

**State of Florida Waiver Request  
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act  
Out-of-School Youth Expenditure Requirement**

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**Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived**

The State of Florida (State) is requesting a waiver of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 681.410, which requires state and local areas to expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).

The State is requesting a waiver of the requirement to expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on OSY.

The State is requesting that this minimum expenditure requirement be lowered to 50 percent.

The State has been able to meet the required 75 percent expenditure rate for OSY since WIOA began, in part, due to local workforce development boards (LWDBs) reducing or ceasing services for in-school youth (ISY). The State is requesting to lower the OSY expenditure rate to 50 percent for statewide and local area activities because the State and local areas see a need to serve more ISY. The State seeks to partner with schools and community programs to serve populations such as at-risk ISY. By investing additional funds for ISY at risk of dropping out of school, the State expects to lower the number of youth who drop out of school.

The State will continue to serve OSY by providing occupational skills training, work-based learning, to include employer-provided training programs like pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship, tutoring/study skills, education and workforce preparation activities, leadership development opportunities, supportive services, mentoring, guidance and counseling, financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills training, career counseling, transition to post-secondary education activities, and follow up services.

**Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers**

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to implementing the proposed waiver.

**Strategic Goals of the Waiver**

The strategic goals associated with this waiver are to:

1. Address the talent pipeline shortages faced by many employers by ensuring the State's youth have the skills and preparation needed to enter the workforce and become contributing members of the local and State economy.
2. Allow local areas to serve OSY and ISY in a way that best meets the needs of the local area according to populations, resources, and other labor market factors.

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3. Expand opportunities at the local level for recruitment and enrollment of at-risk ISY who could benefit from the services of the workforce system.
4. Allow the State to spend its federal WIOA resources with more flexibility.

**Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL)/Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Policy Priorities**

WIOA encourages strategies that connect education and training, support work-based learning, and improve job and career results. This waiver will increase at-risk ISY access to opportunities for necessary education, training, employment, and support services. Generally, this waiver will align with WIOA's career pathways strategy and prepare more ISY for in-demand careers. Approving this waiver request will increase the connection between education and training, provide work-based learning opportunities that include work experience and pre-apprenticeship, and increase access to workforce services for ISY. Specifically, this waiver will align with the following USDOL policy priorities, as found in the USDOL Fiscal Year 2018 – 2022 Strategic Plan, WIOA, and federal regulations:

- The USDOL ETA has a strategic objective to create customer-focused workforce solutions for American workers, including development of a strong youth pipeline.
- The ETA has prioritized improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of workforce development programs, including supporting state and local flexibilities to enable these entities to effectively tailor their workforce strategies to meet their needs.
- The ETA focuses on programs that support work-based learning, skills development, and work readiness while promoting training strategies that lead to credential attainment and closing the skills gap.
- The ETA has prioritized implementation of evidence-based programs and strategies, including adoption of proven programs and strategies.
- WIOA places a strong emphasis on work experience for youth participants, requiring that 20 percent of WIOA Youth funding be expended on this element.
- WIOA promotes strong partnerships to leverage resources and increase opportunities for youth.
- WIOA prioritizes participant success, as measured by skill gains, entry into and retention of employment or post-secondary education attendance, and achievement of an industry-recognized credential.

**Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver**

This waiver will allow the State and LWDBs to develop strategies that address challenges of at-risk youth whether in school or out and will help address student retention, engagement, and immediate transition to post-secondary education, meaningful employment, and/or the military. Expected outcomes for youth participants include an increase of five percent in the:

- Number who attain a measurable skill gain.
- Number who attend post-secondary education.
- Number who participate in occupational skills training.
- Number of ISY who participate in work experience opportunities.
- Number who earn an industry-recognized credential.

**Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver**

1. Future employers
2. Florida at-risk ISY and OSY populations
3. Youth service providers
4. Florida career centers and the one-stop delivery system

#### **The Process to Monitor the Waived Activities and Collect Waiver Outcome Information**

Annual WIOA on-site and remote programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how the waiver is being utilized locally and the success of achieving the stated goals and outcomes. Youth service providers will also be responsible for assessing the use and effectiveness of the waiver.

#### **Opportunity for Local Board and Public Comment on the Waiver**

Workforce development stakeholders, including LWDBs, businesses, and Chief Elected Officials, will be notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and posting on the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's website. This will include instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the general public and stakeholders will have access to the waiver request on the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity's website: [www.floridajobs.org](http://www.floridajobs.org). The public comment period will be open for 14 calendar days.