



Tompkins County Workforce Development Board WIOA Youth Work Experience Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define eligibility, assignment, documentation, duration, and salary for Work Experiences assigned to youth enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program. Work Experiences can be paid or unpaid and are assigned to help job-ready youth learn soft skills such as attendance, teamwork, initiative, etc., as well as job related skills they can use to progress towards their career goals.

Background

At least 20% of the program year's Youth Fund (net of Admin portion) must be spent in Youth Work Experience as set by WIOA Section 129 (c)(4). Allowable Work Experience expenses include the following (per TEGL 8-15):

- Wages and Stipends paid for participation in a work experience;
- Staff time working to identify and develop a work experience opportunity, including staff time spent working with employers to identify and develop a work experience opportunity;
- Staff time working with employers to ensure a successful work experience, including staff time spent managing the work experience;
- Staff time spent evaluating the work experience;
- Participant work experience orientation sessions;
- Employer work experience orientation sessions;
- Classroom training or the required academic education component directly related to the work experience;
- Incentive payments directly tied to the completion of the work experience; and
- Employability skills/job readiness training to prepare youth for a work experience.

All other expenses not defined as above will not be allowable work experience expenses. Supportive services are a separate program element and cannot be counted toward the work experience expenditure requirement even if the supportive services assist the youth in participating in the work experience (per TEGL 21-16).

Policy

Eligibility:

All youth assessed as eligible youth under WIOA Section 129(a)(1) and enrolled in the WIOA Youth program will be eligible for Youth Work Experience. Youth are

required to develop a **career pathway** before beginning a **Work Experience**. If a youth is unsure of their career goal(s), they should complete further career exploration through Career Zone, O*Net Interest Profiler, use of Labor Market Information, etc. and/or through Job Shadow experience(s) before beginning a Work Experience.

*Note: Job Shadows can be completed in a couple of hours to a couple of days to expose youth to different careers they are interested in but are not sure that they want to pursue. Job Shadows are **unpaid**, and youth can complete as many as necessary to determine their career pathway.*

A youth's career pathway should be clearly defined in their **Individual Service Strategy (ISS)** before beginning a Work Experience.

Definition of the Work Experience:

According to the Federal Register Vol 81, no. 161-681.600, Work Experiences:

- Are a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time.
- May be paid or unpaid, as appropriate.
- May take place in the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector.
- Provide the youth participant with opportunities for career exploration and skill development.
- Must include academic and occupational education. The educational component may occur concurrently or sequentially with the work experience. Further academic and occupational education may occur inside or outside the workplace.

Labor Standards:

Labor Standards apply in any Work Experience where an employee/employer relationship, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act or applicable State law, exists. Funds provided for work experiences may not be used to directly or indirectly aid in the filling of a job opening that is vacant because the former occupant is on strike or is being locked out in the course of a labor dispute, or the filling of which is otherwise an issue in a labor dispute involving a work stoppage.

Types of Work Experience:

Work experiences are meant to be short-term, planned, structured job-related learning experiences. The types of Work Experience for eligible youth include the following categories:

1. Summer Employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
2. Pre-apprenticeship programs;
3. Internships and job shadowing; and
4. On-the-job training (OJT) opportunities as defined in WIOA sec. 3(44) and in §680.700 of the same chapter.

Reasons for Work Experience:

1. Assessment (determine youth's readiness, skills needed, interests, etc.) *Note: Work Experience(s) for assessment purposes should be brief (i.e. job shadow, career exploration) and may occur as often as needed. It is recommended that a single Work*

Experience for assessment purposes last no longer than 4 weeks maximum.

2. Skill Gain (i.e. soft or hard skills needed for the youth's identified career pathway)
3. Reference Gain (i.e. development of work history)
4. Potential for **unsubsidized** employment/hire upon completion of the Work Experience

Duration of the Work Experience:

As Work Experience are meant to be short-term, planned, structured job-related learning experiences, there will be a maximum hour limit set for a youth's lifetime. This should be clearly communicated with the youth and with the worksites before a work experience begins. The TCWDB has set local limit that each youth is allotted **up to a total of 480 hours (i.e. 12 weeks of full time work) of paid Work Experience** during their enrollment in the WIOA youth program **provided funding is available**. *Note: Any unpaid work experiences such as job shadowing does not detract from the 480 hours.*

Administrative Override:

There may be instances where a youth will need more than 480 hours of **paid** work experience support (i.e. youth with disabilities requiring extensive job coaching). Staff must submit thorough documentation of support for why additional hours are needed for this youth, with a timeline for how many additional hours are needed, not to be extended "indefinitely". The purpose of the work experience is to transition to unsubsidized work; therefore, a detailed plan of transition must be in place for any youth determined to need an extension of hours. The use of an Administrative Override is pending on funding availability, to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Education/Training Component:

At least one **education/training component** must be incorporated into the Work Experience as defined in TEGl 21-16: "workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills training are to be taught within the same time frame and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway". Therefore, the **education/training** component(s) should:

- directly relate to the Work Experience and assist the youth with their career goals;
- be clearly defined in the youth's ISS **before** the youth starts a Work Experience;
- occur inside or outside the workplace; and
- occur either concurrently or sequentially with the Work Experience.

In keeping with best practice regarding youth development and learning theory, it is recommended that the education/training component **occur concurrently** with the Work Experience and **occur inside the workplace**.

Note: HSE Classes and general Work Readiness Workshops can not count as the education/training component unless it specifically relates the work experience/needs of the youth to obtain their career goal(s) and is documented as such in the youth's ISS and in OSOS Comments.

Fiscal Management:

Youth will earn at least the NYS minimum wage and agreed amount in contract.

Youth counselors are responsible for collecting youth's timesheets, submitting to their fiscal departments, and putting a copy of the timesheet in the youth's paper file. Each youth counselor's fiscal department will control payroll and produce checks, and the youth counselor is responsible for delivering checks to youth.

WIOA Youth priority on Work Experience: WIOA places a priority on providing valuable work experiences to youth and has set a **20% minimum budget expenditure** to go towards the Work Experience. Youth counselors should communicate with their fiscal department and/or direct Supervisor to track if they are spending **at least 20% of their budget on Work Experience**, and to make sure they know how much money is left to spend on Work Experience throughout the fiscal year. TEGL 23-14 states that this **20% minimum** is calculated based on *overall* non-administrative local area youth funds and is not applied separately for In School Youth (ISY) and Out of School Youth (OSY).

Procedure

1. Assess eligibility of youth under WIOA Section 129(a)(1). Once eligibility in the WIOA Youth program is established, all youth must complete:

- an Objective Assessment (following TCWDB Objective Assessment Policy guidelines); and
- an ISS which clearly outlines a youths' career pathway (if career pathway is unknown, refer to Eligibility section above for career exploration options).

2. Staff must **document** the assignment of a Work Experience in OSOS as a Service provided (use Achievement Objective tab in the Customer Module, Services Window, Services Tab), and further document in OSOS Comments the Work Experience location, **start date**, job duties, education/training component, correlation with career pathway, progress and **end date**. Any updates to the youth's ISS should be updated in OSOS as well. *For further directive, staff should please refer to the "411 on WIOA Title I Youth Program Services" (Nov. 2019 updated) document.*

3. A Work Experience assignment should correlate with the youth's career pathway, take any disabilities/limitations into consideration, and be age appropriate (comply with labor laws).

4. Employers providing Work Experiences should complete a **Worksite Agreement** and copies should be kept in the youth's paper file for access during monitoring procedures. Each worksite should have at least one designated **Worksite Supervisor** who the youth report to, signs timesheets, and provides updates/evaluation feedback to the youth counselor.

5. Worksite Supervisors and **Youth** must both sign a completed **Job Training Outline** which specifies the youth's work experience goals, academic and occupational education components that will be incorporated, and a detailed work description (hourly wage rate, number of hours to be worked per week, start and end date, general work duties, etc.).

6. Copies of timesheets should be kept in the youth's paper file along with copies of any payroll documents.

7. Youth counselors are to maintain **routine communication** with Worksite Supervisors to:

- Determine what new skills the youth has learned;
- Obtain feedback from the worksite supervisor;
- Ensure the youth is complying with their assigned work schedule;
- Determine if the worksite is a good fit for the youth; and
- Determine how long the youth is expected to remain at the worksite.

*If it is determined that the youth is not a good fit for the worksite, or if the youth redefines their career pathway, the youth may be reassigned to a **new** Work Experience. Youth counselors and/or Worksite Supervisors have the right to end a youth's Work Experience early due to any misconduct on the youth's part.*

8. Evaluation forms should be given to all Worksite Supervisors to complete on a routine basis (attaching the evaluation form to the youth's timesheet is an effective method to encourage evaluation completion). Questions/Comments sections can be general or tailored specifically to address specific concerns/barriers with the youth's progress.

9. Site Visits should be conducted on a routine basis and can be **scheduled** in advance to ensure the Worksite Supervisor and youth will be available or can be **unannounced** as the Youth counselor sees fit.

10. It is the responsibility of the Youth counselor to meet the needs of the Business (worksite) and maintain a successful working relationship while tracking youth's progress and providing WIOA-based **Supportive Services** and activities to the youth as needed for their success.

11. Education/Training Component: see section above re: incorporation of concurrent or sequential education/training component; documentation in ISS and OSOS Comments must clearly outline the connection of the education/training component to the youth's identified career pathway.

12. The Worksite Supervisor and the youth should be notified **at least 1 week prior to the youth's final day of work**. Youth should be encouraged to speak with their Supervisor about continuing employment or obtaining a professional job reference to aid in their job search. The **end date** of the youth's Work Experience should be noted in both the youth's ISS and in the OSOS Services Tab and Comments section.

13. Updated record should be kept ensuring youth does not surpass their maximum lifetime allotment of **480 hours of paid work experience** (exceptions to maximum hours apply in the event of an Administrative Override occurring; however, detailed records must still be maintained).