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*To:* Workforce Development Board Executive Directors, Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Program Managers and Leads, and WIA Youth Service Providers

*From:* Jane Pawasarat, Bureau Director  
Bureau of Workforce Training

*Subject:* **Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Policy Update 04-06, Change 1: Younger Youth Skill Attainment**

### **Purpose**

The intent of this WIA youth policy update is to further clarify the setting and recording of younger youth skill attainment goals as well as providing guidance to local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), WIA youth program managers and leads, case managers and youth service providers on the following:

- Objective assessment;
- Development of appropriate, well-written, younger youth skill attainment goals;
- Documentation to verify accomplishment of younger youth skill attainment goals; and
- Recording younger youth skill attainment goals in Automated System Support for Employment and Training (ASSET).

### **Legislative, Regulatory and Policy References**

- WIA 1998 Public Law 105-220, section 129(c)(1)(B);
- WIA Federal Rules and Regulations, section 664.405(a)(2);
- WIA Federal Rules and Regulations, section 666.100(a)(3)(i)(A);
- United States (US) Department of Labor (DOL)/Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 3-99, pages 4, 5, 15, 20, 21, 22, 23;
- US DOL/ETA TEGL 7-99, pages 21-23;
- US DOL/ETA TEGL 9-00, pages 4-5;
- US DOL/ETA TEGL 18-00, page 9;
- US DOL/ETA TEGL 28-01, pages 4-5;
- Department of Workforce Development (DWD)/Division of Employment and Training (DET) WIA Policy Manual (August 2012);
- DWD/DET ASSET User's Guide, Chapter 3-5, pages 1-7;
- DWD/DET ASSET User's Guide, Chapter 5-6, pages 1-3; and
- DWD/DET WIA Title 1B Youth Program Guide to Participant Case File Documentation (August 2011).

## **Background**

WIA Public Law 105-220, section 129(c)(1)(A) requires local WIA youth programs to provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skills levels, and service needs of each registered youth 14 – 21 years old. The assessment shall include 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.

WIA Public Law 105-220, section 129(c)(1)(B) requires local WIA youth programs to develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for each registered youth 14 – 21 years old that identifies an employment goal (including, in appropriate circumstances, nontraditional employment), appropriate achievement objectives and appropriate services based on the objective assessment of academic levels, skill levels and service needs. The ISS is developed with input from the youth participant as well as their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) if available. The ISS should be updated on a regular basis as the participant achieves the goals that are set.

## **Policy Guidance**

At a minimum, one skill attainment goal must be recorded in ASSET and included in the participants ISS for all WIA youth participants ages 14 – 18. Additional skill attainment goals may be set at the local boards' discretion. These goals must be based on the objective assessment and include basic, occupational and work readiness goals. The goals must be attained no later than one year from the date they were set.

It is not required to set skill attainments goals for WIA youth participants, ages 19 – 21, but it is strongly encouraged.

- All WIA youth participants, ages 14 – 18, including in-school and out-of-school, who are determined basic skills deficient (defined as an individual who has English reading, writing, or computing skills at the 8.9 or below grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or a comparable score on a criterion-referenced test) are required to have a basic skills goal recorded in ASSET and included in their ISS annually.
- All WIA youth participants, ages 14 – 18, including in-school and out-of-school, who are not basic skills deficient and therefore do not have a basic skills goal set, are required to have a work readiness or an occupational skills goal recorded in ASSET and included in their ISS annually.
- To improve youth skill attainment, the goals set for the participant should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely. The importance of setting these goals is so the participant may experience success in a short period of time.
- WDBs need to provide documentation to demonstrate whether a youth has met the skill attainment goal(s) recorded in ASSET and included in their ISS. The service(s) the youth received to assist them in attaining the goal(s) and how a determination was made as to whether the goal was successfully attained or not attained is required to be documented in ASSET and/or the participant's case file. In ASSET, these can be documented in Manage Employability Plan comment section, Manage Services comment section, or Manage Customer Notes. If the information is not fully documented in ASSET then it must be documented in the participant's case file. Acceptable documentation includes test records, transcripts, certificates, diplomas, verification from school or employer, and/or case notes.
- WDBs must record attained and unattained skill attainment goals under the Manage Employability Plan/Youth Skill Attainment screen in ASSET. The attained goals are recorded in the quarter they are achieved. The unattained goals are recorded one-year from the time the goal was set.

**(See Attachment A on assessment and effective goal-setting).**

## Action Required

- WDBs should review with WIA youth staff, case managers and youth service providers the objective assessment process and the various types, both formal and informal, of assessment tools that may be used to assess youth objectively.
- WDBs should review, with WIA staff, case managers and service providers, definitions pertaining to younger youth skill attainment that are contained in WIA Public Law 105-220 section 101, US DOL/ETA rules and regulations and US DOL/ETA TEGLs.
- WDBs should provide technical assistance and training to WIA youth staff, case managers and youth service providers on developing and writing clear, well defined, measurable and attainable younger youth skill attainment goals. In addition, WDBs should provide technical assistance and training on how to record short and long-term skill attainment goals under the ASSET Manage Employability Plan/Youth Skill Attainment screen.
- WDBs should develop policies and procedures, including monitoring procedures, to ensure appropriate documentation is provided in case files that verify the skill attainment goals listed in the ISS have been attained.

## Automated System Support for Employment and Training (ASSET) Reporting

Reporting Younger Youth Skill Attainment Goals:

1. Select Manage Employability Plan;
2. Select Add Youth Skill Attainment;
3. Select Goal Type;
4. Type Goal in Space Provided;
5. Select No for "Performance Related Goal";
6. Select Contract ID;
7. Select or Modify Goal Attainment Status;
8. Enter Goal Set Date;
9. Enter Planned Date of Attainment (no more than one year from date set); and
10. Enter Comments if appropriate.

**Note:** When the anniversary date of a goal is reached the Goal Attainment Status under Manage Employability Plan/Youth Skill Attainment in ASSET should be changed. If the goal attainment status is attained then record the date in Actual Date of Attainment found under Manage Employability Plan/Youth Skill Attainment.

## Questions and Technical Assistance

If you have any questions or need additional information regarding this policy please feel free to contact the Local Program Liaison (LPL) assigned to your area.

## Attachment A

Information on goal-setting and examples of appropriate, well-written, younger youth, basic, occupational and work readiness skills goals.

## Note:

This policy update is located at the following link:

<http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwdwia/policy.htm>

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **I. Goal Setting Starts at Assessment**

Assessment is the foundation of good planning for youth services. Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Public Law 105-220, section 129(c)(1)(A) requires Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) to provide an objective assessment of the academic levels, skill levels and service needs of each registered youth. Assessment shall include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs and developmental needs of each participant.

Assessment strategies should include both formal and informal assessment tools. Formal assessments should include some type of standardized procedure, such as a written test or a performance-based assessment with a standardized scoring method. The formal assessments used shall include 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. Informal assessment tools are subjective and address different characteristics than the formal assessment tools. Informal assessments are less threatening and are generally more enjoyable activities for young people; however, they require more time to administer, and demand thoughtful interpretations.

The objective assessment of basic, occupational and work readiness skills may include the following:

- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in written materials;
- Ability to solve complex problems where hypotheses must be formed and tested, make decisions and think creatively;
- Reliability, a positive attitude, a willingness to work hard and self confidence;
- Effective management of time, money, materials, space and other resources;
- Ability to work in teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate and work well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds;
- Ability to perform basic computer tasks, such as word processing, manipulating data, using a spreadsheet or database program and accessing information from the Internet;
- Ability to understand social, organizational and technical systems and design or improve systems; ability to monitor and correct performance; and
- Ability to select equipment and tools, apply technology to specific tasks and maintain and troubleshoot equipment.

### **II. Effective Goal-Setting Components**

- Thorough review of the information obtained from the objective assessment;
- Participant must be actively involved in the goal-setting process from the very start;
- Participant feels ownership for their goals;
- Mutual agreement is vital; and
- Goals are achievable, clear and well-defined, measurable, realistic, quantifiable, and success-oriented.

Goals identified through the objective assessment process may be categorized in a number of ways. Each type of goal identified is equally important to the development, effectiveness and the overall performance of the program for the participant. Goals should lay the groundwork for completing secondary school, preparing the participant for post-secondary educational opportunities and unsubsidized employment, and becoming a responsible caring adult.

### III. Goal Types

There are two types of goals identified in WIA for younger youth. These are goals set that are personal in nature for the participant and goals set for skill attainment.

**A. Personal Goals:** Goals set that are personal in nature for the participant include:

1. Categories of Personal Goals

- a. Personal goals;
- b. Employment goals;
- c. Career goals; and
- d. Educational goals.

Personal Goal: These are goals a youth may set for themselves. They may be specific to the youth or to the youth's family.

An example of a personal goal is: **John will volunteer at a homeless shelter.**

Employment Goal: These are goals a youth may set in terms of a specific job or a particular field.

An example of an employment goal is: **Betsy would like to find a job in the Tourism Industry.**

Career Goal: These are goals a youth may set in terms of what they want to do when they finish their formal education.

An example of a career goal is: **Ashley wants a Career in the Health Care Industry.**

Education Goal: These goals relate to academic achievement, as well as developing life-long learning skills important for success.

An example of an education goal is: **Jane wants to get her Masters Degree in Biology.**

**B. Skill Attainment Goals:**

One of the core indicators of success for younger youth is setting and attaining skill attainment goals. These goals must relate to basic skills, occupational skills or work readiness skills. Skill attainment goals must be based on results obtained during the objective assessment. If a younger youth age 14 – 18, including in-school and out-of-school, is basic skills deficient the youth must have, at a minimum, one basic skills goal set in their ISS annually. If a younger youth age 14 – 18, including in-school and

out-of-school, is not basic skills deficient they must have, at a minimum, one work readiness and/or occupational skills goal set in their ISS annually. Additional skill attainment goals may be set at the discretion of the WDB.

A target date for accomplishing each skill attainment goal must be set. The target date must be no later than one year from the date the goal is set. Progress toward these goals should be continuously assessed. Once a goal has been attained, a subsequent goal should be set.

Skill attainment goals may be classified as short or long-term goals for reporting purposes. Short-term goals are a series of incremental, interim, measurable milestones and action steps that enable the young person to succeed annually. The goals are used to determine if actual progress is being made toward the participant's established goals in the Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

Short-term goals are linked to skill attainment in the areas of basic skills, occupational skills and work readiness and must be attained within one year from the date set to be counted as a positive result. Short-term goals can be attained in a shorter period of time, such as two or three months. The goals should be reassessed and updated as the participant moves through the program.

Long-term skill attainment goals must relate to the short-term goals set for the youth. The goals are set around educational attainment, placement in employment, education and/or training. Long-term goals are more exit-oriented and address desirable outcomes that set the criteria for deciding when the participant needs no additional services, other than follow-up. A series of short-term goals should lead to attainment of long-term goals.

## **1. Categories of Skill Attainment Goals**

- a. Basic skills goal;
- b. Occupational skills goal; and
- c. Work readiness skills goal.

### **Basic Skills Goals:**

Basic skills goals are set to reflect a measurable increase in basic education skills, including reading, comprehension, math computation, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, reasoning and the capacity to use these skills.

### **Occupational Skills Goals:**

Occupational skills goals measure growth in either of two types of occupational skills.

1. Primary occupational skills encompass the proficiency to perform actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate or advanced levels.
2. Secondary occupational skills entail familiarity with and use of set-up procedures, safety measures, work-related terminology, record keeping and paperwork, formats, tools,

equipment and breakdown and clean-up routines.

Work Readiness Skills Goals: Work readiness skills goals include the world-of-work awareness and the following:

1. Positive work habits, attitudes and behaviors, i.e., punctuality, regular attendance, getting along with others, presenting a neat appearance, exhibiting good conduct, following directions and completing tasks, accepting constructive criticism from supervisors and co-workers, showing initiative and reliability and assuming the responsibilities involved in maintaining a job;
2. Developing motivation and adaptability;
3. Obtaining effective coping and problem-solving skills;
4. Acquiring an improved self-image;
5. Labor market knowledge;
6. Occupational information;
7. Job search techniques (resume writing, interviewing skills, filling out job applications and follow-up letters); and
8. Career planning and decision making.

#### **IV. Reporting Goals in ASSET**

Sound case management and service provision should include planning through short and long term goal setting. Case managers share responsibility for good participant reporting practices and the benefits of an ISS that integrates both short and long-term goals. All skill attainment goals must be recorded in ASSET under Manage Employability Plan/Youth Skill Attainment.

### Examples of Short and Long-Term Goals Linked to Skill Attainment

Short-Term Basic Skills Goals	Long-Term Basic Skills Goals
Increase one grade level in Math	Receive high school equivalency diploma (HSED)
Increase English proficiency by successfully completing two English courses	Receive General Education Degree (GED)
Successfully complete all course requirements to obtain a high school diploma	Receive four-year college degree
Return to high school and successfully complete Senior year	Receive high school diploma
Successfully complete one-week workshop in Financial Literacy	Receive associate degree in Banking
Successfully complete 6 week writing course	Receive four-year college degree in English
Improve speaking skills	Receive four-year degree in Teaching
Master multiplication tables through 9 x 9	Compete in state Math Contest
Short-Term Occupational Skills Goals	Long-Term Occupational Skills Goals
Successfully complete pre-apprenticeship training	Successfully complete apprenticeship program in plumbing
Successfully complete three health classes	Successfully complete state certified Co-op in health care education
Successfully complete certified nursing assistant classes	Receive associate degree in Nursing
Successfully complete certified baby sitting class	Successfully obtain license to operate a child care facility
Successfully complete carpentry classes	Obtain a job in housing industry
Successfully complete workshops on repairing small engines	Open business repairing small engines
Learn work-related terminology for the Heat and Air Conditioning Industry	Obtain a job at a heat and air conditioning business
Short-Term Work Readiness Skills Goals	Long-Term Work Readiness Skills Goals
Learn to create and use spread sheets	Successfully pass the Certified Public Accountant exam
Attend a workshop on safety procedures in the workplace	Write a safety procedures manual
Obtain skills in operating a chop saw	Receive associate degree in wood working
Obtains drivers license	Successfully complete training to obtain a commercial driving license
Increase teamwork skills through participating on a softball team every Tuesday and Wednesday nights	Pass test to be certified as an umpire
Arrive for work on time.	Arrive for work on time for 20 consecutive days
Attend classes on coping skills	Manage stress in a positive, healthy way
Successfully resolve a problem with lack of dependable transportation	Purchase a car