ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Local Plan PY 2024-2027
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Subject: Work-Based Learning Policy

The purpose of this Work-Based Learning Policy is to establish local guidelines for administering federally funded work-based learning programs in the Workforce Development Board of North Missouri (WDB) region.

Work-based learning opportunities are tools to be used to assist in achieving training and placement goals for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth customers. As such, guidelines established in the OWD Issuances provide the framework for practices and procedures.

Local Marketing Strategy

The Business Customer
Face-to-face contact with businesses
Radio advertising (PSAs)
Phone marketing
Chamber of Commerce info share
Human resources meetings
Face-to-face contact with Economic Developers
Mass mailing utilizing MERIC
jobs.mo.gov message center
CWRC employer partners

The Job Seeking Customer
Basic skills workshops
Radio advertising (PSAs)
Letters of eligibility
CIC advertisements
Soft skills workshops
Social media (i.e. *Facebook*)
ETT meetings
jobs.mo.gov message center

General Worksite Requirements

The WDB requires employers to enroll the company in the E-Verify federal work authorization program before the start date of employees. Employers are required to verify an employee's work eligibility no later than the third business day after the employee starts work.

The Board reserves the right to limit placements at a company to ensure compliance with program objectives and maintain the quality of work experience opportunities. Such limitations may be determined by evaluating the total number of regular (unsubsidized) employees across all company facilities and assessing the quality of instruction, training, and educational opportunities available to participants at the worksite.

No person participating in a WIOA work-based learning program will be “hired by” and/or “supervised” by a relative of that person. For the purpose of this rule, relative is defined to include mother, father, son, daughter, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, sister, brother, uncle, aunt, niece, nephew, cousin, step-parent, step-child, foster parent, foster child, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, and brother-in-law. An individual who “hires and/or supervises” refers to an individual who exercises authority to hire for the position, provides day-to-day training or direction or keeps time and attendance records. In addition, owners are included as supervisors/hiring managers since they have general authority to supervise, hire and dismiss.

Priority for worksite placement will be given to employers who meet the WDB's priority sectors. This requirement is a must for worksites to participate in the On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training Programs.

The Workforce Development Board of North Missouri reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications submitted for participation in work-based learning programs.

Employers that participate in work-based learning programs sponsored by the WDB may be subject to monitoring of the training program to ensure compliance with the rules and regulations of the program.

All employers participating in work-based learning programs must have an informal process for which participant disputes may be heard. If the informal process does not settle the dispute, the region's complaint and grievance policy/process will be utilized to resolve the dispute.

Employers must agree to not discriminate against any participant on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

On-the-Job Training

On-the-Job Training (OJT) is a work-based training service that provides participants with knowledge-upgrade and skills-upgrade training necessary to enable the full performance of a job. OJT opportunities are designed to lead to full-time unsubsidized employment and are not to be used for temporary positions.

OJT also serves as an employer service, as it provides a wage reimbursement to the employer to help offset the extraordinary costs of providing training and supervision to the under skilled worker.

The WDB will follow the guidance found in OWD's "Statewide On-the-Job Training Policy and Guidelines" Issuance regarding company eligibility, as well as OWD's OJT Manual and attachments as a guide to develop and document the OJT.

OJT Contracts may be written for eligible employed workers when:

- The employee's household income does not exceed 200% of the current poverty level, or the participant is not earning wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment.
- The eligibility requirements in 20 C.F.R. Part 680.700 are met
- The OJT relates to the introduction of new technologies, introduction to new production or services procedures, upgrading to new jobs that require additional skills, workplace literacy, and
- Leads to an increase in wages by the end of the OJT.

The WDB allows for OJT reimbursement to equal up to 50% of the participant's wages during the training period. The maximum number of hours for an OJT shall not exceed 1040 hours. The actual amount of training hours for the OJT shall be established following the criteria in OWD's OJT Manual.

A waiver may be granted to exceed the 50% reimbursement rate on a case-by-case basis. This request would need to be in writing to the Executive Director and outline the following factors that will determine the appropriateness of the reimbursement increase:

- Characteristics of the participants taking into consideration whether they are "individuals with barriers to employment"
- Size of the business, and emphasis will be on small businesses (50 employees or less)
- The quality of employer-provided training and advancement opportunities, including transferable skills and certificates.
- OJT Contract is for an in-demand occupation in the North Region.

The WDB has established minimum hourly rates for OJT placements based on economic conditions and historical data reflecting the average hourly rate for WIOA participants. The minimum placement hourly rate is $1.00 above the current Missouri minimum wage for the WDB 34-county region.

The Board will review the job description and specific vocational preparation (SVP) details from O*Net to determine an appropriate amount of hours. Staff will also document any skills the participant has and work with the employer to determine if the OJT hours should be reduced based on their prior experience.

Each OJT agreement and outline will be approved by WDB staff before a participant can start the OJT Program.

The OJT agreement may be modified to adjust end date, number of hours, the contract total amount, or for any other valid changes using the OJT Supplemental Agreement form. This change must be agreed upon by all parties involved in the agreement.

Paid/Unpaid Work Experience

Paid/Unpaid work experiences are to be conducted at a worksite where the participant would not only secure work experience while earning wages but also facilitate the development of job readiness skills that is fundamental to success in the workplace.

Target populations for Paid/Unpaid Work Experiences are in-school youth, high school graduates, eligible veterans, women, and minorities, youth with disabilities, and those with limited work experience or marketable skills.

Work Experiences must support the participant's education and career goals as identified by Employment Plan or the Youth's Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Every effort should be made to ensure the Work Experience aligns with the participant's career path. If a work experience cannot be aligned with the career path, an explanation must be provided in case notes explaining the reason the Work Experience outside of the career path is appropriate.

Work Experiences must be for a limited period of time. In determining an appropriate length of time for a Work Experience, consideration should be given to the skill

requirement of the position, the academic and occupational skills level of the participant, prior work experience, and the participant's EP/ISS.

Work Experience Time Limits

- Adult/Dislocated Worker – Up to 300 Hours
    - Can be extended up to 240 hours with proper justification/documentation.
- Youth – Up to 400 hours
    - Can be extended up to 300 hours with proper justification/documentation.

Scholars at Work

Scholars at Work is a paid work experience that allows youth to gain work experience while earning their Hiset. This program is for youth that meet the out of school eligibility with the barrier of high school drop out. To be enrolled into the Scholars at Work Program, the youth must complete an application and interview with case management staff to be selected.

Participants are able to earn wages while actively attending AEL classes that lead toward the attainment of their Hiset. This portion of the work-experience meets the academic component requirement. Staff will still need to work with the participant to identify the occupational education component (soft skills do not meet this requirement), it is recommended the participant have a second work-site that meets the participant's occupational goals.

Time limits for Scholars at Work are the same as a traditional work-experience.

Participants in the Scholars program are expected to be engaged and complete satisfactory progress towards obtaining their Hiset. If a participant is not actively engaging with the program, which is delaying their progress, their participation in the Scholars program may be terminated based on the following steps:

Verbal Warning (documented in Case Notes) – the Case Manager will warn the participant their lack of engagement is delaying their progress, and may result in suspension/termination.

2-Week Suspension – If after receiving a verbal warning, the participant does not increase engagement and progress towards obtaining the Hiset, they shall be suspended from the work experience portion of the Scholars program. The participant is encouraged to participate in the class, but will not be compensated for their time.

Termination: If after the suspension, the participant does not increase engagement and progress towards obtaining the Hiset, they shall be terminated from the work experience portion of the Scholars program. The participant is encouraged to participate in the class, but will not be compensated for their time.

If a participant feels they should not have received a suspension or termination, they can appeal the decision by contacting the WDB office. A determination will be made by the WDB Director or their designee. The participant also has the right to file a complaint using the region's complaint and grievance policy.

Registered Apprenticeships

Registered Apprenticeship is a proven model of job preparation that combines paid on-the-job training (OJT) with related instruction to progressively increase workers' skill levels and wages.

All Registered Apprenticeship programs consist of the following seven core components – Industry-led, Paid Job, On-the-Job Learning/Mentorship, Supplemental Education, Diversity, Quality and Safety, and Nationally-Recognized Credentials.

OJT Agreements can be utilized to pay a portion of the worksite wages for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth to participate in a Registered Apprenticeship. ITA's can be utilized to cover tuition for the classroom training portion of the apprenticeship if the program is registered on the State's eligible training provider list. The eligibility for a company to receive funds for a registered apprenticeship is the same as the prior section of this policy with the additional requirement, the apprenticeship must be recognized as a registered apprenticeship with the Department of Labor.

Pre-Apprenticeships

A pre-apprenticeship is a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship program and has a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, Registered Apprenticeship program(s).

Target populations for Pre-Apprenticeship programs are high school graduates, eligible veterans, women and minorities, youth with disabilities, and those with limited work experience or marketable skills.

Incumbent Worker

Incumbent Worker training is work-based and/or classroom training by an employer which assists workers in obtaining skills necessary to retain employment or to avert layoffs. IWT provides both workers and employers with the opportunity to build and maintain a quality workforce and increase both participants' and companies' competitiveness. Training will be conducted for 'in demand" industries as established by the Workforce Development Board. IWT is not permitted to be used to provide occupational training for new hire needs (refer to the OJT program). If a collective bargaining agreement covers the employer, then union concurrence with the training services is required.

In addition to the general worksite requirements referenced above, an employer eligibility for the Incumbent Worker Training Program is based on the following criteria:

- The characteristics of the incumbent workers to be training and how they will benefit through retention or advancement. (Target population is individuals with barriers to employment).
- The number of employees the employer plans to train or retrain. For the purpose of the IWT funds, the worksite must be within the 34 counties served by the WDB of North Missouri.
- The quality of training. The training should allow the employee to gain industry-recognized training experience and/or lead to industry-recognized credentials. The implementation of registered apprenticeship programs is encouraged. Training can include, but is not limited to, industry or company-specific work skills, basic job skills, technical computer skills, new manufacturing technologies equipment operation training, changes in production processes, and "soft skills" , such as leadership, teamwork, communication, conflict resolution, and management skills.
- The employee's advancement opportunities post-training. Training must lead to opportunities for advancement and wage increases prior to or within 30 days of the successful completion of training.
- Training may be conducted at the employer's own facility, at a public or private training provider's facility, or a combination of sites that best meet the needs of the business. The company selects the training provider that best suits their training needs. Trainers may be public or private professional trainings, equipment vendors, or subject matter experts. IWT providers are not required to be on the region's approved training provider list.
- The IWT program requires an employer match to participate in the program. The amount of the match is based on the size of the employer.
    - 50 Employees or less – Minimum of 10% match
    - 51-100 Employees – Minimum of 25% match
    - 100+ Employees – Minimum of 50% match

- The employer match can be cash or in-kind contribution. If the employer chooses to provide an in-kind match, it must be mutually agreed upon and included on the Employer Non-Federal Share Requirements Form. In-kind match can include, but is not limited to:
    - Trainee wages/benefits paid during the training period.
    - Leasing costs for classroom space.
    - Equipment purchased for training.
    - Training materials and supplies.
    - Travel and/or lodging costs.

For an employee to be eligible for the IWT program, they must meet the following criteria:

- The trainee must currently be employed by the employer and meet the Fair Labor Standards Act requirements for an employer-employee relationship.
- Have an established employment history with the employer extending back at least six months, this can include time spent as a temporary or contract worker for the employer.
    - If the IWT is being provided to a cohort of employees, not every employee in the cohort must have an established history with the employer for six months or if the majority of employees being trained meet the employment history requirement.
- The trainee must be at least 18 years of age and registered with the Selective Service (if applicable), a citizen of the United States or a non-citizen whose status permits employment in the United States.
- To receive IWT, the trainee does not have to meet the eligibility requirements for participation in career and training services for WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker Programs. Priority should be given to those employees with a barrier to employment.

Cost Reimbursement (OJT/IWT)

Allowable expenses for participation in the OJT or IWT programs will be reimbursed to the employer based on the training agreement. The employer will be required to submit proper documentation that indicates actual expenses.

The WDB does not commit to paying for any cost incurred prior to the execution of any contract or agreement.

The Workforce Development Board of North Missouri is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Missouri TTY users can dial 711. This information can be translated into another language if requested. Please contact the WDB Office for translation assistance.

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