



**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

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**POLICY NO:** 10-19  
**TO:** Service Providers  
**FROM:** Department of Social Services  
**EFFECTIVE:** January 01, 2020, REVISED May 14, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Youth Title I Program Eligibility and Enrollment

**REFERENCES:**

- WIOA of 2014, sections 113-129, 194
- WIOA Final Rule
- Workforce Services Directive (WSD) 16-18, Selective Service Registration
- WSD 17-07, WIOA Youth Program Requirements

**PURPOSE:**

For the purpose of this policy, Service Provider, is the recipient of WIOA funds from the San Luis Obispo Workforce Development Board (SLOWDB).

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to Service Providers regarding SLOWDB's WIOA Youth program eligibility requirements; the registration process (eligibility verification), and the enrollment process for youth to receive WIOA Youth services. Moreover, this policy is in place to ensure accordance with WIOA law, regulations and policies and federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies.

This policy is based on SLOWDB's interpretation of WIOA law, regulations and policies and federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies. This policy will be reviewed and updated based on any additional federal or state guidance.

**POLICY:**

It is the policy of SLOWDB that all WIOA Youth services applicants are deemed eligible, approved for services, and enrolled into the CalJOBS system (the State of California's WIOA participant tracking system) prior to participation in any WIOA funded activities. Service Providers must, for every WIOA youth participant, follow the eligibility, registration (eligibility verification) and enrollment guidance and processes set forth in this policy. The registration and enrollment processes are time sensitive and Service Providers should review

and revise, if necessary, their internal policies and procedures in order to meet the expectations of this policy.

## **PROCEDURE:**

### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

To participate in the WIOA Youth program, youth must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in item A in addition to satisfying the eligibility criteria outlined in either item B, Out-of-School Youth (OSY) or item C, In-school Youth (ISY).

Eligibility for services should not be construed as a guarantee of services. The WIOA is not an entitlement program. [WIOA, Section 194 (12)]

Employment and training opportunities must be provided to youth who can benefit from, and are most in need of, such opportunities. [WIOA, Section 194 (1)]

Once a youth is determined eligible and enrolled for participation under OSY or ISY, this assigned status will remain the same throughout the youth's participation in the WIOA Youth program regardless of any later changes in one or more of the eligibility criteria.

Please reference Attachment A, Youth Eligibility Terms and Definitions, for definitions of the terms used in the Eligibility Criteria section.

#### **A. General Eligibility Criteria**

General eligibility criteria consist of requirements to meet federal laws requiring verification of identity and employment authorization and selective service registration. All youth applicants must meet these requirements in order to be considered for WIOA Youth services.

1. Authorization to work in the U.S.; and,
2. Compliance with Selective Service Registration Requirements (WSD 16-18, Selective Service Registration, SLO Policy 02-19)

Please reference Attachment B, WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation, which lists acceptable documents for each eligibility criterion under item A. All documents must be photocopied and maintained in the participant's file prior to and during the provision of WIOA Youth services.

#### **B. Out-of-School Youth Eligibility Criteria**

For a youth to qualify as an OSY participant, the following eligibility criteria must be met:

1. Not attending any secondary or postsecondary school (not including Title II Adult Education, YouthBuild, Job Corps, high school equivalency programs, non-credit bearing postsecondary classes, dropout reengagement programs or charter schools with federal and state workforce partnerships). See Attachment A, WIOA Youth Policy Terms and Definitions for a detailed definition of this term.
2. Age 16-24 years old at time of enrollment; and
3. One or more of the following:

- a. A school dropout;
- b. A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter. (School year calendar quarter is based on how a local school district defines its school year quarters. Per the California Department of Education, compulsory education law requires everyone aged 6-17 years must attend school, except 16 and 17-year-olds who have graduated from high school or passed the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) and obtained parental permission to leave.
- c. A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a low-income individual and is either basic skills deficient/low levels of literacy or an English language learner;
- d. An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system (justice involved youth/offender/ex-offender);
- e. In foster care or has aged out of the foster care system or has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption;
- f. A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, a runaway, a child eligible for assistance under sec. 477 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 677), or in an out-of-home placement;
- g. An individual who is pregnant or parenting, including non-custodial parents;
- h. An individual with a disability; and/or
- i. A low-income individual who “requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.”

Please reference Attachment B, WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation and Attachment C, WIOA Youth Income Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation which provide acceptable documents for each eligibility criterion listed under item B. All documents must be photocopied and maintained in the participant's file prior to and during the provision of WIOA Youth services. Please refer to Policy 09-19 regarding the maintenance of personally identifiable client information.

### C. In-School Youth Eligibility Criteria

For a youth to qualify as an ISY participant, the following eligibility criteria must be met:

1. Attending school, including secondary and post-secondary schools (excludes attending Title II Adult Education, YouthBuild, Job Corps, high school equivalency programs (see WSD 17-07 for definitions), non-credit bearing postsecondary classes, dropout reengagement programs or charter schools with federal and state workforce partnerships does not qualify under this eligibility criteria);
2. Age 16-21 years old at time of enrollment (A youth with disabilities who is in an individualized education program at the age of 22 may be enrolled as an In-School youth [TEGL 21-16 and EC 56026]).
3. Low-income individual; and
4. Meets one or more of the following barriers:

- a. Basic skills deficient;
- b. An English language learner;
- c. An offender;
- d. A homeless individual, a runaway, an individual who is in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance under section 477 of the Social Security Act, or an individual who is in an out-of-home placement;
- e. Pregnant or parenting;
- f. Individual with disability; or
- g. An individual who “requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.” (No more than 5% of ISY participants enrolled in a given program year may be found eligible based solely on meeting this criterion, “requires additional assistance”.)

Please reference Attachment B, WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation and Attachment C, WIOA Youth Income Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation which provide acceptable documents for each eligibility criterion listed under item C. All documents must be photocopied and maintained in the participant’s file prior to and during the provision of WIOA Youth services.

#### Low-income Exception

The WIOA allows a low-income exception where five percent of WIOA youth may be participants who ordinarily would be required to be low-income for eligibility purposes. Please note, youth who are enrolled for WIOA Youth services under the low-income exception are still required to satisfy all other eligibility criteria for WIOA Youth services. The five percent must be calculated based on the percent of newly enrolled youth during a program year. The five percent low-income exception may include youth from OSY eligibility categories 3c and 3i, ISY, or a combination of both, not to exceed five percent of all WIOA youth participants served in a given program year. (WSD 17-07, WIOA Youth Program Requirements). A contractor must obtain written approval from the WIOA Program Manager prior to enrolling a participant using this exception.

#### REGISTRATION

Registration is an information collection process that documents a determination of eligibility. Registration is also the point at which performance accountability information begins to be collected. The process of registration includes the collection of information to support a determination of eligibility and completion of a WIOA application. Verification of eligibility criteria may include collection of documents, electronic data transfer, personal interview, or an individual’s application for services.

It is at the point of registration that the Service Provider must begin to maintain a secured file for each program registrant. Registrant files must contain photocopies of the original eligibility documents submitted for verification and enrollment and a copy of the signed WIOA application. (Please refer to Policy 09-19 regarding the maintenance of personally identifiable client information.)

For a youth to be enrolled into WIOA Youth services, the following must occur:

1. The Service Provider meets with the applicant and completes a preliminary assessment to determine eligibility. If a youth is determined eligible, the Service Provider reviews with the applicant the list of documents needed to verify eligibility. Attachment B, WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation and Attachment C, WIOA Youth Income Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation provide acceptable documentation for each eligibility criterion.
  - a. The Service Provider must obtain all documents of eligibility verification. All documentation must be dated on or before the final determination of eligibility.
  - b. In the instance that documentary evidence is not verifiable, not readily available, or will entail privation or suffering (undue hardship) for the youth to obtain such documentation, an "Applicant Statement" may be used. Every possible effort must be made to collect all necessary documentation to verify eligibility prior to using an Applicant Statement and all steps taken to attempt to secure documentary evidence must be documented on the Applicant Statement. The Applicant Statement form approved by the DSS WIOA Program Manager and utilized by the service provider may be provided with this policy as Attachment D.
  - c. Any sources of verification not listed in Attachment B, WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation and Attachment C, WIOA Youth Income Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation, **must be** approved by the WIOA Program Manager to ensure they are valid, accepted forms of documentation prior to use and enrollment of a youth into WIOA Youth services.
1. Upon collection of all required verification documents, the Service Provider provides determination and documents to the WIOA manager to ensure the determination and documentation are accurate and complete.
2. If determination and documentation are approved, the Service Provider can complete the WIOA application in the CalJOBS system. ***The application must be completed no later than 30 days from when eligibility documentation was obtained.*** Failure to submit up-to-date documentation may require the Service Provider to collect updated documents to ensure an accurate assessment of eligibility. The application, upon completion, must be printed, signed and dated by the customer and retained in his/her personal participant file. For individuals under the age of 18, the parent or legal guardian signature must be obtained prior to finalizing the application.

## ENROLLMENT

In this phase of WIOA Youth services, the Service Provider completes an Objective Assessment and Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The Objective Assessment is a tool that identifies the academic levels, skill levels and service needs of each participant. The ISS is a tool that identifies and documents career pathways, educational and employment goals, and the Youth Program Elements that will be provided to each participant in order for them to attain their determined goals. The ISS form approved by the DSS WIOA Program Manager and utilized by the service provider may be provided with this policy as Attachment F.

The objective assessment and the ISS must be added to and maintained in the participant's file.

### YOUTH PROGRAM ELEMENTS

In order to support the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, entry into postsecondary education, and career readiness for participants, Service Providers must either provide directly or make available through meaningful referral, each of the following 14 elements listed below. Service Providers are not required to provide every element. Service Providers have the discretion to determine which specific program services a participant receives based on the participant's objective assessment and ISS. Service Providers are not required to provide every element. Attachment G, WIOA Youth Program Elements, provides expanded definitions of each element. (WSD 17-07, Youth Program Requirements)

- Program Element 1: Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent<sup>17</sup> or for a recognized postsecondary credential;
- Program Element 2: Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
- Program Element 3: Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include:
  - Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the year;
  - Pre-apprenticeship programs;
  - Internships and job shadowing; and
  - OJT (on-the-job) training opportunities
- Program Element 4: Occupational skills training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations within the service area;
- Program Element 5: Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- Program Element 6: Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors;
- Program Element 7: Supportive Services;
- Program Element 8: Adult mentoring (for not less than 12 months);
- Program Element 9: Follow-up services (for not less than 12 months, as appropriate);
- Program Element 10: Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;
- Program Element 11: Financial literacy education;
- Program Element 12: Entrepreneurial skills training;
- Program Element 13: Services that provide labor market information and employment

information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and

- Program Element 14: Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

**ACTION:**

All WIOA Youth Program Service Providers must comply with this policy. This policy will remain in effect from the date of issue until such time that a revision is required.

**INQUIRIES:**

Any questions regarding this policy may be directed to the DSS WIOA Program Manager at 805-781-1838.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A, Youth Eligibility Terms and Definitions

Attachment B, WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation and

Attachment C, WIOA Youth Income Eligibility Requirements and Verifiable Documentation

Attachment D, Placeholder for Service Provider's Approved Applicant Statement Form

Attachment E, Eligibility Checklist

Attachment F, Placeholder for Service Provider's Approved ISS Form

Attachment G, WIOA Youth Program Elements

Workforce Development Board (WDB) Approval Required?   Yes   No X

Initial approval date: \_\_\_\_\_

WDB revision approval date: \_\_\_\_\_