

TITLE: WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) Policy # 5015

Type: Program Policy

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Supersedes: WIA Policy # 520R2

Purpose

This policy provides guidance on Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for training services. Customer choice is a guiding principle of WIOA. Participants are expected to make a self-informed choice about their own employment future and the training services needed.

Policy

Training services, when determined appropriate, must be provided through an Individual Training Account (ITA). ITA funds are available to purchase training services from eligible training providers for Adults and Dislocated Workers. Eligible training providers are selected by the participant through consultation with program staff and or employment counselors. Individuals are expected to utilize information that is provided (e.g., skills assessment, labor market conditions/trends and training vendor performance) to take an active role in managing their employment future through the use of ITAs.

Policy Guidelines

Need for Training

The award of an ITA is not an entitlement, therefore, even though an Adult or Dislocated Worker may be eligible (and meet priority of service) for enrollment into a WIOA Title 1 funded program, the provision of training must be needed for the participant to obtain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency.

Use of Previous Assessments

If program staff determines it is appropriate to use a recent interview, evaluation, or assessment of the participant conducted for another education or training program, then a new assessment is not required.

Time Limits

An ITA is limited to six (6) quarters of school. A waiver may be submitted to request additional time to complete the program of training. If a participant already has an associate degree, they may use an ITA to complete a bachelor degree if their occupational goal requires a bachelor degree or will make them more employable. Participants who need to prepare for college level classes by taking reading, writing, math or prerequisite classes are not to be considered as having started their ITA until they begin to take college level classes toward their degree. However, an ITA award could fund prerequisite training to a vocational training program if it is required by the educational institution.

Funding Limits

WIOA Title 1 ITA funding for tuition and fees, is limited to a maximum of \$7,000 for up to six (6) quarters of training. The amount and duration of an ITA award shall be determined on an

individual basis. Funding amounts will take into account any other financial assistance available to the participant and also the federal funding available to the Adult or Dislocated Worker program operator. Other costs associated with training such as parking fees, school supplies, parking passes, licenses, books, uniforms, inoculations, background checks, driving abstracts, etc. may be considered a training cost and would not be included in the \$7,000 maximum for tuition and fees.

Participants Must Apply for Financial Aid

Participants need to apply for financial aid each year and a copy of the award or denial notification must be placed in the file. If the participant will be using financial aid for their living expenses, the participant's personal budget must include the financial aid funds that will be used for living expenses.

Individuals may select training that costs more than the maximum amount available for ITA's when other sources of funds (e.g., Pell Grants, scholarships, severance pay, etc.) are available to supplement the ITA

How ITAs are Authorized

Before any WIOA Title 1 training funds are expended, an ITA request must be approved by WIOA program staff. The ITA request (form and process) includes career exploration activities designed for a participant to gather the information he or she needs to make an informed decision about the occupation and training provider they choose.

Demand Occupation Requirement

The ITA program of training must be for a demand occupation as designated on the Washington State Demand/Decline List. A waiver may be submitted to provide training in an occupation showing as "Balanced, or In-Decline" on the demand list. The training may be approved if it is on a demand list for another WA Workforce Development Area and the participant is able and willing to commute or relocate.

Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Requirement

The ITA program of training *and* training provider must be on the Washington State ETPL for the local WDA or another WA State WDA (if the participant is able and willing to commute or relocate), or it may be on another state's list at the time of the ITA approval.

Training Programs Removed from an ETPL

When a program of training is removed from the Eligible Training Provider list, a participant may continue and complete their program of training, as originally approved; however, the ITA may not be modified or extended.

Time Limit to Enroll

A participant must be enrolled in school within 90 days of the approval of their ITA. (See - Approval of an ITA request). It is recommended for participants who need to attend basic skills or prerequisite classes that their ITA is not finalized for approval until they are ready to begin college level classes.

Modifying an ITA

WIOA program staff may approve a change of the participant's occupational goal to a related occupational goal when a participant decides after attending one quarter of school (maximum of fifteen (15) quarter credits) the occupation chosen is not suitable for the participant.

WIOA program operator may choose to write an internal policy that specifies if there is a specific amount of time that must pass before the program will accept a request for additional training through an ITA.

Using Purchase Orders

After a participant has approval for an ITA, WIOA program staff may write a purchase order to the training institution for tuition. WIOA program staff must follow its own organization's procedure for obligating and de-obligating funds.

Coordination of WIOA Training Funds and other Federal Assistance

WIOA program operators are to consider other sources of funding for training (excluding loans) to pay for training costs so that WIOA funds are used to supplement but not supplant other sources.

An exception to this is educational funding for Veterans. According to TEGL 10-09, the GI Bill and other education and training benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs are not required to be coordinated with WIOA training (i.e., veterans and eligible spouses cannot be required to exhaust their VA benefits prior to gaining access to WIOA Training).

Training and Satisfactory Progress

Participants are required to demonstrate satisfactory progress in training, except for good cause, to access payments through their ITAs.

“Good cause” failure to make satisfactory progress in training includes specific factors that would cause a reasonably prudent person in similar circumstances to fail to make satisfactory progress. Those factors may include but are not limited to:

- Illness, injury or disability of the participant or a member of the participant's immediate family;
- Severe weather conditions or natural disaster precluding safe travel;
- Destruction of the participant's school records due to a natural disaster or other catastrophe not caused by the participant;
- Acting on advice received from an authority, such as the training provider, instructor, or case manager;
- Training is delayed or cancelled;
- Accepting stop-gap employment with hours or other work conditions that conflict with the training; or
- Accepting goal-related employment prior to completion of training.

ITA Exceptions: In situations covered by the following exceptions, a contract for services may be used to provide for training.

- On-the-job training When PacMtn's local policy administrators determine there are an insufficient number of eligible providers in the local area to accomplish the purpose of a system of ITAs.

- When PacMtn’s local policy administrators determine a community-based organization (CBO) or other private organization can provide effective training services to individuals with barriers to employment. The criterion for determining effectiveness includes:
 - Financial stability of the organization;
 - Demonstrated performance measures appropriate to the program, including program completion rate; attainment of the skills, certificates or degrees the program is designed to provide; placement after training in unsubsidized employment and retention in employment; and
 - How the specific program relates to the workforce investment needs identified in the local plan.
- Providing training for multiple individuals for in-demand industry sectors or occupations, (as long as the contract does not limit the individual’s consumer choice.)
- Circumstances in which a pay-for-performance contract is appropriate, consistent with 683.510.

An ITA is not required for intensive and short-term prevocational services. These are training services lasting thirty-nine (39) hours or less or at a cost of 600 dollars or less. Intensive services may include literacy, internship, work experience and other training activities that may not provide formal occupational skills training or be appropriate for an ITA. Similarly, short-term prevocational services are designed to prepare a participant for work, but do not provide formal occupational skills training. As such, they generally are not appropriate for an ITA.

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

WIOA Final Rule; 20 CFR Parts 676,677, and 678; Federal Register, Vol. 81, No. 161, August 19, 2016

WIOA Final Rule; 20 CFR Parts 603, 651, 652, et al; Federal Register, Vol. 81, No. 161, August 19, 2016

Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-09

WorkSource System Policy 1019 R6 & Attachment A - Eligibility Handbook,

State Policy 5611 Rev 2 - Governor's Procedures for Determining Training Provider Eligibility

State Policy 5601 Rev 2 - Individual Training Accounts

PacMtn Procedures Document # 5100P – Individual Training Accounts (ITA)

PacMtn Policy # 5130 – On-the-Job Training

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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