

State of Florida Waiver Request Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) In-School Youth Individual Training Accounts

Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida (State) is requesting a renewal of the waiver of 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 681.550, which allows Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) individual training accounts (ITAs) for out-of-school youth (OSY), ages 16 to 24, using WIOA youth funds when appropriate.

20 CFR 681.550 allows ITAs funded by WIOA youth funds to be used for OSY. The final rule did not expand the use of ITAs for in-school youth (ISY). Instead, ISY wishing to access ITAs may only do so through co-enrollment in the WIOA Adult program. The State would like to waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only OSY and expand this use of ITAs to ISY, ages 14-21. Over the prior three program years (PY), Florida served 23,443 OSY and 7,044 ISY. Additionally, from PYs 2020-2021 to 2021-2022, Florida experienced a 62.5 percent decrease in the number of ISY served. Waiver of this requirement will provide greater flexibility with, and increase the State's capacity for, responding to the training and employment needs of the State's youth.

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

There are no state, local, statutory, or regulatory barriers to implementing the 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. Increase opportunities for youth to acquire occupational skills in post-secondary settings irrespective of their education status.
3. Enhance partnerships with schools and preparing ISY for post-secondary education in occupations that lead to self-sufficiency.

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration Policy Priorities

WIOA encourages strategies that connect education and training and support educational opportunities to improve job and career results. This waiver request is being made to permit local workforce development boards' use of the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to provide training through an ITA to ISY who are preparing to complete secondary education and begin post-secondary education.

This waiver request will also increase the connection between education and training by providing work-based learning opportunities that include work experiences and will increase access to workforce services for ISY.

Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

The State expects to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes as a result of this waiver:

1. Improve the local workforce development boards' and youth service providers' ability to respond to the workforce needs of ISY.
2. Increase the number of youth who utilize an ITA to pursue an industry-recognized postsecondary credential by five percent.
3. Increase access to, and engagement of, ISY in need of post-secondary education, training, and support necessary to succeed in the labor market and meet current high-growth industry demand in the State through acquisition of portable credentials, college credit, and a degree.
4. Improvement in the primary indicators of performance for the WIOA Youth program as set forth in WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii), thus increasing credential attainment and measurable skills gains by five percent.
5. Increase the number of prepared youth candidates who are ready to work by five percent.

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

1. Employers.
2. The State's ISY populations.
3. Youth service providers.
4. The State's 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.

Most Recent Data Available Regarding the Results and Outcomes Observed Through the Implementation of the Existing Waiver

The State's waiver request was approved on March 9, 2023, and was implemented by the state leading into PY 2023. Therefore, the State and local workforce development boards (LWDBs) are continuing to develop strategies to fully operationalize this waiver and do not yet have a full program year of data to evaluate the outcomes observed through the implementation of the waiver. In the interim, the below data represents information available for the most recent fully complete program years.

In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth Enrolled in Education or Training Programs Leading to Credentials

PY	Program	OSY in Education and Training	OSY w/ Measurable skill gains	OSY Measurable Skill Gain Rate	ISY in Education and Training	ISY with Measurable Skill Gain	ISY Measurable Skill Gain Rate
2021	Youth	2843	2018	71.0%	1107	727	65.7%
2022	Youth	2976	2254	75.7%	843	707	83.9%

The above chart provides the number of ISY and OSY enrolled in education or training programs leading to a recognized credential by PY.

**In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth
Enrolled in Education or Training Using an Individual Training Account**

PY	Program	Education and Training	Training Accounts	ISY Enrolled in Education and Training	Using Individual Training Accounts
2021	Youth	2843	804	1107	28
2022	Youth	2976	846	843	14

The above chart reflects the number of OSY and ISY that were enrolled in education or training and utilized an ITA to pursue an industry-recognized postsecondary credential. Based on the data provided, the number of youth using an ITA in PY 2022 decreased by 50 percent from the prior year. The State anticipates that as more LWDBs and youth service providers pivot to respond to the workforce needs of ISY, there will be a continued increase in the current and upcoming program years.

Opportunity for Local Workforce Development Board and Public Comment on the Waiver

Workforce development stakeholders, including LWDBs, businesses, and Chief Local Elected Officials, were notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and post on CareerSource Florida's website. This included instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on CareerSource Florida's website, CareerSourceFlorida.com, in the WIOA combined plan. The public comment period was open for 30 calendar days; no comments were received.