
NTAR Leadership Center

NTAR Leadership Center
Cooperative Inquiry System
Round 4, May, 2009

REAUTHORIZATION OF WIA: TITLE I RESPONSES

Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) authorizes the current workforce investment system and funding for adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. The current workforce system is characterized by one-stop service delivery and tiered services for adults. The Vocational Rehabilitation program, among others, is a mandatory partner in this system. While WIA's legislative authorization expired in 2003, and prior reauthorization bills have not cleared Congress, legislators have continued to appropriate funds for WIA activities. The 111th Congress is once again examining WIA reauthorization, and we are interested in your insights and recommendations on ways that the workforce system could better serve people with disabilities.

Based on your agency or organization's experiences with the workforce system, please provide specific recommendations for WIA reauthorization (Title I) in the following areas:

Connecticut

The One-Stop Delivery System (please include recommendations you may have regarding accessibility, universal design, Disability Program Navigators, mandatory partners, etc.)

Mandatory full accessibility, i.e., center cannot open their doors unless they are fully accessible, beyond minimal ADA compliance.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services (please include recommendations on the tiered services – core, intensive and training; and on the current priority of services for adults)

No response

Youth Services (please consider how youth with disabilities are served in your workforce investment system)

Increased summer youth employment opportunities and partnerships with school districts.

WIA Funding (please consider the adequacy and availability of funding in your workforce system regarding both services and infrastructure)

No response.

Performance Measures (please consider how WIA performance measures impact service to adults, dislocated workers and youth with disabilities)

Many individuals with disabilities are screened out of training opportunities out of fear they will not work, or if they only want to work part time. Maybe different measures could help.

Governance Structure (please consider how the needs of people with disabilities are represented on workforce boards and youth councils in your workforce system as well as in state and local planning)

It now has too many organizational layers. State WIB, local WIB's, contractors, etc.... Streamline it.

Other (please provide recommendations for serving people with disabilities in the WIA workforce system in any other areas not addressed above)

The VR system partnering with the other WIA systems works well in most parts of CT. Since CT VR is in an order of Selection, some people with less severe disabilities get services only through the one-stops. This only works in some locations.

Your agency or organization and state:

BRS – CT [Bureau of Rehabilitation Services]

Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.

Kathy Marchione, 203-551-5517

Louisiana

The One-Stop Delivery System (please include recommendations you may have regarding accessibility, universal design, Disability Program Navigators, mandatory partners, etc.)

Disability Program Navigator program needs to be expanded and navigators available during working hours at ALL One Stops. Navigators must be encouraged to cooperate with Comprehensive Employment Initiatives and be aware of employment activities within the state.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services (please include recommendations on the tiered services – core, intensive and training; and on the current priority of services for adults)

No response.

Youth Services (please consider how youth with disabilities are served in your workforce investment system)

No response.

WIA Funding (please consider the adequacy and availability of funding in your workforce system regarding both services and infrastructure)

Increased infrastructure funding is needed in order to increase capacity of service providers.

Performance Measures (please consider how WIA performance measures impact service to adults, dislocated workers and youth with disabilities)

No response.

Governance Structure (please consider how the needs of people with disabilities are represented on workforce boards and youth councils in your workforce system as well as in state and local planning)

There is little or no representation by people with disabilities on a statewide level.

Other (please provide recommendations for serving people with disabilities in the WIA workforce system in any other areas not addressed above)

No response.

Your agency or organization and state:

Louisiana DHH [Department of Health and Hospitals]

New Jersey

The One-Stop Delivery System (please include recommendations you may have regarding accessibility, universal design, Disability Program Navigators, mandatory partners, etc.)

System in my state is accessible. I walked in one day without an appointment. Within 10 minutes, I was speaking with a counselor.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services (please include recommendations on the tiered services – core, intensive and training; and on the current priority of services for adults)

No experience with this.

Youth Services (please consider how youth with disabilities are served in your workforce investment system)

Not applicable to my department. I work with autistic adults.

WIA Funding (please consider the adequacy and availability of funding in your workforce system regarding both services and infrastructure)

Funding is inadequate.

Performance Measures (please consider how WIA performance measures impact service to adults, dislocated workers and youth with disabilities)

No knowledge of this.

Governance Structure (please consider how the needs of people with disabilities are represented on workforce boards and youth councils in your workforce system as well as in state and local planning)

No response.

Other (please provide recommendations for serving people with disabilities in the WIA workforce system in any other areas not addressed above)

No knowledge of this.

Your agency or organization and state:

Eden Family of Services New Jersey

Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.

garret.bernhofer@edenservices.org

New Jersey

The One-Stop Delivery System (please include recommendations you may have regarding accessibility, universal design, Disability Program Navigators, mandatory partners, etc.)

States should be mandated to spend some of their funding for the One-Stops on a centralized advertising and call-in center. Each county works independently with separate

call-in numbers. Hardly anyone has heard of the One-Stops. This applies to all potential clients would want to use the One-Stops, disabled or not, and employers who might be hiring.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services (please include recommendations on the tiered services – core, intensive and training; and on the current priority of services for adults)

Without fail, our employers tell us that people coming out of many training programs (with the exception of those who have earned industry certifications) are under-prepared. Adult training supported by the state needs to provide the skills employers need for jobs available in real time.

Youth Services (please consider how youth with disabilities are served in your workforce investment system)

The highest high school dropout rates are among youth with disabilities, so clearly, something is not as effective as it should be.

WIA Funding (please consider the adequacy and availability of funding in your workforce system regarding both services and infrastructure)

For the most part, in this state, WIBs are borderline failures. There are three reasons. They are still managed by bureaucrats whose accountabilities are measured in inputs, not outcomes. The perception in this state is that WIB leadership cannot be fired by the WIB. And finally, while each WIB may have 51% of its members in the business world, that is only on letterhead. The WIB meetings are so long and oppressive most company representatives attend only one meeting and vacate. WIBs should be required to have 51% be the mandatory QUORUM at each meeting so every decision is made by business.

Performance Measures (please consider how WIA performance measures impact service to adults, dislocated workers and youth with disabilities)

Too often results are input measures like class time or 'clients served,' whatever that means. Accountabilities should be clearer. For example, an adult in a literacy program who attends class regularly and meets all obligations of the program should be given an individualized guarantee that he or she will reach a specified higher level of literacy -- and that is what the effectiveness of the program/agency should be measured.

Governance Structure (please consider how the needs of people with disabilities are represented on workforce boards and youth councils in your workforce system as well as in state and local planning)

As far as we can tell in this state, they are not represented as completely as they need to be.

Other (please provide recommendations for serving people with disabilities in the WIA workforce system in any other areas not addressed above)

Again, much like above, the single consistent statement we hear from employers is that PWD who are seeking jobs with our companies do not have the necessary skills. I suspect that would be applied to those coming out of state-supported training as well.

Your agency or organization and state:

New Jersey

New Mexico

The One-Stop Delivery System (please include recommendations you may have regarding accessibility, universal design, Disability Program Navigators, mandatory partners, etc.)

Recommend USDOL provide sufficient WIA funds to expand Focusing on Abilities staff to four; and for LWDBs to directly hire a minimum of 1 FTE Navigator for each county to provide services to growing numbers of people with disabilities. [Focusing on Abilities is the state's comprehensive employment initiative for people with disabilities]

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services (please include recommendations on the tiered services – core, intensive and training; and on the current priority of services for adults)

Expand role of LWDB Navigators to provide direct services in tiered services. WIA priorities are for: low income, public assistance recipients, and veterans; no significant outreach for PWD. Focusing on Abilities is working to enhance infrastructure systems.

Youth Services (please consider how youth with disabilities are served in your workforce investment system)

WIA requires VR representation on all state and local boards. Youth with disabilities are not targeted to be served as much as adults. YWD are served through the public education system. Expand role of Navigators to provide youth services.

WIA Funding (please consider the adequacy and availability of funding in your workforce system regarding both services and infrastructure)

Current funding is insufficient. Recommend US DOL provide sufficient WIA funds to increase Focusing on Abilities staff to four FTEs; and one Navigator for each county to ensure systems are maintained and services provided.

Performance Measures (please consider how WIA performance measures impact service to adults, dislocated workers and youth with disabilities)

WIA performance only measures impact on adults, dislocated workers and youth in general-it does not measure demographics such as disabilities. Recommend WIA measure data including, but not limited to: age, ethnicity, disability, recipients of social services, etc.

Governance Structure (please consider how the needs of people with disabilities are represented on workforce boards and youth councils in your workforce system as well as in state and local planning)

Although WIA requires VR membership on state and local boards, it does not require VR representation on youth councils.

Other (please provide recommendations for serving people with disabilities in the WIA workforce system in any other areas not addressed above)

Better communication with local boards and agencies with resources to provide services. Expand Focusing on Abilities staff from one person to four to provide adequate services to all LWDA's.

Your agency or organization and state:

NM Department of Workforce Solutions

Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.

Eliza Castellano, (505) 827-6828; Deborah Wildenstein, 827-9859; Jeff Barela, 827-6820.

Ohio

The One-Stop Delivery System (please include recommendations you may have regarding accessibility, universal design, Disability Program Navigators, mandatory partners, etc.)

Putting in Sorenson Phones. Giving all One-Stop the same name and marketing them. DPN should actively participate in WIB board to get top management support and have a disability perspective integrated into the workforce investment plan.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services (please include recommendations on the tiered services – core, intensive and training; and on the current priority of services for adults)

Universal intensive job search program for all customers instead of each program having their own. If all partners could participate in the training and be able to send their customers to one job search training class-would be beneficial for all. Expand the amount of people who are eligible who do not qualify financially so more people with disabilities can be included.

Youth Services (please consider how youth with disabilities are served in your workforce investment system)

Include youth in workshops at One-Stop. Allow independent youth (not living at home but under age 24) to qualify as youth so they can benefit from youth programs.

WIA Funding (please consider the adequacy and availability of funding in your workforce system regarding both services and infrastructure)

We do not have knowledge of this information.

Performance Measures (please consider how WIA performance measures impact service to adults, dislocated workers and youth with disabilities)

We do not have knowledge of this information.

Governance Structure (please consider how the needs of people with disabilities are represented on workforce boards and youth councils in your workforce system as well as in state and local planning)

Should be consistent throughout WIB boards-could be improved with DPN's participation

Other (please provide recommendations for serving people with disabilities in the WIA workforce system in any other areas not addressed above)

WIA staff needs education so that customers with disabilities are offered the same services so they are not funneled to RSC [Rehabilitation Services Commission].

Your agency or organization and state:

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services - Abbea Forcum; Georgianna Lowe and Debbie Yost---Regional Disability Program Navigators

Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.

abbea.forcum@jfs.ohio.gov; debra.yost@jfs.ohio.gov; georgiannna.low@jfs.ohio.gov

Virginia

The One-Stop Delivery System (please include recommendations you may have regarding accessibility, universal design, Disability Program Navigators, mandatory partners, etc.)

The Delivery System should be fully accessible, 508 compliant and support all universal design guidelines.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Services (please include recommendations on the tiered services – core, intensive and training; and on the current priority of services for adults)

I would recommend retraining them on Green Jobs because we know there will be a need for those types of positions.

Youth Services (please consider how youth with disabilities are served in your workforce investment system)

Too many waiting lists and need more innovative programs and transportation to get them to the programs. Social interaction is really needed including online social networks.

WIA Funding (please consider the adequacy and availability of funding in your workforce system regarding both services and infrastructure)

We need to fund so we can bring down waiting lists and add innovative, replicable programs.

Performance Measures (please consider how WIA performance measures impact service to adults, dislocated workers and youth with disabilities)

All programs should have measurable results.

Governance Structure (please consider how the needs of people with disabilities are represented on workforce boards and youth councils in your workforce system as well as in state and local planning)

I think we do a good job with this but would like to see more youth leaders and mentor programs to bring these young leaders up to speed.

Other (please provide recommendations for serving people with disabilities in the WIA workforce system in any other areas not addressed above)

Collaborate more with other employment agencies and other workforce investment agencies across other states. Share Best Practices and get employers involved.

Your agency or organization and state:

TecAccess, Virginia

Please provide contact information for further information on the responses above.

Debra Ruh, druh@tecaccess.net