

Waiver: Use of Individual Training Accounts For Older, Out-Of-School Youth under the WIA Youth Formula Grant Program

Statutory and/or regulatory requirements to be waived

Minnesota requests the waiver of 20 CFR 664.510, which prohibits the use of ITAs for youth participants.

Actions undertaken to remove state or local barriers

We are unaware of any state or local barriers to implementing the requested waiver.

Goals and expected programmatic outcomes of waiver

Approval of this waiver would support two key strategies identified in *Minnesota's Unified Plan*: 1) improve service effectiveness and efficiency to workers and job seekers; and 2) align workforce programs, policies, resources and strategies structurally to reduce duplication and focus on the agency core mission.

The waiver is designed to enhance customer choice, allow older out-of-school youth to benefit from services provided by Minnesota's certified training providers, and expand services without requiring local program operators to register participants in the adult program and track resources separately for each funding stream.

Program operators will be able to provide additional services to out-of-school youth who can benefit from them without having to go through the duplicative burden of registering for the adult program. Approval of this waiver would simplify the tracking of funds as program providers would not be required to use and track funds from the adult funding stream for ITAs for eligible youth. The allowable service(s) would remain consistent with established policies for adults. Requiring additional registration adds no value to the program or the customer.

Individuals impacted by the waiver

Under this waiver, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) could be used for older out-of-school youth (ages 18-21) served with regular WIA Youth funds. These youth would have access to WIA-certified training providers to best meet their personal and professional goals without encountering additional paperwork that would be required if they were co-enrolled in the adult program.

Service providers will be positively impacted by simplified tracking if co-enrollment in the youth and adult programs is not required.

Process for monitoring progress in implementation

Local areas wishing to implement this waiver are required to state so in their Local WIA Plan, have a board-approved policy in place regarding the criteria for using ITAs with youth participants, and are required to track funds used for ITAs in the Individual Service Strategies for the affected youth. State staff review the implementation of this waiver during the annual on-site review of WIA youth programs.

Notice to affected local boards

Local boards and staffs were notified of the waiver request and given a thirty day direct opportunity to comment on this specific waiver. The comment period ended May 11, 2012.

Public comment

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) provided notice of the waiver request to local boards and staffs and posted the waiver request on its website for a thirty day public comment period, which ended May 11, 2012.

No comments from the general public were received. DEED received the following comments from local boards/staff:

WSA 10, City of Minneapolis (Teresa Harrold):

"WSA 10 supports the proposed waiver."

WSA 8, Southeast MN (Marge Kuethe):

"Workforce Development, Inc. is supportive of the waiver request. Even though we do not currently use the Individual Training Account, we recognize that this is a valued tool used by others and entertain the idea of using them in the future. "