

TRANSMITTAL # 3

MEMORANDUM

May 4, 2006

TO: WIA Committee
Workforce Development Council

FROM: Roger B. Madsen, Director

SUBJECT: Statewide Service Policies for Program Year 2006

ACTION REQUESTED: Recommend Approval of Statewide Service Policies

BACKGROUND:

The Workforce Development Council (WDC) elected to utilize existing WIA local plans for Program Year 2005 in order to facilitate the transition to a single, statewide planning structure. Effective July 1, 2006, the regional WIA plans, which give service providers guidance on WIA program implementation, will no longer be in effect. The WDC agreed to review existing service policies for implementation in Program Year 2006 and develop statewide policy direction for use by all WIA service providers.

Idaho Commerce & Labor requested comments from 33 WIA service providers which resulted in the following recommendations:

1. Adding limited English proficiency, family history of chronic employment and underemployed to Youth Barrier Groups
2. Increasing Incentive and Bonus payments to one \$100 payment at the completion of a General Equivalency Diploma (GED)
3. Increasing Incentive and Bonus payments to \$100 for each area in literacy and numeracy where an increase of one or more educational functional levels is demonstrated
4. Retaining Incentive and Bonus payments at \$70 for high school credit and GED (three responses)
5. Increasing Incentive and Bonus payments to \$60
6. Allowing for Incentive and Bonus payments to include completion of Tech-Prep courses
7. Increasing work experience limitation to 640 hours
8. Retaining Needs Related Payments as an Option (four responses)
9. Making Cash Advance and Relocation Assistance policy for WIA the same as the Trade Adjustment Assistance program's policy

10. Providing waiver conditions for out of area job search and relocation to provide more monetary support
11. Retaining monetary limitation for Individual Training Accounts

The attachment proposes several policy recommendations to achieve uniformity and meet various needs expressed throughout the state.

Attachment

I. Residency

An individual must comply with local residency requirements, if any, to be eligible to receive adult, dislocated worker, or youth services under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act.

Policy Recommendation: WIA services will be limited to residents of the State of Idaho for all programs.

II. Priority

The Workforce Investment Act states that in the event funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are limited, priority shall be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals for intensive services and training services. Further, the Act indicates the appropriate local board and the Governor shall direct the one-stop operators in the local area with regard to making determinations related to such priority.

Based on the recommendation of the WDC, the state has determined that sufficient Temporary Assistance for Families in Idaho (TAFI)/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds exist statewide to serve public assistance recipients. Subrecipients are therefore relieved of the requirement to provide priority to this population.

Policy Recommendation: Priority will be given to adults who meet the general eligibility criteria requirements (18 years of age or older, comply with selective service registration requirements and comply with residency requirements) and are low income.

III. Participant follow-up

The Workforce Investment Act requires that Title I Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker participants receive follow-up services for not less than 12 months. The requirements for each program follow:

- Adults and dislocated workers who are placed in unsubsidized employment must receive follow-up services for a minimum of 12 months after the first date of employment.
- All youth participants must receive some form of follow-up for a minimum of 12 months.

Policy Recommendation: For the duration of the 12-month follow-up period, a minimum of one contact with each exiter is required per quarter. Appropriate supportive services are allowable during the follow-up period.

IV. Work Experience Activity

Work Experience is a short-term or part-time planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a public, private for-profit or non-profit workplace for a limited period of time, generally not exceeding 520 hours. Work Experience is for participants who need assistance in becoming accustomed to basic work requirements. It should promote the development of good work habits and basic work skills. Work Experience is available to youth and adults and on rare occasions may be appropriate for dislocated workers.

Policy Recommendation: The participation hours for this activity are limited to ensure participants are engaged in learning basic work maturity skills such as attendance, following directions, appropriate

attire as opposed to occupational skill training. To ensure the intent of the activity, it is recommended the work experience policy read as follows:

Work Experience activities take place in a public, private for-profit or non-profit workplace for a limited period of time, generally not exceeding 520 hours. All participants enrolled in the Work Experience activity are to receive an hourly wage equivalent to the federal minimum wage. Participants are provided with Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) and Worker's Compensation coverage while participating in this activity.

V. Internship Activity

Internship is a short-term or part-time work assignment with a private for-profit, non-profit, or public employer designed to enhance skills learned in a classroom setting, and to provide the opportunity for the application of these learned skills.

Policy Recommendation: All participants enrolled in the Internship activity are to receive an hourly wage at least equivalent to the federal minimum wage. The wage may be higher depending on the participant's prior training/work experience, and the hourly wage offered at the worksite to individuals with comparable training/work experience.

VI. Out of Area Job Search Activity Limitations and Associated Cash Advance

Out of Area Job Search

This service is designed to assist adults and dislocated workers in seeking employment in areas outside of their normal commuting distance. Case managers may authorize multiple job searches for a single client.

Policy Recommendation: Each out of area job search is limited to 90% of actual costs up to \$600.

Out of Area Job Search Cash Advance

Policy Recommendation: A job search cash advance is limited to 50% of estimated costs not to exceed \$300.

VII. Relocation Assistance Activity Limitations and Associated Cash Advance

Relocation

Relocation assistance is designed to enable participants to receive financial assistance toward the cost of relocating themselves and their family to a labor market outside of their normal commuting distance.

Policy Recommendation: Relocation assistance is limited to 90% of allowable and actual costs not to exceed \$2,000.

Relocation Cash Advance

Policy Recommendation: A cash advance for relocation is limited to 50% of the estimated costs for the trip, or \$750, whichever is lower.

VIII. Individual Training Account (ITA)

The ITA is established on behalf of an adult or dislocated worker participant when purchasing any occupational training services (tuition and books.), from an eligible training provider selected in consultation with the case manager from the State-maintained WIA Eligible Training Provider list.

Policy Recommendation: Remove monetary limitations, ensuring that each ITA cost is reasonable and necessary. Case managers will continue to adhere to the WIA requirement to coordinate available training funds where possible.

IX. Needs-Related Payments

Needs-related payments are payments that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in training services for adults and dislocated workers.

Policy Recommendation: Because of declining funds in WIA, it is recommended that the needs-related payment option be eliminated.

X. Incentives and Bonuses

Incentive and Bonus payments are payments that are based on a participant's attendance and/or performance in accordance with a locally developed formula or procedure. Current regional policies are as follows:

Policy Recommendation: A participant may receive a bonus or incentive from only one of the five groups listed below in a program year.

The Administrative Entity may approve incentives for special programs for youth with special circumstances.

1. \$50 will be offered to a youth participant as an incentive for each high school (core) credit earned with a minimum grade of a C (2.0 grade point average) as a result of WIA intervention. Cumulative payment of this incentive will be applied toward the participant's core classes, which are defined as English (including speech), mathematics, science (physical/biological) and social studies. Local school district policies regarding attendance requirements for awarding of incentive will be followed. A maximum of \$300 per program year may be applied toward this incentive.
2. \$50 will be offered to youth and participants as an incentive for each GED section passed during participation in the WIA Youth Program. Participants will participate in training and receive the accumulated incentive once competency is attained.
3. \$50 will be offered as an incentive to out-of-school, basic skills deficient youth for each area – literacy and numeracy – in which they demonstrate an increase of one or more educational functioning levels based on their pre- and post-test scores. This incentive fund will be issued upon receipt of participant's post-test scores noting the increase in educational functional levels.
4. As an incentive to participate in the initial assessment (pre-test) necessary to meet the Literacy and Numeracy measure, \$20 will be offered as an incentive to youth who are out-of-school and basic skills deficient. This incentive will be paid upon receipt of the participant's scores from their pre-test.

5. Incentives may be awarded to project-based programs for at-risk youth. Payments will be based on attendance and performance criteria. Specific requirements must be included in the Service Provider Agreement.

XI. Youth Barrier Group's "Requires Additional Assistance" and 5% Exceptions (Window)

Youth Barrier Groups

An eligible youth is defined, under WIA sec. 101(13), as an individual who:

- A. Is age 14 through 21;
- B. Is a low income individual, as defined in the WIA section 101(25); and
- C. Is within one or more of the following categories:
 1. Deficient in basic literacy skills;
 2. School dropout;
 3. Homeless, runaway or foster child;
 4. Pregnant or parenting;
 5. Offender; or
 6. Is an individual (including a youth with a disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment. (WIA sec. 101(13).)

Definitions and eligibility documentation requirements regarding the "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment" criterion of Sec. 664.200(c)(6) may be established at the State or local level. In cases where the State Board of Education establishes State policy on this criterion, the policy must be included in the State Plan. (WIA sec. 101(13)(C)(iv).)

Policy Recommendation:

Youth Barrier Group's "requires additional assistance..."

The State defines "Is an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment" as follows:

1. Has repeated at least one secondary grade level or is one or more grade levels behind age-appropriate level
2. Has a core GPA of less than 1.5 or is a postsecondary student deemed by a school official to be on academic probation
3. Is at least two semester credits behind the rate required to graduate from high school for each year of secondary education
4. Is an individual who does not speak English as their primary language and who has a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English
5. Has a family history of chronic unemployment (during the two years prior to application, family members were unemployed longer than employed)
6. Is an emancipated youth
7. Is a current or previous dropout or is deemed at risk of dropping out of school by a school official
8. Has been suspended two or more times from school or has been expelled
9. Has been referred to or is being treated by an agency for depression or a substance abuse-related problem
10. Has experienced a recent traumatic event (within two years of application), is a victim of abuse, or resides in an abusive environment as documented by a school official or professional

