



Workforce Development Board
Bringing Jobs & People Together

1000 Coffeen Street
Watertown, New York 13601

Phone: (315) 786-3651
Fax: (315) 786-3679

Youth and Young Adult Program Work Experience Policy

PURPOSE

WIOA Section 129(c)(2)(C) and 20 CFR 681.600 address work experience and define it as a: planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period. Work experience may be paid or unpaid as appropriate. Work experience may take place in the private for-profit sector, the non-profit sector or the public sector. Labor standards apply in any work experience where an employee/employer relationship, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act or where applicable State law, exists. Work experiences provide youth with opportunities for career exploration and skill development. Work experiences must include academic and occupational education to enhance a trainee's prospects for long-term labor market attachment.

POLICY

The Jefferson-Lewis County Workforce Development Board will make Work Experience available to provide opportunities for young adults (ages 16-24) to:

- Acquire skills, (including work readiness, transferrable and/or job specific skills)
- Explore career interests
- Inform youth of financial literacy information, such as the importance of budgeting & direct deposit
- Develop local character references
- Explain social media do's and don'ts

Work Experience may be developed with public or private employers. The program will provide opportunities for trainees to learn skills and interact with experienced workers in a structured work environment. Up to 100% of the wages paid to a trainee may be paid by the program.

Trainees will be paid the current State minimum wage or the prevailing wage as documented by the employer or local labor market information. Consistent with section 20 CFR 680.480 of the same chapter in the Federal Register, 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.

Work Experience may be employment opportunities and other training opportunities available year-round, including, but not limited to:

- Work experiences
- Pre-Apprenticeship programs
- On-the-Job Training (Trainees in on-the-job training will follow the agency OJT policy)

Work Experience must include academic and occupational education which:

- Refers to contextual learning that accompanies work experience
- May occur concurrently or sequentially with the work experience
- May occur inside or outside of the work site
- Include information needed to understand and work in specific industries or occupations
- Can be provided by the employer, or may be provided separately in a classroom or through other means

Youth must meet WIOA program eligibility requirements and have received an objective assessment resulting in the development of an Individual Service Strategy that documents the participant's need for Work Experience.

DURATION

A training period of 13 weeks or 390 hours will be the standard training duration. However, waivers up to 26 weeks or 780 hours may be granted by the Director of Employment and Training, or designee, to accommodate the following circumstances:

- Personal or family medical leave of absence
- An opportunity to transition to a private sector job
- Extra time needed to complete an employment prerequisite or job-specific skill (e.g. OSHA or similar certification or licensure)
- A learning disability
- A physical disability
- To allow exposure to/acquisition of additional skill sets consistent with the employment goal identified in the ISS

EXPENDITURES

At least 20% of the WIOA Youth program year allocation (less administrative funding) must be spent on Work Experience. Allowable work experience expenditures include the following:

- Wages/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 the work experience
- Staff time working with employers to ensure successful work experience, including staff time spent managing the work experience
 - Staff time spent evaluating the work experience
 - Trainee 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 work experience
 - Employability skills/job readiness training to prepare youth for a Work Experience placement

To complete a Work Experience placement, youth provider staff will:

- Determine eligibility of youth under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- Complete an objective assessment resulting in the development of an Individual Service Strategy documenting the employment goal, and work experience needs (e.g. work readiness, transferrable, and/or job specific skills)
- Identify an appropriate placement based on participant needs as outlined in the ISS.
- Refer the participant to a work site. Referrals may include a pre-placement interview and/or orientation as appropriate to trainee needs and work site protocols.
- Prepare a worksite agreement consisting of:
 - Duties/job description
 - Supervisor Evaluation Forms
 - Emergency Contact Information
 - Youth Payroll Schedule
 - Timesheets
 - documentation the academic and occupational educational component
 - Detailed terms and conditions, including terms of termination clause and payments that the parties have agreed upon.
- Enter the start date, planned end date, and supporting comments for the Work Experience service into OSOS within 5 days of the actual start of service.

Waivers or variations to this process may be granted by the Director of Employment and Training or designee in the following circumstances, and will be documented in the case notes in OSOS:

- Regulatory or legal changes from the State, Federal or local government
- Extraordinary or special needs of a trainee

MONITORING

Youth provider agency staff will monitor work sites periodically throughout the work experience and document interactions in OSOS comments. Work sites will have the opportunity to complete an evaluation of work performance with the submission of each time sheet. Each evaluation will be reviewed by Youth staff with the trainee and work site supervisor to identify and address or correct any behavioral or performance concerns.

Work site contracts may be terminated upon (a) mutual agreement of both parties, or (b) The unilateral action of the Director of Employment and Training or designee, when and if the employer is not providing services in accordance with the training contract.

Concerns regarding training work site performance will be reported by Youth staff to the Director of Employment and Training or designee. In the event a training work site is not performing satisfactorily, a written report will be submitted to the work site addressing the areas of concern, the corrective action needed and a timeframe for improvement. The work site will be given an opportunity to explain issues impacting their ability to meet established goals and discuss concerns, and to reach agreement on a plan for corrective action. In the event a work site is not successful in meeting agreed on outcomes (e.g.

work readiness, transferrable, or job specific skills acquisition by trainee), the youth provider agency may discontinue contracts with that provider. Trainees may be transferred to alternate work sites or placements may be suspended pending the outcome of corrective action plans at the discretion of the Director of Employment and Training, or designee.

Trainees will be encouraged throughout the training program to seek conventional employment and/or educational opportunities. Participants will be offered information on local job fairs and local employment openings at various businesses.

Trainees who do not enter conventional employment during or immediately after work experience will be re-engaged and encouraged to utilize the One Stop Career Center services and access additional employment and training resources to progress to greater socio-economic self-sufficiency. This will include attempts via mail, text, e-mail and calling Youth in order to communicate re-engagement strategies.

DEFINITIONS

Transferable skills (also known as work maturity competencies)

Qualities that can be transferred from one job to another. Behaviors associated with knowledge, skills and attitudes that result in positive work performance, and thereby enhance a youth's potential to retain employment.

Examples include:

- Being consistently punctual
- Maintaining regular attendance
- Demonstrating positive attitude
- Presenting appropriate appearance
- Good interpersonal relationships
- Completing tasks effectively

Job specific skills (hard skills)

Typically, observable activities involving use of tools, equipment, or the performance of activities specific to a particular workplace or job.

For example: Groundskeeping job specific skills may include but not be limited to:

- Cutting lawns using a hand or power mower.
- Trimming and edging around walks, flower beds and walls using clippers, weed cutters, and edging tools.
- Pruning shrubs and trees to shape and improve growth or remove damaged leaves, branches, or twigs, using shears, pruners, or chainsaws.
- Cleaning grounds and removing litter, using spiked stick or broom.
- Shoveling snow from walks and driveways; spreading salt to prevent ice buildup.
- Planting grass, flowers, trees and shrubs, using gardening tools.

- Watering lawns and shrubs, using hoses or by activating fixed or portable sprinkler system.
- Painting fences and outbuildings.

Work Readiness Skills

A broad range of skills which demonstrate a higher level of socio-economic self-sufficiency. Work Experience encourages and provides opportunities for exposure to and acquisition of work readiness skills. The scope and type of skills will vary depending upon the needs of the trainee.

Examples include the ability to:

- Organize activities and create schedules
- Understand how to build personal skills and access education/training
- Arrive at work/appointments using the best form of transportation
- Be dependable and punctual
- Anticipate problems and identify possible solutions
- Obtain necessary personal documents
- Understand requirements and responsibilities of contracts
- Open bank account
- Access community resources
- Establish independent living arrangements
- Explore career options
- Use labor market information to decide upon career
- Use variety of job search techniques
- Complete a job application, and prepare a resume and cover letter
- Develop interview skills to include follow-up after an interview
- Develop telephone skills
- Understand employment laws and regulations
- Understand employer's expectations for attendance and punctuality
- Understand expectations for timeliness of task completion
- Be able to work with little or no supervision
- Have a positive work ethic
- Manage multiple tasks
- Recognize problems, identify causes, create solutions
- Recognize and apply new knowledge and skills
- Develop higher order thinking and decision-making skills
- Specify goals, generate alternatives to accomplish goals, consider risks, evaluate solutions, and choose the best plan of action