

I. Purpose

To define and provide guidance concerning the use and administration of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for eligible WIOA participants enrolled in Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. This includes In-School Youth according to the state's approved waiver for Program Years 2018 and 2019 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2020). This policy provides the criteria concerning eligibility and suitability for customers requesting WIOA training assistance in the Southeast Local Workforce Development Area (STLWDA).

II. Background

One of the key purposes of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is to provide workforce investment activities that increase the employment, retention, and earnings of participants, and increase attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials by participants. The targeted results of training are to improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, increase economic self-sufficiency, meet the skill requirements of employers, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation.

WIOA provides more flexibility for American Job Center (AJC) staff to issue ITAs for apprenticeship programs. An ITA is used for a participant to access training services from an entity on the State's approved Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

III. Instructions

WIOA funds shall be used to provide training services to customers:

1. who, after an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and career planning, have been determined to:
 - a. be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency;
 - b. be in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and
 - c. have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program;
2. who select programs directly linked to in-demand occupations in the local area or planning region, or in another area to which the individual is willing to commute or relocate;
3. who are unable to obtain other grant assistance, including Federal Pell Grants or require assistance beyond the assistance made available under other grant assistance programs

WIOA funds shall be used to support high-quality education, training, and other services that:

1. align with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
2. prepare an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including registered apprenticeships;

3. include, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
4. organize education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
5. enable an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
6. help an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

STLWDB shall abide by the following conditions regarding WIOA-funded training:

1. AJC staff will be able to obtain a participant’s postsecondary financial aid information
2. AJC staff will ensure that participants have access to the ETPL
3. ITAs are approved by the AJC Title I Managers and sent electronically to LWDB Quality Assurance Department for budget and voucher approval in VOS.
4. LWDB does not allow full ITA payment for entire programs beyond each training period unless the institutions have a refund policy requiring that the tuition must be paid in full
5. LWDB allows ITAs to pay for the full cost of training (e.g., books, license fees, training materials, registration fees, supplies, uniforms) that the financial institution does not cover
6. AJC staff ensures that participants have a choice for her/his training provider
7. When considering community-based organizations or other private organizations who desire to serve special participant populations, the LWDB shall consider the following criteria:
 - a. Financial stability of the organization
 - b. Demonstrated performance in measures appropriate to the program
 - c. The relevance of the specific program to STLWDA’s identified needs

Basic Skills:

Prior to being determined eligible for WIOA training funds, all WIOA customers must have a High School Diploma or a High School Equivalency Diploma and meet one of the following basic skills requirements:

Training less than one year:

Minimum 10th grade on TABE or CASAS in Reading, Math and Language

Training one year or greater:

Minimum 12th grade on TABE or CASAS in Reading, Math and Language

WIOA customers currently attending a Post-Secondary Institution:

Minimum GPA of 3.0 on transcripts and/or official letter showing student is in good standing in the current program

WIOA Customers attending Allied Health programs:

Achievement of the minimum requirements on the Nursing Entrance Test (NET), Health Occupations Basic Entrance Test (HOBET), or other equivalent industry specific entrance exam

Note: Since WIOA indicates that customers must have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program, individuals determined to be basic skills deficient who are seeking training opportunities for skills and career advancement shall be referred to a program, such as Adult Education for skills upgrade or postsecondary learning supports, that results in remediation.

Tuition and fees for postsecondary courses that result in remediation must be coordinated with other funding sources, such as Tennessee Reconnect, HOPE, Wilder-Naifeh, etc. Remaining balances may be prorated but should not exceed the maximum limits as outlined below:

Individual Training Account Duration:

The duration of the training will be determined by the nature and length of the course requirements.

Individual Training Account Limits:

(see Attachment A)

<u>Program of study leading to a two-year degree:</u>	\$8,000 Maximum
<u>Program of study leading to a four-year degree or higher:</u> Qualified Juniors and Seniors only	\$8,000 maximum
<u>Program of study leading to a certification, industry recognized credential, or license:</u>	\$5,000 maximum

Training Discounts:

All students, regardless of the method of payment, are to be charged the same tuition. WIOA is not permitted to pay more or less for the cost of training than what is required of non-WIOA sponsored students.

IV. Exceptions

Exceptions and/or accommodations to this policy may be made on a case-by-case basis with prior approval by Career Services Provider designee.

This policy does not create a right by any individual to receive any amount of funding, nor does it create an obligation by the Southeast Tennessee Development District to pay any amounts of funds on behalf of an individual or group. Training is approved based on need, as determined by the Career Service Coordinator and the availability of funds as determined by the Southeast Tennessee Development District, subject to the maximum limitations outlined in this policy.

The LWDB recognizes certain exceptions to the use of ITAs. Contracts for services may be used instead of an ITA only when one or more of these exceptions apply (**WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G)(ii)**):

1. The services provided are OJT, customized training, incumbent worker training, or transitional jobs;
2. The LWDB determines that there are an insufficient number of Eligible Training Providers in the local area to accomplish the purpose of a system of ITAs;

- 3. The LWDB determines that in the area there is a training-services program of demonstrated effectiveness offered by a community-based organization or other private organization to serve individuals with barriers to employment;
- 4. The LWDA determines that the most appropriate training could be provided by an institution of higher education to train multiple individuals for jobs in sector-demanded occupations, provided this does not limit customer choice; or
- 5. The LWDA is considering entering into a pay-for-performance contract and the LWDA ensures that the contract is consistent with ***20 CFR 683.510***

AUTHORIZED BY:

 3/13/19
Michele Holt, Director, Workforce Development Date

APPROVED BY:

 3-13-19
Tony Cates, Chair, Workforce Development Board Date

Individual Training Account Policy; Effective 3.14.18, Revised 3.13.19

WIOA Individual Training Account Policy – Attachment A
ITA Limits Guidelines
March 13, 2019

ITAs should be submitted for approval at a minimum of two weeks prior to the training start date in order to obligate funds and communicate customer obligations. ITAs submitted within less than two weeks of the training start date will be considered on a case by case basis.

Individual Training Account Limits:

The ITA limits outlined in the WIOA Comprehensive Training Policy indicate the “maximum” allowable amount for a particular program of study but does not guarantee an amount of sponsorship that will be provided to any individual for any program of study.

WIOA sponsorships should be determined by pro-rating the maximum allowable amount based on the total number of semester/quarters as indicated by the training provider—that are necessary and/or required for the program. When determining sponsorships for existing students that have already completed a semester/quarter, WIOA staff must use the total number of semesters/quarters *required* in the program NOT the number of semesters/quarters *remaining*.

ITA caps for comparable credential programs offered by both public and private/for-profit training institutions shall be established by the provider offering the most cost-effective training.

To ensure that all WIOA sponsored students complete their training in the time allotted by the training provider and allowed for WIOA sponsorship, WIOA staff must continuously monitor and strictly enforce that all WIOA sponsored students:

1. Make every attempt to attend full time;
 - a. If through case management, it is determined part-time is recommended, then semester maximums will be prorated based on number of hours attending
2. Provide a copy of the Academic Plan/Program requirements
3. Successfully complete all attempted classes with a minimum grade point average of C;
4. Obtain WIOA approval prior to dropping any required course;
5. Refrain from taking unnecessary courses / courses not required by their approved program of study on the ETPL. **WIOA funding is limited to required courses only.**

Program of study leading to a two-year degree: \$8,000 Maximum

- Four Semester Program - \$2,000 per semester
- Six Semester Program - \$1,333 per semester

Program of study leading to a four-year degree or higher: \$8,000 Maximum

Qualified Juniors or Seniors only

- Two Semester Program - \$4,000 per semester
- Three Semester Program - \$2,666 per semester
- Four Semester Program - \$2,000 per semester

Program of study leading to a certification, industry recognized credential, or license: \$5,000 Maximum

- Three Semesters/Quarters - \$1,666 per semester/quarter
- Four Semesters/Quarters - \$1,250 per semester/quarter
- Five Semesters/Quarters - \$1,000 per semester/quarter