

**WIA  
CLASSROOM  
TRAINING  
POLICY AND  
PROCEDURES**

# CLASSROOM TRAINING POLICY & PROCEDURES

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Limitation / Consent for Release of Private Information / Non-Discrimination Policy ..... 1

General..... 2

Assistance..... 2

Classroom Training..... 3

    Definition / Selection Procedures..... 3

    Clarification of Selection and Approval Process ..... 5

    Call Back for Dislocated Workers..... 8

    Selection of Training Methods and Programs..... 8

    Length of Training and Hours of Attendance ..... 9

    Short Term Training Program..... 9

    Tuition and Books..... 10

    Students with Disabilities..... 10

    Four Year Vocationally Oriented Programs..... 11

    Reassessment of Resources..... 11

        Full-time Employment..... 12

        Less than full-time Student Status..... 12

        Unsatisfactory Academic Progress ..... 13

        Suspension from Training Facility ..... 13

        Change in Household Income ..... 13

        Change in Program ..... 13

        Other..... 13

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**Limitation:**

Neither eligibility for nor participation in a WIA program creates an entitlement to services, and nothing in the Act or regulations shall be construed to establish a private right of action for a participant to obtain services described in the initial assessment or ISS.

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training reserves the right to change without notice any of the materials, information, requirements and regulations published in this booklet. This booklet is not to be regarded as a contract.

Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing and approved by the Executive Director or designee, and must be only for extenuating circumstances.

Below release is located on the Individual Training Account (ITA):

**CONSENT FOR RELEASE OF PRIVATE INFORMATION**

I hereby authorize the Financial Aid Office of the post-secondary educational institution listed on the reverse side release of information to the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training for the purpose of determining eligibility on my application for financial aid.

If I am selected for funding, I further authorize the post-secondary educational institute I am currently attending to release information to the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training for the purpose of monitoring my training program. This release of information will be registration of courses taken, grades received, and permission for the Office of Job Training representative to discuss with instructor my progress. I authorize release of high school transcripts, assessment test results, and/or any post-secondary assessment test results to the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training for the purpose of determining academic abilities.

The information to be released is private and subsequent use other than that specified above, or any subsequent release of this information, is expressly forbidden under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, unless my written consent is obtained. I have informed my post-secondary educational institution to release this information. I understand that I may revoke this consent upon written notice (not retroactive) and that this consent will automatically expire within one (1) year after the date of my signature.

**NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training shall provide employment and training services and shall promote employment opportunities which encourage diversity and are equitable for all people without regard for their race, creed, color, gender, sexual preference, national origin, and age, and marital status, status with regard to public assistance, religion or disability.

# CLASSROOM TRAINING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POLICY AND PROCEDURES

## I. GENERAL

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training offers training assistance to eligible individuals who have been formally accepted into full-time vocationally certified training programs offered by area vocational technical colleges, community colleges, some four year colleges and universities, and other accredited public and private training institutions. Authorization to provide assistance is granted through various funding sources as follows but is not all inclusive: the **Workforce Investment Act (WIA)** as amended; Department of Labor, IEG. **WIA programs are not Entitlement Programs.**

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training may provide partial tuition payment and appropriate support services to individuals enrolled in vocationally certified training programs. To receive assistance, participants must be enrolled in a vocationally-oriented program with a normal duration of two years or less. In addition to the payment of tuition costs, the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training may also provide payment for some required textbooks. Finally, participants may also qualify for a needs-based payment support to defray living costs while participating in training. However, this assistance will be predicated on information provided on the Classroom Training Application and/or the financial resources available to the applicant.

## II. ASSISTANCE

The following forms of assistance are available to persons selected to receive assistance, including persons enrolled in vocational short-term orientated training programs, and those who have been determined eligible for services and have been formally enrolled in the Classroom Training Program:

### A. **TUITION**

Tuition is defined as all instructional costs which have a direct and immediate impact upon the vocational training program in which the student is enrolled.

Activity fees, library fees, health fees, student center fees, state exams or licenses, parking fees may be considered for payment. Materials/supply fees and items such as hand and/or power tools, audio-visual equipment, photographic equipment, personal calculators, meters, computers, and expendable items such as pencils, pens, paper tote bags, brief cases, etc. will not normally be paid by the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training. Other funds may be considered when financial aid is not available, for example: uniforms for CNA.

### B. **BOOKS - If Applicable**

Books are required texts and manuals which have been determined by the instructor and the training facility to be necessary for participation in the vocational training program. Incidental reading material, reference material, and other non-required texts such as dictionaries will not be paid under this assistance policy.

### III. CLASSROOM TRAINING

A. **Classroom training** is defined as:

- 1) Training of the type normally conducted in an institutional setting including technical colleges, community colleges, private trade schools, and some four year colleges or universities. Professional or technical training may provide the best opportunity for the applicant or dislocated worker to secure suitable employment as rapidly as possible.
- 2) Training which provides technical skills and information to perform a specific job or group of jobs is always the goal.

B. **Selection Procedures**

With the overall statutory requirement that WIA serve those people who can benefit from and who are most in need of training opportunities, Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training reserves the right to determine who meets the definition of hard-to-serve, most in need of training and establish a Priority for Service. Every effort is made to provide equitable services to all segments of the eligible population.

#### **WIA programs are not Entitlement Programs**

**The selection and approval process is complex and based on many factors:**

- 1) Funds available at the time of application. Funds are distributed in the following areas: Counties of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis, excluding the City of Duluth for WIA.
- 2) Eligibility status of applicant based upon information provided on current Regional application.
- 3) Service to substantial segments of the population is based upon “most in need”, gender, race, age (adult and youth), disabilities, income, skills plus additional criteria depending upon grant or as determined by federal, state or local entities.
- 4) **WIA Programs (See Eligibility Requirements)**
  - a. [Adults Eligibility](#)
  - b. [Youth Eligibility](#)
  - c. [Dislocated Worker Eligibility](#)

**Note: Based upon continuum of services, a client might be eligible for funding but might not be selected.**

5. Current possession of Marketable Skills, as determined by the Office of Job Training, which is based upon applicant's educational level, including prior training, work experience, enrollment in full-time program, and the following training guidelines:
  - a) Institutional training programs are utilized only by individuals for whom such training is likely to lead to regular suitable employment and who can benefit from training. Moreover, the training must be related to jobs which are in demand, or are likely to become available in the area served; and
  - b) Funds **must not** be spent to train individuals for occupations with a history of low retention. Before developing a training opportunity plan, area labor market information( LMI ) must be screened to ensure that job vacancies are not caused by high turnover due to substandard wages or working conditions; and
  - c) Long-term career opportunities as well as short-term job prospects must be taken into account in developing training opportunities. An expanding field or one with career potential with benefits is preferred over a field in which employment opportunities are declining, if immediate employment is available in both. Selection of training programs must be given to occupations determined to be in sectors of the economy with reasonable expectation to have a high potential for sustained demand or growth; and
  - d) Training should **not be** approved for occupations that require only minimal skill training or where the employer has traditionally conducted all necessary training for new employees.
6. Correspondence Courses: No more than two "**On-Line**" training courses in any given semester (will be considered); while maintaining full-time student status and satisfactory academic progress.
7. Two years or less vocationally-certified program (certification is obtained through the Minnesota Department of Education or accredited by State of Minnesota and/or contiguous to the Office of Job training -Superior WI). Training shall normally be completed within 104 wks.
8. Placement rate of vocationally certified program (no enrollment will occur in a program which has less than 50% placement rate).
9. Financial resources and unmet financial need as determined by the training facility or the Office of Job Training which the applicant plans to attend or is currently attending and be eligible for financial aid, not in default status. This means **ALL students must apply for financial aid**.
10. Applicant interview process with staff from the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training and staff recommendation. Pending requests for classroom training will not be approved if an individual drops out of training prior to Office of Job Training review;

11. Satisfactory academic progress or grade transcripts.
12. Completed Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for review with type and level of services to be provided to the applicant/participant.
13. The final selection of which applicant is to be enrolled and funded is determined in the main office by the review/selection team. All of the aforementioned criteria are used in the determination process.

**The Office of Job Training reserves the right to change or modify the selection and approval process and policies at any time.**

**C. Clarification of Selection and Approval Process**

**1. There is no suitable employment (which may include technical and professional employment) available for an applicant or adversely affected worker.**

This means that for the applicant for whom approval of training is being considered, there is at that time no suitable employment available, either in the commuting area or outside the commuting area in an area in which the applicant desires to relocate and there is no reasonable prospect of such suitable employment becoming available for the individual in the foreseeable future. The term suitable employment means "work of a substantially equal or higher skill level or wages than the individual's past adversely affected employment and wages". Commuting area is defined as 70 miles or more round-trip.

If an approved training program was already completed, additional classroom training is not to be approved unless circumstances change and there is no suitable employment available. For exceptional circumstances, written documentation is required.

**2. The individual would benefit from the training.**

This means that there is a direct correlation between the needs of the individual for skills training and what would be provided by the training program under consideration for the individual. Also, the individual has the mental and physical capabilities to undertake, make satisfactory progress and complete the training. Further, this implies the individual will be job ready on completion of training.

**3. There is a reasonable expectation (not necessarily employment immediately upon completion of training) of employment following completion of training.**

This means that, for that individual, given the job market conditions expected to exist at the time of the completion of the training program, there is, fairly and objectively considered, a reasonable expectation that the applicant will find a job, using the skills acquired while in training. Any determination must take into account that "a reasonable expectation of employment will occur." It does not require that employment opportunities for the applicant be available, or offered, immediately upon the completion of the approved training. This emphasizes the point that there must be a fair and

objective projection of labor market conditions expected to exist at the time of completion of the training.

Additional classroom training is not to be approved after completion of approved training unless there is no reasonable expectation of employment or the program continues in a specialty area.

**4. Approved training is reasonably available to the individual from governmental agencies or private sources which may include vocational schools and employers.**

This means that training is reasonably accessible to the applicant within the applicant's commuting area at any governmental or private institution or facility, and it means training that is suitable for the applicant. It also means that emphasis must be given to finding accessible training for the applicant, although not precluding training outside the commuting area if none is available at that time.

In determining whether or not training is reasonably available, first consideration shall be given to training opportunities available within the applicant's normal commuting area. Training at facilities outside the applicant's normal commuting area may be approved only if such training is not available in the area or the training to be provided outside the normal commuting area is provided at a more reasonable cost.

Institutional training may be provided in another state only when the training is contiguous to the SDA (Superior, Wisconsin). Consideration for approving training in another state, excluding bordering cities, can only be done by a written request to the approval committee.

**5. On-line Training**

This means training that is available and provided through the Internet at a MN accredited training facility. In determining if this training is appropriate; all academic course requirements must be met based on the following:

- a) The Office of Job Training has determined that no more than **two** on-line classes per semester will be allowed for funding consideration, while the student still maintains full-time academic semester status (12 credits or more, summer full-time is 9 credits).
- b) No more than one semester of only on-line classes will be considered and must be accompanied with written documentation of the extenuating circumstances.
- c) Funding of classes not on-line, intermixed with on-line classes **will not be** considered for funding, if student exceeds the two on-line courses.
- d) Full time on-line classes or exceeding the two on-line courses **will not be** considered for funding.
- e) Student must meet the daily requirements and expectations as an on-campus class.
- f) The Office of Job Training believes strongly in the value of face to face interaction between student and instructor as it increases the effectiveness of instruction and the ultimate success of the student.

**6. Training is not to be provided to individuals who live in other states and want to attend training institutions in Minnesota under Adult or Youth grants, except some dislocated workers.**

However, adversely affected **Dislocated Workers** with petitions from other states who have **relocated** to Minnesota may be considered for training. Dislocated workers who worked for a Minnesota company, but resided in another state, maybe considered for MN state funding.

**7. The individual is qualified to undertake and complete such training.**

This emphasizes the applicant's personal qualifications to undertake and complete approved training. Evaluation of the applicant's personal qualifications must include the worker's physical and mental capabilities, educational background, work experience and financial resources, as adequate to undertake and complete the specific training program being considered.

Staff should ascertain personal or family resources are available to complete the training. The staff should note on the ISS that financial resources were discussed with the applicant before the training was approved.

**8. Requested training is suitable for the applicant and available at a reasonable cost.**

"Requested training" means the training being considered for the applicant. "Suitable for the Applicant" means that the previously stated condition is met and that the training is appropriate for the applicant given the applicant's capabilities, background and experience.

- a) "Available at a reasonable cost" means that training is not approved at one institution when, all costs being considered, the same training can be obtained at another institution at a lower total cost.
- b) It also means that training is not approved when the costs of the training are unreasonably high in comparison with the average costs of training other applicants in similar occupations at other institutions or facilities.
- c) This criterion also requires taking into consideration the funding of training costs from sources other than WIA funds, and the least cost to WIA funding of providing suitable training opportunities to applicants.

**9. Individual maintaining satisfactory progress.**

All students receiving classroom training assistance with the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training must maintain satisfactory progress as established by the training facility. Each training facility is allowed to establish its own written standards, uniformly applied to all students who receive federal aid at that facility. These standards, however, may vary from facility to facility. The Office of Job Training uses a minimum GPA standard of 2.0.

If the student receiving agency tuition assistance is not making satisfactory progress during a particular month, the training facility should notify this office. In order to re-qualify for classroom assistance, the student must be re-evaluated by the staff of the

training facility. If, at the time of the reassessment, sufficient progress has been made according to standards established by the training facility and the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training, the student will continue to receive classroom training assistance. (See Reassessment of Resources.)

If the student has not made satisfactory progress according to established performance standards, classroom training assistance will be cancelled until the training facility and Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training are satisfied that satisfactory progress has been met.

The appeal process should be as follows:

*The student should first follow the established appeal process that each training facility has for financial aid. If the student is still dissatisfied following the adverse determination, the student may also appeal to the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training's Equal Employment Officer.*

## **10. Determining Reasonable Costs of Training.**

**To determine reasonable costs of training, the following actions shall be taken:**

- a) Reasonable cost of training shall take into consideration the total cost of the training program including tuition and related expenses (books, tools, supplies, and fees), travel or transportation expenses, and subsistence expenses, if applicable.
- b) In determining whether costs of training are reasonable, consideration will first be given to the lowest cost training which is available within the commuting area, which is defined as 70 miles or more round-trip. When similar or like training for suitable employment is offered at more than one training facility, the lowest cost training shall be considered for approval.
- c) Training outside the applicant's normal commuting area should be approved only in situations where appropriate training is not otherwise available.
- d) Selected training that involves substantial, additional transportation or subsistence costs to the total training costs may be disapproved for agency funding, if other appropriate training is available within commuting area.

### **D. Call Back for Dislocated Workers**

Training may be approved for a worker who received a call-back notice but is interested in training instead of returning to work; however, a worker cannot accept both. A dislocated worker cannot be in approved training and in "suitable employment" at the same time. If a worker returns to "suitable employment", training costs will only be covered for the current semester.

### **E. Selection of Training Methods and Programs**

If suitable employment is not available:

- a) training opportunities are to be explored, identified, developed and secured; and
- b) linkages are to be established with other agencies, schools, or training facilities, as appropriate, which will return adversely affected workers to employment as soon as possible.

There is no blanket policy for disapproving certain types of training such as training for a teaching degree, Masters Degree or to limit technical training to a certain length of time. Each applicant has right to apply for funding consideration. The determination must be made on an individual basis and requested in writing by applicant.

#### **F. Length of Training and Hours of Attendance**

Staff shall determine the appropriateness of the length of training and the hours of attendance as follows:

- 1) The training shall be of suitable duration to achieve the desired skill level in the shortest possible time;
- 2) Full-time training is not absolutely necessary, however, it is preferable in most situations in order to complete training in the shortest possible time.
- 3) A single course may be the most appropriate training. For example, a dislocated worker may need a special course to upgrade his/her welding skills, or a person may only need one additional credit to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree;
- 4) Training shall normally be completed in 104 weeks (a "written extension waiver" may be requested by the student), participation in training for any amount of time within a week constitutes one week of training; and
- 5) The hours and days in a week of attendance shall be in accordance with procedures established by the training facility for in class and on-line courses.

#### **G. Short Term Training Program**

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training reserves the right to calculate and determine the financial need of a student enrolled in a short-term classroom training program which generally does not qualify for any type of financial aid, for example, students with disabilities.

An individual financial need analysis (FNA) can be calculated for each participant requesting short-term training (if needed). The financial need analysis process will assess and calculate the student/family's ability to contribute toward post-secondary education. This analysis involves a review of the current income, the income required to maintain the student/family, and the amount of money the student/family can be expected to provide toward the cost of the educational program. (This information can be obtained from the training facility or FNA.)

To determine the student's financial need, the total student/family contribution is subtracted from the cost of attendance. The student's financial need may vary significantly from school to school and from program to program due to difference in educational costs, transportation, room and board, travel, books, child care, tools, uniforms, supplies, personal expenses, etc. (Contact local Financial Aid Office and See FNA form.)

## H. Tuition and Books

1. **Payment.** Payments for tuition and books are normally paid directly to the training institution.

The trainee, who pays for the tuition and books (if applicable), must provide the Office of Job Training staff with receipts of the purchases, if prior approval was granted. Office of Job Training staff should make sure that the costs do not exceed the amount indicated in the receipt. The required books must be itemized by name and price with a dated receipt from the bookstore or verification provided by training facility that books listed is true and correct. A Request/Reimbursement form is completed to have book costs considered for reimbursement. Upon approval by the staff, the Request/Reimbursement form is submitted to the Fiscal Unit for payment.

### 2. **Funding**

#### **Regular Tuition**

- 1) Determine if the credits are appropriate for the training program;
- 2) Determine the reason why a student is taking less than 12 credits (if applicable);
- 3) Determine which classes will be paid;
- 4) The multiplication of the current per credit amount as indicated on the tuition schedule (by title) by the number of credits to be taken; the resulting sum is normally the approved semester tuition amount by the Virginia Office;
- 5) Final tuition statement submitted must be after the training program "drop/add" period.

## I. Students with Disabilities

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training reserves the right to calculate and determine the financial need of a student who has a Disability by WIA definition and is determined WIA eligible based upon the **Family of One** criteria.

An individual FNA can be calculated for each disabled participant requesting classroom training assistance. The need analysis will assess and calculate the independent student's ability to contribute toward the cost of the educational program. This analysis involves a review of the student's current income and resources, the income required to maintain the student and the amount of income expected to be provided toward the cost of the educational program.

The determination of the disabled student's financial need will be calculated by subtracting the student's contribution from the cost of attendance. The disabled student's educational costs and financial need includes special educational equipment (e.g. TDD/TTY equipment, a person to help with sign language, special typewriters, special wheelchairs, tape recorders, transportation, etc.). Any special student aid for the

disabled provided by WIA will be coordinated with the Minnesota Division of Rehabilitation Services, Minnesota Services for the Blind, and other agencies sources to prevent any duplication of services and maximize individual benefits.

#### **J. Four Year Vocationally Oriented Programs**

Before an applicant provides all of the required information, a discussion with classroom training supervisor and agency career counselor regarding the program, client's goals and placement statistics should be reviewed.

The tuition amount considered for approval of the last two years of a four year program shall be equal to the amount indicated on the Credit Amount Table. The amount per credit does not include student activity fee, health fee, computer fee, etc.

Approval of a four year program must be by the agency's classroom training supervisor. The review and subsequent approval process includes:

- Educational plan, detailing the number of all taken and remaining semesters, requested;
- Detailed outline semester by semester of class schedule or a completed credit audit;
- Placement rate information for course of study;
- Acceptance letter and registration form of proposed classes;
- Academic transcripts indicating number of credits earned with grades and indication of advanced standing of student (Junior or Senior).

#### **K. Reassessment of Resources**

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training reserves the right to continually reassess, which may modify or terminate the level and type of services provided, including the level of financial assistance to any participant. If the reassessment information is determined inappropriate for or at the convenience of and in the best interest of the Office of Job Training and/or the government, the participant may be terminated from the program.

The assessment process is ongoing and should not be viewed as a one-time event. Assessment is client-centered, diagnostic approach to evaluating the need(s) of participants culminating in gainful employment. The information gathered through the assessment process is documented in an Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The ISS is an outline of the appropriate mix and sequence of services, the justification of each decision; indication of any need of services including support services and the development of the individualized continuum of services that will lead to employment.

The examples listed below provide some clarifications when a classroom training reassessment must be done. The examples include, but are not only limited to the following:

## 1. FULL TIME EMPLOYMENT

The participant has accepted full time employment \*.

Full time employment is defined as:

- a) working as a paid employee 31 or more hours per week;
- b) working in his/her own business, profession or farm;
- c) working 15 hours or more as an unpaid worker in an enterprise operated by a member of the family;
- d) an individual who was not working, but has a job or business from which he/she was temporarily absent because of illness, bad weather, vacation, labor/management dispute or personal reasons, whether or not paid by the job. (This term includes members of the Armed Forces who have not been discharged or separated, participants in registered apprenticeship programs, and self-employed individuals.)

**\*EXCEPTION (Interim Employment):** Dislocated worker who accepted interim employment. Interim employment is:

- defined as for the purpose of income maintenance prior to, and/or during participation in a dislocated worker training program. The intent is that this temporary employment end at the completion of program participation, and participants would enter into permanent unsubsidized employment.
- must be with an employer other than the one from which the person was dislocated.
- a temporary or part time job providing transitory income that allows a person to participate in a dislocated worker program. Part time employment is defined as less than full time in accordance with the employer of record personnel policies.

## 2. LESS THAN FULL-TIME STUDENT STATUS

Individual maintains less than full time student status (11 credits or less per quarter). Consider:

- a) Will the less than full time student status go beyond one quarter?
- b) Will the individual be able to complete the training program in the time frame specified on ISS plan?
- c) Why is the individual not maintaining full time status?
- d)

### 3. **UNSATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

Unsatisfactory academic progress or is not complying with training facilities attendance policy.

- a) Documentation from school indicating participant is having difficulty.
- b) Written notification to participant indicating the problem which must be addressed immediately.
- c) Review and assess participant's reason(s) for the problem.
- d) Determination of funding continuance or discontinuance should be documented on the ISS or case noted.

### 4. **SUSPENSION FROM TRAINING FACILITY**

Academic suspension, financial suspension, or loan default

- If a participant fails to comply with the schools participation policy, the participant's funding must be suspended.

### 5. **CHANGE IN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

If the household income changes, due to recent employment, change in marital status, increase or decrease in household income, a review and reassessment of the type and level of services provided must be documented.

### 6. **CHANGE IN PROGRAM**

If a participant requests or changes programs, a reassessment must be conducted using the same uniform selection procedures used at the time of participant's initial enrollment. For any new approval to be considered, the participant must request in writing the reasons for requesting additional training or change programs. This request must document all extenuating circumstances.

### 7. **OTHER**

- It is the participant's responsibility to provide the Office of Job Training with written documentation regarding the temporary withdrawal from active participation in the training program.
- A written response to the participant must be provided regarding continuation or suspension of funding.

**In all situations, the ISS with any supporting documentation must be modified to reflect the current status of the participant.**