
Individual Training Accounts (ITA)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction for establishing Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adults, Dislocated Workers and Out-of-School Youth ages 17-24.

BACKGROUND

Under WIOA Title I, training services may be provided to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth through ITAs. ITAs may be established on behalf of eligible individuals to fund occupational classroom training and approved web-based training from the State approved, Eligibility Training Provider List (ETPL). Participants are expected to utilize information such as skills assessments, labor market conditions/trends, and training provider's performance, and to take an active role in managing their employment future through the use of ITAs.

POLICY

ITAs, also referred to as Training Scholarships, are one training option that may be made available to eligible and appropriate participants when it has been determined the individual will be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency or higher wages from previous employment through career services alone.

ITAs are not an entitlement and shall be provided to eligible participants who have been assessed and determined to have specific skill-related barriers to employment.

Training programs selected shall be connected to occupations in demand, based on current labor market information with an emphasis on employment opportunities within the Workforce Development Board's (WDB) priority industry sectors. Training shall lead to an industry recognized certificate, competency or skill recognized by employers.

A. Eligibility Criteria for Training

1. The participant is unemployed or employed at a wage that is below the level of self-sufficiency consistent with the WDB's approved policy.
2. A comprehensive assessment determined the participant was in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment.
3. The participant possesses the skills and qualifications needed to successfully complete the desired training program.

4. The participant has a GED or high school diploma and a 9th grade reading and math comprehension level. Approval may be granted by the America's Job Center of California (AJCC) or Special Project Program Manager (Program Manager) to waive these requirements for specific occupational classroom training.
5. The participant has demonstrated the following:
 - Commitment to completing the identified training program
 - Knowledge of the targeted demand occupation in the local area or proposed area of employment
 - Knowledge of the job requirements and working conditions of the chosen career
 - Knowledge of training courses available and pertinent performance and cost information
 - The ability to meet the training provider's entrance requirements
 - The training program is consistent with the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS)
 - Attendance at all required appointments
6. The participant has been unable to secure other financial assistance to cover the cost of training, including Pell Grants.
7. The participant has not participated in WIA or WIOA funded ITA training for 24 months following their last date of attendance in, or completion of, a prior WIA or WIOA funded training through Pacific Gateway. The WDB Director has the authority to waive these requirements if proper justification has been provided.

B. Selection of Training Providers

WIOA program staff will assist participants to make well-informed training decisions and provide guidance in selecting a training facility and specific program from vendors currently on the ETPL, as required by WIOA. The selected training provider must demonstrate a WIOA Active Status and/or 70% Placement Rate. Exceptions to the ETPL requirements may occur where special grant funding allows for flexibility.

Pacific Gateway has the authority to prohibit the referral of participants to training vendors and/or training programs that have demonstrated poor performance.

ITAs may be used for registered apprenticeship programs that are listed on the State approved ETPL.

WIOA program staff are responsible for verifying both the training provider and selected training program are listed on the ETPL and meet local WDB requirements.

C. Funding and Duration Limit

The maximum ITA amount is \$7,500 per customer. In general, training should not extend beyond twelve (12) consecutive months but can, in some instances, extend to eighteen (18) months or exceed \$7,500 with authorization by the WDB Director. Exceptions may occur where special grant funding allows for flexibility.

Prior to receipt of an ITA, the availability of other financing for training services shall be exhausted, including Pell Grants and other grant assistance (excluding loans). WIOA program staff are responsible for documenting if the training provider and training program qualify for financial assistance and the eligibility/ineligibility for grant assistance.

Participants may use other sources of funds to cover training costs that exceed \$7,500. The leveraging of funds for the participant covering either the full training or payment in excess of the \$7,500 in training fees should be documented on the ITA Scholarship (Exhibit A).

Participant must access their ITA forty-five (45) days from the date of issuance. Exceptions may be permitted due to unexpected circumstances that prevent the Participant from accessing the ITA (i.e. program scheduling constraints) upon authorization from the Program Manager.

Funds expended on a training program for any individual, whether that amount meets the maximum amount or not, shall be determined as fulfilling the training agreement.

ITA funds are used for tuition costs, required books, fees, specialized course-specific supplies or activities. An ITA may fund prerequisite training if it is required by the approved training program.

D. ITA Review and Approval Process

WIOA program staff are responsible for verifying an ITA Application is complete and demonstrates the participant's knowledge of the training program, knowledge of job requirements, knowledge of the targeted demand occupation in the local area or proposed area of employment, and commitment to complete the training program.

The Program Manager is responsible for verifying procurement, contract and fiscal requirements have been met prior to submission to the WDB Director. ITAs must be approved by the Program Manager and WDB Director (or designee), prior to a participant beginning training. The Program Manager is responsible for ensuring the Fiscal Unit has received a copy of the approved ITA Application and that the ITA has been entered on the ITA Log and the appropriate training activity entered in CalJOBS.

Any changes to the ITA must be documented on a modified ITA Scholarship and submitted to the Program Manager for approval. The Program Manager is responsible for communicating such changes to the Fiscal and Data Management Units.

E. ITA Invoicing

Training providers must submit all invoices, including attendance records, evaluations, certificate of completion(s) and all supporting documents, as agreed on the Educational Agreement, for review and verification, prior to the issuance of payment.

F. Recovery of Unused WIOA Training Monies

To ensure prompt return of any unused training monies, WIOA program staff shall track the participant's monthly progress. WIOA program staff are responsible for immediately notifying the Program Manager when there is an early termination of a participant's training. The Program Manager will notify the Fiscal and Data Management Units and update the ITA Log to reflect the early termination of training. The WDB's Fiscal Unit is responsible for the collection process of any outstanding training and/or tuition refund. Refund requirements for training providers are outlined in the Educational Agreement.

G. Appeals Process

Participants have the right to appeal if they are denied training. If they believe they have been unfairly denied access to training through an ITA, they may file an appeal using the published Pacific Gateway's Customer Complaint Procedures.

REFERENCES

- WIOA Section 134 (c)(3)
- WIOA Section 129 (c)(2)(D)
- Title 20 CFR 680.230
- Title 20 CFR 680.300, 680.320, 680.330, 680.340
- Title 20 CFR 681.550
- WIA Directive WIAD04-4, "Recovery of WIA Tuition and Training Funds" (August 18, 2004)
- Pacific Gateway Self-Sufficiency Standard Policy P-WIOA - SSS - 1.A

INQUIRES

For questions or assistance related to this policy, please contact Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network staff at (562) 570-3748.

NS:am