

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Fact Sheet: Governance and Leadership

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law on July 22, 2014, is the first legislative reform of the public workforce system in 15 years. The law supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

WIOA presents an extraordinary opportunity to improve job and career options for our nation's workers and jobseekers through an integrated, job-driven public workforce system that links diverse talent to businesses. It supports the development of strong, vibrant regional economies where businesses thrive and people want to live and work.

WIOA retains the nationwide system of one-stop centers, which directly provide an array of employment services and connect customers to work-related training and education. WIOA furthers a high quality one-stop center system by continuing to align investments in workforce, education, and economic development. The new law places greater emphasis on one-stops achieving results for jobseekers, workers, and businesses. WIOA reinforces the partnerships and strategies necessary for one-stops to provide job seekers and workers with high-quality career services, education and training, and supportive services they need to get good jobs and stay employed, and to help businesses find skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WIOA REFORMS FOR GOVERNANCE

WIOA seeks to improve the effectiveness of and streamline the governing structures of the public workforce investment system, empower elected officials and workforce boards, establish structures for working regionally aligned with regional economies, and engage the key stakeholders needed to lead the system to achieve the goals of WIOA.

WIOA empowers State and Local elected officials and private sector-led workforce boards with the responsibility of developing a strategic, integrated plan that supports economic growth and labor force needs intended to grow the capacity and performance of the workforce system. WIOA authorizes the following changes:

- Streamlines membership requirements for State and Local workforce boards while maintaining a majority of business representation
- Requires certification and continuous improvement of one-stop centers by the Chief Elected Officials and the workforce boards

WIOA PROGRAMS

WIOA authorizes the one-stop career center (also known as American Job Center) service delivery system and six core programs. The core programs are:

- WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth formula programs) administered by Department of Labor (DOL);
- Adult Education and Literacy Act programs administered by the Department of Education (DoED);
- Wagner-Peyser Act employment services administered by DOL; and
- Rehabilitation Act Title I programs administered by DoED.

WIOA also authorizes the Job Corps program, the YouthBuild program, Native American programs, and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker programs, as well as evaluation and multistate projects.

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- Adds Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, and Registered Apprenticeship as required board members and increases the voice of labor on the board
- Identifies 13 functions for Local workforce boards. Among them are:
 - Analyses of regional conditions;
 - Leading efforts to engage employers;
 - Leading efforts to develop and implement career pathways;
 - Identifying and promoting proven and promising practices;
 - Establishing standing committees to more effectively accomplish the work of the local boards;
 - Better utilizing technology to facilitate connections among the intake and case management information systems of one-stop partners, to access services provided through the one-stop system (including remote areas), to meet the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, and to leverage resources and capacity;
 - Promoting consumer choice of participants among providers;
 - Enhancing coordination with education providers; and
 - Assessing the physical and programmatic accessibility of one-stop centers annually in accordance with applicable nondiscrimination provisions under Title I of the WIOA and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Identifies 12 functions for State workforce boards. Among them are:
 - Review of statewide policies and programs and development of recommendations on actions state should take to align core and other programs in a manner that supports a comprehensive system, including the review and provision of comments on state plans for activities and non-core programs of one-stop partners.
 - Development of guidance for the implementation and continuous improvement of the workforce development system (addressing alignment, career pathways, sector partnerships, coordination between states and local areas, identification of regions, technical assistance, case management information systems)
 - Identification and dissemination of best practices
 - Development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the one-stops
 - Development of strategies for technological improvements
 - Development of statewide workforce and labor market information systems

EFFECTIVE DATES FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In general, WIOA takes effect on July 1, 2015; however, the planning requirements and common indicators of performance take effect on July 1, 2016 and other exceptions specifically noted in the law.

DOL is working in coordination with the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services to support the public workforce system to implement WIOA. The DOL WIOA Resource Page (www.doleta.gov/WIOA) will include updated guidance and resources, as well as communicate opportunities to provide input. The WIOA Collection Page (wioa.workforce3one.org) provides links to technical assistance tools and information to support implementation. Questions regarding WIOA can be emailed to DOL.WIOA@dol.gov.

