

Adopted Policies

Alternative Training Programs Policy

Policy Statement

In order to open sector and other training to a wider and more diverse participant base, the WIB has prioritized a need to develop and participate in alternative training programs for special populations with multiple barriers to employment, and a need to invest in VESL, academic prep, transitional work, and bridge programs for participants unable to qualify initially for ITA and sector-based training.

Priority for Intensive and Training Services

WIA states that in the event that funds allocated to a local area for Adult employment and training activities are limited, priority for intensive and training services funded with Title I Adult Funds must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals in the local area.

WIA includes in its definition of low-income individuals an individual who:

- Is eligible for Food Stamps;
- Receives public assistance including foster children;
- Has a household income below Federal Poverty Line or 70% of the lower living standard;
- Qualifies as homeless;
- An individual with a disability, whose own income meets the requirements of the program, but is a member of a family whose income does not meet such requirements.

Alternatives to Traditional ITA Training Programs

In order to meet these priorities and provide to special populations with multiple barriers to employment maximum opportunities to benefit from WIA programs, alternatives to traditional ITA training programs may be employed.

For example, short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning and communication skills, may be provided as “Intensive Services” and do not require the establishment of an ITA.

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Further, in lieu of traditional ITA training, contracts for training may be authorized when:

- A. **Such services are on-the-job training provided by an employer, or customized training.**
- B. **The Local WIB (LWIB) determines that there are an insufficient number of eligible providers of training services in the local area involved to accomplish the purposes of a system of individual training accounts.**
 1. The Local Plan must describe the process to be used in selecting the providers under a contract for services.
 2. This process must include a public comment period for interested providers of at least 30 days.
- C. **The LWIB determines that there is a training services program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the local area to serve targeted low-income special participant populations that face multiple barriers to employment.**
 1. Special participant populations that face multiple barriers to employment include:
 - (a) Low-income individuals with substantial language or cultural barriers;
 - (b) Low-income individuals who are offenders;
 - (c) Low-income individuals who are homeless;
 - (d) Low-income individuals who are disabled; or
 - (e) Other low-income hard-to-serve populations with special needs as defined by the LWIB.
 2. An eligible provider is:
 - (a) A community-based organization
 - (b) Another private organization.
 - 3) The WIB has developed the following criteria to determine demonstrated effectiveness of training service programs:
 - (a) Financial stability of the organization;
 - (b) Demonstrated performance for the program organization and/or key staff;
 - (c) How the specific program relates to the workforce investment needs identified in the local plan; and
 - (d) How the use of the program supports WIB priorities.

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Those training providers operating under the ITA exceptions still must qualify as eligible providers. To qualify:

- 1) Appropriate service providers may be selected as long as the Local Workforce Investment Area takes into consideration the specific geographic and demographic factors where the program operates and the characteristics of the special population being served.
- 2) The Local Workforce Investment Board must require performance data for all WIA Title I funded participants participating in any program of contracted training services.