

Strategies for Effective On-the-Job Training (OJT) Implementation

Workforce GPS: New OJT Toolkit

This section highlights the OJT Toolkit, designed for local Business Service Representatives (BSRs) and case managers, offering practical strategies and user-friendly guidance to streamline contracting and strengthen collaboration between employers and the workforce system.

Key Topics:

- What the toolkit components are and how to use them
- Investigating how OJT can be used across various funding sources in the workforce system
- Ideas for initiating OJT to increase and maintain employer engagement
- Strategies to simplify the OJT contracting process

OJT is a powerful work-based training, and the Department of Labor's (DOL's) Employment and Training Administration has updated a toolkit to assist in implementing effective on-the-job training programs.

Reminder: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Adult (AD) and Dislocated Worker (DW) Funds can be used to reimburse employers for on-the-job training strategies, as well as partners in the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program, who also use on-the-job training.

- In times of worker shortage, OJTs mean developing a talent pipeline for employers
- OJT has the flexibility to be a retention tool

What does OJT Contracting mean?

The work-based learning tool involves sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in a real workplace setting or simulated environment. And these interactions provide in-depth first-hand engagement with the task required in a given career occupation.

The goal of OJT is to bridge the gap between training and employment by ensuring that the skills and knowledge gained through training are directly applicable to the workplace.

It also means you're helping to build the talent pipeline for employers by offering reimbursement to offset training costs and lost productivity while training new hires. OJT has demonstrated positive economic impacts in various situations, such as during worker shortages, layoff aversion efforts, and Rapid Response scenarios. It's also a highly adaptable strategy that can be used as a retention tool, especially in layoff-averse cases.

New components added to the toolkit are:

- Trade Adjustment Assistance Components
- OJT Across Funding Streams Chart
- All-in-One Resource

The chart below outlines the various types of expenses that can be reimbursed, such as reimbursement amounts and training duration, across WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and TAA programs. It serves as a quick reference to find what is federally allowable, though restrictions may apply at the local level.

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Features of OJT Across Funding Streams			
FEATURES	WIOA (ALL PROGRAMS)		TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE
	ADULT, DW	RAPID RESPONSE	
Reimbursement Amount	Up to 75% reimbursement to employers	Up to 75% reimbursement to employers	Up to 50% reimbursement to employers*
Assessment	IEP can be developed to show OJT is needed	Incumbent Workers can be assessed for eligibility **	OJT supports goals of IEP
Training Duration	Determined by state or local area	Determined by state or local area	Not to exceed two years
Participant Requirements	WIOA eligibility determined before employment	Review of pre-layoff wages and skills ***	Must meet six criteria for approvable training
Training Plans	Business Service Rep seeks input from employer	Business Service Rep seeks input from new employer	Business Service Rep seeks input from employer
Who Sets the OJT Structure?	Board Policy	Board Policy	State
Allow Employed Worker OJTs?	Yes	Yes	No

*For OJT approved training for a co-enrolled TAA participant, WIOA may reimburse employers up to an additional 25 percent, bringing the total reimbursement to employers up to 75 percent.

** Must be tied to layoff aversion strategies for a threat of layoff.

***Rapid Response can be provided before the employee has fully separated from the employer. A review of the employee's pre-layoff wages needs to occur, in addition to the employee's skill set to justify the need for additional training.

Updates To the OJT Policy:

The Policies section has been revised to provide local areas with key considerations for developing or updating their On-the-Job Training (OJT) policies. This includes integration of relevant policy elements, especially those aligned with the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program.

Enhancements to the Outreach Section:

The Outreach section has been enhanced and expanded to more effectively support the promotion of OJT opportunities within the Workforce system. Key updates include:

- **New Guidance References:**
Inclusion of Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) O3-23 and TEGL O7-23, both of which offer critical guidance on outreach and marketing strategies within the Workforce system.
- **Outreach Strategies:**
Updated strategies to enhance engagement with employers and job seekers, including targeted communication methods and practical examples.
- **Additional Resources:**
Links to relevant tools and materials have been added to help local areas in designing effective outreach campaigns.

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Refreshed OJT Contract (page 15 within the linked OJT Toolkit):

- The top section of the contract has been updated to include the funding source and show whether the OJT is standard or for upskilling, such as incumbent worker training. It also names the business liaison and staffing specialist, giving employers confidence that dedicated staff are supporting both their needs and those of the job seeker.

Company:		Contract Number:	Funding Source: Adult <input type="checkbox"/> DW <input type="checkbox"/> DWG <input type="checkbox"/> TAA <input type="checkbox"/>	Contract Type: Standard OJT <input type="checkbox"/> Upgrade OJT* <input type="checkbox"/> <small>*Upgrade OJT's are used as Incumbent Worker Training.</small>
Business Liaison:		Staffing Specialist:		
Company Address / Phone		Company Point of Contact: Name, Email and Phone		

- The monitoring section has been updated to include a fillable example of a local monitoring toolkit. This tool is designed for use with both the employer and employee, capturing essential information, training progress, safety, and workplace relationships.

Business Size (Circle one)	< 50 employees	51-250 employees	> 250 employees
Training Plan Is Complete (skill requirements listed; skill gaps noted)	Yes	No	In Progress
Instructor has subject knowledge, ability to teach such knowledge, maintains good work habits that reflect the employer's standards, agrees to provide progress reports, and has the time away from regular duties to carry out the teaching for the participant to be successful	Yes	No	Unsure
Outside Training Provider will provide progress reports to employer and WDB representative	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Business has not exhibited a pattern of failing to provide OJT participants with continued employment	Yes	No	Unsure
Business verifies WIOA funds will not be used to relocate operations in whole or in part	Yes	No	
Business has operated at its current location for at least 120 days	Yes	No	
Business is not utilizing OJT participants to fill job openings as a result of a labor dispute	Yes	No	
OJT funds will not be used to directly or indirectly assist, promote, or deter union organizing	Yes	No	
The OJT will not result in the full or partial displacement of employed workers	Yes	No	

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Training Areas:	Skills Rating for OJT participant: 1= Basic 2= Intermediate 3= Experienced	Max #of hours needed to be proficient (Fill out ONLY if no candidate has been identified):	Training hours specific to identified OJT candidate:
1.			
2.			
3.			

Key recommendations for using OJTs actively, consider offering advice to local business service representatives, case managers, or other boards on how to get started:

- Consistent engagement and clear communication with employers
- Streamlining the process to make it manageable for businesses
- Careful screening of participants to ensure strong matches and positive outcomes
- Setting clear expectations, including roles, timelines, and deliverables
- Thinking from the business perspective, prioritizing their goals and time constraints
- Building strong relationships through trust and ongoing support
- Understanding business needs and aligning OJT strategies accordingly
- Listening first, and then responding with tailored solutions
- Establishing boundaries and deadlines to maintain clarity and accountability

Following these practices can help create more successful and sustainable OJT partnerships.

Please email the Adult Programs Performance Team at performanceap.deed@state.mn.us should you have questions or need further guidance on this type of service.

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Date: April 2025