



Workforce Development Board Policy ☒

Standard Operating Procedures ☒

Topic: Basic Skills Deficient

Date: July 1, 2025

☒ New

☐ Revised

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Purpose

This policy outlines the requirements for identifying, assessing and documenting basic skills deficiency when serving adults and youth funded under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

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Policy Statement

WIOA Adult Program

Adults seeking services through WorkSource Portland Metro (WSPM) or WIOA Adult programs must be assessed to determine their basic skill level at the point of WIOA eligibility determination and enrollment. Basic skills deficient in WSPM or WIOA Adult programs is defined as:

Unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. This may be determined by staff during the enrollment process while working with the Applicant when at least one of the following elements are observed (and therefore assessed):

- **Adult Education:** Is enrolled in a Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, this also includes enrollment in English as a Second Language (ESL) class.
- **Limited English Skills:** Determined to be limited English skills proficient through staff-engagement and observation.
- **Staff Observation:** Staff make observations of deficient functioning in completing forms, assisting in the development of a service strategy, or behaviors in group discussion settings.
- **GPA:** Information (in writing or through discussion with the Applicant) that an educational institution the Applicant engages or engaged with determined them to have a GPA at D or below within the previous six months.
- **Special Education:** Qualifies for Special Education services or has an Individual Education Program (IEP) plan.
- Applicant is co-enrolled in another Portland Metro program that has made the Basic Skills deficient determination or is co-enrolled in another local workforce area where that Contractor made the Basic Skills deficient determination.

WIOA Youth Program

Youth seeking services through the Next Generation (NextGen) WIOA Youth program must be assessed to determine their basic skill level at the point of WIOA Youth eligibility determination and enrollment. Basic skills deficient in the NextGen program is defined as:

1. Have English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test administered within the last 12 months from the date of eligibility determination. A copy of the test must be maintained in the Participant file.
- Or
2. Unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. This may be determined by staff during the enrollment process while working with the Applicant when at least one of the following elements are observed (and therefore assessed):
 - Information (in writing or through discussion with the Applicant) that an educational institution the Applicant engages or engaged with determined them to have a GPA at D or below within the previous six months.
 - Qualifies for Special Education services or has an Individual Education Program (IEP) plan.
 - Is enrolled in a Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, this also includes enrollment in English as a Second Language (ESL) class.
 - Determined to be Limited English Skills proficient through staff-engagement and observation.
 - Staff make observations of deficient functioning in completing forms, assisting in the development of a service strategy, or behaviors in group discussion settings.

Basic Skills Documentation

The basic skills deficient documentation is staff assessment. This is documented in I-Trac with the assessment selection made by staff in the *Basic Skills Control*.

For purposes of participant co-enrollment across local workforce areas in Oregon, WorkSource Portland Metro will accept a basic skills deficient assessment/determination by any other Oregon local workforce area contractor.

References

20 CFR 681.290 and 680.600