

**SUBJECT: Youth Goal Setting**

**REFERENCE:** Workforce Investment Act of 1998; 20 CFR 666.100; TEGL 17-09; TEGL 17-05; TEGL 18-00; and Youth Program Design policy.

**BACKGROUND:** In order to know that eligible younger youth (aged 14 through 18 at participation) are benefiting from the program services received, the Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data (WIASRD) tracks information on Goal Attainment. For a younger youth who is basic literacy skills deficient, setting one basic skills goal is required. By addressing specific issues, there shall be consistency statewide in measuring and documenting the goal attainment for younger youth.

**POLICY: Objective Assessment**

For younger youth, the assessment of basic, occupational, and work readiness skills is necessary to establish goals. The objective assessment process identifies the service needs, academic levels, goals, interests, skill levels, abilities, aptitudes, and supportive service needs, as well as barriers and strengths. It includes a review of basic and occupational skills, prior work experience, employability potential, and developmental needs.

**Setting the Goal or Goals**

Goals shall be set at the point of assessment. However, the date of the first goal set must be recorded as the registration date. [In NEworks, this date is the WIA participation date.] Additional goals may be set after assessment when called for by the youth's service strategy or when initial goals are attained (unless the three goal maximum for the year has already been met).

One goal (minimum per year) must be set for all in-school youth (14-18 years old) and any out-of-school youth (14-18 years old) assessed to be basic literacy skills deficient.

For the participant who is deficient in basic literacy skills, the first goal set must be a basic skills goal. Other work readiness skills and/or occupational skills goals may be set at the same time or later, as appropriate, up to a maximum of three goals per year.

A participant shall be considered “basic literacy skills deficient” as defined in the local plan, but at the minimum is an individual who:

1. computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below grade level 8.9 on a generally accepted standardized test or a comparable score on a criterion-referenced test; or
2. is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

For disabled youth, it is appropriate to set goals that can be reasonably attained by the individual according to the individual service strategy.

### **Types of Goals**

Participants may have any combination of the three types of skill goals:

- **Basic Skills Goal**

The basic skills goal shall be set to reflect a measurable increase in basic education skills including reading comprehension, math computation, writing, speaking, listening, problem solving, reasoning, and the capacity to use these skills.

- **Work Readiness Skills Goal**

A work readiness skills goal shall prepare youth to meet the expectations of employers by demonstrating measurable growth in:

1. World of work awareness;
2. Labor market knowledge;
3. Occupational information;
4. Values clarification and personal understanding;
5. Career planning and decision making;

6. Job search techniques (resumes, interviews, applications and follow-up letters);
7. Survival/daily living skills, i.e, using the phone, telling time, shopping, renting an apartment, opening a bank account, and using public transportation);
8. Positive work habits, attitudes, and behaviors, i.e., punctuality, regular attendance, presenting a neat appearance, getting along and working well with others, exhibiting good conduct, following instructions and completing tasks, accepting constructive criticism from supervisors and co-workers, showing initiative and reliability, and assuming the responsibilities involved in maintaining a job);
9. Developing motivation and adaptability;
10. Obtaining effective coping and problem-solving skills; and
11. Acquiring an improved self image.

- **Occupational Skills Goal**

An occupational skills goal shall measure growth in either of the two types of occupational skills:

1. Primary occupational skills encompass the proficiency to perform actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate or advanced levels.
2. Secondary occupational skills entail familiarity with and use of set-up procedures, safety measures, work-related terminology, record keeping and paperwork formats, tools, equipment and materials, and breakdown and clean-up routines.

**Establishing the Time Frame**

The target date for accomplishing each skill goal must be set for no longer than one year from the goal initiation date. If a participant exits before achieving the goal, then the youth has failed to attain the goal. The skill goal or the target date set can only be extended if the participant has a gap in services where they are placed in a hold status in which the participant is not receiving services but plans to return to the program. When they enter a hold status, the one year clock for the goal target date stops. The clock begins again once the participant is no longer in a hold status. Note: There may only be one extension per goal and the extension may only last a maximum of three months.

**Determining if the Goal Has Been Met**

Attainment of a goal is to be based on an individual's assessment using widely accepted and recognized measurement/assessment techniques. To determine whether a youth has met the skill attainment goal, a pre-assessment and post-assessment of skill level is required. There are a wide range of tools that may be used to measure skill attainment goals for youth. Local assessment strategies must include some type of standardized assessment procedure such as a written test or a performance-based assessment with a standardized scoring method. In some cases, a standardized test or a performance-based assessment may not be available (such as for work-readiness skills). It is important that the youth is aware of the objective measure that will determine success for the goal.

**Reporting**

Success of skill attainment goals will be recorded in the quarter of goal achievement, while failure will be recorded in the quarter one year from the time the goal was set if not attained by such time. NEworks allows for the tracking of goals and their completion.

**Documentation**

While flexibility is allowed, assessment strategies must include methods for documentation. Since participant records are subject to audit, local programs must ensure that staff document individual skill achievement and goal attainment.