



Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and Individual Service Strategy (ISS) Policy

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide entities awarded a subcontract or agreement through the North Central Workforce Development Board's (NCWDB) WIOA Title I funds with the guidelines and requirements for the development and implementation of Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and Individual Service Strategy (ISS) documents.

II. REFERENCES:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); Public Law 113-128
- North Central Workforce Development Board (NCWDB) Policies
- Training and Employment Guidance Letters No. 21-16, No. 23-14, No. 19-16, No. 8-15, No. 10-16
- WIOA Notice of Propose Rulemaking on Title I and Title III Programs
- Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry Individual Employment Plan (IEP)/Individual Service Strategy (ISS) Authentication and Signature Standard Operating Procedure
- CWDS Help Center - Adding Planned Services to an Individualized Employment Plan / Individual Service Strategy; Understanding the Basics of an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP)/Individual Service Strategy; Refresher Training Transcript

III. BACKGROUND:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires that all Adult and Dislocated Worker participants be provided with comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs. For Youth participants, programs are to provide an Objective Assessment of the academic levels, skills levels, and service needs, including a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs), supportive service needs, and developmental needs of such participant, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and Individual Service Strategy (ISS) are a culmination of the assessments and needs toward employment goal(s), appropriate achievement objectives, and the appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals, including providing information on eligible providers of training services, and career pathways to attain career objectives.

The goal for most participants is to obtain full-time employment. To achieve this goal, the IEP must be jointly developed and individualized according to each participant. The IEP must be signed, or authenticated, by the WIOA Title I provider staff and the participant. The plan should be an ongoing strategy with regular updates that assess the participant's skills and abilities, and measures progress, along

with authentication that reflects the accountability of all parties to achieve the employment goal.

The IEP is developed as a detailed reflection of the following:

- Assessment results
- Skills
- Barriers
- Interests
- Employment goal
- Planned services
- Supportive services
- Training, if needed

WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(B) requires the development of Youth Individual Service Strategies (ISS), an intensive service, for youth ages 14-21 and in-school (ISY) or ages 16-24 and out of school (OSY) directly linked to one or more of the indicators of performance; and shall identify:

- a) career pathways that include education and employment goals (including, in appropriate circumstances, nontraditional employment);
- b) appropriate achievement objectives;
- c) and appropriate services for the participant that directly link to the participant's Objective Assessment.

An assessment of the required WIOA Youth 14 program elements should be evident when referring to the ISS.

An ISS can be developed to address goals for Employment, Education, and/or Individual Development. To reach these goals, the ISS for a Youth participant must be jointly developed and signed by the WIOA Title I staff and the participant. The plan should be an ongoing strategy with regular updates and authentications to reflect the participant's progress and/or plan changes, including educational and employment opportunities as appropriate.

The ISS reflects details of the following:

- Youth objective assessment
- Employment goal (Education and Individual Development goals are possible for youth)
- Planned services
- Assessment results
- Age-appropriate goals
- Appropriate services strategies
- Skills
- Barriers
- Interests

The IEP/ISS will serve as the basis for the entire case management service strategy and as an on-going guide for delivery of appropriate services. The IEP/ISS will identify and document a participant's progress, activities completed, benchmarks reached, and any other accomplishments. Local labor market information must be taken into consideration in the development of the IEP.

The IEP and ISS are also used to justify training which must be linked to occupations in demand in the local area or areas where the individual is willing to relocate based on the region's current labor market data.

The Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS)/PA CareerLink® is the system of record for tracking program participant data. All workforce development activity **must be entered into CWDS/PA CareerLink®** to ensure compliance with federal and state statutes, regulations, and policies.

While data **must** be entered and authenticated in the CWDS 2.0 IEP/ISS screens within **30 days** of the creation of the plan, interview, evaluation, assessment, plan closure or other communication with participant where an applicable change in a plan was identified, it is proper PII handling procedure to promptly (within 48 hours) enter information into CWDS 2.0

Any discrepancies arising between Workforce Solutions policy and or procedures with federal and state provisions due to current or future revisions will default to the current minimum federal and state regulations and guidance available. Workforce Solutions policy and or procedures may set forth stricter requirements than provided by federal and state guidance, but in no case will local policy and or procedures not meet minimum federal and state policy.

IV. POLICY:

- 1) All Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth shall have an IEP/ISS established.
- 2) The development of the IEP/ISS, including assessments must be recorded in the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS).
- 3) The IEP/ISS is a continual process which is to be participant driven, and designed collaboratively with the participant.
- 4) The IEP/ISS is to be based off of the assessments provided to the participant. This includes assessment for service needs and coordinated delivery of the required WIOA Youth 14 program elements.
- 5) Specific medical information is to be excluded from the IEP/ISS. Any barriers to employment/education which are health related are to be framed in a manner which states the limitation rather than a health condition or diagnosis (ie. "Cannot lift more than 10 pounds" vs. "has had surgery on a torn rotator cuff.")
- 6) All elements of the IEP/ISS shall focus on employment/career goals, education goals (if applicable), and overcoming barriers to employment.
- 7) The plan shall provide a framework including timeframes, resources, and incremental steps/objectives to achieve overall goals and remediate barriers.
- 8) The IEP/ISS should be reviewed/updated and authenticated in cooperation with the participant at least quarterly.
- 9) The IEP/ISS and progress notes shall be used as the basic instrument to record results of decisions made about the combination and sequence of services for the participant based on the assessment.

- 10) It is the responsibility of the WIOA Title I provider to establish processes to review and approve all registration paperwork, including the IEP/ISS, for completeness, accuracy and internal consistency as well as to ensure that the plan is current at all times.

V. PROCEDURES:

- 1) WIOA Title I staff will provide for assessments of adults/dislocated workers and Objective Assessment for Youth as part of enrollment and service development.
- 2) Staff will create the IEP/ISS within CWDS in collaboration with the participant
- 3) Staff will enter the required assessments/objective assessment into the IEP/ISS
- 4) The assessment will identify interests, skills, employment, and barriers to be addressed and documented within the IEP/ISS
- 5) The Youth ISS goals will be linked to at least one of the indicators of performance:
 - a) Educational and Employment Rate 2nd quarter after exit;
 - b) Educational and Employment Rate 4th quarter after exit;
 - c) Median Earnings 2nd quarter after exit
 - d) Credential Attainment;
 - e) and Measurable skills Gains.
- 6) The IEP/ISS shall contain goals and objectives to achieve the participants specific occupational goal. Goals and objectives should take a holistic approach, including elimination of barriers identified during assessment.
- 7) All goals and objectives shall be measurable and attainable within the identified timeframe.
 - a) Employment Goal
The employment goal is determined as a result of comprehensive assessment consisting of an interview, evaluation, and/or specialized testing. The goal is based on the participant's career aptitudes and interests. It is WIOA Title I's role to guide participant career choices based on assessment results, labor market information, career pathways, work experience, trainings, special skills, interests and other viable information.
Any skills or remedial training necessary to meet employment goals should be included as objectives under the employment goal.
 - b) Educational Goal (Youth Only)
An educational goal should be linked to an employment goal. The goal is to have the youth continue or return to school and achieve post-secondary education or advanced occupational training. If applicable, the ISS should identify services to maintain regular school attendance, counseling, tutoring, and/or career options, as well as dropout prevention and recovery strategies that will lead the youth to completion of their educational goal.
 - c) Objectives

The objectives of the plan break down the larger goal (employment and/or educational) into shorter steps to reach the established goal(s). Effective objectives will include established start dates and projected end/review dates of achievement, in which they should be reviewed and updated when needed.

Objectives should be closed upon completion with a successful or unsuccessful outcome. Objectives can be added throughout the participant's active status in the program if any new goals or added services are needed that were not discussed within the initial IEP/ISS process.

- 8) WIOA Title I staff shall also enter a case note providing more information around the development of the IEP or ISS. The case note shall include:
 - a) brief summary of assessments, barriers, interests, skills gaps, training and supportive service needs;
 - b) for youth participants, identification of which of the 14 program elements are needed;
 - c) summary of goals, objectives and planned services;
 - d) signature/authentication;
 - e) plan for IEP/ISS review.
- 9) The IEP/ISS should be reviewed/updated on a regular basis, no less than quarterly, and may be reviewed more frequently when training and supportive services are being provided.
- 10) Projected end dates of a goal or review dates for objectives should be frequently monitored by WIOA Title I staff to ensure that timeframes are being met.
- 11) The IEP/ISS must be updated when necessary to reflect any goal changes from the initial plan.
- 12) Updates should be completed in collaboration with the participant and authenticated in the IEP/ISS.
- 13) Plan reviews and updates should be documented in the Progress Notes section of the IEP.
 - a) If there are no changes/updates to the IEP/ISS, enter a progress note with subject "IEP/ISS Review." Clearly state that the case has been reviewed, the participant is on track with plan, and no changes or updates are being made.
 - b) If changes/updates have been jointly agreed upon with the participant, make modification of plan in CWDS and enter a progress note within the IEP/ISS section detailing the updates and subject "IEP/ISS Update."
 - c) Ensure the participant authenticates any plan changes by reviewing and signing the plan within 48 hours to ensure proper PII handling.
- 14) All electronic signatures and requests for signatures should be documented in the progress notes.
- 15) All participants who have an active participation period and those receiving follow-up services, shall have at least one goal with at least one objective open in the IEP or ISS.
- 16) Follow-up services are to be documented in the IEP/ISS objectives.

VII. EXPIRATION:

Ongoing

VIII. INQUIRIES:

Questions shall be directed to:

Pamela Streich, Executive Director at pstreich@ncwdb.org; or

Donna Hottel, Strategic Planning and Project Manager at dhottel@ncwdb.org

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IX. POLICY HISTORY:

Name	Date	Description of Change	Effective Date
Tonya Mauk	07/01/2024	Policy restructured to align with CWDS 2.0	07/01/2024
Pam Streich	01/17/2017	Policy revised to reflect new agency (Workforce Solutions for North Central PA)	01/17/2017
Pam Streich	12/01/2016	Policy revised to add Career Pathway language	12/01/2016
Pam Streich	07/01/2013	Policy revised to address the transition to WIOA from WIA)	07/01/2013

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program