

# Questions and Answers

## WORKFORCE INVESTMENT PROGRAMS

### INTAKE ASSESSMENT:

1. What assessment instruments are available in the Columbus Career Center?

The following standard assessment instruments are currently available in the Columbus Career Center:

- Career Ability Placement Survey (CAPS)
- General Aptitude Battery (GATB)\_
- Adult Basic Literacy Exam (ABLE)
- O\*NET Interest Profiler (Occupational Information Network)
- O\*NET Work Importance Locator
- USES Interest Inventory and Checklist (United States Employment Services)
- Leisure Search Inventory
- Career Exploration Inventory
- Job Search Aptitude Inventory
- TapDance (typing test)
- Differential Aptitude Test (DAT)
- TABE D5

2.) What assessment instruments does the Workforce Investment Program generally accept?

- Differential Aptitude Test (DAT)
- Interest Inventory
- TABE D5

3.) Are assessments completed by other agencies acceptable, and if so, is there a time limit placed that they will be accepted.

Other test administered by agencies that are similar or that provide the same results as those provided in the Career Center, may be used so long as the date test was administered does not exceed 12 months.

4.) How will it be determined what assessment is right for a customer?

Customer-driven assessment services mean guiding the customer to make an informed choice about a course of action that best meets their needs and interests and maximizes their employment opportunities. The appropriate assessment method to

provide that guidance depends on the customer – one size does **not** fit all!

*For example:*

- **A customer asks for job referrals in a specific occupation.** The issue to address is whether there is a realistic employment opportunity in that occupation. An assessment may be indicated to determine whether the customer's potential of getting the desired job is realistic. The assessment that is appropriate at this point is an evaluation of work experience and training in addition to a *Service Needs Evaluation* – i.e., determining whether the customer's work, school, or other history indicates readiness for the job requested.
- **A customer has no background in the desired occupation or a similar field.** A diagnostic assessment of *skills, abilities, vocational interest and aptitude* is needed to help determine what steps the customer would need to take to be qualified for the occupation.
- **A customer wants occupational training but does not have a specific occupational goal.** A combination of *career exploration and In-Depth Assessment or diagnostic assessment* might be indicated.

The “Guide For Shared Assessments,” developed jointly by the Georgia Departments of Human Resources, Labor, and Technical and Adult Education in 1998, although dated in some areas, may be helpful in determining the appropriate tool(s) for a particular customer. Over 40 aptitude, interest, job matching software, achievement/abilities, job readiness, skills and personal traits tests were evaluated, and the strengths and weaknesses of each are identified. Contact Workforce Development to request a copy of the guide.

Sections 663.240 and 663.310 of the WIA Final Rules require an assurance as to the need for training and the ability of the customer to successfully participate whenever adult or dislocated worker funds are used to support training. A paraphrase of these sections follows:

Through in-depth interview and evaluation or assessment, and service coordination (case management), a determination has been made that training is needed and that the customer has the skills and qualifications to succeed in the training program selected. The case file is to include these assurances. The assurances are to be stated in the Georgia Workforce System (GWS) customer service plan or in the customer record in a paper-based system. WIA Section 129(c)(1)(A) on youth activities requires that an objective assessment be conducted for each youth participant. The assessment shall include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including nontraditional jobs), supportive service needs, and developmental needs of the participant. [Updated 2/03]

5.) **Must everyone be tested for reading skills before beginning WIA-funded training services?**

**Youth age 14 – 18 must be tested.** While there is no requirement for adult testing,

Determining math and reading functional levels may be one of several useful assessments to determine training needs, supportive services and barriers to address before employment begins. Staffs of partner agencies should share assessment results when possible to avoid duplication and more efficiently serve customers.

6.) **Is a comprehensive assessment required for those served in the WIA youth program and optional for other customers?**

A comprehensive assessment that includes the elements specified in the Act is required for each customer served in the youth program. A comprehensive assessment is also required for each customer in the adult/dislocated worker program; however, in order to determine who may receive training services, a customer in the adult/dislocated worker program must have received an "interview, evaluation or assessment, and case management"; be determined to be in need of training; and have the skills and qualifications to successfully complete the selected training program. In order to make a quality training determination, some level of assessment will likely be appropriate. (Assessment will often serve as the one intensive service required prior to training.) (WIA Sections 129(c)(1)(A) and 134(d)(4)(D), WIA Final Rule, Parts 663 (Subpart C) and 664 (Subpart D))

## **ELIGIBILITY AND REGISTRATION**

1. **What is the definition of WIA registration? What about enrollment?**

All youth receiving services of any level (i.e., core, intensive or training) under the Title I youth funding stream must be registered with WIA. For adults (including dislocated workers) and youth served under the adult or dislocated worker funding streams, WIA registration takes place when a customer receives WIA-funded intensive or training services following an evaluation of service needs. When a customer is registered for WIA, he/she is then enrolled into service(s). **[Updated 2/03]**

2. **When do you register someone for WIA?**

For adults and dislocated workers, WIA registration occurs when the customer receives intensive or training services directly funded by WIA. All youth receiving services of any level under the Title I youth funding stream must be registered with WIA.

3. **What eligibility details are there for adult, youth, and dislocated workers?**

WIA-14 requires that 100% verification of eligibility must be conducted for all customers applying for WIA services. Such verification shall be based on documents submitted by the applicant during core and intensive services, and updates (where applicable) during eligibility determination.

Copies of the following documents should be secured during the WIA eligibility process to determine the customer's eligibility for WIA participation.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| a) proof of age                                 | h) proof of address                                  |
| b) verification of earnings for past six months | i) draft certification                               |
| c) history of independence                      | j) educational status (if eligibility based on such) |
| d) family income                                | k) Citizenship Status                                |
| e) institutional status or Foster Child         | l) public assistance                                 |
| f) family size                                  | m) handicapped status if based on such               |
| g) social security card; and,                   |  |

**WIA-14-Imposed Policy:** The following requirements have been established by WIA - 14 in determining eligibility of all applicants:

- 1) The **age** of all applicants must be verified at time of WIA intake;
- 2) All applicants must be 16 years of age or older for in-school WIA funded activities or 19-21 years of age for out-school WIA funded activities.
- 3) Applicants participating in a WIA Summer Component, must be between the ages of 15-21 years;
- 4) All applicants must **show verification of address** at time of intake. Verification of residency must be in the last six (6) months.
- 5) All applicants who are non-dependent individuals, based on a barrier, must have documentation verifying the barrier.
- 6) When using **pay stubs** for verification of family income, pay stubs should include name or social security of the individual and date.
- 7) All intake information must be completed in **black or blue ink**.

**Note 1:** Youth dropouts, 15 years of age, are prohibited from participation in any WIA program.

**Note 2: Self-attestation** is prohibited in this workforce area as a means of verification. The individual must present documentation relating to those items used to determine eligibility.

#### 4. Who is considered a “displaced homemaker” under WIA?

The definition of displaced homemaker under WIA is different from its definition under JTPA. WIA Section 101(D) defines a displaced homemaker as an individual who has been providing unpaid services to family members in the home and who:

- Has been dependent on the income of another family member but is no longer supported by that income, AND
- Is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Please note that individuals who have been on public assistance are **not** considered displaced homemakers under WIA, unless they had been dependent on a family member's income and no longer have that income. (Section 663.120 Final Rule)

5. **What determines the need for training?**

In the simplest terms, the inability to get and/or keep a job demonstrates the need for training. However, several steps must occur before WIA funds are used for training. At least one core service and one intensive service must be provided. Intensive services should deal with issues such as personal barriers or exploration of career options that may be all that is needed for the customer to become employed. If the need for training is discovered, a variety of sources such as Pell, HOPE, and others should be considered before WIA funds can be used. The next step should be determination of the most appropriate funding source for such training.

6) **What if a customer registered with WIA in another state comes to a career center in Georgia expecting WIA services? Does their WIA approval cross state lines?**

No, WIA registration does not cross state lines. Most border areas are working with areas in neighboring states to streamline service needs of employers and job seekers across state lines. As with any other potential customer, staff should explore the customer's needs and available resources in the area, including WIA if appropriate.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

1) **What documentation is required to move a customer beyond core and intensive services to training?**

The information required in the GDOL automated service record will be appropriate. However, information must be documented in the GWS system, or case file.

2) **Who is the WIA grant recipient?**

At the State level, the Governor is the grant recipient; however, Governor Barnes has named the State of Georgia Department of Labor to carry out this function under the Workforce Investment Act.

At the Local Level, the local grant recipient is the Chief Local Elected Official for the area. In a multi-jurisdictional area, local elected officials must select a chief to assume this role. This would be established in writing through the local elected official agreement for the area. In practice, the local government (city or county) represented by the chosen chief local elected official serves as the local grant recipient. In either case, the chief elected official may elect to designate a sub-recipient or fiscal agent to receive the grant and serve as signatory authority for the area's WIA grant. This would also need to be established in writing through an agreement between the Georgia Department of Labor and the CEO(s).

At our local level, the Mayor of the City of Columbus has been named the chief local elected official for the area, with primary responsibility for carrying out the duties prescribed under the Workforce Investment Act. In addition, the Mayor of the City of Columbus further designated the Columbus Consolidated Government as the grant recipient and the Job Training Division as the Administrator of WIA funds under the Act.

## **ADULT FOLLOW-UP**

1) **How do you determine if a WIA customer should exit and receive follow-up services, or remain in WIA and receive limited services?**

Services should be provided based on the needs of the customer. When a customer has achieved his or her goal(s), such as getting a job or completing training, it will generally be appropriate to record an exit from WIA and to provide follow-up services as needed. There will always be exceptions; a career advisor or service provider will be in the best position to make this determination in consultation with the WIA grant administrator.

2) **What customer workshops are available at the Columbus Career Center?**

All Career Centers offer both *standard* workshops and *customized* workshops designed for customers in their local area. The *standard* workshops are:

- **SOAR**, A Guide to Obtaining your Next Job – 2 hour sessions that include a 1 hour orientation to the resource area and 1 hour information session on job search techniques
- **RePlace Yourself** - 3 ½ hour session on job search techniques
- **YES** (Your Employment Search) – 10 hour session over 2 or more days on job search techniques.
- **Coping with Change** – 2 hour session on financial and stress management.

Customized workshops vary among career centers, based on local customer needs. Examples include the following: Positive Attitude, Age is an Asset, Networking, telephone Interviews, Using the Internet, Occupational Choices, Cold Calling, Skills Identification, Salary Negotiations, Electronic Resumes, Overcoming and coping with Test Anxiety, and Career Transition

## **PAYING FOR SERVICES**

1) **Which must be accessed first, WIA, HOPE or Pell resources? If Pell and HOPE must be paid first and are not readily available to students, can WIA funds be used until the grants come in?**

For some time, WIA and Pell federal regulations have offered conflicting guidance about priority use of funds. USDOL representatives recently informed GDOL staff that final WIA Regulations do not resolve this conflict. Further clarifications from the

Federal officials suggest States and local areas simply take measures to ensure that no payment duplication occurs and establish priority decisions as each sees fit. GDOL concurs and delegates such priority policy making to local workforce boards. For this workforce area, customers requesting assistance through WIA -funding, must first access PELL and where applicable, HOPE, before any WIA funds are expended. In cases where an individual has applied and is not eligible for PELL, and in some circumstances HOPE, WIA funding may be able to assist if the individual is eligible for WIA.