



Workforce Connections Programs, Services and Activities WIOA - Youth Program Design	YTH-040-02
	Revision No. 5 - Effective 02-25-2020
Policy Approved By: WC Executive Director Policy Adopted on: November 2013	

Purpose:
To establish Workforce Connections (WC) policy and guidelines regarding the youth program design for programs funded in whole or in part under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Background:
Youth programs and service provisions under Title I of WIOA are designed to: **1)** assist eligible out-of-school youth (OSY) and eligible in-school-youth (ISY), seeking assistance in achieving academic and employment success, with effective and comprehensive services and activities that include a variety of options for improving educational and skill competencies and provide effective connections to educational institutions and employers; **2)** implement integrated strategies for career pathway approaches that support postsecondary education, training and employment; **3)** implement work-based training strategies and employment approaches to help participants develop essential skills that are best learned on the job; **4)** implement progressive levels of education and training approaches that will help individuals with higher levels of skills and experiences earn marketable credentials, engage in further education and employment, and achieve economic success; **5)** provide continued supportive services to individuals who need them to participate and succeed in workforce investment and training activities.

Policy:
The design framework for services of local youth programs must: a) conduct intake; b) provide for an objective assessment of each eligible participant; c) development of an individual service strategy (ISS) for each eligible participant that is directly linked to one or more of the performance indicators; d) provide case management of youth participants, including follow-up and referral services.
Providers of youth services must ensure that each one of the 14 program elements listed in Sec. 129 (c) (2) of WIOA must be made available to eligible youth participants.

Reference:
Public Law (P.L.) 113-128 WIOA Secs. 3, 107, 121, 123, 129, 189, 503; 20 CFR Part 681, 20 CFR Part 683; TEGL 23-14, TEGL 21-16, TEGL 8-15; State Compliance Policies (SCPs) 2.1, 2.2

This policy may be subject to change as additional Federal statutes and regulations, and State policies and guidelines are released.

WIOA makes two (2) significant changes to prior requirements for service strategies by adding new components to the objective assessment (OA) and the individual service strategy (ISS).
1) The ISS must be linked to one or more of the indicators of performance found at Sec. 116 (b) (2) (A) (ii) of Title I of WIOA.
2) The OA and ISS must identify career pathways that include appropriate education goals.

I. Required Program Design Framework

Overall, program design framework is an essential element in helping providers of youth services develop comprehensive service strategies based upon individual needs.

Pursuant to established regulations, all youth who are enrolled must meet WIOA eligibility criteria. Youth service providers are responsible for intake, assessment, and the development of an individual service strategy (ISS) for each WIOA-eligible youth. A brief description of each activity is provided below:

A. Orientation

An orientation must be provided to each eligible youth. This includes information on the full array of services that are available through the network of funded programs within the local workforce development area (LWDA), including the One-Stop Career Center (OSCC) partners.

As previously indicated, WIOA provides different levels of services for youth program participants. Additional topics for orientation may include, but are not limited to, the following: 1) introduction to the program's purposes and goals; 2) regulations of the program; 3) provider of youth services responsibilities; 4) program participant responsibilities; 5) program resources and services available; 6) provide information on follow-up services that may be available to program participants, as appropriate; 7) provision of accurate information relating to the availability of supportive services, other available services in the LWDA, and referral to such services as appropriate.

B. Intake

Intake involves services such as registration, eligibility determination, and collection of information to support verification of eligibility of services. It may also include pre-screening of potential participants and general orientation to self-help services. Other activities include referrals to other services for further assessment, as necessary, and referred to appropriate programs to meet the basic skills and training needs of the applicant.

C. Objective Assessment

Assessment is a process that identifies service needs, academic levels, goals, interests, skills levels, abilities, aptitudes, and supportive service needs; it also measures barriers and strengths. It includes a review of basic and occupational skills, prior work experience, employability potential and developmental needs. Assessment results are generally used to develop the ISS.

D. ISS

The ISS is the plan that identifies the employment goals, educational objectives, and prescribed appropriate services for the participant. The ISS is essential in identifying service strategies for each participant that are directly linked to one or more of the indicators of performance, and that shall identify career pathways that include education and employment goals (including, in appropriate circumstances, nontraditional employment), appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant taking into account the assessment conducted pursuant to subparagraph (A), except that a new service strategy for a participant is not required if the provider carrying out such a program determines it is appropriate to use a recent service strategy developed for the participant under another education or training program.

E. Career Coaching

Youth programs must provide career coaching services to assist youth in making informed choices and successfully completing the program. Support may be provided on an individual or group basis. Career coaching principles and methods must be incorporated throughout the program design. A career coach is assigned to follow the progress of each youth from enrollment to program exit, and through follow-up services. Documentation of all services and activities must be recorded on the youth's ISS and the authorized MIS.

F. Support Services

Programs must provide supportive services to eligible youth participants that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under Title I of WIOA.

G. Follow-up Services

Follow-up services are critical services provided following a youth's exit from the program for no less than 12 months to help ensure the youth is successful in employment and/or post-secondary education and training.

The youth service provider must establish and implement procedures to ensure that follow-up services are conducted and documented in the most efficient possible way. This include the implementation of procedures to document and record when a participant cannot be located or contacted.

If at any point in time during the program or during the 12 months following exit the youth requests to opt out of follow-up services, they may do so. In this case, the request to opt out or discontinue follow-up services made by the youth participant must be documented in the case file and recorded in the authorized Management Information System (MIS).

II. General Provisions for Local Youth Programs

A. Local youth program services will, at a minimum, incorporate the required youth program design, program elements, and additional requirements in accordance with Sec. 129 of Title I of WIOA.

B. The youth program design and service delivery must be based upon the following program components:

1. Preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities;
2. Occupational training services (that lead to the attainment of a recognized post-secondary credential);
3. Work-based opportunities;
4. Youth development services; and
5. Employment services.

C. Program elements that must be made available to each eligible program participant

1. Preparation for Postsecondary Education Opportunities:

- a) Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized post-secondary credential; and
- b) Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate.

2. Occupational Training Services:

- a) Occupational skills training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved; and
- b) Education offered concurrently with, and in the same context as, workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

3. Work-Based Opportunities:

Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include the following types of work experiences:

- a) Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
- b) Pre-apprenticeship programs;
- c) Internships and job shadowing; and
- d) On-the-job training opportunities;

4. Youth Development Services:

- a) Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate;
- b) Supportive services;
- c) Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months, which may occur both during and after program participation;
- d) Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;
- e) Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referral to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth;
- f) Financial literacy education;
- g) Entrepreneurial skills training;
- h) Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and
- i) Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training.

5. Employment Services:

- a) Career exploration;
- b) Pre-employment;
- c) Job search;
- d) Job placement;
- e) Support service; and
- f) Follow-up services.

D. Program and Service Delivery for Youth Programs

1. Program Delivery Additional Requirements – ISY

- a) In addition to the five (5) program components indicated above (item II (C)), the ISY program must include strategies to outreach and engage youth 14-21 at-risk of dropping out of school by implementing a career pathway approach that will include a link between academic learning, work-based experience and youth development services.
- b) Provider of youth services must establish strong partnerships with educational institutions that have the existing career and technical programs and/or career pathways programs.
- c) ISY programs shall include continuous educational opportunities that connect participants to their school, community and work, as appropriate. These activities should lead to the attainment of a high school diploma, strong connections to post-secondary education, and career pathways options.

2. Program Delivery Additional Requirements – OSY

In addition to the five (5) program components indicated above (item I (C)), the OSY program design must include strategies to outreach to and engage youth 16-24 who are no longer attending school, and who have not achieved their high school diploma or GED. These strategies include, but are not limited to:

- a) Tutoring: instruction designed to coach, teach, and guide youth participants to increase academic success potential. Tutoring can be provided as a group activity, one-on-one service or via computer based programs through partnering agencies or workforce centers;
- b) Study skills training: strategies and methods of focused learning. Study skills training is designed to improve learning ability and may include, but is not limited to, learning styles, time management, study habits, and listening and writing skills;
- c) Alternative secondary school offerings: a public school or public contracted educational program that serves youth who have not been successful in mainstream traditional academic programs and provides educational services leading to high school diploma;
- d) Innovative and developmental approaches to deliver educational activities such as GED classes, credit recovery, alternative education programs to complete a secondary school program; and
- e) Occupational skills development that leads to an industry recognized credential or certificate.

OSY programs should address both educational and employment development strategies that prepare the youth for post-secondary education, career pathways, long term careers, and full time employment. The overall OSY program design should provide continuous pathways to post-secondary education and training activities that will enable the youth participants to attain a diploma and/or an industry recognized credential and enter into the workforce.

III. Consistent with Sec. 129 of Title I of WIOA in order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, all youth programs shall provide elements consisting of:

- A. Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies**
1. **Tutoring:** instruction designed to coach, teach, and guide youth participants to increase academic success potential. Tutoring can be provided as a group activity, one-on-one service or via computer-based programs through partnering agencies or workforce centers.
 2. **Study skill training:** strategies and methods of focused learning. Study skills training is designed to improve learning ability and may include, but is not limited to, learning styles, time management, study habits, and listening and writing skills.
 3. **Dropout prevention strategies:** student-centered intensive individualized attention and instruction through tutoring, mentoring programs, alternative secondary school offerings, and instruction technologies to assist participant youth with the completion of high school.
Effective programs also characteristically feature a wide range of student assistance services to address such things as substance abuse, teen pregnancy and young parenthood, suicide prevention, and other mental and physical health issues.

B. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services as appropriate

1. A public school or public contracted educational program that serves youth who have not been successful in mainstream traditional academic programs and provides educational services leading to high school diploma.
2. To be classified as an “alternative school” or “alternative course of study” for WIOA purposes, a specialized structured curriculum is required that is distinguishable from the regular curriculum offered to students in corresponding grades or classes. Although alternative education programs are often referred to as “schools”, they are actually programs within a school.

C. Paid and unpaid work experiences (WEX) that have, as a component, academic and occupational education, which may include summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; pre-apprenticeship programs; internships and job shadowing; and on-the-job training opportunities.

1. Work experiences are a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Work experience may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate. A work experience may take place in the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. Labor standards apply in any work experience where an employee/employer relationship, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act or applicable State law, exists. Work experiences provide the youth participant with opportunities for career exploration and skill development. Work experience must include academic and occupational education.
2. The types of work experiences include the following categories: 1) summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year; 2) pre-apprenticeship programs; 3) internships and job shadowing; and 4) on-the-job training opportunities.

- a) Summer employment opportunities are a component of the work experience program element. These work-based models can be effectively used to target job seeker needs.
- b) Pre-apprenticeship is a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program and has a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, registered apprenticeship program(s).
- c) An internship is a temporary position which emphasizes on on-the-job training rather than merely employment, and it may be paid or unpaid. Internships and work experiences provide a helpful means for an individual to gain experience that leads to unsubsidized employment.
- d) Job shadowing is typically a part of a career exploration/development activity. A participant youth follows an employee at a firm for one or more days to learn about a particular occupation or industry. Job shadowing can also help the participant youth to explore a range of careers and a specific career objective in order to select a career pathway. Participating several times a year, participant youth gain first-hand experience in a variety of career choices so they can: 1) understand the daily duties and activities involved with each job and career; 2) ask questions about the job and workplace; 3) identify their career interests; 4) become aware of the technical and academic skills they would need to enter each career; 5) develop communication skills; 6) apply a connection between academic classroom work and their career goals.
- e) The term “on-the-job training” means training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that: a) provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job; b) is made available through a program that provides reimbursement to the employer of up to 50 percent of the wage rate of the participant, except as provided in Sec. 134(c)(3)(H) of Title I of WIOA, for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training; and c) 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.

D. Occupational skills training is an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. Providers of WIOA Title I youth services must give priority consideration to training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area. Such training must: 1) be outcome-oriented and focused on an occupational goal specified in the individual service strategy; 2) be of sufficient duration to impart the skills needed to meet the occupational goal; and 3) result in attainment of a recognized post-secondary credential.

E. Education offered concurrently with, and in the same context as, workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. This program element reflects the integrated education and training model and requires integrated education and training to occur concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training. This program element describes how workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills training are to be taught within the same time frame and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway.

F. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate.

Leadership development opportunities are opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination and other positive social behaviors such as: a) exposure to post-secondary educational possibilities; b) community and service learning projects; c) peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring; d) organizational and team work training, including team leadership training; e) training in decision-making, including determining priorities and problem solving; f) citizenship training, including life skills training such as parenting and work behavior training; g) civic engagement activities which promote the quality of life in a community; and h) other leadership activities that place youth in a leadership role such as serving on youth leadership committees, such as a standing youth committee.

G. Supportive services

Supportive services for youth, as defined in WIOA Sec. 3(59), are services that enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities. These services include, but are not limited to, the following: a) linkages to community services; b) assistance with transportation; c) assistance with child care and dependent care; d) assistance with housing; e) needs-related payments; f) assistance with educational testing; g) reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities; h) referrals to health care; and i) assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eye glasses and protective eye gear.

H. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months

Adult mentoring for youth must: a) last at least 12 months and may take place both during the program and following exit from the program; b) be a formal relationship between a youth participant and an adult mentor that includes structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement to develop the competence and character of the mentee; c) include a mentor who is an adult other than the assigned youth case manager; and d) while group mentoring activities and mentoring through electronic means are allowable as part of the mentoring activities, at a minimum, the local youth program must match the youth with an individual mentor with whom the youth interacts on a face-to-face basis.

Mentoring may include workplace mentoring where the local program matches a youth participant with an employer or employee of a company.

I. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate

1. Comprehensive guidance and counseling provides individualized counseling to participants. This includes drug and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, and referral to partner programs, as appropriate, WIOA Sec. 129(c)(1)(C)(J).
2. When referring participants to necessary counseling that cannot be provided by the local youth program or its service providers, the local youth program must coordinate with the organization it refers to in order to ensure continuity of service.

J. Financial literacy education

In general the financial literacy education program element includes activities that will help participants gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed financial decisions that enable them to attain greater financial health and stability by using high quality, age-appropriate, and relevant strategies and channels, including, where possible, timely and customized information, guidance, tools, and instruction.

K. Entrepreneurial skills training

Entrepreneurial skills training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business. Such training must develop the skills associated with entrepreneurship. Such skills include, but are not limited to, the ability to: a) take initiative; b) creatively seek out and identify business opportunities; c) develop budgets and forecast resource needs; d) understand various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option; and e) communicate effectively and market oneself and one's ideas.

L. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services. These services are intended to foster greater motivation, informed decision making and consideration of future educational and employment opportunities for the program participant.

The above-cited activities may include a broad variety of workforce and educational resources, which can assist the program participant with future employment and career-related issues. These program design resources may include, but are not limited to:

- Discussion on information with respect to labor market trends;
- Assessment of participants' vocational interest inventory results;
- Information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
- Identification of career pathways of interest to the program participant;
- Information on non-traditional employment options;
- Pre-employment transition services; and career development planning.

M. Activities that help the program participant prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training. Services under this program element prepare the program participant for advancement to post-secondary education or training after attaining a high school diploma or equivalent. These services may include, but are not limited to:

- Exploring post-secondary education and training options;
- Assisting the program participant in preparing for Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) and American College Testing (ACT);
- Assisting with college applications;
- Searching and applying for scholarships and grants; and
- Assistance with financial aid applications.

N. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate

1. Follow-up services are critical services provided following a youth's exit from the program to help ensure the youth is successful in employment and/or post-secondary education and training. Follow-up services for youth may include: a) leadership development and supportive service activities; b) regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise; c) assistance in securing better paying jobs, career pathway development, and further education or training; d) work-related peer support groups; e) adult mentoring; and/or f) services necessary to ensure the success of youth participants in employment and/or post-secondary education.
2. All youth participants must receive some form of follow-up services for a minimum duration of 12 months. Follow-up services may be provided beyond 12 months at the State or local board's discretion. The types of services provided and the duration of services must be determined based on the needs of the individual and therefore, the type and intensity of follow-up services may differ for each participant. However, follow-up services must include more than only a contact attempted or made for securing documentation in order to report a performance outcome, WIOA Sec. 129 (c)(2)(I).
3. **Follow-up services additional guidance**
Additionally, follow up services shall be provided for:
 - Tracking, performance, reporting purposes; and
 - Provision of services and activities after placement.

Providers of youth services must implement the following approach for the provision of follow up services:

- Contact,
- Retention,
- Progress, and
- Follow up services, which must be incorporated into the cycle of the youth work or school day, must be designed in a way that will avoid service delivery interruptions.

Common standards for follow up services shall be designed to:

- Engage with the youth participant,
- Maintain a mentoring relationship with the youth after placement,
- Set program's expectations and address/maintain support to youth participant,
- Consider developing (or just include in the ISS) follow up activities (consider listing those on entity's website, brochures),
- Consider developing a schedule for frequent, systematic contact.

Follow up services and youth program design:

Sub-recipients must ensure that the needs of youth participants are met. Program staff shall pay attention to the youth participant while providing follow up services; they might be in need of the following services:

- Housing,
- Transportation,
- Childcare,
- Workplace tools, clothing, etc., and
- Other services, as appropriate or authorized by established policies.

Best Practices

Follow up services shall be designed to provide:

- Access to additional educational services,
- Access to better jobs, and
- Access to services that facilitate youth progress.

Examples:

- ✓ Make sure to incorporate a career ladder in the ISS,
- ✓ Emphasis on career pathways (always objective),
- ✓ Address long-term learning,
- ✓ Address any necessary areas to promote and facilitate youth progress
- ✓ If a youth loses his/her job, act as soon as possible. Address the reasons and assist with employment services, as appropriate.

Follow up services, as permitted or appropriate, shall promote and facilitate the following:

- Linkage to system resources,
- Assistance with educational testing,
- Pre-employment related fees,
- Referrals to appropriate system partners,
- Financial literacy,
- Mentoring assistance, and
- Promote network of available resources and services.

4. Accountability

- Follow up services must occur at least once per month after exit,
- Case notes shall include collection of information on employment status, education progress, need for additional services, challenges and assistance needed to address them,
- Contact may occur in person, by telephone or email. All contact must be recorded as a follow up service with a detailed case note,
- Program participant may request to withdraw from the program or simply to stop follow up services. This must be clearly documented via case note in the authorized MIS.
- The service provider must attempt to contact the participant monthly to provide follow-up services. Once 90 days have passed, and contact attempts have not been successful, no further contact attempts will be made. The service provider must exhaust at least three different contact types before discontinuing follow-up attempts. All contact attempts must be properly documented in case note entries in the MIS (currently EmployNV). Acceptable contact types can include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Telephone;
 - SARA;
 - In-person;
 - Email;
 - Text message;
 - Social media (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, etc.); and
 - Message left with contact person.

IV. Youth Programs and the One-Stop

WIOA Sec. 121 (b) (1) (B) (i) requires that the youth program function as a required one-stop partner and fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a one-stop partner described in WIOA Sec. 121(b)(1)(A). In addition connections between the youth program and the one-stop system may include those that facilitate: 1) the coordination and provision of youth activities; 2) linkages to the job market and employers; 3) access for eligible youth to the information and services required in section III of this policy; 4) services for non-eligible youth such as basic labor exchange services, other self-service activities such as job searches, career exploration, use of career center resources, and referral as appropriate; and 5) other activities described in WIOA Sec. 129 (b) – (c). Local boards must either collocate WIOA youth program staff at one-stop centers and/or ensure one-stop centers and staff are equipped to advise youth in order to increase youth access to services and connect youth to the program that best aligns with their needs.

V. Limitation

Follow-up services are critical following a youth’s exit from the program. Follow-up services must be provided, at a minimum, for 12 months, which ensures a youth’s success in employment and/or post-secondary education and training.

The following services may not be provided to youth participants after program exit:

- On-job-training (OJT);
- Paid work experiences;
- Occupational skills training;
- Paid internships; and
- Paid pre-apprenticeship programs.

VI. Source Support Documentation

Service Activity <i>(Ensure and verify proper completion)</i>	Required support documentation*
Objective Assessment & ISS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fully executed ▪ Properly signed and dated by participant and career coach ▪ Must demonstrate participant’s career objective goals ▪ Must show target dates for accomplishments ▪ Must show follow-up and updates
Progress and achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Copy of certificate of completion ▪ Copy of diploma(s) ▪ Copy of credential(s) ▪ Income – employment verification ▪ Follow-up related paperwork – retention ▪ Skills gain verification ▪ Case notes
*List is not all inclusive. Additional support documentation may be included as necessary or required for auditing purposes.	