

## WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) HIGHLIGHTS

**Requires States to Strategically Align Workforce Development Programs:** WIOA ensures that employment and training services provided by the core programs are coordinated and complementary so that job seekers acquire skills and credentials that meet employers' needs.

- Every state will develop and submit a four-year strategy in the form of a single unified strategic plan for core programs.
- States can include other key partners in their plans such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Perkins career and technical education programs.
- The U.S. Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Education approve the plans.

**Fosters Regional Collaboration:** WIOA promotes alignment of workforce development programs with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers.

- States will identify regions within their state and have coordinated planning and service delivery strategies.

**Streamlines and Strengthens the Strategic Roles of Workforce Development Boards:**

WIOA makes state and local boards more agile and well-positioned to meet local and regional employers' workforce needs.

- State and local boards must coordinate and align workforce programs to provide coordinated, complementary, and consistent services to job seekers and employers.

**Refines One-Stop Career Center Infrastructure:** The Act maintains the current One-Stop mandatory partners. WIOA requires that each local area reach agreement on shared costs to fund infrastructure of the One-Stops. If local areas fail to reach an agreement, a State-funding protocol for allocating costs will be imposed. Wagner-Peyser can no longer have independent offices and are now required to deliver services within the One-Stop environment.

**Emphasizes Local Performance Accountability Measures:** WIOA increases the accountability and reporting requirements of both the Local and State systems. WIOA title 1 (Adult Dislocated Worker, Youth), Wagner Peyser, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation will be expected to meet the same performance outcomes.

- Failure to meet the minimum performance measures may lead to sanctions being placed on States and Local regions.
- Initial sanctions for both State and Local regions include performance improvement plans and technical assistance.
- After two years of not meeting state performance measures, sanctions can include a reduction of five percent of the Governor's allotment.
- If a Local area fails to meet performance in three consecutive years, the Governor has the ability to require the appointment and certification of a new local board, prohibit the use of any eligible provider or partner that is failing performance, or any other action that the Governor deems fit.

**Aligns Programs:** WIOA brings together the core programs of Federal investment in skill development:

- Employment and training services for adults, dislocated workers, and youth and Wagner-Peyser employment services administered by the Department of Labor through formula grants to states are aligned with adult education and literacy programs and vocational rehabilitation programs administered by the Department of Education.

**Focuses Training and Employment:** A variety of training products will be provided to job seekers including education, training and workforce activities through more on-the-job training; incumbent worker training, and customized training opportunities.

**Improves Services to Employers and Promotes Work-Based Training:** WIOA contributes to economic growth and business expansion by ensuring the workforce system is job-driven: finding *people for jobs* rather than *jobs for people*.

- State and local boards will promote the use of industry and sector partnerships to address the workforce needs of multiple employers within an industry.
- Employers are incentivized to meet their workforce needs and offer opportunities for workers to learn with increased reimbursement rates for on-the-job and customized training.

**Reinforces Connections with Registered Apprenticeship (RA):** WIOA promotes the use of RA, a proven model that provides workers with career pathways and opportunities to earn while they learn.

- RA programs are included on the eligible training provider list for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs as long as they remain registered, providing access to high-quality training.

**Refocuses Youth Workforce Activities:** Youth services focus will be improved by placing a priority on out of school youth, high school dropout recovery and achievement of recognized postsecondary credentials. Career Pathways and work-based learning will be promoted as leading approaches to be adopted on a wider scale.

**Improves Services to Individuals with Disabilities-** WIOA increases individuals with disabilities' access to high quality workforce services and prepares them for competitive integrated employment.

- One-Stops will provide physical and programmatic accessibility to employment and training services for individuals with disabilities.
- State vocational rehabilitation agencies will set aside at least 15 percent of their funding to provide transition services to youth with disabilities.