



OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENTS, INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYMENT AND SERVICE STRATEGY PLANS

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I. BACKGROUND

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Sec. 134(c)(2)(A)(xii)(I) and Sec. 129(c)(1)(A) require WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers receive a Comprehensive Assessment, and a Youth an Objective Assessment (OBJ), to identify appropriate services and career pathways. This may include obtaining or retaining employment and/or post-secondary education.

After obtaining an assessment, WIOA Sec. 134(c)(2)(A)(xii)(II) and Sec. 129(c)(1)(B) require employment plans for Adult and Dislocated Worker via an Individual Employment Plan (IEP), and Youth via an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) to those receiving Individual Career Services. **For Youth, the ISS must be directly linked to one or more of the Performance Indicators (see Administrative Bulletin 221 Performance Indicators).**

II. POLICY

Assessments

WIOA requires an assessment of academic levels, skill levels and service needs of each participant, which includes a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs. Assessments must also consider a participant's strengths rather than just focusing on areas that need improvement. The result of an assessment is having information to develop an employment plan (see Section B). The assessment must include an appraisal of basic skills and a career-related evaluation that will help participants understand how personal attributes affect their potential success and satisfaction with different career options and work environments.

The assessment must include an evaluation of these elements and documented in case notes:

- **Basic Skills** – standardized testing is utilized to evaluate literacy and numeracy skill level, such as the CASAS, to make this determination.

- **Developmental Needs** – items, materials, situations, steps or acts that need to occur to aid in the growth of an individual or to assist an individual to realize or meet his or her potential.
- **Occupational Skills** – training that will provide the job skills required to work in a specific industry or occupation.
- **Prior Work Experience** – job experience gained by previous employment, it can include paid or unpaid employment.
- **Employability** – skills that are required to secure employment and maintain employment. This includes job readiness skills.
- **Interests** – work-related interests that can identify potential training and occupational goals. Interest inventories can be utilized to discover interests.
- **Aptitudes** – talents and abilities utilized to identify potential training and occupational goals including non-traditional jobs. Career and aptitude assessments can be utilized to discover aptitudes.
- **Strengths** – tasks or actions that can identify potential training and occupational goals.
- **Supportive Service Needs** – assistance provided to eliminate potential barriers to, and enable active participation in, an activity.

The contractor does not need to complete the entire assessment if it is appropriate to use a recent assessment developed under another education or training program. In this context, SCW defines “recent” as having been completed within the previous six months.

There may be instances where, during the previous six months, a participant completed one or more components of the assessment that was administered by another education or training program or a licensed medical provider but does not have a wide-ranging assessment that satisfies WIOA’s requirements. In this case, SCW encourages the contractor to use those components that have been accomplished and focus WIOA resources on the components that still need to be completed.

Case managers must case note the details of the first assessment and how the decision was made – to determine the participant is eligible for training assistance.

The Objective Assessment must be reviewed annually by the participant and case manager. Any changes must be documented on the Objective Assessment Tool (Attachment 1 Objective Assessment Tool) and within case notes.

Employment Plans

The employment plan shall identify Career Pathways (see Section C) that include education and employment goals (including, in appropriate circumstances, non-traditional employment), appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the participant considering the Assessments. Program elements provided to a Youth must align with the needs and goals set forth in the ISS.

The employment plan is a service plan designed specifically for the individual and based on the information obtained during the Assessment. It is developed jointly by the participant and contractor at the time of – enrollment to identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and the appropriate combination of services.

As a guide for the delivery of appropriate services, the employment plan will serve as the basis for the case management service strategy. The employment plan will identify and document:

- a. The educational goal(s) of the participant;
- b. The employment goal(s) of the participant (including, when appropriate, non-traditional employment goals);
- c. Appropriate achievement objectives for the participant. Youth must include a direct link to one or more of the Performance Indicators (see Administrative Bulletin 221);
- d. Appropriate services, the sequence and mix of the services, and justification for the services to be provided, including support services;
- e. Any referral(s) to other services/programs and justification; and
- f. Services needed, but not available in the SCW Area.

Case managers must update the employment plan throughout participation and on an on-going basis. It must document, among other items, the services provided, participant's progress, training completion, benchmarks reached, and any other accomplishments. Case managers must document this information regardless of who provides the element (CFR pg. 56177).

Case managers must revise the employment plan when any of the following occur;

- a. Change in career path goal(s);
- b. Change in education path goal(s); or
- c. Significant change in training and/or life circumstances;

Local Labor Market information will be taken into consideration in the development of the employment plan. A list of occupations and skill sets that are in demand or decline in the SCW region will be posted on the state Employment Security website. [ESDWAGOV - Occupations in Demand list](https://www.esd.wa.gov/occupations-in-demand)

The employment plan should be recorded in the state provided database and does not give legal or entitlement rights for services to participants.

Career Pathways

WIOA Sec. 3(7) defines Career Pathways as a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- a. Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of Washington State and the regional or local area economy;
- b. Prepares an individual to be successful in a full range of secondary or post-secondary education options, including pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships;
- c. Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- d. Includes, as appropriate, an education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupation cluster;
- e. Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;

- f. Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized post-secondary credential; and
 - g. Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.
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III. CO-ENROLLMENT OR CONCURRENT PROGRAM ENROLLMENT

Co-enrollment or concurrent program enrollment of participants (Adult/DW, Adult/Youth, DW/TAA, DW/NDWG, etc.) is a common service strategy that enables participants to receive a wider range of services to meet specific needs. For co-enrollment the participant's employment plan must include a clear justification for the co-enrollment (need and benefit to the participant) including the documentation of services planned from each program (services and funding tracked by program).

REFERENCES

All contractors will be monitored for compliance with the MIS procedures for timeliness, accuracy and completeness of all forms and documents.

- 20 CFR § 680.170
 - 20 CFR § 681.320
 - TEGL 19-16 – Guidance on Services Provided Through Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs
 - TEGL 21-16, Change 1 & TEGL 33-12 – WIOA Youth Program Guidance
 - WorkSource System Policy 1011, Revision 7 – CASAS for Basic Skills Assessments
 - WorkSource System Policy 1020, Revision 3 – Data Integrity and Performance Policy and Handbook
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