

# **Workforce<sup>3</sup>One**

**Transcript of Webinar**

**Introduction to WIOA**

*Transcript By  
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Hello, and thanks for tuning in to today's tutorial, Introduction to the New Law: WIOA 101. Our speaker will be Gerri Fiala, deputy assistant secretary for the Employment and Training Administration at the United States Department of Labor.

GERRI FIALA: Hello. I'm here to talk to you about WIOA and a tremendous opportunity that it offers to the public workforce system. The vision for WIOA is to achieve and maintain an integrated, job-driven workforce system that links our diverse, talented workforce to our nation's businesses and improves the quality of life for our citizens. It's based on three key pillars of the public workforce system. First, one-stop career centers provide first-rate customer service to job seekers, workers and businesses. Second, the demands of businesses and workers drive workforce solutions. Third, the workforce system supports strong regional economies, fostering collaboration at the regional level among workforce, businesses and other institutions.

WIOA has six broad goals. The first is to increase access to education, training and employment, particularly for people with barriers to employment. In other words, it's to make it easier for these individuals and others to acquire the tools and the skills they need to obtain good, sustained employment. The second goal is to create a comprehensive, high-quality workforce system by aligning work force investment education and economic development. It promotes the alignment of the workforce program with regional economies and it provides the core programs and opportunity to be coordinated so that job seekers start where they are and they acquire the skills and credentials they need to meet employers' needs.

Goal three is to improve the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education and economic development efforts. This is an extraordinarily important goal, because it is the goal by which people – investors, decision-makers can make informed decisions, and for individuals, that they can make informed decisions about the training and services that best meet their needs. Goal four promotes the improvement in the structure and delivery of services. It values an evidence-based, strongly accountable, data-driven decision-making system, and it ensures that program accountability is valued for both participants and the taxpayers that invest in that system.

Goal five is to increase the prosperity of workers and employers so that individuals acquire the skills that they need to find first jobs or better jobs that sustain employment, and employers can obtain the skilled workers they need to ensure their profitability and success in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century economy. The last goal is self-explanatory. It's to reduce welfare dependency, increase economic self-sufficiency, meet employer needs and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the United States.

A key focus of WIOA is the alignment of various federal programs in the workforce development system. These are programs that are administered by the U.S. Department of Labor, programs administered by the Department of Education, programs administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, including the TANF program, which is a new and now mandatory partner in the one-stop service delivery system, programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including programs that provide nourishment and sustenance for low-income families and resources to acquire skills – programs by the Department of Housing and Urban Development that can assist low-income in ensuring that they have housing for

themselves and their families while they are partaking of services and training programs that will help them acquire the skills and credentials they need to obtain those good jobs, and the U.S. Department of Commerce, which has a clear focus on ensuring that the businesses in this country have the skilled workers they need to compete, and compete successfully.

There are four titles in WIOA. The first title includes programs for low-income adults, low-income youth and dislocated workers to help them acquire the skills and credentials they need to obtain employment. It's the primary source of federal workforce development funding for these programs, and it will help them continue to build their skills once they are employed.

Title II of WIOA is the main source of federal funding for the adult education and literacy programs, including English language services. Title III funds – the Wagner-Peyser employment services program, which provides labor exchange services that match employers with qualified job seekers and also supports the production of high-quality labor market information.

Title IV programs are administered by the Department of Education, and Title IV funds vocational rehabilitation, which supports a wide range of services that are designed to help individuals with disabilities prepare for and engage in competitive and gainful employment, and secure the financial and personal independence that they need through rehabilitative services. There are a small number of statutory deadlines within the act, and these are the following: WIOA, first of all, was implemented on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014. That very day, the Title IV Rehabilitation Act amendments took effect. In January of 2015, the Departments of Labor and Education are to publish notices of proposed rulemaking for comment. On July 1 of 2015, all of the provisions in WIOA take effect except for those that are specified, and the exceptions are the provisions for unified state plans and common performance accountability.

On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, 18 months from enactment, the law directs the Departments of Labor and Education to publish the final rules once the departments have received and analyzed comments on the notice of proposed rulemaking. And on July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2016, the provisions for unified state plans and common performance accountability take effect, and the act is fully implemented at that time.

I hope this quick overview of the structure of WIOA has been helpful, and we look forward to the next part of the discussion, which will provide a little more detail.

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