



DECEMBER 1, 2025

TO: All Western Piedmont Workforce Development Area Title I Service Providers

SUBJECT: Priority of Service for Adults Policy

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

EXPIRATION DATE: Indefinite

CONTACT: Workforce Development Program Manager

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Charity Patterson Hamber (Dec 2, 2025 15:38:43 EST)

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Workforce Development Director

PRIORITY OF SERVICE FOR ADULTS POLICY

PURPOSE: To provide guidance to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I Service Providers (herein referred to as service provider) on the requirements for providing priority of service to all covered persons and identified populations. *To rescind Western Piedmont Workforce Development Area Priority of Service for Adults Policy dated November 3, 2025.*

BACKGROUND: The WIOA establishes a priority requirement for the use of funds allocated to the Local Area for certain adult employment and training activities. Priority of service must be given to recipients of public assistance, low-income individuals, and those who are basic skills deficient, regardless of the amount of funds available to provide services. These priorities are in addition to the requirements that veterans and their eligible spouses receive.

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) has mandated that states work toward a goal of ensuring that at least 50.1% of the individuals enrolled in Title I Adult meet the criteria of at least one of the priority of service categories. States that continuously do not meet the mandated goal may be subject to findings or corrective action (USDOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 07-20).

Recipients of public assistance, individuals who are basic skills deficient, or those identified as being low-income, as these categories are further defined below, represent some of the workforce system’s most in need participants, and are the three priority groups that WIOA specifically mandates are entitled to receive priority of service (in addition to veterans and eligible spouses) for individualized career or training services under the WIOA Adult program.

Definitions:

Low-Income Individual (WIOA Section 3(36)): A low-income individual is defined as a person who meets any of the following criteria and will satisfy the low-income requirement for WIOA Title I Adult services:

Recipients of public assistance: Individuals who receive, or in the past six months have received, or are a member of a family that is receiving or in the past six months has received, assistance through one or more of the following:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP);
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program;
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program; or
- State or local income-based public assistance.

Other low-income individuals include:

- Individuals in a family with a total income at or below 70% of the lower living standard income level;
- Homeless;
- Foster youth; or
- Individuals with disabilities with an income at or below 70% of the lower living standard income level.

A youth 18 or older, who was determined to be a low-income individual eligible for the WIOA Title I Youth program, may be co-enrolled in the WIOA Title I Adult program without an additional determination of eligibility. They may be counted as an individual who meets adult priority of service if the original determination was made no more than six months prior to the date of co-enrollment. Under WIOA, an individual with a disability, whose family does not meet income eligibility criteria, will qualify for priority as a low-income adult.

Basic Skills Deficient Individual (WIOA Section 3(5)): The term “basic skills deficient” is defined as a youth or adult who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, or write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society. It is expected that any such basic skills deficiencies will be determined by an objective, valid, and reliable

assessment such as the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) or Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE). If priority of service will also be based on basic skills deficient criteria, then the participant's file must contain academic tests (including the participant's name, date of test, and results).

The priority of service for public assistance recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient is a statutory priority that applies only to the recipient of individualized career and training services in the WIOA Title I Adult program.

In accordance with guidance provided by 20 CFR part 680, TEGLs 19-16 and 07-20, North Carolina and Local Areas must apply priority of service in the order listed below:

Priority 1

Veterans and eligible spouses who are:

- low income, or
- recipients of public assistance, or
- who are basic skills deficient

Priority 2

Individuals who are:

- low income, or
- recipients of public Assistance, or
- who are basic skills deficient

Priority 3

Veterans and eligible spouses who are:

- not low income, and
- not recipients of public assistance, and
- not basic skills deficient

Priority 4

Individuals who are not low income recipient of public assistance or Basic Skills Deficient and have one or more of the following barriers to employment showing a need for additional assistance to gain self-sufficiency:

- Homeless
- Single and pregnant or parenting
- Subject to the justice system/court involved
- Individual with disability
- Poor Work History
- NC Registered Apprenticeship Candidate needing to increase skills to obtain employment at a self-sustaining wage or advance in their current career pathway.

Priority 5

Individuals who do not meet the above priorities may be enrolled on a case by case basis with priority given to those individuals who are at or below 150% of poverty level based on current funding levels and approval of the Workforce Development Program Manager.

Note: When past income is an eligibility determinant for federal employment or training programs, any amounts received as military pay or allowances by any person who served on active duty, and certain other specified benefits, must be disregarded for the veteran and for other individuals for whom those amounts would normally be applied in making an eligibility determination. Military earnings are not to be included when calculating income for veterans or transitioning service members for this priority.

PROCEDURE:

The service provider will be expected to ensure that a sufficient number of adults receiving individualized career and training services in the Local Area regions are from one of the priority of service categories: public assistance, low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Local policies and

procedures, to include monitoring practices, should be reviewed and updated accordingly to accommodate this policy.






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Final Audit Report

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