

# WIOA POLICY IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Updates: 3.20.2020

## WIOA Title I Application Process Guidance

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DWD Content from Policy: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/wioa/policy/08/08.2.301.htm>

- Allow all interested individuals the opportunity to apply for the WIOA Title I Programs<sup>4</sup> without time delays or other requirements imposed by the local WDB or service provider. Local WDBs and their service providers cannot require applicants to attend a meeting, orientation, intake, or similar event in order to fill out an application.  
**Note:** If an applicant requires accommodations because of a disability or needs translation/interpreting services, arrangements must be made for the needed accommodations without time delays so the applicant can complete an application form as soon as possible.
- Ensure that the applicant signs and dates each application form and all application forms are saved.

**Forward Careers:** FCI is telecommuting and has converted all documents to fillable forms and digital signatures. Client meetings are being conducted virtually via phone or webinar. Are phone, webinar, and digital signatures acceptable alternatives per the above policies?

**WOWWDB Response:** Yes

### DWD Response:

1. The use of Skype or other videoconferencing services to conduct appointments, particularly for intake/enrollment. As an LPL group, we feel that this is an innovative way to bring people into the program(s) during these challenging times. We have determined that viewing eligibility documentation via technology and documenting appropriately on a document verification form is an allowable way of determining eligibility.

## INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYABILITY PLANS Policy #: CM-05

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**POLICY ON UPDATING IEPs:** IEPs must be updated as goals expire and new goals need to be set, and as services change and participant's move through the program. At the end of this period, the career planner and participant must determine if any other needs have changed and set new goals. This is to take place in an in-person meeting with the career planner and participant. In the rare occurrence when an in-person meeting is not feasible, detailed documentation must be case noted.

If the 1st page (occupational interests, eligibility for training services, training preparation and career path information) information for the participant has not changed, the IEP may be updated by doing the following.

- Attach a blank copy of the second page of the IEP to the original plan;
- Complete the Activity sections on the new page with those steps the participant will complete during the upcoming period; and
- The career planner and participant must sign and date the bottom of the new sheet.

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documentation via technology and documenting appropriately on a document verification form is an allowable way of determining eligibility.

2. The use of electronic signatures/email confirmation for self-attestations, WIOA applications, IEP/ISS, and any other jointly developed documents. We feel that this is also an acceptable use of technology to engage with participants.

## SUPPORTIVE SERVICES Policy #: CM-07

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**POLICY:** All participants must receive a welcome letter upon enrollment which informs them of the services available through the WIOA program which includes supportive services. Participants must also have the opportunity to discuss it with career planners and are required to sign the form, acknowledging that they received it. It is expected that career planners, as part of their initial and ongoing assessment, screen for barriers and supportive service-related needs, document the needs, and provide suggestions for how to address those needs. It is also expected that career planners provide referrals to other resources first, documenting the referral and participant follow-through and results. When other resources are not available, are too burdensome to obtain, or will not be available on a timely basis, WIOA funded supportive service options may be explored. Career planners must offer and provide services in an equitable fashion providing the same referrals for those with similar circumstances.

### TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE:

- Reimbursement during training is limited to \$0.12 per mile after the first 16 miles (round trip).
- Bus passes, taxi tickets and/or gas cards may be distributed for use during career and/or training services.
- Participants must acknowledge receipt of gas cards, taxi tickets, bus passes, and/or gift cards by signing off on the Transportation Assistance form in the designated area. This may happen on the same day and time as the items are distributed if there has been prior approval for distribution of the item(s).
- A single interview or appointment will be limited to the equivalent of \$20 (gas card) or lowest price for a onetime taxi ticket or bus pass.
- For the start of a job (or Youth Program Work Experience services), assistance will be limited to the first two weeks or when the person receives their first paycheck, whichever comes first.
- For participants requiring ongoing assistance to attend school or at the start of a new job, a daily or monthly rate may be assigned for public transportation, but will be limited to 50% of the total cost (for those in training) or when the person receives their first paycheck.

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## ON-THE-JOB TRAINING Policy #: T-05

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The service provider must monitor **on site at least once during the contracted hours (preferably mid-way)** using a monitoring form. In exceptional cases, monitoring may be done via means other than on-site. Exceptions are to be discussed with the WDB Director prior to monitoring. The service provider must review the OJT Training Plan with the employer and employee during monitoring. **Both employer and employee must be interviewed and sign the monitoring report form.** The results of the service provider observations of the workplace will be reviewed with the employer prior to the employer signing the monitoring report. Employee section of the monitoring form will be signed by employee and service provider. In addition, local monitoring of the OJT files to ensure compliance with all policies governing OJTs will occur randomly on an annual basis. Monitoring must assure that all requirements are met and reimbursement amount substantiated by:

- Payroll records;
- Timesheets; and
- Training records in accordance with specification on the OJT Training Plan.

**Note: on-site monitoring also occur for work experience and internship.**

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## WIOA Document Verification

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**Forward Careers:** FCI is utilizing ZOOM for webinar options with clients and will have the ability to verify documents in that manner. Is this an acceptable practice?

**WOWWDB Response:** Yes

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## YOUTH ASSESSMENT Policy #: P-02 (More to come from WOWWDB)

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All Youth Program participants must receive an objective assessment of their:

- academic levels;
- basic skills levels;
- occupational skills;
- prior work experience;
- employability;
- interests and aptitudes;

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- areas of strength;
- developmental needs; and
- service needs, including supportive services.

**Forward Careers:** FCI will use DWD's BSD Screener for enrollment. Are there alternative basic skills/TABE assessments that can be used virtually and acceptable?

**WOWWDB Response:** I will follow up. Policy revisions will need to be presented to WOWWDB for review and approval before implementation.

## **DWD Response:**

1. We are having some discussion with WDA 10 about alternative objective assessment practices for Youth program participants as the technical colleges are closing, so TABE may not be the most viable option. This is another area where federal and state policy allow for some level of flexibility, but depending upon your current local policy, it may require a local policy change to use another assessment tool.

## **Dislocated Workers/TAA**

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### **DWD Comment:**

1. Our team had a discussion this morning with Joan Killian-Ikeler regarding increased TAA co-enrollments for Dislocated Workers who may qualify. This may be a good opportunity for DW career planners to review their caseloads for potential TAA-eligible dislocations. We are working on pulling together a list of TAA-eligible employers and will share that as soon as it's available.

## **TA ASSISTANCE**

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**Forward Careers:** FCI will continue to follow current support services policy and internal procedures. For long-term adjustments, we are requesting TA on methods to electronically provide supportive services to clients – Would WOWWDB and DWD allow supports reimbursements to be conducted through Venmo transactions and would e-gift cards be allowable?

**WOWWDB Response:** I will follow up. Policy revisions will need to be presented to WOWWDB for review and approval before implementation.