Purpose

The Opioid epidemic exacerbates the already stressed healthcare system and regional economy of the 5-county workforce area (PacMtn WDA). This project is designed to connect the community healthcare and workforce development systems. It will help Dislocated Workers and those affected by opioid addiction remove barriers to employment, become work ready and enter the world of work as contributors to the local economy and our communities.

PacMtn’s Opioid Use Reduction and Recovery (OURR) program will provide services aligned with and designed to support the goals of the region’s economic development strategy, as well as the applicable WIOA Strategic Plan(s) for the PacMtn area.

Policy

This policy is in direct response to PacMtn receiving the Department of Labor’s National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker Demonstration Grants to Address the Opioid Crisis. As part of the grant application process the entire five county PacMtn region was designated as hard-hit by the opioid crisis, supporting the need for additional guidance around serving expanded populations impacted by the opioid crisis.

This policy applies to all activities funded by and delivered through the local WorkSource system and applicable service providers. This policy provides guidance regarding the eligibility determination and enrollment of qualifying individuals affected directly or indirectly by the Opioid crisis, or workers seeking to enter into professions that could help in addressing the Opioid Crisis and its causes. With nation and region-wide community efforts underway to address the opioid crisis, providing additional guidance for our area workforce professionals to align with those efforts as part of this grant was identified as a necessity.

PacMtn and other workforce professionals will provide workforce based services in collaboration with and embedded in the community agencies that serve high-risk opioid affected populations including homeless youth and adults, youth under the care of state juvenile rehabilitation facilities, organizations supporting those in and out of county jails, mothers addicted while pregnant, and community mental health based organizations.

Policy Guidelines

Qualified workforce professionals will offer career guidance, job readiness assessments and placement support for individuals who are ready to be placed in a structured skill development program, and/or supervised work-experience (WEX), job shadow, internship or an unsubsidized job placement.
Trained workforce staff will be responsible for ensuring eligibility and documentation in accordance with the requirements set by US Department of Labor and covered in the OURR Procedures Document # 8000P.

Qualifying participants:

May be co-enrolled into WIOA formula grants if determined eligible, but it is not required Participant must be a dislocated worker, incumbent worker, or new entrant to the workforce

New Entrant to the Workforce;

- An individual (age 16 and up) just entering the workforce for the first time
  OR
- An individual (age 16 and up) who has been disconnected* from the workforce for long enough that it’s as if they are starting over, including**:
  - Individuals who have experienced unemployment for longer than twenty-seven (27) weeks
    OR
  - Individuals who have been disconnected* from the workforce by incarceration and/or conviction
    OR
  - Individuals who have been disconnected* from the workforce for at least thirty (30) days due to institutionalization into an inpatient treatment facility or outpatient treatment regimen
    OR
  - Individuals who have been disconnected* from the workforce due to new or exacerbated disability or substance use disorder which caused disconnection due to the individuals inability to perform the essential functions of their previous employment and/or has impacted their ability to establish new employment

*Disconnected is defined as any separation that has not allowed or will not allow an individual to return to their previous place of employment or previous line of work

**Justifications for these definitions include consideration that these individuals are re-entering the workforce with new barriers that may prevent them from returning to existing employment and/or are re-entering after a health related scenario

- Please refer to WIOA guidance for definitions of Dislocated Worker and Incumbent Worker

Along with career, training, and work-based services allowed, other specific services and strategy guidance may be available but must be determined by the local WDC. Up to 10% of funding can be used for supportive services.

Example of supportive services that may be allowed:

- Health, mental health, addiction, or other forms of outpatient treatment that may impact opioid addiction and related, underlying, or complicating conditions;
Drug testing for current use of illegal drugs prior to enrollment in career or training services or prior to employment;

Linkages to community services, including services offered by partner organizations designed to support grant participants;

Referrals to health care, including referrals to drug treatment and mental health services; and,

Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications.

**Please note:** NHE grant funds may not be used to pay the costs of in-patient drug treatment and rehabilitation programs.

**WIT System Data Entry Requirements (WorkSource Integrated Technology System)**

As may be applicable and required for any WIOA and or Wagner-Peyser applicant or participant Career, Training or Follow-Up Service Data Entries to include but not be limited to the following:

- Applicant or Participant Registrations,
- Program Enrollments,
- Eligibility Determinations
- (Adult, DW, as applicable, Low Income, Military Service, Veteran, Priority of Service, etc.)
- The IEP's
- ITA’s and Training Program Enrollments/Service Delivery
- Training paid by others
- Training/Program Completions
- Support Services,
- Exits
- Follow-Up Services,
- Case Note Entries;

and all other data requirements as necessary per Policy 1020 - Data Integrity and Performance Reporting Requirements and Handbook, please follow all current and future Workforce Integrated Technology (WIT), System guidance, training, instructional materials and direct departmental or program supervisor instruction and policies developed.

If the applicant or participant’s information is already entered in the WIT System, staff must verify that the information is current and/or make updates. If required by program, print out the applicable or necessary document, obtain signatures and place in the hard copy file. Please note all system data updates or changes in case note.

To deliver Career and or Training Services, the program staff person is required to enter participant and program specific data that will create an Individual Employment Plan/Service Plan.

**Data Validation Note:** As may be applicable, the date of dislocation entered must be documented in the file by either verification from the employer; a Rapid Response list; Notice of Layoff; public announcement with a cross-match with UI; self-attestation and for transitioning military members by the Army Career Alumni Program (ACAP) application along with a self-certification from the applicant.

Applicants who identify them self as a veteran must have a copy of their DD214 in their participant file. The dislocation date must have the month, day and year.
Any discrepancies arising between PacMtn policy and or procedures with federal and state provisions due to current or future revisions will default to the current minimum federal and state regulations and guidance available. PacMtn policy and or procedures may set forth stricter requirements than provided by federal and state guidance, but in no case will PacMtn policy and or procedures not meet minimum federal and state policy.

References

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014

Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 12-17

WorkSource System Policy 1019 R4* & Attachment A - Eligibility Handbook

PacMtn Procedures Document # 5005P - Career Services
PacMtn Policy #5015 - Training Services
PacMtn Policy #5300 - Incumbent Worker Training
PacMtn Policy #5200 - Support Services

*Compliance with the state’s eligibility policy will be based on the version of the handbook in effect at the time of the action or activity that may be at issue.

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