



Consumer Choice (Training Services)

Effective Date

6/12/2024

Purpose

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides a framework for a workforce development system designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services. One of the key components of WIOA is ensuring that individuals have access to a variety of training options and can make informed decisions about their training and career pathways.

In the Northeast Iowa Local Area, we are committed to ensuring that all consumers have the ability to make informed choices regarding their services and support. Our consumer choice process involves several key steps.

Policy

NEIWDB will follow State ePolicy.

<https://epolicy.iwd.iowa.gov/Policy/Index?id=220&Version=1>

Requirements of Consumer Choice

Training Services, whether under Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) or under contract, must be provided in a manner that maximizes informed consumer choice in selecting an eligible provider.

1. **Career Services Determination:** Determining the career services that are best performed by the IowaWORKS Center consistently and career services that require contracting with a career service provider.
2. **Assessment and Eligibility Criteria:** Determine individual eligibility for training services. This includes evaluating the individual's employment history, skill levels, and career goals to ensure they meet eligibility criteria. This is a part of the OBA and ISS process. The IEP/ISS will outline the individual's career goals, the services needed to achieve those goals, and the steps required to complete the plan. During this process and the need for training determined, individuals will receive career counseling to help identify suitable occupations and training programs.
3. **Information Dissemination:** Title I provides comprehensive information about the available services and providers and programs. This includes details on the cost, duration and outcomes of the programs.
 - Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL): Individuals will use the ETPL to compare different training providers and programs. The ETPL is a state-maintained list of training providers who have been approved to provide training services to WIOA participants.

- This helps to ensure sufficient access to services for individuals with disabilities, including opportunities that lead to integrated, competitive employment for individuals with disabilities and sufficient access for adult education and literacy activities.
4. **Consultation and Support:** Career Planners work one-on-one with participants to help them understand their options and make informed decisions. They select a provider and program that best meets their needs and career goals.
 - Research and Information: Individuals are provided with information about various eligible training providers and programs. This includes details on the cost, duration and outcomes of the programs (e.g., completion rates, employment rates, average wages).
 - Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL): Individuals will utilize IowaWORKS ETPL to compare different training providers and programs. The ETPL is a state-maintained listing of training providers who have been approved to provide training services to WIOA participants. The ETPL list can be accessed at www.iowaworks.gov without logging in. Under *Job Seekers*, click *Additional Services*, and then click *Training Services*. Next, click *ETPL Approved Programs* to explore and review training programs.
 - Performance Data: Individuals are given access to performance data for each training provider to make an informed choice. This data includes metrics like job placement rates, average earnings of graduates, and industry-recognized credentials earned.
 5. **Selection Mechanism:** Participants can select their preferred options thorough individualized counseling sessions with their Career Planner and by completing the State of Iowa – Consumer Choice Worksheet.
 - Consumer Choice: With the guidance of their Career Planner, individuals make an informed choice about which training provider and program best meets their needs and career goals.
 - Consumer Choice Worksheet: Participants will complete the comparison worksheet of approved training providers to help them select the program that best matches their career goal. This document will need to be signed by both the participant and Career Planner and document uploaded to Consumer Choice case note. The Consumer Choice Worksheet is available on the IWD Employment & Training Hub, Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker & Youth, Title I Resources, F) Training, Training Justification & Consumer Choice.
 6. **Referral Process:** Once a decision has been made, the Career Planner facilitates the referral process with the chosen provider.
 7. **Participant Rights and Responsibilities:** Participants are informed of their rights to choose among available options without undue influence, as well as their responsibilities in maintaining eligibility for services.
 8. **Conflict of Interest:** The Northeast Iowa Workforce Development Board has conflict of interest policies in place to manage and mitigate conflicts of interest ensuring that all advice and support provided by staff are unbiased and in the best interest of the participant.



Local Policies – Participant Services

9. **Coordination with Other Services:** The ITA process is closely coordinated with other services offered by the IowaWORKS offices, including workforce preparation activities, job search and placement assistance and supportive services to provide a holistic support system.
10. **Staff Training:** Career Planners and other relevant staff undergo training to stay informed about the ITA process, consumer choice requirements and how to support participants in making informed decisions.
11. **Continuous Improvement:** Northeast Iowa LWDA has mechanisms in place for the continuous improvement of the consumer choice process, including policy reviews, feedback loops from participants and staff and the integration of best practices.

This process ensures clarity and transparency, helping participants understand how they can exercise their choice and ensuring that the process is systematic and fair. The cornerstone of the WIOA Consumer Choice process is ensuring that individuals make well-informed decisions about their training and career paths. Information and services should be accessible to all individuals, including those with disabilities.