

VI WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD POLICY DOCUMENT

Workforce Program Guidance WIOA 311-17

TO: Virgin Islands Single State Workforce Development Area

SUBJECT: WORK BASED TRAINING

DATE: April 2017

Purpose: To provide guidance to all staff and administrators of the One-Stop Career Centers on the types of Work Based Training (WBT) available through the Workforce System

References: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 Title I Section 121; 20 CFR 680.700 – 680.840; TEGL 19-16

Background: Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) work-based training presents a great opportunity for fostering increased employer engagement, implementing sector strategies and encouraging industry partnerships. Through work-based training employers have the opportunity to gradually train their employees at varying skill levels and employees earn an income while receiving skills necessary to succeed at their jobs.

Policy: The Virgin Islands Single Local Workforce Area will use work-based training to enhance employment opportunities for job seekers who need both skill training and employment history in order to advance in the workplace. WBT will be promoted to employers as workplace tools to build, expand or enhance business opportunities within the local community.

The options included under Work-Based Training include:

- Pre and Registered Apprenticeship;
- On-the-Job Training;
- Customized Training;
- Incumbent Worker Training;
- Transitional Jobs;
- Work Experience

Work-based training options may be stand-alone activities or used in tandem with other work-based training; with a mix of classroom training or with career services. They may be one component of a customer's individual service strategy that leads to unsubsidized employment. They may be used as a part of a larger workforce development strategy for employers.

Work-Based Training Options

Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

A Pre-Apprenticeship program can occur in any occupation but is best suited for those that can be followed by a Registered Apprenticeship program. It should consist of serve as an introduction to a specific occupation or level of skill with both academic and hands-on

components included. Pre-apprenticeship programs are of limited duration and should result in an industry recognized entry level certificate.

Registered Apprenticeship

A Registered Apprenticeship program is employer-driven and combines on-the-job training with job related instruction. The curricula must meet industry approved criteria and meet skill standards set by each industry. Layered credentials may be attained by participants who successfully complete training and skills mastery for different levels of performance.

The Virgin Islands Workforce Area does not currently have a State Apprenticeship Agency (SAA) therefore Registered Apprenticeship programs that wish to operate in the Virgin Islands must gain approval through the federal DOL Office of Apprenticeship (OA).

Registered Apprenticeships are required to be on the Eligible Training Provider List under WIOA. In order to fully integrate RA programs as an employment and training solution for American Job Centers several training options may be used:

- An ITA may be developed for a participant to receive RA training;
- An OJT contract may be developed with a RA program for training participants. The OJT contract may support some or all of the OJT portion of the RA program;
- A combination of an ITA to cover the classroom instruction along with an OJT contract to cover on-the-job portions of the RA is allowed; and
- Incumbent worker training may be used for up-skilling apprentices or journey workers who already have an established working/training relationship with the RA program

Supportive services consistent with WIOA section 134 (d)(2) and local policies are allowable for RA participants in coordination with career and/or training services.

On-The-Job Training

On-the-job training (OJT) is training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that:

- Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job;
- Is made available through a program that provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50% of the wage rate of the participant – this percentage may increased to 75% by the Board based on factors such as the:
 - *Characteristics of the participant;*
 - *Size of the employer;*
 - *Quality of employer-provided training and advancement opportunities and other factors as may be determined by the Board;*
- Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, taking into account the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.

Customized Training

Customized training is training designed to meet the special requirements of an employer (including a group of employers) conducted with a commitment by the employer(s) to employ individuals upon successful completion of the training.

The employer pays a significant portion of the cost of training as determined by the local board taking into account:

- The size of the employer;
- The number of employees participating in training;
- Wage and benefit levels of those employees;
- The relation of the training to the competitiveness of a participant and other employer-provided training and advancement opportunities

Customized training does not have to result in an industry recognized credential but training curricula used should reflect current industry standards.

Incumbent Worker Training

Incumbent Worker training (IWT) is training carried out with an employer or groups of employers of such workers (which may include employers in partnership with other entities for the purposes of delivering training) for the purpose of assisting such workers in obtaining the skills necessary to retain employment or avert layoffs. The cost to employers shall not be less than –

- 10 percent of the cost for employers with not more than 50 employees
- 25 percent of the cost for employers with more than 50 employees but not more than 100 employees
- 50 percent of the cost for employers with more than 100 employees

For an employer to receive Incumbent Worker Training funds the individual(s) receiving training must be:

- Employed;
- Meet the Fair Labor Standards Act requirements for an employer-employee relationship;
- Have an established employment history with the employer for six (6) months or more (which may include time spent as a temporary or contract worker performing work for the employer receiving IWT funds)

There is one exception to the six month requirement, which is that in the event that incumbent worker training is being provided to a cohort of employees, not every employee in the cohort must have an established employment history with the employer for six months or more as long as a majority of those employees being trained meet the employment history requirement.

Transitional Jobs

Transitional Jobs are a type of work-experience and are considered to be an individualized career service. Transitional jobs are time-limited and wage-paid work experiences that can be subsidized up to 100 percent. These jobs may occur in the public, private or nonprofit sectors. They are only available to individuals with barriers to employment who, are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history. Transitional jobs provide an individual with work experience that takes place within the context of an employee-employer relationship in which the program provider generally acts as the employer, and with an opportunity to develop important workplace skills.

In the Virgin Islands Workforce Area transitional jobs must:

- Be combined with career and supportive services;
- Be designed to establish a work history for the individual;

- Have a duration of four (4) to six (6) weeks;
- Occur in a local demand occupation field;
- Incorporate workplace skills learned through career pre-training services;
- Demonstrate success in the workplace; and
- Develop skills that lead to entry into and retention in unsubsidized employment

Work Experience

Work Experience is a planned, structured learning experience that occurs in a work environment for a limited period of time. They may be paid or unpaid and arranged within the private for profit sector, the non-profit sector or the public sector. It is offered to entry level customers who have expressed an interest in a particular field of work or who may have received training in the field but have no practical hands on knowledge. A work experience should:

- Have duration of six (6) to eight (8) weeks;
- Be based on a specific project with specific deliverables accomplished at the program's end;
- Occur within one of the local demand occupation fields

There is no requirement for the employer to retain the employee at the end of transitional employment or work experience programs; however, permanent unsubsidized employment should be sought to complete the customer's individual service strategy.

Inquiries: Questions should be addressed to the:

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