

## Executive Summary

### Workforce Services Policy – Youth Program Service Design and Framework

#### 1. What is the purpose of this policy?

The Youth Program Service Design and Framework policy outline the required program framework for youth programs funded in whole or in part under Title I of WIOA. Funds allocated to a local area for eligible youth must include programs that provide assessments and develop service strategies linked to indicators of performance. These programs must also provide activities leading to the attainment of a secondary school diploma, preparation for postsecondary education and training opportunities, strong linkages between academic instruction and occupational education leading to the attainment of recognized post-secondary credentials, preparation for unsubsidized employment, and effective connections to employers.

#### 2. Has this policy been updated? If so, what is the purpose of the policy update?

The policy was updated due to a Federal Audit conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration for the Title I-Youth program.

- The policy includes the following directions for local areas:
  - Establishing a framework for data requirements; and
  - Clarifying the expected outcomes
- Added the required language regarding procuring, awarding, and terminating contracts of youth service providers.
- Outlines the importance of competitive and open procurement process, awarding, onboarding, and evaluating services providers.
- Explicit language was added to strengthen the policy regarding youth providers' responsibility to ensure all youth have access and awareness of the fourteen program elements.
- Strengthened the guidance to Local Boards regarding youth program design and delivery that outlines the design that the Local Boards should replicate.



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**STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

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**Workforce Services Policy – Youth Program Service Design and Framework**

**Effective Date:** June 5, 2020

**Duration:** Automatic Annual Renewal

**Purpose:**

The Youth Program Service Design and Framework policy outlines the required program framework for youth programs funded in whole or in part under Title I of WIOA. Funds allocated to a local area for eligible youth must include programs that provide assessments and develop service strategies linked to indicators of performance. These programs must also provide activities leading to the attainment of a secondary education diploma, preparation for postsecondary education and training opportunities, strong linkages between academic instruction and occupational education leading to the attainment of recognized post-secondary credentials, preparation for unsubsidized employment, and effective connections to employers.

**Scope:**

Office of the Governor, Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD); Division of Workforce Services (WFS); Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development (ECD); Tennessee Department of Education (TNED); Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS); State Workforce Development Board (SWDB); Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs, Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program(AE); Title III – Wagner-Peyser Act Program (WP); Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR); Regional Planning Council (RPC); Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB); Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA); American Job Center (AJC); One-Stop Operator (OSO); Workforce System Sub-Recipients (Sub-Recipients); Workforce System Partners (Partners)

**Background:**

The Youth Program and service provision, under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), is designed to:

- Assist eligible out-of-school youth (OSY) and eligible in-school youth (ISY), who are 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 an effective connection to educational institutions and employers, including small employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the local and regional labor markets.

- Implement integrated strategies for career pathway approaches that support post-secondary education, training, and employment
- Implement work-based training strategies and employment approaches to help participants develop essential skills that are best learned on the job
- Implement progressive levels of education and training approaches that will help individuals with higher skill levels and experience earn marketable credentials
- Provide continued support services to individuals who need them to participate and succeed in work investment and training activities

### **I. Program Design<sup>1</sup>:**

Program design is an essential element to assist youth service providers to develop comprehensive service strategies based upon an individual needs. Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) must develop intensive outreach efforts to non-profits, community groups, faith-based agencies, schools, and other support agencies who can provide youth services. Access points must be developed in high school libraries with staff trained to assist youth in accessing all available services. Outreach programs must be implemented that will target populations with barriers to employment (including, but not limited to, offenders, homeless individuals, basic skills deficient, English language learners, individuals aging out of foster care, pregnant or parenting individuals, and persons with disabilities<sup>2</sup>). Monitoring will occur through the TDLWD monitoring process, including, but not limited to, PAR monitoring, youth tours, and onsite technical assistance visits.

### **II. Framework:**

#### **A. Intake<sup>3</sup>:**

An Orientation process must be provided to each potential eligible youth participant. Orientation must include information on the services that are available within the WIOA Title I youth program and the One-Stop Service Delivery system in the local area. These services may include, but are not limited to:

- Orientation/Introduction of the program purpose
- All program services and resources available
- Responsibilities of other service providers
- Program participant's responsibility
- Information on follow-up services
- Information on support services
- Referral to other appropriate services

**Intake involves registration, eligibility determination, and collection of documentation to support verification of eligibility for services. Other services also include referral for basic skills development and referral to other services as appropriate.**

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<sup>1</sup> 20 CFR 681.420

<sup>2</sup> 20 CFR 681.210-681.220

<sup>3</sup> 20 CFR 681.320

**B. Assessments<sup>4</sup>:**

Assessment is a process that identifies service needs. An objective assessment must be administered to all eligible youth. The WIOA youth program design requires an objective assessment of academic levels, goals, interests, skills levels, abilities, aptitudes, and supportive service needs; it also measures barriers and strengths. Assessment results are used to develop the Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The results from the objective assessment must be entered into Jobs4TN.

**C. Individual Service Strategy (ISS)<sup>5</sup>:**

The Individual Service Strategy is the plan that identifies the employment goals, educational objectives, and appropriate services for the participants. Development and updating as necessary of an ISS is required for each participant. An ISS must be directly linked to one or more of the indicators of performance and identifies a career pathway that includes education and employment goals. Goals and objectives must be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely and align to the interests and career pathway identified in the objective assessment. 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 training program.

**D. Career Coaching:**

Case management is more a process than a service and typically includes non-instructional activities such as navigation to and arrangements for academic, career or personal counseling, financial aid, childcare, housing, and other financial assistance that can be critical to the success and continued engagement of the individual in pursuing their career pathway component. Youth programs must provide case management services to assist a youth participant in making informed choices and 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 case manager is assigned to follow the progress of each youth participant from enrollment to program exit, including follow-up services.

Documentation of all services and activities must be recorded on the youth participant's ISS and in Jobs4TN. Local boards must also outline minimum requirements for case managers to contact youth participants. Case notes, at minimum, must reflect who was assisted, why, when and where the contact occurred and must be entered promptly with detailed information. Recording case notes is critical because it weaves each service element into the comprehensive service plan.

**E. Support Services<sup>6</sup>:**

Youth programs must provide supportive services to eligible youth participants that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in youth activities authorized under Title I of WIOA. Local Workforce Development Boards must develop policies that outline procedures for administering supportive services and participants receiving supportive services.

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<sup>4</sup> WIOA Sec. 129(c)(1)(B), 20 CFR 681.290, 20 CFR 681.420 , TEGL 21-16

<sup>5</sup> WIOA sec. 129(c)(1)(B)

<sup>6</sup> 20 CFR 681.570

## **F. Follow-Up Services<sup>7</sup>:**

Follow-up services are critical services provided, for no less than 12 months, following a youth participant's exit from the program. These services help ensure the youth is successful in employment and/or post-secondary education and training beyond their program completion. The youth service provider must establish and implement procedures to ensure that follow-up services are conducted and documented in Jobs4TN.

1. Follow-up services must include more than only a contact attempted or made for securing documentation to report a performance outcome<sup>8</sup>. Local programs must have policies in place to establish how to document and record when a participant cannot be located or contacted. At the time of enrollment, youth must be informed that follow-up services will be provided for 12 months following exit. 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 must be documented in case notes
2. Allowable Follow-up Activities:
  - Supportive Services
  - Adult Mentoring
  - Financial Literacy Education
  - Services that provide Labor Market Information
  - Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training

## **III. Procurement for Local Youth Programs:**

Each LWDB must adhere to the TDLWD Workforce Services procurement policy that outlines competitive procurement through a request for proposal (RFP) process.

The LWDB must identify eligible youth providers for the LWDA by awarding grants or contracts on a competitive basis based on the recommendation of the youth standing committee. Youth standing committee members must disclose any and all conflicts of interest with bidder's staff including, but not limited to, family ties (spouse, child, parent, sibling) fiduciary roles, employment or ownership interests in common.

When awarding grants or contracts to youth service providers, each LWDB must follow, at minimum, the following criteria:

1. Proposals must include a detailed outline of how the bidder will execute youth elements identified in the RFP;
2. Proposals must demonstrate the bidder's ability to deliver services to the targeted population in accordance with locally established guidelines;
3. Proposals must demonstrate whether the organization leverages community-based resources, including partnerships with organizations that provide leadership development, mentoring services and private sector employment involvement;
4. Proposals must highlight the bidder's experience in engaging at risk youth in similar activities; and;
5. Proposals must illustrate the understanding of and commitment to meeting goals and objectives established by each LWDB.

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<sup>7</sup> 20 CFR 681.420

<sup>8</sup> TEGL 21-16

LWDB must ensure that the following activities are addressed in contracts between local areas and the contracted service provider:

- The required services that will be delivered to youth<sup>9</sup>
- How those services will be provided, including detailed service delivery plans that specifically address the 14 design framework services<sup>10</sup>

Additionally, contracts between each LWDB and the contracted service provider must also include assurances that service delivery will be based upon the following program components:

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

#### **IV. Program Elements**

All 14 program elements must be made available to each eligible youth participant.

In order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, or entry into post-secondary education and career readiness for participants, all youth programs shall provide services consisting of the following program elements<sup>11</sup>:

1. 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 postsecondary credential
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences (WEX) that have an academic and occupational education component. Local boards must ensure that the academic and occupational components are being met with each work experience. WEX can 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
4. Occupational skills training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupation in the local area involved
5. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral (as appropriate)

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<sup>9</sup> WIOA Section 129(c)(2)

<sup>10</sup> 20 CFR681.420

<sup>11</sup> WIOA Section 123

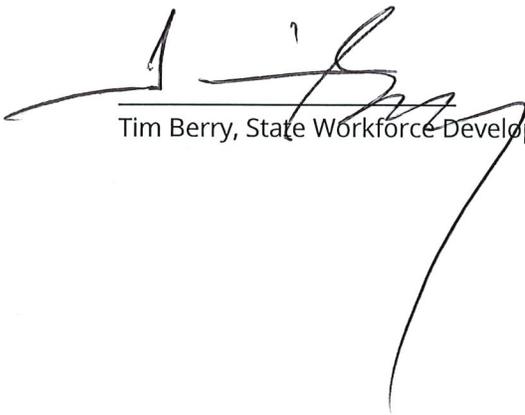
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors (as appropriate)
7. Supportive services
8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a minimum total of 12 months
9. Follow-up services, for a minimum of 12 months, after the completion of participation (as appropriate)
10. Financial Literacy Education
11. Entrepreneurial Skills Training
12. 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
13. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training
14. Education offered concurrently with, and in the same context as, workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster

**References:**

20 CFR 681.420; WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii); WIOA Section 121(b)(1)(A); WIOA Section 121(b)(1)(B)(i); WIOA Section 129; WIOA Section 123; TEGL 21-16

**Contact:**

For any questions related to this policy, please contact the Program Integrity Unit at [Workforce.Board@tn.gov](mailto:Workforce.Board@tn.gov).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Berry', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and extends below the line.

Tim Berry, State Workforce Development Board Chair