

PASSAIC COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Subject: Title I Youth Additional Assistance Eligibility

Effective Date: 05/08/26

PURPOSE

The WIOA Title I Youth Program, Requires Additional Assistance (RAA) Policy, identifies and defines specific conditions of the criterion under which a youth may be deemed to require extra assistance. The Policy includes tracking and documentation requirements to ensure that no more than 5% of In-School Youth (ISY) participants are determined eligible under this category. Under WIOA Title I, "Additional Assistance" is an eligibility category for youth who do not meet other standard barriers but still require help to finish school or find a job.

POLICY

The Workforce Development Board adopts the federal regulations and State of New Jersey, NJDOL policies and procedure for Youth eligibility for additional assistance. The WIOA youth program focuses its resources on eligible in-school and out-of-school youth who have one of several different barriers to employment. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth requirements are primarily governed by Section 129(a)(1). Under this section, individuals must be categorized as either an Out-of-School Youth (OSY) or an In-School Youth (ISY) at the time of enrollment.

Out-of-School Youth (OSY) eligibility

- OSY must be aged 16–24
- Not attending school
- Meets one of several barriers:
 - Has dropped out of school
 - Low-income with a diploma
 - Justice-involved
 - Homeless or in foster care
 - Pregnant or parenting
 - Disabled
 - Needing assistance to finish school or find a job

In-School Youth (ISY) eligibility criteria

- ages 16-24
- citizen or legal alien
- registered for Selective Service (males 18 and older)
- low-income individual and
- must have one of the additional barriers listed below:
 - 16-24 years old and not attending school
 - Fall within one or more of the following categories:
 - Individual with a disability
 - School dropout
 - Has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter
 - A high school graduate who is basic skills deficient; or an English language learner
 - Offender
 - Homeless, runaway, or foster child
 - Pregnant or parenting

Federal Regulations

Federal regulations 20 CFR § 681.300 and 681.310(a) 681.460(b) and 681.580(c) require that states or local areas must further define the meaning of the “requires additional assistance” barrier. 20 CFR 681.310(b): In each local area, not more than five percent of the OSY newly enrolled in a given program year may be eligible based on the "requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment" criterion.

In instances where the state does not define the “requires additional assistance” barrier, the local area must define it in its local plan. In the context of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), "Additional Assistance" serves as a specific eligibility barrier for youth who might not fit into other categories but still struggle to succeed in education or employment. WIOA Sec 129 (c) (2)

According to TEGL No. 21-16, a state may establish definitions and eligibility documentation requirements for criteria for an individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.” If the state does not establish these definitions and eligibility documentation, the local

area must do so if it uses this criterion. These policies established at the state or local level should be reasonable, quantifiable, and based on evidence that the specific characteristic of the youth identified in the policy objectively requires additional assistance.

- If the youth is OSY, the low-income requirement applies only to the following categories of youth: a. A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is either basic skills deficient or an English language learner; b. An individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.
- All ISY must be low-income unless they are served under the five-percent exception.

Supportive Services

Enrolled youth are eligible for supportive services are to help youth stay in the program. These include:

- Logistical Support: Assistance with transportation (bus passes, gas cards), childcare, or housing.
- Work/School Essentials: Funding for uniforms, work-related tools (safety gear, eyeglasses), books, and application fees for certifications.
- Emergency Needs: Some local boards provide "needs-related payments" for immediate crises like food or emergency utility bills.
- Legal & Health: Referrals to legal aid, healthcare services, or mental health counseling.

NJDOL Policies and Procedures

In New Jersey, the Workforce Innovation Notice (NJWIN) guidance—specifically NJWIN 9-15 and NJWIN 5-15 defines youth "requiring additional assistance" (RAA) as a specific eligibility barrier for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program.

NJDOL Requirements

- NJWIN Guidance: Per NJWIN 9-15, the state requires local areas to establish clear written definitions and documentation requirements for these criteria.
- The 5% Rule: NJWIN 5-15 notes that while most "additional assistance" youth must be low-income, up to 5% of youth served in a local area may be "covered individuals" who do not meet the low-income requirement.

WDB Criteria

While Federal law and the NJDOL provide a broad framework, the specific definitions are established by Local Workforce Development Boards to reflect the unique needs of their communities. The WDB requires the identification of specific, quantifiable barriers that qualify a youth for this category. These barriers include:

- **Academic Challenges:** Failing a core subject, being one or more grade levels behind, or being at risk of dropping out due to high absenteeism. Currently struggling in a traditional school setting or has a history of poor attendance.
- **Employment History:** Having no employment for the last 6 months, a record of being unable to hold a job (fired/quit repeatedly), or lacking basic work-readiness skills. Never held a full-time job for more than 13 consecutive weeks.
- **Life Circumstances:** Being a victim of abuse or bullying, residing in an abusive environment, suffering from substance abuse, or being a child of an incarcerated parent. Residing in a high-crime or high-poverty area. Has no reliable transportation, or lives in a non-traditional household (e.g., with a grandparent or unofficial guardian).
- **Specific Skills:** Having limited English proficiency or being a GED graduate with no work history.

The Passaic County WDB Additional Assistance Policy

Passaic County WDB establishes the following additional assistance eligibility to reflect the unique needs of the youth in the local area:

Youth who need help completing an educational program or securing and holding a job, due to the following circumstances:

- Youth who require additional assistance to complete an educational program or require additional assistance to secure and hold employment
- Youth with limited English proficiency skills

In-School Youth must be low income.

- Only 5% of enrolled youth can exceed income guidelines. Case worker must receive approval and sign-off.

- Only 5% of you can be enrolled as requiring additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or any of the three locally developed criteria:
 - Youth who are one or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the individual's age
 - Youth at risk of dropping out of school, due to high suspension or absenteeism levels, or underperformance and in danger of not passing the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA):
 - Youth who is a GED graduate with no or limited work history, and in need of further training

Case worker must receive approval from their manager and sign-off for enrollment.

Out-of-School Youth need to be low income, ONLY:

- If the youth has a High School diploma/GED and is basic skills deficient
- If the youth requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or any of the three local criteria:
 - Youth who are one or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the individual's age
 - Youth at risk of dropping out of school, due to high suspension or absenteeism levels, or underperformance and in danger of not passing the High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA):
 - Youth who is a GED graduate with no or limited work history, and in need of further training

Only 5% of the youth can meet these criteria as defined. Case worker must receive approval and sign-off from their manager. The WDB requires documentation of the specific, quantifiable barrier that qualifies a youth for assistance. Record of the additional assistance provided must be kept on file and recorded in AOSOS.

POLICY REVISION

The WDB Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) policies are reviewed and amended annually by the WDB to remain in compliance with all federal mandates and state-level policy changes issued by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Local partners are notified of all changes to WDB policies.