

WIA Title I and Related Activities Manual

Chapter 13: Dislocated Worker Program Section 13.7: Priorities For Service

Effective Date: July 1, 2008, Updated April 13, 2009
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Required Action

Action:

The information contained herein is to be used in the development and implementation of WIA Plans and Project Plans to serve dislocated workers.

Who:

Program Providers of Dislocated Worker Services

Background:

Workers dislocated from employment have various qualifications for reentry into the workforce. While some individuals will have a substantial need for program services, others can succeed in finding employment with minimal or no particular assistance. Open enrollment for all can exhaust resources leaving limited or no access to the program. A system for screening potential participants affords an opportunity to best utilize scarce resources and facilitates continuing access to the program.

Program Providers of Dislocated Worker Services have developed methods for prioritizing enrollment and determining how best to utilize scarce resources. This policy will provide further guidance and lend authority to the positive steps taken to manage the program.

POLICY:

Department policy related to this issue (Chapter 13, section 13.6, Retraining Workers Most in Need) provides guidance for the development of plans relating to the retraining of participants with barriers to employment. This is in accordance with WIA criteria that requires retraining services be provided to participants who are most in need of and can most benefit from the program. Policies developed to prioritize enrollment should complement criteria for retraining enrollees who are most in need.

Policy and Procedures

I. Establishing Local Policy

Dislocated Worker providers must establish a system of prioritizing the enrollment of participants and the subsequent delivery of services. Written criteria are to be developed and implemented in accordance with this policy. The criteria shall apply to all dislocated workers served and ensure access and availability of program services throughout the program year.

II. Assessment of Priority for Services

Local policy is to encourage early intervention for eligible dislocated workers. Providers of services are to engage strategies that promote immediate assistance for workers in need of dislocated worker program services. Services are to be made available as soon as possible upon notification that a business will close or incur a layoff and that employees will be terminated. Under the State Dislocated Worker Program, services to long term unemployed dislocated workers remain limited to 25% of program enrollment.

Expeditious and Rapid Response to dislocation events and other notification information disseminated to dislocated workers exists to promote early intervention. Workers are to be encouraged to enroll immediately and made aware of the fact that opportunities for program assistance are limited, that assistance available today, may not be available at a future date.

In addition, local policies are to reinforce the fact that a dislocated worker is an individual who has had a permanent, long-term attachment to the workforce. This permanent relationship is evidenced by the employment history of the individual seeking program services.

The determination for enrollment in the dislocated worker program and the subsequent Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for services is based upon an individual assessment. The participant record documents the priority for enrollment and the planned level of services.

III. Determining Priority

Local policy is to encourage early intervention Individuals to be served and what services are to be offered depend on individually determined needs. Some participants require minimal assistance with job search, others considerable readjustment services or retraining in order to obtain employment. Assessment provides direction to determine what services will be required and aids in the development of an ISS to achieve reemployment.

Assessment is an ongoing process that reveals programmatic responses to dislocated worker needs. Priority for service is revealed through an initial assessment and the matrix of services provided is determined by further assessment.

Setting local priorities for receipt of dislocated worker services acknowledges the fact that resources are limited and that not all individuals will require Dislocated Worker Program assistance in order to become reemployed. Providing services based on an ISS directs resources where needed.

The characteristics of dislocated workers that establish priority for program services are listed below:

Dislocated workers lacking skills needed to become reemployed; or
Workers dislocated from declining industries and or occupations leaving the individual with limited or no opportunity for reemployment in that industry/occupation; or

Significant numbers of workers from a plant closing or mass layoff seeking reemployment with the same skills in the same or similar occupation or industry at the same time within the local labor market.

In conjunction with the characteristics listed above, dislocated workers needing priority consideration for program services also include the following:

Dislocated workers with extended tenure in the same industry, occupation or with the same employer;
Dislocated workers with other substantial barriers to employment.

Local policy is to incorporate a plan that provides varying levels of service appropriate to the assessed need for program participants. Whenever possible, participant retraining programs should build on the existing skills of an individual to more quickly facilitate reemployment. Examples of the mix of services may include the following:

Minimal basic readjustment services for individuals with marketable job skills who need help in locating new employment.
Basic readjustment services for individuals with marketable job skills who are assessed as needing intensive assistance.
Basic readjustment services combined with short-term training and or the acquisition of credentials or licensure needed for employment.
Retraining for individuals who do not possess marketable skills needed to become reemployed.

NOTE: no priority of service policy may utilize age, race, ethnicity or religion as a basis for establishing priority.

Reference Section:

Cites/References:

Public Law WIA 105-220, section 134 (4)

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