

MESA COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Policy and Procedure

Title: Data Integrity and the Customer Participation Cycle for WIOA Title I and TAA Policy

State Policy Guidance Letter: MIS-2017-01

Effective Date: 10/23/2017

Revision Date:

Program: Career Development Program (WIOA) & Trade Adjustment Act (TAA)

Authorized Signature(s):

I. REFERENCE(S):

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, P.L. 113-128 – July 22, 2014
- Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 amended by Title III of WIOA
- WIOA Regulations at 20CFR parts 651, 652, 680, and 682
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-16, change 1: Performance Accountability Guidance for WIOA Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV Core Programs
- TEGL 19-16: Guidance on Services Provided through the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs under WIOA and the Wagner-Peyser Act, and for Implementation of the WIOA Final Rules
- TEGL 21-16: Third WIOA Title I Youth Formula Program Guidance

II. PURPOSE:

To provide guidance that ensures compliance with the participation, enrollment, exit, and follow-up requirements of WIOA and TAA. To also provide procedural guidance for the documentation and data entry of program enrollments, services, and exits that will ensure accurate and reliable data for compliance with USDOL/CDLE reporting and data validation requirements.

III. POLICY/ACTION:

A. The Participation Cycle, Case Management, Service Provision, Exits, and Follow-up:

Program performance measures are keyed to the participation cycle; therefore, accurate documentation and data entry of enrollment and exit dates, as well as reportable services and follow-up services into the Connecting Colorado database, are critical. The following sections define the requirements for each of these elements.

1. **The Participation Cycle:** For the purpose of this guidance, the participation cycle is the period that begins on the participation date and ends on the exit date. The term period of participation refers to the duration of participation cycle. The following definitions apply to the participation cycle:

a. **Applicant:** An applicant is an individual who has completed a WIOA or TAA application and has been determined eligible for the appropriate program.

b. **Participation Date**

i. For Title I Adults and Dislocated Workers (DWs), and TAA participants, the participation date is the date an eligible Applicant receives the first participation service (and is enrolled in the appropriate program). As used in this guidance, the terms enrollment date and registration date are interchangeable with participation date for these three programs.

ii. For WIOA Youth, however, the enrollment or registration date is the date of the first participation service, but the participation date is the date all four program requirements have been completed (see item e. below). Connecting Colorado will calculate the participation date for Youth.

c. **Participation Service:** A participation service is a program-funded, staff assisted service provided to an eligible applicant, other than supportive services, self-service, information-only services, administrative, local defined, or follow-up services. (Exception: for Youth, supportive services are a participation service). Included are career and training services that are provided by program-funded staff and specific assessment and training services provided concurrent with approval of TAA-funded benefits. On the date the first participation service is provided, an eligible Applicant is enrolled in the appropriate Program (See Attachment B, WIOA Service Crosswalk).

d. **Non-Participation Service:** A non-participation service is a service or activity that does not commence or extend program participation. Supportive services, self-service, information-only services, administrative, follow-up services, and locally defined services are non-participation services (Exception: for Youth, supportive services are a participation service). (See Attachment B, WIOA Service Crosswalk).

e. **Participant**

i. For the Title I Adult and DW, and TAA programs, a Participant is an eligible Applicant who has received at least one participation service on or after the date the Applicant was determined eligible.

ii. For the Title I Youth program, a Participant is an applicant who has satisfied all applicable program requirements for the provision of services, including eligibility determination, an objective assessment, and development of an individual service strategy, and received one or more of the 14 WIOA Youth program elements identified in sec. 129(c)(2) of WIOA. Local Areas have 30 calendar days after the date of eligibility to complete the 4 youth participation requirements.

f. **Exiter** - An Exiter is a Participant who has not received a participation service for 90 consecutive calendar days, has no gap in service, and is not scheduled for future services. Exceptions to this definition are listed in section 4b below.

2. **Case Management:** Case Management is a client-centered approach in the delivery of services designed, for instance, to prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans to enable participants to access needed activities and services. Therefore, by its very nature, “case management” includes administrative functions such as regular contact with training providers, an employer or the participant to assess training progress, employment status, or the need for additional services, respectively. Caseload management functions such as contacts with service providers, paying invoices, contacts with former participants to update employment status or to secure documentation, and activities such as data entry are certainly part of case management, but they are administrative in nature and are not considered a service that would commence participation or extend exit according to USDOL policy guidance. These functions are appropriately recorded as administrative services, and they will have no effect on the participation period.

3. **Service Provision:** It is essential to the integrity of participant data that services entered into the record reflect services actually provided to the Participant and that all activities involving a participant are correctly identified and accurately recorded in the participant’s Connecting Colorado record. In addition, whether or not the service was anticipated in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS), there should be a clear indication in a case note that the service will aid in the attainment of a goal(s) specified in the IEP or ISS. In other words, each participation service requires a case note that includes a description of the service provided.

4. **Exits:** An Exiter is a Participant who has not received a participation service for 90 consecutive calendar days, has no gap in service, and is not scheduled for future services. For an explanation of extending a gap in service beyond 90 days, see 4(d).

a. **Exit Defined:** (see 20 CFR 677.150 for full definition) – Exit is the point after which a participant who has received services through any program meets the following criteria:

- i. For the adult, dislocated worker, TAA, and youth programs authorized under WIOA title I, and the Employment Service program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act, exit date is the last date of a participation service.

- ii. The last day of a participation service cannot be determined until at least 90 days have elapsed since the participant last received services; participation services do not include supportive services (except for youth), self-service, administrative, information-only services, follow-up services, or locally defined services. This also requires that there are no plans to provide the participant with future services.

b. **Co-enrolled Exiters:** A co-enrolled participant cannot be exited until participation has been completed for all of the programs in which the participant is enrolled. This is consistent with USDOL's requirement that – at a minimum – there be a common exit date across WIOA, TAA and Employment Service programs, such as Employment Service (ES). There is one exception to this rule, as follows:

i. **Discretionary Grants** - Exit in a discretionary grant program must occur when participation in that grant has been completed or the grant expires. For National Dislocated Worker Grants, participants must be exited no later than the date the grant expires, but exits prior to the expiration date must follow the 90-day rule. The data entry procedure is illustrated in Attachment A.14.

NOTE: If an individual is co-enrolled in the WIOA youth program and any other program, and is receiving supportive services, this service will be considered a participation service and will extend participation.

c. **Extending Program Enrollment:** With the exception of supportive services, self-service, information-only services or activities, follow-up services, administrative services, and locally defined services, every service provided to a Participant (including supportive services for Youth only), once recorded, establishes a new exit date. It is expected that, in the course of reviewing the Connecting Colorado Caseload Report, the Case Manager will attempt to contact a Participant who appears to have become inactive to determine the Participant's status. If the contact results in the delivery of a participation service, the service and a case note must be recorded. An offer to provide a service or a scheduled appointment to provide a service must not be recorded as a participation service, although the contact and the results should be entered as an administrative service. Appropriately documented. Program participation is only extended when a qualifying participation service is provided to a Participant and recorded, or when an allowable gap in service is recorded in Connecting Colorado.

d. **Gap in Service:** A gap in service prevents an unintended exit from occurring and may be utilized by the Case Manager in one of three allowable circumstances:

i. Delay before the beginning of training;

ii. Health/medical condition or providing care for a family member with a health/medical condition;

iii. Temporary move from the area that results in temporary discontinuance of services, including National Guard or other related military service.

The duration of the gap in service (PG service) cannot exceed 180 days, and the Case Manager must document one of the above circumstances in addition to the participant's intent to continue services once the issue prompting the gap in service has been resolved. The Case Manager's case notes must refer to physical documents as well as notes from

the interview with the Participant specifying the reason for the gap and the Participant's intent to complete the agreed-upon IEP/ISS. The Case Manager may approve continued suspension of services for an additional period of up to 180 days to address unforeseen circumstances that arise during the first gap in service. A Participant cannot exit prior to the actual end date of a PG service. If a participant does not return from a planned gap to re-engage in services, the record should be terminated to the date of the last participation service. NOTE: A planned gap in service can only be entered by an MIS representative. Staff should contact their local MIS representative for assistance in storing a Gap in Service.

5. Follow-up Services and Follow-up Contacts

a. **Distinguishing Between Follow-up Services and Follow-up Contacts:** The provision of follow up services represents value-added from the participant's perspective, whereas the activity of following up with the participant through telephone, letter or e-mail contact represents value-added from the local center's perspective. Both are necessary. However, although regular contacts between local staff and current and former participants are necessary, this is an administrative function necessary to support case management and should not be considered a service that supports the individual's service plan and their attainment of specified goals.

b. **Follow-up for WIOA Title I Adult/Dislocated Worker Exiters:** Local Areas must provide follow-up services for adults and dislocated worker participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months, once employment has commenced. Follow-up services do not extend the date of exit in performance reporting. The exit date is determined when the participant has not received participation services in the Adult or Dislocated Worker program or any other DOL-funded program in which the participant is co-enrolled for 90 days and no additional services are scheduled. At that point, the date of exit is applied retroactively to the last date of a participation service. Once 90 days of no participation services has elapsed and the participant has an official exit date applied retroactively to the last date of service, the program continues to provide 6 follow-up services for the remaining 275 days of the 12-month follow-up requirement. The 12-month follow-up requirement is completed upon one year from the date of exit.

The State is establishing the following definition of follow-up services for WIOA Adults and Dislocated Workers: "Any career or supportive service (but not a training service) that directly supports the continued employment of the adult or dislocated worker customer." We expect that such services are called follow-up services in case management and Connecting Colorado, and that they are reported to USDOL as follow-up services. Such services will be entered in Connecting Colorado with the regularly assigned service code, but with the addition of the FL (follow-up) code (entered in the Related Activity field) for

tracking and reporting purposes. In addition, Local Areas will identify how the follow-up service supports the continued employment of the customer. This is to be entered in the notes section of the service data entry screen and must identify purposes such as “needed to provide transportation to and from the work site” or “needed to help resolve an on-the-job work issue,” etc. Follow-up services for adults and dislocated workers are designed to ensure job retention, wage gains and career progress but do not count as participation services and do not extend the participation period. Also note that, while follow-up services must be made available, not every adult and dislocated worker will want or need such services. Whether or not the adult or dislocated worker Exiter receives follow-up services, the Case Manager is expected to contact, or attempt to contact, the Participant who was employed at exit at least once in the 12-month period following the exit date. Supportive services also may not be used to extend the date of exit for performance accountability purposes for AD or DW. Supportive services, like follow-up services, do not make an adult or dislocated worker a participant or extend participation.

c. **Follow-up for WIOA Title I Youth Exiters:** 20 CFR § 681.580 describes follow-up services as “critical services provided following a youth’s exit from the program to help ensure the youth is successful in employment and/or postsecondary education and training. Follow-up services may include regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise.” Follow-up services may begin immediately following the last expected date of service in the Youth program (and any other USDOL program in which the participant is co-enrolled) when no future services are scheduled. Follow-up services do not cause the exit date to change and do not trigger re-enrollment in the program.

The exit date is determined when the participant has not received participation services in the Youth program or any other USDOL-funded program in which the participant is co-enrolled for 90 days and no additional services are scheduled. At that point, the date of exit is applied retroactively to the last date of service. Once 90 days of no participation services has elapsed and the participant has an official exit date applied retroactively to the last date of service, the program continues to provide follow-up services for the remaining 275 days of the 12-month follow-up requirement. The 12-month follow-up requirement is completed upon one year from the date of exit.

The final rule also states that follow-up services for youth also may include only the following youth program elements:

- i. supportive services;
- ii. adult mentoring;
- iii. financial literacy education;

iv. services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and

v. activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

Provision of these program elements must occur after the exit date in order to count as follow-up services. Follow-up services should be documented in the case file that they were provided as follow-up services post exit.

The State is establishing the following definition of follow-up services for WIOA Youth: “Any career or supportive service (but not a training service or other than the 5 allowed youth program elements) that directly supports the continued employment or post-secondary success of the youth customer.” We expect that such services are called follow-up services in case management and Connecting Colorado, and that they are reported to USDOL as follow-up services. Such services will be entered in Connecting Colorado with the regularly assigned service code, but with the addition of the FL (follow up) code (entered in the Related Activity field) for tracking and reporting purposes. In addition, local areas will identify how the follow-up service supports the continued employment or post-secondary success of the customer. This is to be entered in the notes section of the service data entry screen and must identify purposes such as “needed to provide transportation to and from the work site” or “needed to support continued attendance in post-secondary school,” etc.

20 CFR § 681.580 states that all youth participants must be offered an opportunity to receive follow-up services that align with their individual service strategies. Furthermore, follow-up services must be provided to all participants for a minimum of 12 months unless the participant declines to receive follow-up services or the participant cannot be located or contacted. Follow-up services may be provided beyond 12 months at the Local WDB's discretion. The types of services provided and the duration of services must be determined based on the needs of the individual and therefore, the type and intensity of follow-up services may differ for each participant. Follow-up services must include more than only a contact attempted or made for securing documentation in order to report a performance outcome.

Some youth may not be responsive to attempted contacts for follow-up, and other youth may be difficult to locate making it impossible to provide follow-up services for such individuals. Local programs should have policies in place to establish how to document and record when a participant cannot be located or contacted. At the time of enrollment, youth must be informed that follow-up services will be provided for 12 months following exit. If at any point in time during the program or during the 12 months following exit the

youth requests to opt out of follow-up services, they may do so. In this case, the request to opt out or discontinue follow-up services made by the youth must be documented in the case file.

d. **Follow-up for Co-enrolled TAA Exiters:** An employed TAA Exiter who is co-enrolled in a WIOA Program must be contacted post-exit according to the instructions in paragraph 5.b, above. Otherwise, follow-up contacts and services to TAA Participants are optional. Case Managers should note, however, that these services and activities might have a direct and positive impact on the employment retention and wage gains of Participants who enter employment.

e. **Follow-up Codes:**

1) **FN Activity Code:** A follow-up activity code FN is added to the Applicant Store Service Menu screen for Case Managers to utilize when recording a follow-up contact, which does not have to be with the former participant (e.g., could include contact with a family member or the employer).

2) **Related Activity Field and the FL Code:** A field has been added to the Applicant Store Service data entry screen. By entering FL in the Related Activity field, the Case Manager identifies a follow-up service rather than a participation service. In so doing, the Case Manager prevents the reactivation and extension of the Exiter's Program enrollment. For data entry instructions, refer to Attachment A.14.

6. **Timely and Accurate Data Entry:** Ideally, Case Managers will record a service immediately on the date the service is provided. The advantages of this practice are evident: the Case Manager, other One-Stop office staff, the clients and Program monitors all gain the benefits of accurate recording and timely data availability. While this is a logical standard for timeliness of data entry, adherence is not always practical or feasible. To avoid undue delays and any negative impact on data integrity and quality of service, this guidance establishes the following standards:

a. The maximum interval allowed between the date a service is provided (or begun) and the date the service is recorded is 14 calendar days. Although this is system enforced, local areas are urged to establish proactive procedures designed to assure compliance with this policy.

b. Recording a date of service (Start date) other than the date the service was actually provided (or begun) is prohibited.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Procedures for enrolling and exiting WIOA/TAA Participants and recording participant services. https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/PGL-MIS-2017-01_Participation-Cycle-WIOA-TAA-attach-A-Data-Entry.docx

Attachment B: WIOA Service Crosswalk https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/PGL-MIS-2017-01_Participation-Cycle-WIOA-TAA-attach-B-WIOA-Service-Crosswalk%20%281%29.xlsx

Attachment C: WIOA Participation Cycle Training PowerPoint
https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/PGL-MIS-2017-01_WIOA-TAA-Participation-Cycle-attach-C-Training-PPT%20%281%29.pptx