

Job-Driven Systems Change for Local Economic Vitality

ABOUT THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2014

WIOA Vision: The publicly funded workforce system envisioned by WIOA is quality-focused, employer-driven, customer-centered, and tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. It is designed to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment (Department of Labor, Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA No: 4-15).

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is transforming workforce services as we know them. Formerly known as WIA (Workforce Investment Act), WIOA is the largest single source of federal funding for workforce services. Signed into law on July 22, 2014, many of the Act's provisions are yet to be clarified, and, thus, their full impact remains unknown. State plans will be submitted in January of 2016. It is critical that states expect significant changes over the course of the coming years in this transition from the current structure under WIA to the requirements set out in WIOA.

THE ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM

" [WIOA] requires across the state that anyone involved with workforce become better aligned and focus on the end goal."

Director Beth Townsend,
Iowa Workforce Development



WHAT ARE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS?

A sector partnership is a workforce collaborative that organizes key stakeholders and targeted industry partners into a sustainable working group that focuses on the long-term workforce needs of a targeted industry cluster. Membership in the sector partnership is determined by the targeted industry partners. Sector partnerships operate within a true labor market region and are not confined to particular workforce, education, or similar regional boundaries.

WHAT ARE CAREER PATHWAYS?

A career pathway organizes rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services related to a targeted industry cluster to meet the education and skill needs of the region and state, and the particular needs of an individual, all in the context of workforce preparation. This is achieved through collaboration between industry partners and support partners within a sector partnership.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW SYSTEM UNDER WIOA:

- » *Greater business engagement* – can be seen in the changing local Workforce Development Board structure and the emphasis on **sector partnerships** and **career pathways**.
- » *Seamless partnerships* – WIOA expects full integration of services within the system, building efficiencies, and consistent data collection using common metrics across service providers and agencies.
- » *Emphasis on credentialing and skills attainment*, rather than just attainment of a job.
- » *Expanded role of Regional Workforce Development Boards* – local boards have a greater role in decision-making and the structure expands to include a larger business voice.

“WIOA moves us from silo systems to a comprehensive, collaborative system focused on meeting the needs of Iowa workers and businesses.”

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services
Director David Mitchell

THE NEED

By 2018, 3 of every 5 jobs in Iowa will require education/training beyond high school.

Over 2 million people



of the population
are age 25 or older

Most of the 25 and
over segment



has a high school
education or higher

Only **35.6%**
of people
25 or over

have an associate's degree
(26th out of 50 states)

Only **25.3%**
of
Iowans

have a bachelor's degree
(36th out of 50 states)

IOWA'S EXISTING INVESTMENTS

Leading up to and after the reauthorization of federal workforce legislation, Iowa's General Assembly has made significant investments in Iowa's workforce infrastructure that are critical to an effective system. Most importantly, programs including Pathways for Academic Career Employment (PACE), Gap Tuition Assistance, and Adult Basic Education (ABE) have been transformational in their support to individuals to attain basic skills and credentials: key qualities sought by today's employers. Iowa has also prioritized local decision-making through a regional workforce infrastructure that ensures local needs are addressed and met through local discussions and resource allocation.

“WIOA raises the bar for collaboration among partners.”

State Director for Adult Education, Alex Harris

ABOUT AIWP

The Association of Iowa Workforce Partners (AIWP) is a statewide organization of regional Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partners that provide specialized workforce services to Iowans, including hard-to-place, at-risk, low-income adults, low-income youth, and dislocated and unemployed individuals. The mission of AIWP is to advance the quality and availability of workforce services in Iowa through education, advocacy, and professional development. AIWP members efficiently serve both jobseekers and employers through a regional system, matching Iowans with training and skills to meet the unique needs of local employers.

Workforce Development Regions

