



Self-Sufficiency Policy

I. PURPOSE:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and its corresponding regulations require that each local workforce development board set the criteria for area self-sufficiency. In determining self-sufficiency for the North Central region, the Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL), the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG), and the Self-Sufficiency Standard were taken into consideration.

II. REFERENCES:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- TEGL 7-20
- Department of Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Income Guidelines – Federal Register Vol. 91, No. 10; pages 1797 -1798
- U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration (ETA) Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard, Center for Women’s Welfare, University of Washington School of Social Work <https://selfsufficiencystandard.org/>
- Workforce Solutions for North Central PA Board (NCWDB) Policies

III. DEFINITIONS:

Consumer Price Index (CPI) – is a measure of the average change overtime in the prices paid by urban consumers for a market basket of consumer goods and services.

Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG) – dollar amounts that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) publishes annually to indicate the minimum income a person or family needs to meet their basic needs. figures issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) used to establish eligibility for a variety, but not all, public assistance programs. These figures are revised annually based on changes in the Consumer Price Index.

Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) – reflects cost of living increases for the Regions and major metro areas by calculating the percentage change in the most recent Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for an area then applying this calculation to each of the previous year's LLSIL figures.

Self-Sufficiency – the financial ability of a person or household to attain an acceptable level of functioning and adequate quality of life without reliance on public or private assistance. Based on standards that includes the knowledge and skillsets necessary to cover the costs of needs such as housing, childcare, food,

healthcare, transportation, taxes, and emergency savings. Self-sufficiency encompasses multiple domains that include education, well-being, social capital, and finances at the individual, family, and community levels of society.

1. Self-sufficiency is the income level a person or family must be below to be eligible for certain WIOA services.
2. Eligibility for these services is determined by confirming that a participant is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment at the self-sufficiency wage or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone. (WIOA Sec. 134 (c)(3)(A))

The Self-Sufficiency Standard – determines the amount of income required for working families to meet basic needs at a minimally adequate level, considering family, composition, ages of children, and geographic differences in costs. (WIOA Sec. 134)

Underemployed Worker or Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) – an individual who cannot get a full-time job that makes use of their skills and therefore is working a low-skill job, a part-time job, or a job that does not pay a living wage, leaving the worker unable to meet the Self-Sufficiency Standard.

IV. BACKGROUND:

One of WIOA's main purposes is to increase economic self-sufficiency through workforce development activities. Pennsylvania's workforce development system aims to help workers and businesses compete in a global economy by preparing individuals for jobs, improving employer competitiveness, and supporting economic growth. In times of economic crisis or increased participation at the PA CareerLink® offices, the workforce system has an essential role in providing services for individuals with the most need. With low unemployment rates and reduced numbers of individuals seeking PA CareerLink® services, the workforce system has the opportunity to proactively improve activities for those who can most benefit. Through the assessment process, the needs of participants will be determined and priority of service given to individuals with barriers to employment (see Workforce Solutions Priority of Service Policy). The end goal is to enable participation in the local economy through meaningful employment and a sustainable income that provides economic self-sufficiency.

The U.S. Department of Labor expects local workforce development areas to follow a process for determining economic self-sufficiency standards for Adult and Dislocated Worker Program participants.

V. POLICY:

Workforce Solutions has determined self-sufficiency to be at or above 250% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIG)*. An individual in the North Central Workforce Development Area is considered to be at self-sufficiency if the entire household's gross earned income is at or above 250% of the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines. See table provided on Workforce Solutions Website at

<https://www.workforcesolutionspa.com/categories/resources/pages/policies-overview>

* The Self-Sufficiency Table will be updated yearly as changes occur with the FPIG.

VI. POLICY EXCEPTIONS:

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/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.

VII. RESCISSIONS:

None

VIII. EXPIRATION:

Ongoing

IX. INQUIRIES:

Questions shall be directed to:

Pam Streich, Executive Director at pstreich@ncwdb.org; or
Donna Hottel, Strategic Planning and Project Manager at dhottel@ncwdb.org

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X. POLICY HISTORY:

This policy is reviewed annually (at a minimum), typically during the first week of July, by Workforce Solutions' staff to assess and implement any necessary changes, edits, updates and revisions.

Name of Staff Reviewer	Date of Review	Description of Change	Effective Date
Pam Streich, Donna Hottel, & Tonya Mauk	2/19/2026	Self-Sufficiency Wage & references	2/19/2026
Pam Streich, Tonya Mauk & Donna Hottel	11/10/2025	Self-Sufficiency Wage	11/10/2025
Pam Streich, Tonya Mauk & Donna Hottel	08/21/2024	Self-Sufficiency Wage	08/21/2024
Donna Hottel	08/01/2021	Self-Sufficiency Wage	08/01/2021
Pam Streich	07/01/2020	Issued	07/01/2020

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<https://www.workforcesolutionspa.com/categories/resources/pages/stevens-amendment>