

YOUTH SERVICES POLICY

Effective Date: September 19, 2019

Background: Youth Services will be administered under Sections 3, 107, 116, 123, and 129 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 and the Region VII Workforce Development Plan.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 allows the Region VII Workforce Development Board to provide contracted Youth Services to eligible regional youth. The purpose of Youth Services is to assist and support eligible youth in their pursuit of academic and employment success. The Region VII WDB has agreed to utilize its administrative and fiscal entity as its administration and coordination element for any Youth Services contract(s) with regional service provider(s). This policy follows very closely the guidance provided by both the U.S. Department of Labor and the Region VII Workforce Development Board Local Plan.

Policy: The Region VII Workforce Development Board (WDB) will offer Youth Services to eligible youth residing in the counties of Berkeley, Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan, and Pendleton, comprising Region VII. The Region VII WDB Youth Services Program will be delivered by a qualified, eligible Service Provider(s) selected by awarding a cash advancement and/or cost-reimbursable annual contract on a competitive basis in response to a public Request for Proposal (RFP). Existing contracts can be extended one (1) additional year up to (3) additional years subject to successful performance and funding availability.

A. *Eligibility Requirements*

The term “eligible youth” refers to an individual who:

1. Is at least 14 and no older than 24(i.e. has not yet reached his/her 25th birthday); and
2. Is an individual with one or more of the following barriers:
 - a. Deficient in basic literacy skills
 - b. School dropout
 - c. Homeless, a runaway, or a foster child
 - d. Pregnant or a parent
 - e. An offender
 - f. An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment

If the family of a disabled youth does not meet the income eligibility criteria, the disabled youth will be considered a low-income individual and will be eligible for Youth Services if the youth’s own income:

1. Meets the income criteria established under WIOA; or

2. Meets the income eligibility criteria for cash payments under and federal, state, or local public assistance programs.

B. *In-School vs. Out-of-School Youth*

Eligible youth are subdivided into two categories: In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth. The term "In-School Youth" refers to an eligible youth, who is enrolled in secondary school, including alternative schools, at the time of registration. An "Out-of-School Youth" is an eligible youth who is either: (1) a secondary school dropout (i.e. a youth who is not attending any school and who has not received a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent); or (2) an eligible youth who has either graduated from high school or holds a GED, but is either deficient in basic literacy skills, unemployed, or underemployed at the time of registration.

C. *Deficient in Basic Literacy Skills*

An Out-of-School Youth is considered to be "deficient in basic literacy skills" if he/she computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test, e.g. the TABE or WorkKeys.

D. *Offender*

The term "offender" refers to an individual who:

1. Is or has been subject to any stage of the criminal justice process, and for whom services under this Act may be beneficial; or
2. Require assistance in overcoming artificial barriers to employment resulting from a record of arrest or conviction.

E. *Requires additional assistance to complete an education program*

An In-School Youth may be considered to "require additional assistance to complete an education program" if that youth is performing academically at one or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to his/her age, as documented by performance on a generally accepted standardized test, e.g. the SAT 9.

F. *Funding Requirements*

As stated in the Act, funding for eligible youth must:

1. Provide effective and comprehensive activities, which shall include a variety of options for improving educational and skill competencies and provide effective connections to employers;
2. Ensure on-going mentoring opportunities with adults committed to providing such opportunities;
3. Provide opportunities for training;
4. Provide continued supportive services;
5. Provide incentives for recognition and achievement; and
6. Provide opportunities for activities related to leadership, development, decision-making, citizenship, and community service.

G. *Program Design*

Fund allocated to Region VII to serve eligible youth shall be used to carry out programs that:

1. Provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels, and service needs of each participant including a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs), supportive service needs, and developmental needs, except that a new assessment of a participant is not required if the provider carrying out such a program determines it is appropriate to use a recent assessment of the participant conducted pursuant to another education or training program;
2. Develop a service strategy for each participant that identifies an employment goal (including, in appropriate circumstances, nontraditional employment), appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services taking into account the assessment referenced above, 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; and
3. Provide preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities, strong linkages between academic and occupational learning, preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities, and effective connections to intermediaries with strong links to local and regional employers.

H. *Program Elements*

The Region VII Youth Services Program will make available the following fourteen elements and will offer them to eligible youth in accordance with each youth's Individual Service Strategy. It is not required that each youth receive services provided under all fourteen elements, but it is expected that each youth will receive services under at least two of the fourteen elements as part of their comprehensive plan. The fourteen service elements are:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction, leading to completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies;
2. Alternative secondary school services, as appropriate;
3. Summer employment opportunities that are directly linked to academic and occupational learning and paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing
4. Occupational skill training, as appropriate;
5. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors;
6. Supportive services
7. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
8. Follow-up services for 12 months after the completion of participation; and
9. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate.

10. Financial literacy education
11. Entrepreneurial skills training
12. Labor market and employment information services
13. Activities that prepare youth for transition to postsecondary education and training
14. Educated offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation

I. *Additional Program Requirements*

The Region VII WDB, acting through the Service Provider(s), shall ensure that each eligible youth receives information on the full range of appropriate services that are available through the local board or other eligible providers or one-stop partners, as well as referral to appropriate training and educational programs that have the capacity to serve the eligible youth on either a sequential or concurrent basis.

The contracted Youth Services Provider(s) shall ensure that an eligible youth who does not meet the enrollment requirements of a particular program or who cannot be served shall be referred for further assessment, as necessary, and referred to appropriate programs that may meet the basic skills and training needs of the youth.

The Region VII Workforce Development Board shall ensure that parents, youth participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to programs for youth are involved in the design and implementation of the youth program through participation in the Youth Committee.

J. *Priority of Service*

At a minimum, 75 percent of the total available funding shall be used to provide youth services to Out-of-School Youth

Youth with greater numbers of identified barriers to success shall have priority over youth with fewer identified barriers.

K. *Exceptions*

Not more than 5 percent of participants may be individuals, who do not meet the minimum income criteria for eligibility, if such individuals have any of the following barriers:

1. School dropout
2. Basic skills deficient
3. Educational attainment that is one or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to their chronological age
4. Pregnant or parenting
5. Disabled, including a learning disability
6. Homeless or runaway youth
7. Offender
8. Other serious barriers to employment as they may be identified by the Region VII WDB, including, but not necessarily limited to, stated current or

past substance abuse, truancy, absence of positive adult role models, and diagnosed emotional disorders.

L. *Prohibitions*

No provision of this Act shall be construed to authorize any department, agency, officer, or employee of the United States to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution, school, or school system, or over the selection of library resources, textbooks, or other printed or published instructional materials by any educational institution, school, or school system.

All of the fund made available under this Act shall be used in accordance with the requirements of this Act. None of the funds made available under this Act may be used to provide funding under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.) or to carry out, through programs funded under this Act, activities that were funded under the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, unless the programs funded under this Act serve only those participants eligible to participate in the programs under this Act.

No funds shall be used to provide an activity for eligible youth who are not school dropouts if participation in the activity would interfere with or replace the regular academic requirements of the youth.

M. *Linkages*

The Youth Committee shall establish linkages with educational agencies responsible for services to participants as appropriate. WIOA Youth funds are not sufficient, nor are they intended, to fund all youth needs in the region. The WDB, the Youth Committee, and the Youth Service Provider must also seek partnerships with other youth-serving agencies to build a comprehensive youth service delivery system.

N. *Volunteers*

The Region VII Workforce Development Board shall make opportunities available for individuals who have successfully participated in the Youth Services Program to voluntarily assist current participants through mentoring, tutoring, and other activities.

O. *Performance Measures*

Program design must incorporate an awareness of WIOA performance measures. For younger youth, aged 14-17 years, the focus will be on:

1. Skill attainment
2. Staying in school and receiving a diploma or high school equivalent, and
3. Retention

NOTE: Actual WDB negotiated performance standards for Youth are outline in the Strategic Plan.

- **Skill attainment:** This measure pertains to goals set and attained in the course of a 12-month period.

- **Diploma/High School Equivalent:** This goal is considered to have been met if the youth has received a diploma or high school equivalent by the end of the 1st quarter after exit from the program.
- **Retention:** This is a measure of the youth's participation in a "qualifying activity" during the 4th quarter after exit.

For older youth, aged 18-24 years, the focus shifts to:

1. Entering employment
 2. Retaining employment
 3. Showing a positive earnings gain over time, and
 4. Attaining a recognized credential
- **Entered Employment:** This goal is met when a youth has entered employment by the end of the 2nd quarter after exit.
 - **Retention:** This measure whether an older youth who was employed in the 1st quarter after exit is employed at any time during the 4th quarter after exit.
 - **Earning Change:** This measures the change in earnings after WIOA participation by comparing earning for the 3rd and 4th quarters prior to registration with earnings from the 3rd and 4th quarters after exit.
 - **Credential:** This measures whether a youth received a credential prior to the end of the 3rd quarter after exit and is either employed or in post-secondary education or advanced training in the 2nd quarter after exit.

P. Service Provider Responsibilities

1. Eligible youth participants must be registered in the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) information management system prior to being placed in any service elements.
2. At their initial meeting with the Service Provider, youth will be given information concerning:
 - a. Equal Employment Opportunity
 - b. Civil Rights
 - c. Grievance Policy

Signed copies of the above will be placed in their permanent file. At this time, the youth (and parent, if under 18) will also sign a Release of Information form and the WIOA Pre-Registration form, with copies placed in the individual file. The Service Provider will deliver a copy of the WIOA Registration form to the Youth Coordinator within 7 days.

3. If an eligible Out-of-School youth is eighteen or over at the time of registration, the Service Provider staff will confer with the WDB Youth Coordinator who will determine if concurrent or sole enrollment in the Adult program is appropriate.
4. An Individual Service Strategy (ISS) will be developed for each youth with input from the youth (and parent(s) or guardian(s) when applicable). The

ISS must list all service elements, with dates of enrollment. For new registrants, the ISS must be completed within 30 days of registration. The original will be placed in the individual file with a copy forwarded to the Youth Coordinator within 7 days of completion.

5. The ISS will be reviewed quarterly and this review will be documented in case notes.
6. Any changes to the ISS will be forwarded to the Youth Coordinator within 7 days to permit timely entry into the MACC system.
7. The Service Provider will be responsible for marketing the Youth Services program to the targeted population.
8. All older youth, aged 18-24, without exception, will participate in a program that will lead to a credential applicable for the Credential measurement.
9. All youth program participants will sign a Memorandum of Understanding detailing their rights and responsibilities.
10. Any paid or unpaid work experiences, internships, job shadowing and/or summer employment opportunities will be relevant to the youth's stated employment goals as documented in the Individual Service Strategy.
11. Each youth will have a minimum of one up to a maximum of three goal(s) set per 12-month period. Care will be taken to ensure that these goals are both age-appropriate and attainable within the 12-month period.
12. If a youth is basic skills deficient, at least one of their goals will address that until such time as the deficiency no longer exists (as verified by the appropriate measurement instrument).
13. While the Service Provider will give priority of service to youth currently enrolled, on-going recruitment efforts should target possibly under-represented age ranges. The goal will be to have 25% of the total participants in each range: 14-15 year olds, 16-17 year olds, 18 year olds, and 19-24 year olds.
14. At least 75% of the total youth funding will be used to provide services/activities to Out-of-School youth.
15. The Service Provider will submit monthly reports, using forms provided by the WDB, to document both the number and category (In-School vs. Out-of-School) of youth served by county and the utilized service elements.
16. The Service Provider will submit cost reimbursable invoices on a monthly basis, with said invoices due on the last day of each month.
17. The Service Provider will be responsible for entering information into the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) computer system, including, but not necessarily limited to, individual development plans/goals and enrollment/completion dates for all assigned services including partner agencies.
18. The Service Provider will conduct face-to-face meetings with registered youth at least quarterly, with telephone contact required monthly during the "off" months.

Equal Opportunity and Grievances: The Region VII Workforce Development Board prohibits discrimination in all aspects of the administration, management, and operation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs and activities. Services offered at the Region VII WorkForce WV Career Centers will be provided universally without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief. Individuals may file a complaint or grievance by following the Region VII Workforce Development Board Grievance Procedure Policy, a copy of which will be provided upon request.

Questions: Contact the Region VII Workforce Development Board Executive Director, 151 Robert C. Byrd Industrial Park Road, Suite 2, Moorefield, WV 26836. Telephone number is (304) 530-5258. Fax number is (304) 530-5107.

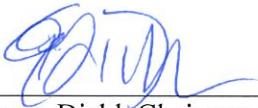
Expiration Date: Effective until rescinded or modified in writing by the Region VII Workforce Development Board.



T.J. Van Meter, Executive Director



Date



Layne Diehl, Chairperson Region VII WDB



Date