

Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act-Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Skill-up Program

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is a significant piece of legislation in the United States designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market. It also aims to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Youth Alliance provides WIOA services in a nine county area and supports both the St. Joseph and Maryville Missouri Job Centers.

Key Objectives

1. **Job Training:** Improve access to quality workforce services, including education and training.
2. **Support Services:** Provide essential support services to help individuals complete training programs and find employment.
3. **Employment Opportunities:** Enhance the workforce system to better serve job seekers, including those with barriers to employment.
4. **Employer Engagement:** Strengthen the alignment of workforce programs with the needs of employers.

Performance Accountability

WIOA mandates a performance accountability system to measure the effectiveness of programs. Key performance indicators include:

- Employment rates after program completion.
- Median earnings of participants.
- Credential attainment rates.
- Measurable skill gains.
- Effectiveness in serving employers.

Key Features of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

1. **Eligibility:**
 - **WIOA Adult Program:**
 - Must be 18 years or older.
 - Priority is often given to individuals with significant barriers to employment, such as low-income individuals, recipients of public assistance, or those who are basic skills deficient.
 - **WIOA Dislocated Worker Program:**
 - Individuals who have been laid off, have received a layoff notice, or are part of a layoff due to plant closures or downsizing.
 - Self-employed individuals who are unemployed due to economic conditions or natural disasters.

- Displaced homemakers who are no longer supported by another family member and need to find employment.
2. **Core Services:**
 - **Career Services:** Job search and placement assistance, career counseling, and labor market information.
 - **Individualized Services:** Comprehensive assessments, development of individual employment plans (IEP), career planning, and case management.
 - **Training Services:** Occupational skills training, on-the-job training (OJT), incumbent worker training, and programs that combine workplace training with related instruction.
 3. **Support Services:**
 - **Transportation Assistance:** Help with transportation costs to attend training or job interviews.
 - **Childcare Assistance:** Support for childcare expenses to enable participation in training programs or job searches.
 - **Work-Related Tools and Clothing:** Assistance with purchasing uniforms, tools, or other necessary items for a job or training program.
 4. **Funding:**
 - **Individual Training Accounts (ITAs):** Vouchers that participants can use to pay for training programs at eligible training providers.
 - **Support for Training:** Financial assistance for tuition, books, supplies, and other training-related expenses.

Benefits of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

- **Improved Employment Opportunities:** Gain skills and credentials that are in demand by employers.
- **Comprehensive Support:** Receive a range of support services that address various barriers to employment.
- **Customized Assistance:** Benefit from personalized career planning and training tailored to individual needs.
- **Financial Aid for Training:** Access funding to cover the costs of training programs.

SkillUP is a program designed to provide training and employment services to help individuals gain the skills necessary to secure and maintain employment. It often targets those who are receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, though it can sometimes serve other populations as well. Here's an overview of what the SkillUP program typically entails:

Objectives

- **Increase Employment:** Help participants gain the skills and credentials needed to obtain gainful employment.

- **Reduce Dependency:** Decrease reliance on public assistance by improving participants' economic self-sufficiency.
- **Enhance Skills:** Provide training and education that align with local labor market demands.

Key Components

1. **Assessment and Planning:**
 - **Initial Assessment:** Determine the participant's current skills, educational background, work experience, and career interests.
 - **Individual Employment Plan (IEP):** Develop a personalized plan outlining the steps needed to achieve employment goals.
2. **Training and Education:**
 - **Vocational Training:** Provide training in specific trades or professions that are in demand in the local labor market.
 - **Basic Education:** Offer Adult Basic Education (ABE), literacy, and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses.
 - **Certification Programs:** Help participants earn industry-recognized credentials or certifications.
3. **Job Search Assistance:**
 - **Resume Writing:** Assistance with creating and improving resumes.
 - **Interview Preparation:** Training on how to prepare for and succeed in job interviews.
 - **Job Placement Services:** Connecting participants with potential employers and job opportunities.
4. **Support Services:**
 - **Childcare Assistance:** Help with finding and paying for childcare to allow participants to attend training or work.
 - **Transportation Assistance:** Providing or subsidizing transportation to ensure participants can attend training and job interviews.
 - **Work-Related Expenses:** Assistance with purchasing necessary work attire, tools, or equipment.
5. **Career Counseling and Case Management:**
 - **Ongoing Support:** Regular meetings with a case manager or career counselor to track progress and adjust the employment plan as needed.
 - **Problem-Solving:** Assistance with overcoming barriers to employment, such as housing issues, health concerns, or legal problems.

Target Population

- **SNAP Recipients:** Primarily targets individuals receiving SNAP benefits, although eligibility criteria may vary by location.
- **Low-Income Individuals:** Often extends services to low-income individuals who may not be receiving SNAP but still need employment assistance.

- **Disadvantaged Populations:** May also focus on groups with significant barriers to employment, such as those with disabilities, veterans, or previously incarcerated individuals.

Measuring Success

The success of SkillUP programs is often measured by:

- **Employment Rates:** The percentage of participants who gain employment after completing the program.
- **Earnings:** Increases in participants' wages and overall income.
- **Retention Rates:** How long participants stay employed after securing a job.
- **Skill Attainment:** The number of participants who complete training programs and earn credentials or certifications.

SkillUP aims to empower individuals by equipping them with the skills and resources necessary to achieve economic independence and improve their quality of life.