

Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization Brief Summary

Input from the CWI-MIG Subcommittee

The Council on Workforce Investment is the state's federally mandated advisory body to the Governor on workforce issues. They have expressed interest in being engaged in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) revisions. A report from this Subcommittee to the Council could include (a) suggestions on disability-related issues for WIA reauthorization; (b) the relevancy of the workforce-related Managed Care and Employment Task Force Recommendations (Attachment A); and (c) any MIG initiatives, lessons learned, or innovations that would be pertinent for Council discussion to improve the workforce infrastructure, and training and employment placement services for persons with disabilities.

Possible question to kick-off Subcommittee discussion: What disability and employment related issues are currently at the forefront that the Council could recommend for inclusion in WIA reauthorization?

Workforce Investment Act Background

WIA of 1998 establishes parameters for the state's workforce investment "system" such as requiring Workforce Development Boards, program partners and One-Stops/Job Centers. The second major aspect of the Act defines the services and eligibility of various employment related training and job placement activities. WIA is not an entitlement program, and is only one of a number of state-operated training and employment programs [See attachment B for brief detail on these topics in Title I] The Act includes these programs that are referred to as "titles":

- WIA activities for Adults, Youth & Dislocated Workers (WIA Title I)
- Adult Education and Family Literacy (WIA Title II)
- Job Service - Labor Exchange such as Job Net (Wagner-Peyser WIA Title III)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (WIA Title IV)

The Act has nondiscrimination language along with regulations that provide a general definition of "reasonable accommodation" for individuals with disabilities. In essence, such accommodations are "modifications or adjustments," made on a case-by-case basis, "that enable a qualified individual with a disability... to receive aid, benefits, services, or training equal to that provided to qualified individuals without disabilities." The Job Centers must be universally accessible to individuals with disabilities, including physical, programmatic, and communications accessibility.

U.S. Department of Labor WIA Reauthorization

WIA was enacted as a five-year program. Congress has continued the Act while there have been several unsuccessful attempts to adopt revised legislation. The new administration has WIA on a high priority list for reauthorization. The U.S. Department of Labor has begun listening sessions focused on WIA reauthorization including its impact on programs and services for people with disabilities. A recent Webinar with disability stakeholders solicited comments on: what is working well in WIA and should be continued, what is not working well and should be discontinued or altered, and what opportunities does reauthorization present for innovation and change? Representatives from the Employment and Training Administration, and the Office of Disability Employment Policy participated in this webinar. Comments from many different state's workforce partners included:

- Include, with supported funding, the Disability Navigator Program rather than leaving it as a separate activity from WIA
- Require a Navigator in each Comprehensive Job Centers with specific roles including an Integrated Resource Team for a collaborative "systems" approach to service delivery
- Allow for local flexibility so that the Navigator can meet regional needs
- Require, with supported funding, training of Job Center staff at the front-line who are in first contact with people, case managers, and computer technical assistants to increase appropriate their knowledge regarding disability issues
- Staff need to be more knowledgeable to improve services for WIA's "targeted" population groups
- Dislocated Worker staff need to be better trained to serve persons with disabilities
- In general, staff need to be more knowledgeable about other resources like ticket-to-work, MIG, work incentives, etc.
- Require, with supported funding, training of County Veteran's staff
- Customized employment needs to be encouraged as part of job placement services
- Training and supportive services for micro-entrepreneurs, contract employees and other non-traditional employment needs to be encouraged
- Title II should be merged into Title I so that training services could be provided in a more fluid manner which would also encourage career pathways and apprenticeship, and improve services for people who have multiple complexities
- Detail expectations and require a performance goal for state's to meet "universal access"
- Two performance measures need to be redesigned to provide for less than full-time employment. Ticket-to-Work is addressing this issue
- Performance measures should measure the outcome of actual participant goals. Currently, the measures do not reflect that type of "success"
- Establish common performance or benchmarks for all related training and employment programs. Re-align federal programs
- Wrap-around services, tools and practices need federal financial support
- Require state level contracts with the Job Centers for One-Stop partners that are focused specifically on services for persons with disabilities such as Vocational Rehabilitation to identify roles, referrals and braided funding support
- Eliminate the mandatory One-Stop partners and allow the local areas to design their own consortia for collaborative service delivery
- Require One-Stop partners to participate financially to maintain the workforce infrastructure
- There needs to better ways for the "system" and workforce partners to work with employers for employing people with disabilities and developing economic and planning initiatives
- Strengthen and expand new partners around housing and healthcare services, developmental disabilities and mental health community agencies
- Youth eligibility is problematic for inclusion of persons with disabilities
- Require, with financial support, a Resource Coordination Specialist in the Comprehensive Job Centers to serve in a "pre"-case management role

The full audio transcript of this webinar can be accessed at www.workforce3one.org

Attachment A

"Workforce"- Related Recommendations from the Managed Care and Employment Task Force Final Report

Notes:

"The Department" = Now DHS

"MCO" = Managed Care Organization

Recommendation Area 1:

The Department should adopt a clear policy on employment for the managed long-term care system to guide all system partners in a common effort to achieve common goals.

Recommendation Area 3:

In support of full implementation of the policy on employment by the managed long-term care system, the Department should offer strong support, technical assistance, and financial incentives to MCOs in order to increase employment outcomes for managed care members, and should ensure that certification of MCOs takes into account MCO capacity to support integrated employment outcomes.

3-E. The Department should support pilots that, under the new (Social Security) *Ticket to Work and Self Sufficiency* program and in partnership with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) whenever possible, combine MCOs and their Provider Networks as "Employment Networks" and thus make these managed longterm care entities eligible for federal outcome payments for achieving members' integrated employment goals.

Recommendation Area 4:

In order to blend all resources available for individuals wishing to pursue employment, the Department and MCOs should strengthen coordination with system partners, including the school system, vocational rehabilitation system, and the workforce "One-Stop" system.

4-C. The Department, DVR and the Department of Workforce Development's Division of Education and Training (DET) should work collaboratively to develop and implement an interagency agreement (modeled after the existing interagency agreement on youth transition) for **adults** seeking integrated employment and eligible for services from these agencies. In part, the agreement should identify multiple strategies for blending funding at the state agency level to streamline the negotiations regarding specific individuals. The agreement should also specify the resources, including staff, that will be contributed by each partner.

4-D. The Department, DVR and DET should coordinate activities to provide MCO staff, DVR counselors, Disability Navigators, and DET Employer Services Teams with information, training, and/or technical assistance on their respective programs and services, and on how the various services available through DVR, DET and the managed long-term care benefit package can be coordinated to provide the short and long-term support individuals with disabilities need for integrated employment.

4-E. The Department should request that DVR and MCOs appoint liaisons to: (1) coordinate employment services and planning with their common consumers at the local level; and (2) partner with ADRCs in coordinating outreach efforts to schools, transition-age students with disabilities and their families. MCO and DVR staff should coordinate their employment services activities with "One Stop" Job Center partners and any locally coordinated employment services that exist within that Workforce Development area.

Recommendation Area 5:

In order to ensure all MCO members have a range of employment choices equal to those available to citizens without disabilities, targeted efforts should be undertaken to increase the pool of Wisconsin employers hiring qualified applicants with disabilities to fill existing or customized positions.

5-A. The Department should join with relevant state-level partners, including DWD, to provide interested employers with a single point of contact in seeking qualified applicants with disabilities. As part of these efforts, state agencies should consider whether and how this single point of contact might be created and sustained on a statewide, regional or local basis to offer customized assistance, which ideally should include (1) someone coordinating and communicating to employers the details of what and who is available from each of the different agencies and resources, and (2) someone assisting the employer to recruit candidates (consumers) as well as to support them once employed (e.g. setting up a job coach to assist with orientation to the workplace, training, etc.; identifying reasonable accommodations and sources of support available to help cover the cost, if substantial).

5-B. The Department should join with relevant state-level partners, including its state partner with primary responsibility for employment, to collaborate on raising awareness of existing state-level efforts, where necessary developing new efforts, and encouraging MCOs and local partners to

- Educate employers on the business benefits of hiring people with disabilities and the untapped labor pool represented by people with disabilities in our state. As part of these efforts, specifically, (1) engage Chambers of Commerce to ensure their member benefit includes this education, and (2) offer this education through Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM) chapters. Consideration should also be given to the possibility of undertaking a statewide marketing initiative aimed at raising business/employer awareness of people with disabilities as a labor pool and how employing people with disabilities can help businesses capture greater market share.
- Support an initiative to encourage business leaders/owners and other employers to develop their own message about the value of employing people with disabilities
- Encourage government units, MCOs, ADRCs and service providers to expand employment opportunities within their organizations for people with disabilities
- Engage with union organizations and employers with unionized workplaces to develop strategies to remove obstacles to employment of people with disabilities in unionized workplaces. Strategies might include the development of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) to allow more flexibility for unionized businesses to hire and retain people with disabilities in customized positions.
- Engage with corporations to address corporate-wide policies that may inadvertently limit employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

5-C. The Department should engage with state-level partners, including the Departments of Revenue and Workforce Development, to consider the option of implementing a state work opportunity tax credit, modeled after the federal tax credit, but offering tiered credit amounts to encourage the hiring of individuals with more substantial disabilities. Higher credits should be available to employers who hire people with more significant levels of disability (e.g. category one under Division of Vocational Rehabilitation guidelines). The amount of the credit could also be tied to the hours offered to a new hire with a disability, where the larger the number of hours employed, the larger the employer's credit.

5-D. The Department should engage with state-level partners on expanding and improving publicity of state agency efforts to recognize publicly Wisconsin employers for their

commitment to hiring individuals with significant disabilities and on how to encourage similar efforts at the local level.

Recommendation Area 11:

As individuals consider the possibilities around employment, benefit specialists should be available to provide accurate, timely and easy-to-understand information on the interaction of benefits eligibility and employment, including work incentives that allow individuals to work while maintaining eligibility for Social Security, Medicaid, and long-term care services.

11-D. DHS should encourage other state agencies to purchase work incentive benefits counseling services only from credentialed practitioners (when credentialing is available).

Recommendation Area 17:

In order to ensure all MCO members have a range of employment choices equal to those available to citizens without disabilities and are able to pursue their individualized employment goals, service providers should be helped to expand and improve their capacity to develop and support high quality integrated employment outcomes.

17-C. All employment service providers should be encouraged to develop partnerships with their local One-Stop Job Centers and to ensure that the individuals they serve are accessing the centers' available services.

17-G. DHS, through its Division of Long-Term Care and DWD, and DVR should partner on an on-going collaborative initiative to encourage its common set of providers/vendors to maintain staff who are knowledgeable of, and able to implement, the best and most innovative practices related to the provision of employment services and supports. As part of this effort, DHS/DLTC and DWD/DVR should collaborate to develop, maintain and regularly update an evidence-based, state-wide training curriculum for supported employment service providers.

Attachment B

WIA-Title I Summary of Related Issues

At the state level, the Department of Workforce Development is responsible for carrying out the requirements of WIA-Title I. The Council on Workforce Investment is the required state body to assist the Governor in the development and continuous improvement of the statewide workforce system. The majority of Title I federal funds are provided to the 11 Workforce Development Areas that have a local board to coordinate, plan and oversee the local workforce system including the Job Centers in their area. The state's workforce website is at <http://www.jobcenterofwisconsin.com/>

The federal Disability Program Navigator Initiative in 2003 helped to expand the capacity of the workforce system to better serve customers with disabilities. The Navigators serve as a resource to the workforce investment community, including employers, to bring together blended/braided resources around the customer's training and employment needs.

All of the mandatory partners, listed below, must complete a Memorandum of Understanding. The partners are required to provide core services that are applicable to their respective programs, participate in operating costs of the Job Centers, and agree on methods for referring customers among partners for a full array of service delivery. Each partner has their own funding stream, required services, regulations and performance measures.

WIA Mandatory One-Stop Service Delivery Partners:

- WIA activities for Adults, Youth & Dislocated Workers (WIA Title I)
- Adult Education and Family Literacy (WIA Title II)
- Job Service - Labor Exchange such as Job Net (Wagner-Peyser WIA Title III)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (WIA Title IV)
- Welfare-to-Work (No longer a program)
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families/WI W-2 (Added by WI Governor)
- Food Stamp Employment & Training and Food Stamp Workfare (Food Share)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program- Older Americans Act
- Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (and NAFTA-TAA)
- Veterans Employment & Training Services & local veteran's outreach programs
- Community Services Block Grants
- Housing and Urban Development Employment & Training Activities
- Unemployment Insurance

Representatives from national programs if funding/activities are present in workforce area:

- Native American Programs
- Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Programs
- Job Corps
- Youth Opportunity Grants

Eligibility to provide services to youth and dislocated workers are very prescriptive in Title I. Adult participation must meet the general requirements of 18 years of age or older; and authorized to work in the U.S.; and registered for Selective Service, if applicable. Each Workforce Development Area may have additional eligibility requirements such as income criteria. In addition, the federal Jobs for Veterans Act requires all workforce programs to serve eligible veterans and spouses first as a priority of service. The Act requires a sequence of services whereby an individual must receive a "core" service before being able to advance to intensive and training as listed below.

WIA Title I Core Services

1. determinations of whether the individuals are eligible to receive assistance under WIA;
2. outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling), and orientation to the information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system;
3. initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs;
4. job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, career counseling;
5. provision of employment statistics information including:
 - accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas;
 - job vacancy listings in such labor market areas;
 - information on job skills necessary to obtain the listed jobs; and
 - information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings and skill requirements for such occupations;
6. provision of performance information and program cost information on:
 - eligible providers of training services, provided by program, and
 - eligible providers of youth activities, -
 - providers of adult education,
 - providers of postsecondary vocational education activities and vocational education activities available to school dropouts under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act; and
 - providers of vocational rehabilitation program activities under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
7. provision of information regarding:
 - how the local area is performing on the local performance measures and
 - any additional performance information with respect to the one-stop delivery system in the local area
8. provision of accurate information relating to:
 - the availability of supportive services, including child care and transportation, available in the local area, and
 - referral to such services, as appropriate;
9. provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;
10. assistance in establishing eligibility for:
 - programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under this Act and are available in the local area; and
11. follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment.

WIA Title I Intensive Services

1. Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.
2. Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals.
3. Group counseling.
4. Individual counseling and career planning.
5. Case management for participants seeking training services.
6. Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.

WIA Title I Training Services

Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;

On-the-Job Training;

Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs;

Training programs operated by the private sector;

Skill upgrading and retraining;

Entrepreneurial training;
Job readiness training *;
Adult education and literacy activities * provided in combination with services (listed above); and
Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training.

**State Workforce Education and Training Programs by Funding Level
2005-2006**

(One year funding starting July 1, 2005, October 1, 2005, or January 1, 2006, depending on source.)

Program	Funding Level	Agency	Job Center Partner
Education, Training & Related			
Vocational Rehabilitation	\$ 67,158,436	DWD	X
Wisconsin Works	59,785,135	DWD	X
Workforce Investment Act	44,985,136	DWD	X
Community Development Block Grant	19,488,100	Commerce	X
Food Share Employment/Training	16,220,937	DWD	X
General Purpose Revenue Grants (varied)	13,861,700	WTCSB	
Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange	13,765,276	DWD	X
Carl Perkins Voc Ed - Post Secondary	10,839,800	WTCSB	X
Trade Adjustment Assistance	10,800,000	DWD	X
Carl Perkins Voc Ed - Secondary Ed	10,029,106	DPI	X
Community Services Block Grant	7,632,915	DHFS	X
Adult Education & Family Literacy	6,531,300	WTCSB	X
SBDC Training & Consulting Services	4,657,000	UW Ext	
Veterans Educational Grants	3,529,000	DVA	
Brighter Futures Initiative	3,456,500	DHFS	
Customized Labor Training	3,125,000	Commerce	
Veterans Employment & Training (LVER/DVOP)	2,991,000	DWD	X
Wisconsin Entrepreneurs Network	2,468,500	UW Ext	
Senior Community Services Employment	2,235,054	DHFS	X
Tech Prep, Carl Perkins Title II	2,001,500	WTCSB	X
Refugee Employment and Training	1,750,000	DWD	
Reemployment Services (UI Profiling)	1,600,000	DWD	X
Youth Apprenticeship	1,100,000	DWD	
Apprenticeship	1,735,000	DWD	
Veterans Assistance Program	1,319,045	DVA	
Children First	1,140,000	DWD	
Community Based Economic Development	712,200	Commerce	
DCFS Scholarship Program	687,591	DHFS	
Jobs and Business Development	537,500	DWD	
Retraining Grant	378,000	DVA	
WI Resource Center Voc Workshop	163,000	DHFS	
Troops to Teachers	161,000	DVA	
Business Employees Skills Training	100,000**	Commerce	
WI Resource Center Pre-Release	92,000	DHFS	
Income Replacement/Cash Benefits			
Unemployment Insurance Benefits	\$ 57,100,000*	DWD	X
Wisconsin Works Cash Benefits	52,441,965	DWD	X
Trade Adjustment Assist. Allowance	36,800,000	DWD	X

*UI benefit payment budget figure based on US DOL "resource justified" budget model; level is expected to increase based on actual experience.