

INSTRUCTION LETTER

INSTRUCTION NUMBER: WIOA 17-05 Amendment 1

TO: All SC Works Partners and Staff

SUBJECT: **Effective Use of Initial Assessment for Wagner-Peyser Customers**

DATE

ISSUED: May 16, 2018

DATE

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

DATE

EXPIRES: Indefinitely

PURPOSE: This guidance changes the Wagner-Peyser (WP) Initial Assessment procedures for the Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) staff in the comprehensive SC Works centers. This policy does not apply to the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program. **This policy guidance replaces Local Instruction Letter 17-05.**

BACKGROUND: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) merges core and intensive services into a new category of career services that includes both basic and individualized services. Basic career services must be made available to all job seekers. Basic career services include services such as labor exchange services, labor market information, job listings and referrals, and information on partner programs. Individualized career services are to be provided as appropriate to assist individuals in obtaining or retaining employment. A key component in determining which level of service is needed is an initial assessment of a customer's knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and abilities to support the employment goal, and to identify supportive service needs.

The purpose of the initial assessment is to understand the customer's occupational goals, existing skills, and work search readiness, and to determine if any barriers to employment exist. This initial assessment is conducted within the context of local labor market conditions and also considers services that may be articulated by the customer, such as a desire to pursue training or education. The initial assessment will result in a determination of next steps for the customer, which may include referral to a Workforce Consultant for individualized career services and the development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

POLICY: Wagner-Peyser customers referred to a Workforce Consultant in a comprehensive SC Works center are to receive an initial assessment by DEW staff prior to the referral. The initial assessment is intended to gauge which level of services a customer requires. It is a preliminary indication of the customer's needs derived from the baseline information gathered during the initial provision of staff assisted services. All subsequent services should be driven by continued assessment of the customer's needs.

Basic Career Services

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Customers who possess the following are considered job search ready and are to be provided basic career services:

- an occupational goal with a favorable labor market outlook (determined by using labor market information and tools in the SCWOS database);
- the knowledge, skills, aptitudes, and abilities required for the occupational goal; and
- no barriers that prevent obtaining and retaining employment.

These individuals should not require referral to a Workforce Consultant, but should be provided job search and placement assistance, including referrals to other SC Works center activities, such as resume preparation and/or interviewing preparation.

Individualized Career Services

Individualized career services, such as career planning and the development of an IEP, are to be provided by a Workforce Consultant to customers who:

- do not possess an occupational goal; and/or
- do not possess the requisite occupational knowledge, skills, and abilities to readily find work related to their occupational goal; and/or
- have barriers that potentially prevent obtaining and retaining employment; and/or
- require further training.

Individuals initially considered job search ready may subsequently be determined to need individualized career services. Individuals initially determined to need individualized career services will likely benefit from basic career services as well.

Initial Assessment Procedures

The attached WP Initial Assessment Form is for *staff use only* and can assist staff with the interview process when gathering the information necessary to conduct a thorough initial assessment. This form is used to identify quickly the customer's occupational goals, existing skills, and work search readiness, and to determine if barriers to employment exist. This form may contain sensitive information and should be protected from public access and view. Additionally, staff is prohibited from printing the form due to its confidential nature.

The Initial Assessment Form must be completed to evaluate the following:

1. Occupational Goal:

Evaluate the customer's occupational goal as favorable or not favorable in the labor market.

- If the customer does not have a clear occupational goal or the outlook for the occupational goal is not favorable, then the customer is identified for individualized career services and must be referred to a Workforce Consultant.

2. Knowledge, Skills, Aptitudes, and Abilities:

If the goal is for an occupation or occupational cluster that has a favorable outlook in the

labor market, then review the customer's skills to determine if the customer has the necessary educational proficiency, experience, training, and aptitude to compete in the current job market.

- If knowledge, skills, and abilities are deficient, then the customer must be referred to a Workforce Consultant.

3. Barriers to Employment:

If the customer has the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities, then any barriers or obstacles that may prevent the customer from finding and retaining employment should be identified (examples: health and physical considerations, poor work history, lack of references, child care or elder care issues, criminal record, transportation issues, limited English skills, homelessness, or other personal issues).

- If barriers to employment exist, and cannot be addressed during the initial assessment or a subsequent appointment, then the customer must be referred to a Workforce Consultant.

4. Job Search Skills:

The customer's job search planning, preparation, and job seeking skills must also be evaluated. These skills include interviewing and communication skills, knowledge of where to look for work, and how to research companies, knowledge of how to update appropriately a resume, basic computer skills to apply for work online, ability to conduct internet-based job searches, social networking and self-marketing skills, motivation to find work, and possessing a work search plan.

- If job search skills are deficient, and cannot be addressed during the initial assessment or a subsequent appointment, then the customer must be referred to a Workforce Consultant.

Upon completion of the WP Initial Assessment Form, activity code 137: WP Initial Assessment must be entered into SCWOS. A corresponding case note indicating the outcome of the assessment (i.e. referral to a Workforce Consultant or job search ready) must be entered with the completed WP Initial Assessment Form attached as a PDF to prevent a viewing rights issue. The PDF is viewable by other staff/partners with SCWOS access.

If the completed WP Initial Assessment Form indicates a referral to a Workforce Consultant is required, staff must also enter activity code 188: Interagency Referral in SCWOS. A corresponding case note detailing the nature of the referral must be sent to the Workforce Consultant with the completed WP Initial Assessment Form attached as a PDF. The Workforce Consultant will then schedule an appointment with the customer to provide the appropriate individualized career services as determined by the form.

ACTION: This document is for your information and DEW will implement this policy. Specifically, DEW Regional Managers are responsible for the equitable distribution of referrals within their comprehensive SC Works centers.

INQUIRIES: Should you have any questions concerning this instruction, please contact Dana Wood at (864) 596-2028 (TTY: 711 or wood@upstateworkforceboard.org).



Ann Angermeier, Executive Director

Source: State Instruction Letter 17-08

Attachment: WP Initial Assessment Form, Assessment and Referral Forms for all other Partners in the Workforce System