



Northern Middle Tennessee Workforce Board Inc.

Effective Date: 10.01.2018

Duration: Indefinite

American Job Center Initial Assessment Policy

Purpose

This document establishes guidance to carry out effective intake, initial assessment, and determination of appropriate programs which will result in employment for participants utilizing services offered by an American Job Center (AJC) and explains the process conducted when a participant enters an AJC.

Background

American Job Centers (also known as One-Stop centers) are designed to provide a full range of workforce assistance programs within one comprehensive location. These centers offer training referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services for all Tennesseans, including employers seeking a well-trained and skillful workforce. Under WIOA any participant - including those simply requesting information about employment - must have access to technologies to conduct a self-directed job search, staff assisted job search, and to access other labor-market information. AJCs must make these services universally available and increase access opportunities, particularly for those with barriers to employment.

Policy & Instructions

A key service provided in the AJC system is the initial assessment of a participant's knowledge, skills, and abilities to support that participant's employment goal. The initial assessment determines needs and strategies to achieve sustainable employment; furthermore, training and supportive services are based on an analysis of information gathered from the participant during the intake process. The intake process may include the use of registration information, a resume, data collection, and/or the customary verbal interview. A thorough initial assessment will provide sufficient information about the participant's current situation which staff will use to create a service plan. Assessments must be conducted with each participant to determine their needs, goals, and services to be delivered.

Initial Assessment Process

Staff at the AJC will use the objective assessment (Attachment I) to learn about the participant's occupational goals, existing skills, and work readiness to determine whether or not the participant has any barriers to employment. This assessment is conducted in the context of current local labor market conditions by utilizing the tools and resources available through Jobs4TN.

The initial assessment process will include the following steps:

1. Occupational Goal Evaluation:
 - a. An analysis of the participant's occupational goal to determine whether it is favorable or unfavorable in the labor market
 - b. If the participant does not have a clear occupational goal, or if the participant's outlook for an occupational goal is unfavorable, then the participant is identified for career development services (i.e., career exploration to identify an occupation with a favorable, local labor-market outlook).

2. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities Evaluation:

If the participant's occupational goal has a favorable outlook in the labor market then the following questions must be asked:

- a. Does the participant have occupational skills that are currently in demand?
- b. How does the participant's work history, experience, and/or level or expertise relate to the participant's goal?
- c. Does the participant have transferable skills?
- d. Does the participant have the necessary education and training to compete in the job market?
- e. Is the participant unlikely to return to a former occupation due to local economic conditions?

If the answers indicate to staff that the participant has deficiencies in knowledge, skills, and/or abilities which will lead to barriers for sustainable jobs and earnings then the participant will be identified as needing educational, training services, or support services.

3. Barriers to Employment Evaluation:

This should be conducted if the participant's knowledge, skills, and abilities are proficient. Some examples of barriers to employment are:

- a. Health and physical considerations
- b. Poor work history
- c. Lack of references
- d. Child or elder care issues
- e. Criminal record
- f. Transportation issues
- g. Limited English skills
- h. Homelessness

If no barriers exist, or the barriers can be addressed during the initial assessment or a subsequent appointment, the participant is identified for job search ready services.

Note: It is essential that participants with barriers to employment who are in need of immediate income be provided short-term prevocational services that include communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, professional conduct, and financial literacy services to prepare them for unsubsidized employment.

4. Job Search Skills Evaluation:

This should be conducted to determine a participant's planning, preparation, and job seeking skills.

- Does the participant have job adaptation skills?
- Does the participant have an up to date resume?
- Does the participant need assistance with interviewing and/or communication skills?
- Does the participant know how to conduct an effective job search?
- Does the participant have basic computer skills in order to apply for work online and conduct internet-based job searches?
- Does the participant have social networking and self-marketing skills?
- Is the participant motivated to find work?
- Does the participant have a work search plan?

5. Services

Based on the information provided through the Initial Assessment, the Career Service Provider will determine the level of service and/or training commitment. With partner coordination, the following services and/or training may be provided.

a. Job Search Ready Services

These services are to be provided to participants who possess the following:

- An occupational goal with a favorable labor market outlook;
- Occupational knowledge, skills, and abilities for the occupational goal; or
- No barriers that might prevent obtaining and retaining employment

b. Training Services

These services are to be provided to participants who:

- Do not possess an occupational goal; and/or
- Do not possess the requisite occupational knowledge skills, and abilities to find work related to the participant's occupational goal; and/or
- Have barriers that potentially prevent them from obtaining and retaining employment

These training services will include, but may not be limited to:

- Work-based training skills with instructions
- Occupational skills training
- On-the-Job training
- Skills upgrade
- Customized training
- Training in a registered apprentice program
- Issuance of ITAs with other support services

6. Assessments for Training

To determine an individual's basic skill level and suitability for training, a training assessment of skills and education must be given prior to enrollment in training, and reason for suitability must be case noted in the participant's electronic case file. If an individual has tested within the last 6 months those scores can be used without re-testing.

If an individual is attending training at the time of WIOA enrollment and provides their most recent transcript/grades to show they are making satisfactory progress then they are not required to take a new assessment.

If an individual provides documentation that they have passed the prerequisite test according to the training program test then they are not required to take a new assessment.

Interest inventories should be administered to individuals interested in attending training to assess the individual's skills, abilities, interest, and work values. Assessments are used as an indicator to determine if desired training is suitable for the individual. Individuals already attending training at the time of WIOA enrollment would not be required to take an interest inventory.

7. Exceptions to this policy requires approval from the Board.

All assessments must be uploaded into the participant's electronic case file.

References

20 CFR 680.220; WIOA Section 129(c)(1)(A); WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(A)(iii); WIOA Section 134(c)(2)(B); WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(A)(ii); Workforce Services Guidance – American Job Center Initial Assessment Guidance

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