



# AMERICAN SAMOA

## Workforce Innovations & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Annual Narrative Performance Report Performance Year 2021



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## **Introduction**

American Samoa Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (AS WIOA) Program is operated as a Unified State Plan. It is stipulated in the American Samoa WIOA Program State Plan that the target population is comprised of the Youth, Adults, and Dislocated Adults. In addition, the American Samoa Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act partners with the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) and the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program. Since Performance Year 2020, the AS WIOA Program have primarily been providing services specifically to the Youth, Adults, and Dislocated Programs. From its inception in 2019, the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) program's core partners (Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education and Family Literacy Programs) not only contribute to the creation of the American Samoa WIOA State Plan, their services for the disabled adults and youth correspond with the critical elements described in the WIOA grant conditions. The ultimate GOAL of the American Samoa WIOA Program is to Equip job seekers through Training and Education opportunities available locally through the government, private sectors, or the general community. Partnership is paramount in the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) operations, and it was recognized during the service activities initiated and executed during the Summer Youth Employment Program (2021), Work-based Learning, On-the-Job (OJT) and Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE).

DHR Director Lynn Pulou-Alaimalo and other Leaders of the American Samoa Government (ASG) during the SYEP 2021



SYEP 2021 participants Career Exploration and Cultural Activities



## **Customer Satisfaction**

The American Samoa Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (AS WIOA) program does not have a customer satisfaction survey during Program Year 2021, however as an integral part of the Implementation Plan of American Samoa WIOA Program, there will be a variety of surveys created in the future that will focus specifically on the target population (Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Adults) as well as the overall Improvement and Sustainability of the services provided. This process will enable a sterner approach to identifying Improvement Strategies for the program/services. The outcome of the satisfaction survey is a vital reflection in respect to the NEEDS of the Programs and to meet the goal and Vision. Intense training is being administered for caseworkers on a weekly basis by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) team and an integral part of these sessions include importance of customer service. In addition to the Implementation Plan, policies and procedures are being reviewed and modified to meet the current operations and assessments of the target populations.

The following is the breakdown of the data that American Samoa Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (AS WIOA) will be collecting in respect to the Evaluation and Customer Satisfaction:

1. Self-Service
2. Participant Applications
3. Participation Orientation
4. Walk-ins
5. New Employer Registration
6. Employer Served

- 7. Follow-ups
- 8. Training need Statement

**Studies for Research and Evaluation**

As of Program Year 2021, the American Samoa Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (AS WIOA) Program does not conduct evaluations nor coordinate and design the evaluations in conjunction with state and local workforce development boards.

**Effectiveness in Service Employers Measure**

AS WIOA Effectiveness in Serving Employers Data Elements: Repeat Business

Customers

Pilot Approaches	Rate	Update
<i>Retention (retention with the same employer):</i>	81.3%	Percentage rate for this Approach remains the same for this report
<i>Repeat Business Customers (percentage of repeat employers using services with the previous three years)</i>	100.0%	Percentage rate for this Approach remains the same for this report
<i>Employer Penetration Rate (percentage of employers using</i>	100.0%	Percentage rate for this Approach remains the same for this report

<i>services out of all employers in the state)</i>		
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Note: data is extracted from [My Reports - Workforce Integrated Performance System \(Grantee\)](#) ([appiancloud.com](#))

### **Common Exit**

As of Program Year 2021, American Samoa Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (AS WIOA) did not have in place a common exit process. Recurring technical assistance is being administered for the American Samoa team by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA/DOL) team in order to comply with regulations regarding case working, data input and validation, and general policies and process specific to service activities rendered to the community. The assessment process includes intake (application/enrollment), eligibility, and then assessment (supportive services). We then create the Service Plan and Goal Setting; this area of the service activity is critical as employment barriers are carefully assessed and documented in order to better identify the follow-up services. Based on training, caseworkers are not to exit participants from the system nor in their case files unless the

1. Hire American Samoa system has retired/automatic release or
2. Participant is out of the job/unemployed

### **Data Validation**

Program Year 2021 stands as the Training Period for American Samoa WIOA as all the critical components of the grant conditions are now in place. For instance, the utilization of the Hire American Samoa system and the establishment of the American Samoa Workforce Development Board (ASWDB). In response to the data validation process and procedures, the American

Samoa team was able to draft a data input policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure integrity of data collection and input are administered and completed on a timely manner. Furthermore, customer information will be reported in the system per documented records maintained in customer's permanent file. A review of applicable performance reports, extracts, etc. shall be conducted monthly to ensure accurate and timely reporting has been completed. The timeliness of data entry applies to all services requiring data entry, even if programs convert to paperless systems.



<b>Document #2</b> <b>WIOA101</b>	<b>Title:</b> <b>Data Input Policy</b>	<b>Print Date:</b> <b>April 2022</b>
<b>Revision #</b> <b>0.0</b>	<b>Prepared By:</b> <b>WIOA Leadership</b>	<b>Date Prepared:</b> <b>April 2022</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b> <b>April 2022</b>	<b>Reviewed By:</b> <b>Theresa Theis</b>	<b>Date Received:</b> <b>April 2022</b>
	<b>Approved By:</b> <b>ETA/DOL</b>	<b>Date Approved:</b>

- Policy:** **Data Input Policy for the American Samoa Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA)**
- Purpose:** To ensure the integrity of data collection and input are administered and completed on a timely manner.
- Definition:** Hire American Samoa Information System ([www.hireamericansamoa.com](http://www.hireamericansamoa.com)) is the automated information system utilized in American Samoa.
- Procedure:** Upon an emergency, disaster or other exigent circumstances, staff have up to 3 days to enter the information into HireAmericanSamoa.

All data entry will be done the same day the participant is enrolled on the system.

Customer information will be reported in the system per documented records maintained in customer's permanent file. A review of applicable performance reports, extracts, etc., shall be conducted on a monthly basis to ensure accurate and timely reporting has been completed. The timelines of data entry apply to all services requiring data entry, even if programs convert to paperless systems.

## Waivers

There is no update to report due to no new waivers proposed for AS WIO



## **Rapid Response Activities**

American Samoa does indeed have a Rapid Response program that provides services to workers, employers, and businesses facing closures and layoffs. Amidst the Covid 19 pandemic, the government shutdown that occurred in 2020 caused a lot of financial problems with small businesses/companies and halted the operations of the government. Regardless of the challenges that were overwhelming to the territory and its people, workers were provided opportunities to procure financial assistance through grant funding through the American Samoa Human Resources Workforce Innovations Act (AS WIOA) Program, by way of an unemployment funding. In addition, workers who were assessed were eligible for services such as job search, information on On-the-Job Training (OJT) training, referral to basic and remedial education, and placement assistance.

The Rapid Response structure begins with the Department of Human Resources, Employment and Training Division as the State/Territory Dislocated Worker Unit. This team is responsible for receiving all WARNING notifications. DHR-ETD helps coordinate the online case management system. This will allow Department of Human Resources identify opportunities for employers and then provide training for required skill set for the job seeker.

## **Performance Accountability System**

The table below details the Employer Services that American Samoa WIOA Program provides for the territory. The American Samoa Department of Human Resources spearheads all efforts towards effective performance and ensuring an accountability system. Consistent collaborative work with our government and private sector Employers is critical, especially in retaining or increasing the Establishment Count. There was an exponential increase in

participation through the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) 2021; this was the opportunity of expansion to other employers (government and private sectors). AS WIOA is anticipating an increase of Employer/Establishment count through SYEP thereby creating Policies and Procedures for the Accountability System.

AS WIOA Effectiveness in Serving Employers Data Elements: Repeat Business

Customers

Employer Services	Establishment Count
Employer Information and Support Services	64
Workforce Recruitment Assistance	64
Engaged in Strategic Planning/Economic Development	64
Accessing Untapped Labor Pools	42
Training Services	64
Incumbent Work Training Services	64
Rapid Response/Business Downsizing Assistance	64
Planning Layoff Response	64

**State Strategic Goals and Vision**

Although American Samoa Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (AS WIOA) program is establishing structure in initial phases of the services, we have identified Goals and Visions that are in alignment with the State Plan as well. Goals for equipping and educating a skilled workforce, including preparing youth and individuals with barriers of employment, and the underserved populations in the territory of American Samoa. In addition, Goals for meeting the

skilled workforce needs of employees. Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Individuals with disabilities, and so forth. The Vision of the American Samoa Workforce Innovation Opportunity Acat Program is primarily to ensure the Workforce System meets the needs of the territory's business and workers, today and in the future.

In developing the Goals and Strategies, the Governor's economic Goals and feedback were incorporated to maximize chances of success, reduce duplication of services, and to ensure effective alignment of the Territory's workforce delivery system. The system will focus on intensive services for those individuals who are at-risk youth who face the biggest obstacles in securing and maintaining employment; ensuring that each agency and partner work collaboratively to remove and reduce barriers in American Samoa. The core partners will infuse strategies so individuals with significant barriers to employment will be integrated and achieve successful competitive employment. On top of training quality employees, the Department of Human Resources serves employers in many other ways; Assistance with Recruitment and Retention; Applicant Testing; and Contractual services that will assist with improving and streamlining the process of finding employees.

### **Statewide Fund Activities**

The statewide fund activities include ALL program operations to enhance the quality of services to employers and job seekers throughout the territory of American Samoa. As of date, the AS WIOA funding is directed to the various programs (Youth, Adult, Dislocated Adults) to ensure consistent operations. Activities/operations include:

1. Administering and monitoring the AS WIOA program operations

2. Providing technical assistance in carrying out WIOA activities
3. Operating a fiscal and management accountability information system
4. Maintaining Performance and Information on the cost of Attendance (including tuition and fees)

It is understood that activities under the AS WIOA Program are appropriated to ultimately safeguard the operations listed above however, in the efforts to expand the services here in the territory, there will be modifications applied. There is a high increased number of job seekers, especially within the Youth and Dislocated Adults population due to the pandemic and graduates. The American Samoa Apprenticeship State Expansion (AS ASE) Program is a guaranteed opportunity avenue as well to enable additional Training and Education. Lastly but not the least, activities to support accessibility strategies (work experience, credentialing, and skill building) to bridge gaps between territory's workforce and the employers are all supported by program funds. Professional and well-equipped employees will produce more effective services that the government and its private sectors are in dire need of today.

### **Technical Assistance**

The territory of American Samoa seeks assistance with utilizing partnership, identifying potential partners into youth program design, effective training design tools and strategies. Recognizing the required reports and deadlines that American Samoa WIOA Program is tasked, success, technical assistance to improve the tools used in program monitoring, data input and reporting, and data analysis is paramount. There are technical assistance calls every week spearheaded by Employment and Training Administration (ETA) FPO and team to assist

American Samoa. In the future, investment towards effective training services (ETS) is surely incorporated as it is also a requirement stated in the American Samoa State Plan Modification.

## **Conclusion**

Performance Year 2021 was indeed a year of trainings and partnerships for American Samoa WIOA however there were numerous of challenges that surfaced during the planning and implementation phases. Some of the major accomplishments outlined for PY 2021 include:

1. A successful Summer Youth Employment Program 2021
2. Partnership with the Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education and Literacy Programs continue collaboration with Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) in efforts to complete grant requirements.
3. Work-based Learning (WBL) and On-the-Job Training (OJT) service activities continued throughout this Performance Year. Majority of the departments that provided hands-on training for participants employed the participant after 6 months of training.
4. Guidance and technical assistance underlining the State Plan Modification that was due March 2022 was underway by Federal Project Officer (FPO) Patricia O'Sullivan and Performance Manager Teresa Theis.
5. The Hire American Samoa data information system was finally utilized by the American Samoa WIOA team as components of data collection and validation were in place to be used. The system enables paperless and comprehensive data input for performance and program reports (quarterly and annual).