

VI WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD POLICY DOCUMENT

Workforce Program Guidance WIOA 303-15

TO: Virgin Islands Single State Workforce Development Area

SUBJECT: **Delivery of Services and Activities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) – Adults and Dislocated Workers**

DATE: July 2015

Purpose: To provide guidance to all staff and administrators of the One-Stop Career Centers providing WIOA services to customers of the Workforce Development System.

References: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-128) Title I; TEGL 3-15

Background: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed as a valuable member of the workforce. The workforce system provides universal access to career services and training that is job-driven and specific to local demand occupations.

Policy: Services provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers through the One-Stop Centers will consist of Career Services and Training Services. There are three types of “career services”: basic career services, individualized career services and follow-up services. Training services may be made available if One-Stop Center staff determine, after an interview, evaluation or assessment and career planning that the individual is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency. There is no sequence of service requirement for career services and training.

Career Services

Career Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers replaces “core” and “intensive” services practiced under WIA. There are three categories of career services – basic, individualized and follow-up – which can be provided in any order, but specific to the needs of each individual customer.

Basic Career Services must be made available to all individual job seekers through the One-Stop Centers. The services include:

- Determinations of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated or youth programs;
- Outreach, intake (including identification through the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services system of Unemployment Insurance claimants likely to exhaust benefits) and orientation to information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system;

- Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps) and supportive services;
- Labor exchange services, including –
 - Job search and placement assistance and when needed by an individual, career counseling, including –
 - Provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
 - Provision of information on nontraditional employment
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including those within the one-stop delivery system and when appropriate other workforce development programs;
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional and national labor market areas, including
 - Job vacancy listings in labor market areas;
 - Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and
 - Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements and opportunities for advancement for those jobs;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers;
- Provision of information about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures;
- Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance including: child care, child support, medical or child health assistance available through the Territory’s Medicaid program and Children’s Health Insurance Program, benefits under Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), assistance through the earned income tax credit, housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and assistance under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program;
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA; and
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims under UI programs, including meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim –
 - Meaningful assistance means providing assistance:
 - On-site using staff who are properly trained in UI claims, filing and/or the acceptance of information necessary to file a claim or
 - By phone or via other technology, as long as the assistance is provided by trained and available staff and within a reasonable time;
 - The costs associated in providing meaningful assistance may be paid for by the UI program, the WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker programs, the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service, or some combination of these funding sources.

Labor Exchange/Job Services*, the primary services provided by Wagner-Peyser staff fall under *Basic Career Services*. All basic career services **must be made available by Wagner-Peyser staff in coordination with other one-stop partners. They may also make available Individualized Career Services for those individuals with barriers to employment.

Individualized Career Services – If One-Stop Center staff determines that individualized career services are appropriate for an individual to obtain or retain employment, these services must be made available to the individual. These services must be available in all one-stop centers.

One Stop Center staff may use recent previous assessments by partner programs to determine if individualized career services would be appropriate. These services include:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include –
 - Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
 - In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;
- Development of an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the customer to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of and information about eligible training providers;
- Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring;
- Career planning;
- Short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training in some instances pre-apprenticeship programs may be considered as short-term pre-vocational services;
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities that help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training or employment;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; and
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

Follow-Up Services must be provided as appropriate for customers who are placed in unsubsidized employment for up to (12) months after the first day of employment. Counseling about the work place is an appropriate type of follow-up service. Follow up services *do not extend* the date of exit in performance reporting.

Delivery of Career Services – Career Services shall be provided through the One-Stop Delivery System –

- (i) Directly through one-stop operators; or
- (ii) Through contracts with service providers, which may include contracts with public, private for profit, and private nonprofit service providers approved by the local Board

Training Services

Training services may be made available to Adults and Dislocated Workers who are eligible to receive services from the One-Stop Center –

- (I) Who after an interview, evaluation or assessment and career planning have been determined by a One-Stop Operator or One-Stop Partner as appropriate to –
 - (a) Be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, through career services;
 - (b) Be in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment; and
 - (c) Have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services;
- (II) Who select programs of training services that are directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area or the planning region or in another area to which the adults or dislocated workers are willing to commute or relocate;
- (III) Who meet the requirements of Adult and Dislocated Worker funding eligibility; and
- (IV) Who are determined to be eligible in accordance with the Adult Priority requirements

Training services may include –

- Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment;
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs;
- Training programs offered by the private sector;
- Skill upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training;
- Job readiness training provided *in combination with* services described above;
- Adult education and literacy training provided *concurrently or in combination* with services described in above;
- Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of training.

Work-based Training – There are additional work-based training options and flexibilities for adults and dislocated workers under WIOA. They include –

- Registered Apprenticeship
- On-the-Job Training
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Transitional Jobs

Delivery of Training Services

Consumer Choice

Training services provided shall be provided in a manner that maximizes consumer choice in the selection of an eligible provider of such service.

Linkage to Occupations in Demand

Training services shall be directly linked to an in-demand industry sector or occupation in the local area or in another area to which an adult or dislocated worker receiving such services is willing to relocate. The Board *may* authorize a program of training services for occupations not currently in demand but that have a high potential for sustained demand or growth in the local area.

Individual Training Accounts

An individual who seeks training services and who is eligible may in consultation with a career counselor select an eligible provider of training services from the list of approved providers. Upon such selection, the one-stop operator involved shall, to the extent practicable, refer such individual to the eligible provider of training services and arrange for payment for such services through an individual training account.

Training Contracts

In accordance with WIOA Section 134 (c) (3) (G) (ii) contracts may be procured for training services for the following reasons –

- On-the-job training, which may include placing customers in a Registered Apprenticeship program, customized training, incumbent worker training or transitional jobs;
- If the Board determines that there are insufficient number of eligible providers of training services to use ITA's;
- If there is a training services program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in a local area by a community-based organization or other private organization;
- If the Board determines that the most appropriate training could be provided by an institution of higher education to train multiple individuals for jobs in demand sectors or occupations; and
- If the Board determines a pay-for-performance contract strategy.

Additionally, the Board may determine that providing training through a combination of ITA's and contracts is the most effective approach.

One-Stop Center Permissible Activities

WIOA provides additional flexibility to Adults and Dislocated Workers by allowing more than the standard work readiness activities and services. Other activities that are permissible and should be employed as needed in the One-Stop Centers include:

Job Seeker Services

- Customer support to enable individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities and veterans) to navigate among multiple services and activities;
- Training programs for displaced homemakers and for individuals training for nontraditional occupations in conjunction with programs operated in the local area; and
- Work support activities for low-wage workers, in coordination with one-stop center partners, which will provide opportunities for these workers to retain or enhance employment. This may include any activities available under the WIOA adult and dislocated worker programs in coordination with activities and resources available through partner programs.

Employer Services

- Customized screening and referral of qualified participants in career and training services to employers;
- Customized employment-related services to employers, employer associations or other such organizations on a fee-for-service basis that are in addition to labor exchange services available to employers under Wagner-Peyser; and
- Activities to provide business services and strategies that meet the workforce investment needs of area employers.

Coordination Activities

- Employment and training activities in coordination with child support enforcement activities, as well as child support services and assistance activities;
- Employment and training activities in coordination with activities to facilitate remote access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including facilitating access through the use of technology;
- Improving coordination between workforce investment activities and economic development activities carried out within the local area involved and to promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services;
- Improving services and linkages between the local workforce investment system and employers, including small employers;
- Strengthening linkages between the one-stop system delivery system and the unemployment insurance programs; and

- Improving coordination between employment and training activities and programs carried out in the local area for individuals with disabilities, including programs carried out by Statewide Independent Living Councils, and activities carried out by Centers for Independent Living;
- Other Federal agency supported workforce development initiatives, under the Departments of Transportation, Energy, Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Health and Human Services and Defense programs, as applicable.

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