

TRANSMITTAL #6

WIOA POLICY

April 20, 2016

TO: Workforce Development Council

FROM: Susan Simmons, Deputy Director 

SUBJECT: Definition of individual requiring additional assistance for youth program eligibility

ACTION REQUESTED: Recommend approval of the proposed youth policy definition for "requires additional assistance" for implementation beginning PY2016

REFERENCE: WIOA §129(a)(B)(VIII); §681.300

BACKGROUND:

Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and proposed regulations at § 681.300 indicate the state should establish definitions and eligibility documentation requirements for when "individual requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment". In Idaho where the state board establishes state policy on this criterion, the Workforce Development Council must include the definition in the state plan.

A review of the existing definition under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) shows specific criteria which are no longer applicable under WIOA or no longer applicable because the state's youth program exclusively targets out-of-school youth. In fact, many youth may already be eligible for program services under WIOA eligibility criteria. The intent of establishing the definition and the additional criteria is not to "open" enrollment to all youth but rather to ensure that those youth most in need and looking for help to move ahead have the opportunity to do so.

Based on the Youth Committee's recommendation from its January 2016 meeting and the new WIOA definition, staff revised the definition in the state's youth program. The proposed revision is listed on the following page.

Proposed Definition for WIOA Youth Policy:

Low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment:

- A) Has been treated by a professional for mental health issues including traumatic events, depression, or substance abuse related problems. OR
- B) Has been or is a victim of abuse, or resides in an abusive environment as documented by a licensed professional; OR
- C) Has been unemployed for at least three of the last six months (not necessarily consecutive); OR
- D) Has a family history of chronic unemployment (during the two years prior to application, family members were unemployed longer than employed); OR
- E) Limited English speaking or cultural displacement. i.e., refugees.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend the Workforce Development Council approve the Youth Committee’s proposed definition of youth requiring additional assistance for implementation in PY2016.

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Attachment A

Existing Idaho WIA Definition for Individual who Requires Additional Assistance

Individual who requires additional assistance policy - A youth must also qualify for at least one of the following:

1. Youth is “basic skills deficient” if they:
 - i. have English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
 - ii. Are unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family or in society.
2. Has repeated at least one secondary grade level or is one or more grade levels behind age appropriate level
3. Has a core GPA of less than 1.5 or is a postsecondary student deemed by a school official to be on academic probation (*not applicable in PY16*)
4. Is at least two semester credits behind the rate required to graduate from high school for each year of secondary education
5. Has a family history of chronic unemployment (during the two years prior to application, family members were unemployed longer than employed)
6. Is an emancipated youth
7. Is a current or previous dropout or is deemed at risk of dropping out of school by a school official (*Current dropout status is eligibility criteria for WIOA youth program-not necessary*)
8. Has been suspended two or more times from school or has been expelled
9. Has been referred to or is being treated by an agency for depression or a substance abuse-related problem
10. Has experienced a recent traumatic event (within two years of application), is a victim of abuse, or resides in an abusive environment as documented by a school official or professional
11. Is a youth 16 years of age or older who has not held a job for longer than three months or is currently unemployed and was fired from a job within six months of application
12. Is participating in alternative education (*not applicable in PY16*)
13. Is 18-24 years of age and has been unemployed for the last six months