

OREGON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

Policy – Hard to Serve Populations: Exception to Individual Training Account

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the criteria by which an exception can be made in limited circumstances to the use of an Individual Training Account in order to serve hard-to-serve populations.

Background

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) specifies that local boards provide training services through an Individual Training Account (ITA) system except under certain limited circumstances. One of those circumstances, in WIA Sec. 134(4)(G)(ii), is:

the local board determines that there is a training services program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the local area by a community-based organization or another private organization to serve special participant populations that face multiple barriers to employment.

In addition, WIA 134(4)(G)(iv) states:

- (i) Definition.--In this subparagraph, the term "special participant population that faces multiple barriers to employment" means a population of low-income individuals that is included in one or more of the following categories:
 - (I) Individuals with substantial language or cultural barriers.
 - (II) Offenders.
 - (III) Homeless individuals.
 - (IV) *Other hard-to-serve populations as defined by the Governor involved.*

As noted above, the WIA allows local boards to offer certain training services pursuant to a contract for services in lieu of an ITA if the local board finds there is an effective local program that can serve "special participant populations" that face multiple barriers to employment. It is important to note that this exception will only be used in limited circumstances and should not be used to circumvent the intent of the WIA, which is to encourage customer choice.

The Service delivery Task Force recommended to include in the state board's recommendations to the Governor the following definition of "hard-to-serve populations":

- Individuals with disabilities, including learning disabilities,
- Individuals with substance abuse issues,
- Individuals with mental health issues, and
- Individuals who are victims of domestic violence.

The Stakeholders' Group agreed with the categories listed in the definition but decided that the local boards should have discretion to add other categories under the "hard to serve" population definition. The group also discussed the fact it was important to recognize that these exceptions will only be made after a professional case manager has identified that an individual may face one of these issues when the person is receiving case management services or other intensive services. The case manager has the resources available to send the person for an assessment if necessary to see if one of the barriers listed in the policy would prevent the individual from successfully completing training without integrating some additional component into the training to address the barrier. If an assessment indicates that the barrier is significant, then contracted services may be offered if the local board has followed the procedures outlined in the WIA.

Policy

This policy is only applicable to relating to use of contracts in lieu of training accounts for populations facing multiple employment barriers. If one of these barriers impairs the individual's ability to successfully complete training without addressing the barrier, then the local board may serve the following populations through a contract for service in lieu of an individual training account:

- Individuals with substantial disabilities, including learning disabilities
- Individuals with substantial substance abuse issues
- Individuals with substantial mental health issues
- Individuals who are victims of domestic violence; and
- Individuals in others categories approved by the local board.

Approved by:	Annette Talbott, Workforce Policy Coordinator
Date:	
Effective Date:	March 17, 2000

This policy will remain in effect until amended or rescinded by the Oregon Workforce Investment Board.