

**Individual Training Account (ITA) Policies – August 2020**

An adult or dislocated worker determined eligible for WIOA funded services may select a provider from the State ETPL after participating in career services and completing an Individual Employment Plan with guidance of a WIOA career advisor. Career Resource Center operators must consider and coordinate the availability of other sources of grants/financial aid to pay for training costs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), State-funded training (HOPE and Strategic Industry Workforce Development Grants (SIWDG)) and Federal Pell Grants so that WIOA funds supplement other sources of training grants. The following policies shall be utilized to establish local parameters for service. The ITA policies are to be implemented and followed by Career Resource Center staff and are also to be implemented and followed by Training Providers for WIOA participants.

**POLICIES:**

- (1) Training must be in occupations identified on the most recently published WorkSource Metro Atlanta Demand Occupations List. Occupations not included on the Demand Occupations List, with documentation of employment prospects and livable wage, may be considered on a case by case basis and must be approved by the Career Resource Center Manager.
- (2) Training must result in an employment wage sufficient to attain self-sufficiency without the aid of public assistance.
- (3) Training must be at full-time status (as defined by the institution) to accommodate existing Unemployment Insurance requirements. Exceptions to this policy may be approved, in writing, on a case-by-case basis.
- (4) Programs should not exceed 104 weeks (two years).

Applicants must be fully accepted into the specific occupational skills training program of their choice. Degree/certificate program may include courses from an approved core of general education (i.e., math and English) required for the degree/certificate. WIOA funding can be used for core classes in these cases. Prerequisites or developmental studies are not considered core and no WIOA funding will be provided. WIOA funding will be provided when the student has received formal acceptance into a career program.

Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis and requests should include evidence that financial support is available during extended training periods.

- (5) All training programs must be within a reasonable commute of the WIOA local area that may include out-of-the-area and out-of-state training institutions. Out-of-the-area training programs that are not within commuting distance to the WIOA local area may be approved on a case-by-case basis. All approved training must be located within the contiguous United States.
- (6) WIOA funds must be coordinated by Career Resource Center operators and training providers. Availability of other sources of grants to pay for training such as TANF, SNAP, state-funded training funds, HOPE and Pell must be considered so that WIOA funds supplement other

## ARWDB POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

sources of training funds. A WIOA participant may enroll in WIOA-funded training while his/her application for Pell Grant is pending if the Career Resource Center operator has made arrangements with the training provider and the WIOA participant regarding allocation of the Pell Grant. Career Advisors should assist in developing a financial plan to cover total costs of training including scholarships and grants. The ARWDB enrollment agreement should detail all loans or personal funds that are included to cover the total costs of training as a means of cost analysis. If it is determined through the analysis of the cost of attendance that the total cost of attending training exceeds the amount available through HOPE and WIOA funding, then Pell funds may be utilized by the participant for living and other appropriate personal expenses during the training period.

- (7) WIOA funding may be provided for college level and post baccalaureate instruction only if all the following conditions have been met:
  - (a) The customer must be accepted into a certificate or degree program, and the course of study must be occupation-specific (i.e., radiological technician, accounting, STEM teacher certification), or the customer is a Registered Nurse seeking a graduate degree in Nursing to fill a vacant instructor position at a university or technical college. No funds shall be provided for general academic programs (i.e. general academic studies, Bachelor of Business Administration, Bachelor of Art, etc.)
  - (b) Total course of study will take no longer than 104 weeks (2 years) to complete and be a certificate, diploma or degree program. Extended critical industry shortage curricula will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.
  - (c) The customer must demonstrate that he/she has the financial resources to attend long-term training.
- (8) Continuing Education and other similar courses will be approved if the following conditions apply:
  - (a) The customer must have a specific occupational goal.
  - (b) The customer must present evidence describing how the proposed training will increase his/her employment marketability.
- (9) ITAs may be utilized for expenses related to training, including but not limited to the following: books, tuition and fees, supplies, tools, uniforms and shoes, certification, licensing, testing fees, drug testing and background testing for entrance into training, medical requirements for training entrance, and such items as specifically required for a course or program.

The following items **are not provided** by ITAs: computers, computer equipment, computer program software, peripherals, and electronic and wireless equipment ***unless approved on a case-by-case basis by ARC/ARWDB.***

## ARWDB POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- (10) ITAs will not be used for payment of late fees caused by customer error or delay. The customer will be responsible for these fees, as he/she is responsible for other fines or penalties.
- (11) Training limitations follows:
- (a) Up to **\$7,000** in training costs, excluding support, may be expended for each participant for up to one year of training. One year is defined as up to 52 calendar weeks from the initial start date of training. The limit of \$7,000 will apply in circumstances where training is designed to be completed in 52 weeks or less, even if the customer is unable to complete training under the usual program training schedule.
  - (b) Up to **\$10,000** in training costs, excluding support, may be expended for each participant for up to two years of training. No more than \$7,000 will be provided towards training costs during any one 52 calendar week period as noted above.
  - (c) Participants that have previously completed or applied for WIOA Funded Training can apply and receive training if they meet one of the following provisions:

### **i. Next Step in Your Career Pathway**

If a participant is looking to advance in their current industry and additional training is needed to move to the next level, they can re-apply for WIOA funded training. In addition to WIOA funded training, the participant may be asked to explore workplace tuition reimbursement programs or other training resources. To qualify under the “Next Step in Your Career Pathway” provision, it must be at least two years since they have successfully exited out of the program and the participant must have obtained and been continually employed in training related industry. This policy does not apply to incumbent worker training.

### **ii. Declining Occupation**

If the training was in an occupation where there is declining opportunity or in an industry that is no longer experiencing growth (resulting in a lack of opportunities to experience income growth), the participant can re-apply for WIOA funded training. To qualify under the “Declining Occupation ” provision, it must be at least two years since the participant successfully exited the program, and they must have obtained training related employment and are able to show how this additional training will help increase their income opportunity.

### **COVID Declining Occupation**

If the participant is in an occupation that is declining due to COVID-19, there is not a two-year waiting period to attend training to enter a new industry. Examples of COVID Declining Occupations can be: Hospitality and Manufacturing.

### iii. Extenuating Circumstances

If the participant was unable to complete training due to an extenuating circumstance (school closure, incarceration or judges' orders to work, eviction, child support mandates, care for an ill family member, death in the family, medical illness etc.) then they may be able to reapply for WIOA funded training. To qualify under the "Extenuating Circumstances" provision, it must be at least one year since they withdrew from the program, they must have provided information to their career advisor prior to program withdrawal (Career Advisors must accurately document in case notes), and the extenuating circumstances must be resolved or they must provide documentation or an explanation of the "Extenuating Circumstance" with their eligibility documents and the extenuating circumstances must be resolved.

If these scenarios do not, in most instances the participant will not be able to reapply for WIOA Funded Training, but we encourage that they speak with career center staff as some exceptions may be made. If WIOA Funded Training is not an available option, the participant will still be able to utilize the different services at the Career Resource Center.

**Other Local Workforce Boards may have different training limitation policies.**