WorkSource
MONTGOMERY
Connecting Employers & Job Seekers

POLICY: COHORT TRAINING

EFFECTIVE DATE: **POLICY NUMBER: 2018-18**

PURPOSE

The policy on Cohort Training ensures that every Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) participant receives quality services. This policy outlines steps to ensure that eligible and suitable job seekers have opportunities for training in vocations from the High Priority Occupations list according to the Montgomery County Workforce Development Board (WDB).

BACKGROUND

Cohort training is another avenue for which WIOA Title-I training services for eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth are provided. Cohort training has proven to be most efficient and effective, therefore it is the preferred method of training. Using Cohort funds, eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth can partake in training services at a discounted group rate, negotiated with the training provider, provided a minimum number of participants make up the cohort. Therefore, similar to Individual Training Accounts, WSM Career Specialist utilize the same criteria to make training selections that fit the customer's Individual Employment Plan. Participants are expected to utilize information such as skills assessment, labor market information and training providers' performance and take an active role in managing their employment future through the use of cohort training.

CANCELLATIONS

This policy supersedes all pre-existing policies for Cohort Training.

ACTION REQUIRED

Within 15 days of the receipt of this policy it is the recipient's responsibility to ensure all staff are informed of the policy and to create an internal process to ensure accountability.

QUESTIONS

Questions relating to this policy should be directed to the Director, Talent Development / WIOA at policy@worksourcemontgomery.com, or 240-641-6736.

POLICY

Participants seeking Cohort Training, just like Individual Training Accounts, must apply for financial aid (if appropriate) during their career research and before requesting access to WIOA funds. WorkSource Montgomery AJC staff should be assisting customers with the FAFSA process; information is available at www.fafsa.ed.gov. WorkSource Montgomery Staff should notify participants that any financial aid received may reduce the funding provided by WorkSource Montgomery, Inc.

Each participant is required to conduct research and prepare a training plan prior to submitting a written request for training funds. The following must be documented in the request:

- The occupations for which the training will prepare the participant;
- The local employment projections for the specific occupation(s);
- The entry level salaries of these positions;
- Evidence that the position is on the High Priority Occupation list;

Customers seeking training funds must first successfully complete assessments if they have not earned a Bachelor's degree. The scores on the assessments must be equal to or higher for the particular profession the customer is interested in pursuing. Results must show aptitude in the field of training. If the scores do not meet such threshold, remediation would be required.

The appropriate Career Specialist will confirm with WorkSource Montgomery's Director that the training providers being considered have an existing MOU. If an MOU has not been established, the training provider will prepare an MOU within 48 hours and will forward it to WorkSource Montgomery. WorkSource Montgomery Center staff should not refer clients to any school or course until the MOU has been signed.

Once the participant has completed the necessary research and appropriate assessments, the Career Specialist will meet with him/her to review the findings of the research and determine if the proposed training is an effective career and training option/opportunity. The Training Justification Check List must also be reviewed with the participant and attached to the request. The case file must contain a determination of need for training services as identified in the participant's Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

Once the Eligible Trainee has submitted their training plan the following must occur:

- The Career Specialist will sign and date the Check List verifying all data is complete and correct.
- The Career Specialist will submit the following to the Director for review:
  - ITA Check List
  - Print out of course(s) from Training Provider
  - Case Notes evidence of participant's research in Training and courses
  - The Title I Director will review all of the material and approves the request
  - Should the Director deny the request, the entire packet will be returned to the Career Specialist with the reason(s) for denial
  - The Career Specialist will then meet with the participant and review the reason for denial.

It is important to inform the participant of this process

- The Career Specialist must verify the client is attending training and will be in communication with the training provider.
- The Career Specialist is to remain in continuous communication with customers enrolled in Cohort Training. The goal is to line up employers who will benefit from the talent pool exiting the training, and place Cohort completers into occupations for which training funds were invested.

FUNDING

Cohort training aims for a 25% discount (can vary) compared to ITA training. Cohort minimum participation to achieve the discounted rate depends upon the course delivered; it typically ranges from 3-12 participants.

DISCLAIMER

This policy is based on WSM's interpretation of the statute, along with the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act; Final Rule released by the U.S. Department of Labor and federal and state policies relating to WIOA implementation. This policy will be reviewed and updated based on any additional federal or state guidance.