



Workforce Development

PRIMER

INTRODUCTION TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce development represents a portfolio of job preparation and training services and labor market intelligence that together ensures that workers have the right skills and qualifications necessary to meet the talent needs of employers when and where they are needed most. Workers are able to attain a sustainable income to support themselves and their families and participate fully in the community, and businesses have the capacity to succeed in today's highly competitive and global marketplace. Through effective workforce development, the community and economy prosper.

The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) represents the cornerstone of the public workforce development system and stipulates the foundational principles, governance, mandates, and funding for local workforce development agencies. Signed into law in 2014, WIOA builds upon the former authorizing legislation, the Workforce Investment Act, to strengthen and improve the nation's workforce system to help workers, including those with significant barriers to employment, obtain quality jobs and assists employers in finding and retaining skilled talent.

The U.S. Department of Labor is the administrative agency for workforce development programs under WIOA and allocates funding through three primary funding streams - adults, dislocated workers, and youth - utilizing a formula that is based on unemployment and poverty. Rapid Response funding supports employers experiencing a significant downsizing and/or layoffs.

USE OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Regions and cities which have a high unemployment rate and/or a shortage of certain types of workers benefit most from this federal grant program. Proposed programs which align with most or all of WIAO's tenants listed below are more likely to receive funding.

1. Strategic alignment among workforce development programs and between job training and employment opportunities through business engagement and relevant labor market intelligence
2. Accountability and transparency that is evidence-based and data-driven and responsible to participants and taxpayers
3. Regional collaboration between local workforce development programs and with regional economic development strategies
4. Quality and accessible services provided to job seekers and employers; improved services to individuals with disabilities
5. Enriched services to employers that include work-based training
6. Key investments in serving out-of-school and disconnected youth
7. Enhances the Job Corps program



QUESTIONS THE FINANCE OFFICER SHOULD ASK ABOUT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

The finance officer should be prepared to answer the following questions before accepting workforce development funds.

- » What are the grant requirements including administration and reimbursement of funds, compliance with federal procurement regulations, performance and reporting requirements, and audit obligations?
- » What are the requirements to collaborate with other regional or state agencies?
- » Which department or entity will administer the program?
- » How are an entity's economic development and other policy goals aligned with applying for a workforce development grant?

OUTSIDE RESOURCES FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- » American Job Center: www.servicelocator.org
- » Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA): <https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>
- » U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration: www.doleta.gov

About GFOA

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) represents approximately 20,000 public finance officers throughout the United States and Canada. GFOA's mission is to promote excellence in state and local government financial management. GFOA views its role as a resource, educator, facilitator, and advocate for both its members and the governments they serve and provides best practice guidance, leadership, professional development, resources and tools, networking opportunities, award programs, and advisory services.