

Policy Name:	WIOA Youth Basic Skills Deficient Policy
Date Approved	February 28, 2020
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Owner	Workforce Manager – Youth
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REFERENCE: 20 CFR § 681.290

BACKGROUND

Eligibility criteria for WIOA Youth Services consist of two primary components income eligibility, and employment barriers as found in WIOA Section 129 (a)(1)(B).

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) allows LWDBs areas to provide services to youth who are low income, but do not meet one of the WIOA identified barriers. These participants can be considered “basic skills deficient” In alignment with the local policy, to determine Basic Skills Deficiency (BSD) used for program enrollment of:

- i. WIOA Out-of-School-Youth (OSY) who have a high school diploma or its equivalent, are low income and Basic Skills Deficient or an English Language Learner
- ii. WIOA In-School Youth (ISY) who are Basic Skills Deficient

BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT

- (1) Have English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- (2) Are unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.
 - (b) The State or Local WDB must establish its policy on paragraph (a)(2) of this section in its respective State or local plan.
 - (c) In assessing basic skills, local programs must use assessment instruments that are valid and appropriate for the target population, and must provide reasonable accommodation in the assessment process, if necessary, for individuals with disabilities.

POLICY

For eligibility under WIOA using “Basic Skills Deficiency” as the youth’s eligibility criteria, Out of School Youth (OSY) must be between the ages of 16-24 at the time of eligibility determination, and they must have a high school or HSE diploma and be basic skills deficient and must be low income. Being Basic Skills Deficient alone does not make a youth eligible for WIOA services. All four (4) criteria must be met: age 16-24, HS/HSE diploma, Basic Skills Deficient and low income.

For eligibility under WIOA using “Basic Skills Deficiency” as the youth’s eligibility criteria, In School Youth (ISY) must be between the ages of 14-21 at the time of determining eligibility and attending or enrolled in secondary or for-credit postsecondary school at the time of eligibility determination and low income and basic skills deficient (either deficient in basic literacy skills or an English Language learner who is deficient in basic literacy skills). All four (4) criteria must be met: age 14-21, attending/enrolled in school, low income, and Basic Skills Deficient.

Youth program staff will utilize approved assessments to clarify participant need, career goals, and skill gaps that can be addressed with program services through the WIOA 14 Required Elements. Approved

assessments are in accordance with the current legislative regulations for youth assessment and eligibility. All assessments or determinations must be made within 60 days of the initial application. Formal assessment results within the last six months, provided by the participant or a partner agency, are acceptable to use.

ASSESSMENTS PERMITTED

1. Approved standardized testing instrument to demonstrate a youth reads and/or computes math at or below the 8th grade level, determined using the National Reporting System (NRS) Educational Functioning Level 4 (“High Intermediate Basic Education”):
 - a. Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)
2. Basic Skills Deficiency for WIOA youth program eligibility for youth who are unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society will be determining utilizing one (1) of the following assessments:
 - a. Prove It: Basic Reading Comprehension
 - b. Prove It: Basic Arithmetic
 - c. Prove It: Math & Reasoning Skills
 - d. Prove It: English as a Second Language

Scoring below passing level (80%) on one of these assessments will determine if the youth is considered Basic Skills Deficient for purposes of program eligibility.

Description of the Prove IT – Integrated Assessments

These assessments are currently available free of cost via Metrix NY Wired, locally at: [www.http://cnyworks.metrixlearning.com](http://cnyworks.metrixlearning.com)

Participants must score at least 80% correct to pass – certificate of passing score with detailed test record will be provided upon completion of the assessment. Please file the participants’ assessment record demonstrating pass/fail in paper file for reference. Proper documentation of those who score below 80% (fail rate) is required in order to support the Basic Skills Deficiency determination.

Basic Reading Comprehension (30 questions; established time = 1 hour)

Test Description: The Basic Reading Comprehension test examines the test taker's ability to draw important information from written material. Test takers are asked to read text passages and answer questions, identify words based on how they are used in a sentence, and determine whether a statement is a fact or an opinion. This test is designed to be administered to applicants for positions where the need for a demonstrated ability to understand basic written information is important. Tests for Punctuation, Office Grammar and Spelling, Vocabulary, and English as a Second Language are also available.

Basic Arithmetic (40 questions; established time = 1 hour)

Test Description: This Basic Arithmetic test assesses the test taker's ability to manage basic mathematical calculations and estimations. The topics covered include adding, subtracting, rounding, estimating sums, and estimating differences. This test is appropriate to administer to applicants that will be required to conduct basic mathematical reasoning and calculations on the job. Paper and pencil

may be considered appropriate to provide test takers while administering the test. Tests for Basic Office Skill and Basic Warehouse Knowledge are also available.

Math & Reasoning Skills (40 questions; established time = 1 hour)

Test Description: The Math & Reasoning Skills test covers such topics as percentages, multiplication, fractions, word problems, patterns, and comparisons. This assessment would be appropriate to give to any person who needs to use math and/or reasoning skills on a regular basis. Tests for Math Word Problems and Analytical Skills are also available.

English as a Second Language (43 questions; established time = 1 hour)

Test Description: The English as a Second Language test aims at assessing the skill level of the test taker in employing English for communication. Such topics addressed include conversational English, subject/verb agreement, homonyms, and acronyms.

***REFERENCE:**

WIOA Section 129 (1)(B)(iii)(VIII)

20 CFR 681.300

Plus, additional guidance as it comes down from USDOL and/or NYSDOL