

**State of Florida Waiver Request
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
20 Percent Youth Expenditure Waiver Request**

Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida is requesting a waiver of the requirements in WIOA Section 129(c)(4) and 20 CFR 681.590(b) to allow local workforce development areas to count both WIOA local youth formula funds and TANF funds toward the minimum 20 percent expenditure requirement for paid or unpaid work experience. Although Florida met its expenditure requirement for program years (PYs) 2023 (25.3%) and 2024 (23.9%), there are a number of local workforce development boards (LWDBs) that continue to struggle to meet this requirement annually.

This waiver will allow Florida to count TANF funds spent on co-enrolled youth in the work experience expenditure calculation. It will facilitate partnerships across youth-serving agencies such as the Florida Department of Commerce and the Florida Department of Children and Families, as well as efficiencies with federal funds. The state will be able to leverage multiple funding sources to serve youth effectively, freeing up Title I Youth funds to expand access to other meaningful work-based learning opportunities such as credential attainment, occupational skills training aligned with in-demand sectors, registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship, and the delivery of supportive services to increase participation in these activities. This waiver enables local areas to maximize available resources while reducing administrative barriers and preserving WIOA funds for other critical youth services. Additionally, unemployment rate estimates¹ for Florida's youth have increased 3.4 percentage points since the most recent low of 7.6% in April 2025. This represents over five times the increase in youth unemployment rates reported at the national level over the same time period. Florida's request to allow increased focus on occupational skills training and work experience is an effort to close this gap.

This waiver request aligns with TEGL 05-25 and Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation, of America's Talent Strategy.

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

The State has provided technical assistance and training to local staff and strengthened partnerships between workforce boards and TANF agencies through initiatives like Hope Florida to reduce administrative burden and expand access to paid and unpaid work experience opportunities for youth. There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to allowing local workforce development areas to count both WIOA local youth formula funds and TANF funds toward the minimum 20 percent expenditure requirement for paid or unpaid work experiences. The only barrier is the federal requirement that the state is seeking to waive.

Strategic Goals of the Waiver

This waiver supports the State's strategic goals by:

1. Expanding opportunities for youth to engage in meaningful work-based learning opportunities.

¹ Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Population Survey

2. Maximizing available resources and reducing administrative barriers through reducing the duplication of services across programs and agencies.
3. Allowing local workforce development boards to more effectively respond to local needs in the expenditure of funds available to serve youth.
4. Improve services to Florida businesses and job seekers by aligning and expanding partnerships that leverage and braid funding and coordinate programming to improve outcomes and accountability.
5. Reducing welfare dependency and increasing economic self-sufficiency for Floridians by focusing on community collaboration between workforce, education, industry, and other partners to break down silos and maximize the effectiveness of workforce development efforts.

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 05-25 encourages state workforce development boards to review current policies and practices to maximize opportunities provided by WIOA to modernize and innovate operations and optimize service delivery of workforce development programs.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation: Creating new models of workforce innovation built to match the speed and scale of AI-driven economic transformation. By allowing local workforce development boards the flexibility to use their financial resources in a way that maximizes work experiences for youth, Florida will improve outcomes for WIOA youth and assist local employers by creating a talent pipeline that is responsive to their specific needs.

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. Increased number of youths participating in paid or unpaid work experiences, including, but not limited to, on-the-job training and preapprenticeships by five percent.
2. Improve the provision of business services to local employers by creating a pool of candidates for employment that is tailored to local needs.
3. Expanded number of employers offering work-based learning opportunities to youth by five percent.
4. Increased percent of local workforce development areas that meet or exceed the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement.
5. Improved youth employment and credential attainment outcomes following program participation.

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

1. WIOA youth participants
2. Employers
3. Local Workforce Development Boards
4. Families that receive public assistance

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 used locally and the success of achieving the stated goals and outcomes. Local workforce development boards will also be responsible for assessing the use and effectiveness of the waiver. Local areas will also be required to report on implementation and performance as a result of the waiver in their local and regional plans.

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

The State of Florida does not have a waiver related to this requirement at present.

Below are current baseline data points considered related to the requested waiver. Based on the WIOA data², Florida is trending downward and will need to take direct action to reverse and improve the trend(s).

- Number of youth participating in paid and unpaid work experience were: 1,862 in PY 2023; 1,291 in PY 2024; and 387 in PY 2025 Q2.
- Number of youth participating in on-the-job training were: 49 in PY 2023, 30 in PY 2024, and 29 in PY 2025 Q2
- Number of youth participating in pre-apprenticeships were: 61 in PY 2023; 51 in PY 2024; and 26 in PY 2025 Q2.
- Deduplicated number of youth in paid/unpaid work experience, on-the-job training, and pre-apprenticeships were: 1,933 in PY 2023; 1,334 in PY 2024; and 426 in PY 2025 Q2.
- Number of employers participating in on-the-job training activities were: 1,570 in PY 2023; 2,021 in PY 2024; and 1,105 in PY 2025 Q2.
- Number of employers participating in pre-apprenticeship activities were: 6 in PY 2023; 8 in PY 2024; and 7 in PY 2025 Q2.

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 (shown below). There were no comments received.

² Employ Florida Marketplace data extracted 5/7/2026

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