

Region 1 Workforce Development Board Policy Letter #04

Subject: Individual Training Accounts

Effective Date: November 1, 2016 (Revised Date: May 16, 2019)

Purpose: This policy outlines the process for the Individual Training Account (ITA), a system established under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to purchase training from a certified eligible provider of training services on behalf of an eligible participant.

Background: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) establishes the Individual Training Account (ITA) as one of the principal methods for WIOA-eligible participants to access needed training services. The Region 1 Workforce Development Board will approve regionally eligible training providers and programs who submit an initial or renewal application via the MACC (Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium) computer system and who has been granted state approval. Workforce Advisors at the One Stop Centers will provide eligible participants with access to training provider information so that participants can make an informed decision in regards to training thereby focusing on a customer choice driven philosophy.

Policy: The Region 1 Workforce Development Board may provide eligible WIOA participants with training services according to local provisions. *ITA funding is not guaranteed to any participant and is contingent on availability of funds.*

Limitations on Programs:

- ➔ WIOA provides a focus on serving “individuals with barriers to employment,” defined in WIOA section 3(24) and seeks to ensure access to these statutory populations on a priority basis. WIOA establishes a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to local areas for adult employment and training activities and must give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in the provision of training services. Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service for all DOL-funded job training programs based upon the statutory priority.
- ➔ Training services can be critical to the employment success of many adults, dislocated workers, and young adults. Under WIOA, training services may be provided if Region 1 WDB center staff determine, after an interview, evaluation or assessment, and career planning, that the individual:
 - Is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment, that leads to self-sufficiency, or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone;
 - Is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to

- economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, through career services alone; and
 - Has the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services (*TEGL WIOA NO.3-15*).
- ITA's are designed to get people back into the labor force quickly, therefore, participants who meet the priority of service guidelines and who do not currently possess a post-secondary education will be given preference.
- A participant seeking a Bachelor's degree is not eligible to receive ITA funding, unless the degree can be completed within the two year timeframe of an ITA. The Region 1 WDB staff will discuss an exception for the participant, if deemed appropriate.
- Advanced degrees beyond a Bachelor's Degree will not be considered for funding.
- Participants will be limited to **one (1)** occupational skills course or training program whether the participant successfully or unsuccessfully completes the program and that only under extraordinary circumstances, with special approval, can a participant be eligible to reenter additional training. **However, if the participant successfully completes the first occupational skills course or training program they may apply for an additional ITA in order to advance in the occupational career pathways. ITA funding is not guaranteed to any participant and is contingent upon priority of service and availability of funds.**
- Participants are required to apply for grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of training. WIOA assistance may be in addition to, not in place of, other grant assistance.
- Training costs, reimbursable by WIOA, shall not exceed a total of **\$5,000** to include tuition, fees, books, supportive service payments, and if required by the program, supplies, tools and special equipment. **An individual may in turn be eligible for the WIOA On-the-Job Training (OJT) Program operated by the Region 1 Workforce Development Board.**
- Training costs incurred prior to the time the ITA approval is granted may not be approved for payment. The training provider and/or participant shall provide documentation of sources of income or funding for a training program that costs in excess of the amount approved for WIOA funding.
- If a participant is enrolled in a training prior to issuance of an ITA, participant **must** provide the Workforce Advisor their most recent transcript related to their current training program to determine current progress in program.
- Participants may transfer (**must** have prior approval from the Region 1 Programs and Scholarships Manager) from a training institution of higher education to another as long as all accumulated hours are accepted by the receiving institution and participant will still be able to complete within the original two year timeframe.
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding shall not be provided for individuals changing programs unless a reassessment is conducted by a Region 1 Workforce Advisor, nor will the costs of any repeated course(s), lost books, etc., be borne by Region 1 Workforce Development Board / WORK4WV Region 1, Inc.

- ➔ Transfers will not be approved for participants attending providers of training other than institutions of higher education.
- ➔ Funds shall not be approved for sectarian training or activities.
- ➔ Region 1 reserves the right to limit funding for certain trainings, including trainings on the Region 1 Demand Occupation List based upon supply / demand ratio of trainees vs. openings.
- ➔ Online classes/programs will be approved only if they are part of an approved, accredited curriculum and attendance can be verified. Participants enrolled in online classes/programs are **not** eligible for *Supportive Service Payments*.

10. Duration/Terms of Training Program: Length of training shall be based on the time needed to adequately learn occupational skills and cost effectiveness. Training must be completed within a two (2) year timeframe. Training must begin within ninety (90) days of the date in which the individual receiving the ITA tested negative to the drug screen as mandated under the policy of WorkForce West Virginia (Workforce West Virginia Guidance No. 15-12-Workforce Investment Act Participant Drug Screening). Participant must enroll and participate in no less than what is considered as a full time student in the approved program of study.

11. Exceptions to ITA Policy: A waiver to the ITA policy may be granted where there exist an insufficient number of eligible providers of training in the local area or where a training service program is demonstrably effective in servicing special populations.

12. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Individual Employment Plan (IEP): All participants of the Individual Training Account (ITA) program must sign the Region 1 Workforce Development Board / WORK4WV Region 1, Inc. Memorandum of Understanding and an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) prior to receiving training services.

13. Requirements for ITA Award:

- a. Participant must possess a High School diploma or High School Equivalent. In special circumstances this may be achieved simultaneously with ITA sponsored training.
- b. Have met the following requirements and received the following minimum services as outlined below:
 - (1) Orientation to the WORKFORCE West Virginia Career Center System (AJC Information Sessions)
 - (2) Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) assessment in Math, Reading, and English
 - (3) Research Assignment/Labor Market Research
 - (4) WIOA eligibility determination
 - (5) A Drug Test as mandated under the policy of WorkForce West Virginia (Workforce West Virginia Guidance No. 15-12-Workforce Investment Act Participant Drug Screening) (See Attachment A)
- c. Choose an occupation that has been determined as a demand occupation within Region 1 as defined by the current Region 1 Demand Occupation List. Region 1 will only consider other training occupations not listed on the demand occupation list when a school, employer, job seeker, economic development agency, or other entity

can provide written proof that such an occupation is in demand. The Region 1 WDB will review the data and issue a decision approving or denying the occupations based on the information provided, or on O*Net justification.

- d. Engage in labor market research and complete a WIOA Research Assignment to answer questions pertaining to availability of occupational openings in the area, rate of pay, hours of work, ability and willingness to take openings, transportation and child care requirements. Documentation must be submitted on forms provided by the Workforce Advisor (See Attachment B).
- e. Upon Negative Drug Screen results the participant must meet with a Workforce Advisor to complete the ITA Packet (See Attachment C).
- f. Must be accepted into the selected training program, by the training provider, with supporting documentation.
- g. Participant **must** complete a Federal Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) to apply for PELL grant, if the training provider of choice is a PELL Eligible Institution. Participant must submit a Student Aid Report (SAR) indicating the results of the FAFSA with the Research Assignment **before** an ITA is issued. Must apply for PELL and submit a SAR **each** school year while in WIOA funded training to continue receiving WIOA funding.

14. Failure to Abide: Failure to abide by this policy relieves the Region 1 Workforce Development Board / WORK4WV – Region 1, Inc., of any obligation to pay for any costs incurred.

Approved: **May 14, 2019**
 May 16, 2019
 May 16, 2019

Executive Committee
Region 1 Workforce Development Board
LEO Board

**REGION 1 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
WORK4WV-REGION 1, INC.**

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) WITH PARTICIPANTS

I, _____, am receiving services under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA). I agree to the following conditions and statements in order to receive services.

_____ I understand that funding may be provided in order to complete occupational training. This training **must** be completed within a two (2) year timeframe. Training must begin within ninety (90) days of the date in which I tested negative to the drug screen as mandated under the policy of WorkForce West Virginia (Workforce West Virginia Guidance No. 15-12-Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Participant Drug Screening). Training is limited to one (1) training opportunity whether I successfully or unsuccessfully complete the training and that only under extraordinary circumstances, with special approval, can I be eligible to reenter additional training. However, if I successfully complete the first occupational skills course or training program I may apply for an additional ITA in order to advance in the occupational career pathways.

_____ I am aware that WIOA funds for Region 1 are limited and may exhaust before my training is complete. Therefore, I understand Region 1 Workforce Development Board/WORK4WV-Region 1, Inc. will not be obligated to continue providing any further funding for my training if this occurs. **Training Services Are Not an Entitlement.**

_____ I understand that WIOA may not pay for any training costs incurred prior to the ITA issue date.

_____ I will enroll, participate and complete training in whatever constitutes the programs full-time attendance mandates (ex. No less than 12 credit hours per semester (excluding summer sessions) and / or 10 instructional hours per week).

_____ If my training facility is Pell Grant eligible, I **must apply** and submit the Student Aid Report (SAR) before an ITA is issued. I must apply for PELL and submit a SAR each school year while in WIOA training to continue receiving WIOA funding.

_____ I must provide the Workforce Advisor a copy of my most recent transcript related to my current training program before issuance of an ITA and for each grading period thereafter in order to continue receiving WIOA funding.

_____ I understand that any default on federally funded or federally guaranteed student loan(s) may disqualify the awarding of any and all WIOA funds.

_____ I must be making satisfactory progress in my training program or WIOA funding may be suspended. Satisfactory progress is completing the report period (i.e., semester or quarter) with a minimum of 2.0 GPA (grade point average). I must submit to my Workforce Advisor my grades each reporting period.

_____ I must submit my attendance form every two (2) weeks whether or not I am receiving supportive service payments.

_____ **If awarded supportive service payments, I must attend in-classroom training at least 10 hours or more per week to be eligible for such payments (online programs and/or online classes do not qualify as in-classroom training).**

_____ I will notify my Workforce Advisor immediately if I accept temporary or permanent full or part-time employment while receiving services and after completing the program. This information will not result in loss of WIOA funding.

_____ I understand that if I have any questions or need assistance I will contact my local Workforce Advisor to assist me.

_____ I understand that I have the right to file a grievance under the WIOA Regulations section 667.600 and section 181 of the Workforce Investment Act.

_____ I agree to the conditions in this MOU.

_____ I refuse the conditions in this MOU.

Participant Signature

Date

The undersigned has reviewed this document with the participant and was able to respond to the participant's questions. The participant appeared to understand the conditions contained in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Workforce Advisor

Date