

Q and A received from Tennessee local investment staff about ARRA 2009 summer youth opportunity program.

1

Q If a youth has parents or guardians that have lost their employment, is there a requirement to prove the income of the youth?

A. Income eligibility is a requirement for any youth participating in the summer opportunities program. Family income will be calculated to determine eligibility.

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Q. What are credentials that may be required for performance under the ARRA summer youth program?

A. There is no specific credential requirement under ARRA. However, youth can receive a credential under work readiness, and this credential must be a recognized credential.

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Q. What are some of the credentials for a short term programs?

A. Under the common measures short term training does not lead to a credential. But, there are certain pre-vocational services that may lead to a credential.

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Q. Would CPR or OSHA certificates be recognized as credentials?

A. Yes, the OSHA certificate is a recognized credential.

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Q. We have an opportunity to send middle-school aged youth to a local day camp at a space Institute. It's a camp designed to try out careers. Due to the educational and skills training components, can this count as both a classroom and work component?

A. Yes, as long as there is source documentation for the skills training offered and the attendance for the class room training.

6

Q Is it permissible to place high school students in a class room for educational advancement ½ of the day and then in a career-technical education that stimulates the workplace for the employment piece?

A. Yes, as long as there is source documentation for the skills training offered and the attendance for the class room training.

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Q. May current WIA students, enrolled at a technology center, receive payment for the classroom training as long as they are placed in employment ½ of the time?

A. Youth may be paid for work readiness portion and not for class attendance.

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Q. If a youth is determined eligible in April as disadvantaged and she/he begins her/his program in June, will the 45-day window be waived to accommodate this situation?

A. Currently, the 45-days window will not be waived.

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Q. Do we still have to calculate income for the last six months on participants, and then multiply the wages by two to get the annual estimates?

A. Yes, you need the annual income. The calculation for income has not changed under ARRA.

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Q. Are JTG students who are exited from JTG and who are in one year follow-up still eligible?

A. WIA/JTG is eligible as long as they currently meet the youth eligibility guidelines. A reminder, JTG students funded by ARRA will be counted in performance measures for work readiness services.

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Q. Are in-school youth, who are exited and in post secondary training, eligible?

A. Yes, they are eligible for the summer work readiness program and meet the eligibility criteria.

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Q. Are eligible youth only allowed work for eight weeks or can they work the entire allowed summer months?

A. This is a local decision and there is no rule why they should not. The suggestion of an 8 week slot was for planning services.

13

Q. Can we do remediation/credit recovery in conjunction with work experience as part of the youth program?

A. Yes, as long as there is source documentation for the skills training offered and the attendance for the class room training. Any student in remediation setting will be counted in the year round program.

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Q. How much may we pay youth for the remediation portion?

A. We should not pay for remedial portion unless there is (unmet need) such as support services preventing participation in remedial services.

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Q. Would the pay for the remedial portion be a stipend or could be an hourly wage like the experience portion?

A. Youth in remedial services may receive stipend and we hope local areas have defined policies for paying stipend.

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Q. Are there any assessments tools that (the state thinks) need to be used to assess youth skills for the summer or will TABE suffice?

A. Assessment instruments are dictated by the needs of the participant and the initial interview. A case manager decides the appropriate assessment tools to benefit the participant. Please refer to Policy 07-32.

18

Q. If TABE is administered and scores are entered in e-CMATs, will the scores be picked up for the Literacy and Numeracy measures?

A. Yes, if the youth completes his summer program and returns for remedial services funded under WIA and not under ARRA.

19

Q. Are there any pre-and post tests for the Work Readiness measures?

A. No.

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Q. Is the summer program available for all youth regardless of age, race or language barriers?

A. Yes, as long the youth (14-21) meets the eligibility income guidelines.

21

Q. Is providing a drug test for youth, if requested by the employer, an allowable activity?

A. Most employers pay for this service; if, however, the hiring hinges on this issue, the LWIA may pay for this service as part of the training component. LWIAs should persuade the employer to pay for drug testing.

22

Q. Has there been any clarification as to employment (work experience) for youth in golf courses, pools etc.? Can a youth be employed as a cashier or in a concession stand in these facilities?

A. We have not received additional information clarification from USDOL. The guidance states that The WIA does not permit youth working in those establishments as a work experience. Neither does TEGL 14-08, which does not allow these establishments as a work experience sites.

23

Q. We do not plan to conduct a TABE test for youth work experience or work readiness activities. We were told by the supervisors at a work site that we could do work-readiness competencies. Do we have any further guidance on this matter?

A. The LWIA has to ensure that the work readiness competency test is a nationally recognized test.

24

Q. Is it permissible to pay for class attendance for post secondary students? Will we require achievement/progress with attendance?

A. Unless there is unmet need we do not need to pay for class attendance. If the students are supported with ARRA they should also be in a work readiness program.

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Q. We understand that we are to pre-test secondary education students and then post-test those who were deficient; is this correct?

A. Yes, if they are deficient.

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25

- Q. Must we pre-test within 30 days of the registration date? Our concern is that if we have a registration date in April, and then the activity date will be in June. Would that put the test date beyond 30 days?
- A. Pre-test can be conducted after 60 days.

26

- Q. We have a list that shows includable and excludable income for eligibility purposes from the JTPA area. Do other areas have a more updated list? How do we count military pay?
- A. Yes, we have an updated list. You will find it in the e-CMATs manual. The manual is posted on the TDLWD Web site. Military pay is excludable.

27

- Q. It was mentioned in one of the meetings that there should be one staff person to every 100 participants. Does this mean one coordinator per county, plus the other staff member?
- A. This is not a policy. This is a local decision.

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- Q. Some providers are hiring additional staff could they use formula funds to hire staff?
- A. Yes, formula funds can be used to hire staff, but staff hired must be informed the position is temporary.

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- Q. WIA Section 664.460. Work experience should help youth acquire the personal attributes, knowledge and skills needed to obtain a job and advance employment. The purpose is to provide the youth with the opportunities for career exploration and skills development. Work experience can have the following elements:
- A. a. Instruction in employability skills or generic workplace skills
b. Exposure to various aspects of industry including progressively more complex tasks, internships

- c. Job shadowing, integration of basic academic skills into work activities
- d. Entrepreneurship; service learning;
- e. Paid and unpaid community services and other elements designed to achieve the goals of work experiences.

In terms of integration of work based learning and classroom based learning, this is particularly important to provide greater relevance of the academic classroom-based learning to the workplace and it's particularly important for struggling students who often have challenges with understanding the meaningfulness and purposefulness of academics.

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Q. What is the Work Readiness indicator?

A. The work readiness indicator comes from the skill attainment rate in the WIA. It is the work readiness skills component of the skill attainment rate.

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Q. Is an assessment required with stimulus funds?

A. Yes, but you have the flexibility to determine the type of assessment necessary for youth who are participating in the summer employment only.

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Q. Does the increase in the upper age limit (for youth) to age 24 apply only to Recovery Act funding or to formula youth funding as well?

A. It only applies to Recovery Act funds.

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Q. What is to be done with 22 to 24 year olds after the stimulus period ends?

A. When recovery funds have been exhausted, they may be co-enrolled in the WIA Adult program or they may be referred to other programs for which they are eligible (which may be a WIA partner program).

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Q. If a youth only participates in the summer employment and uses stimulus or Recovery Act funding to pay not only the wages or the work experience, but also pays for supportive services and tutoring, will the youth still only be counted in the work readiness performance measure or will they be counted in the common measures too, if that state is a common measures state?

- A. It would only be counted using the work readiness indicator. Because, as long as there is work experience between May 1st and September 30th, other allowable WIA activities would still be considered as summer youth employment.

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- Q. Will youth who enter work experience prior to and during the summer be subject to only the work readiness measure?

- A. If they enter prior to the summer, they would in fact be included in all the measures and not just the work readiness measure. However, anyone who goes into work readiness during the summer months would only be subject to that work readiness indicator.

36

- Q. Is it allowable for active WIA youth participants to participate in the recovery summery program? And if so, is there a recommended percent of existing participants versus new participants?

- A. Yes, it is allowable for a current youth participant who is already in a work experience to participate in the summer program. However, these youth would be under whatever performance measures that particular state is using. No percent is recommended for existing versus new participants; the percentage is going to be a local decision/determination based on the availability of participants and on other factors determined by the local area.

37

- Q. What is the work readiness indicator?

- A. The work readiness indicator comes from the skill attainment rate in WIA. And, it is the work readiness skills component of the skill attainment rate.

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- Q. Is a 24 year old eligible for summer and year-round programming, or just for summer?

- A. A 24 year old can participate either in a summer work experience or can continue to participate in the Recovery Act funds in any of the other allowable WIA activities beyond the summer.

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Q. Will waivers of low-income eligibility be available for returning veterans from Iraq, especially with the maximum age being 24 years old?

A. There will be no waivers for eligibility as under WIA. This is not a waivable criteria.

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Q. Can a youth work longer than eight weeks during the summer?

A. The summer is basically a five-month period, from May 1st to September 30th. A youth could work at any point during that period and still fall under the work readiness indicator only. In addition, a youth can continue to work beyond the summer and this would be considered an additional activity under WIA; and, all the other performance measures would apply. Yet, there is no prohibition on youth working only eight weeks.

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Q. Do we decide who needs an assessment and ISS or should everyone do one?

A. Everyone does need an assessment and ISS. However, what is decided is the type and level of assessment and the type of individual service strategy that needs to be employed. There is flexibility to determine the level of assessment and ISS.

41

Q. Is concurrent enrollment into the year-round youth program encouraged or discouraged?

A. We would encourage young people to be served appropriately using WIA funds. In particular, the non-summer months should be used as an opportunity to enroll out-of-school youth who do not return to school after the summer months.

42

Q. Can youth be paid more than the minimum wage?

A. The answer is yes. If a local area chooses to pay youth higher than the minimum wage, that would be its prerogative. And in many states, if one is following wage provisions, then it's necessary to have a higher minimum wage in a state than the federal minimum wage. So it's up to the LWIA to determine whether or not to pay more than the minimum wage.

43

Q. Do existing program participants who are already WIA eligible need to re-do the eligibility process with forms, documentation, etc., or are they already considered to be eligible?

A. They would already be considered eligible if they are currently eligible for the WIA program.

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Q. Must all summer youth activities include job placement? Why or why not?

A. What is critical, in order for it to be considered a summer work opportunity, is that it has a work experience. The reason for this is: in order for it to be considered employment, there must be some work experience for which a young person could gain a work readiness skill.

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Q. Should unemployment insurance be paid on the summer youth employment?

A. Summer Youth employment in Tennessee is considered "Excluded Service" for Unemployment Insurance purposes unless "the employing unit for which such service is performed is liable for a federal tax on the remuneration paid for such service against which credit may be taken for premiums paid under this chapter, or unless the employing unit has elected that such service shall be deemed to constitute employment" in which cases such service shall be "included services".

"Excluded Service" means that the employer is not liable to pay Unemployment Insurance premiums for the Summer Youth employee . Their employment is considered "subsidized" and the employee would not receive wage credit for Unemployment Insurance purposes. This ruling is based on TCA 50-7-207 (c) (5) (G).