funds shall be the payer of last resort.
- Training over 40 hours must be provided by a training institution approved through the Eligible Training Provider System (ETPS). Training must be specific to a career or employment in the listed sectors, Healthcare, Information Technology, Manufacturing, Transportation/Logistics and Construction and must result in a certificate or degree. If the training is outside of Region approved sectors, it must be in a high growth/in-demand or stable occupation and must be approved by director or designee.
- Master and PhD programs will not be approved for WIOA programs. Exceptions to this will be made with the Director's or designee's approval on rare occasions when there is documentation that the training will result in an outcome of related employment. Documentation must be presented in the form of a letter of intent to hire by an employer, which lists the position title, job description, rate of pay, and estimated employment date. Any exceptions may not exceed eight semester hours of training.
- As per the Ozark Region Assessment Policy, each client will be provided an assessment prior to training.
- Justification of the need for training must be well documented in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and service notes.

## Supportive Services

Supportive Services shall be provided eligible individuals according to the Ozark Region Local Supportive Service Policy.

## Contact

Students in WIOA funded training will be required to maintain monthly contact with their assigned Workforce Development Specialist.

## Progress

Any training plan could be subject to de-obligation if an individual receives a failing grade and he/she does not retake and pass the required course or appropriate test at the next available opportunity. The client will bear the cost of repeating the course or test. Grade reports or grade transcripts shall be required to be submitted at the end of each semester or reporting session.

Students are required to make progress toward their education goal maintaining a minimum of a 2.0 GPA. These goals shall be reviewed on a monthly basis. A lack of progress shall make a training plan subject to de-obligation.

## Trade Act

Trade personnel are to follow the Ozark Region Policy unless otherwise approved by Division of Workforce Development (DWD) prior to placing an individual in training.

## Exceptions

Any exceptions to this policy may be made on a case by case basis and shall be approved by the Director or their designee.

*Approved by the Workforce Development Board and Council of Local Elected Officials April 5, 2017.*

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