

U.S. Department of Labor

Employment and Training Administration
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210



July 27, 2026

The Honorable Jeff Landry
Governor of Louisiana
PO Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Governor Landry:

Thank you for your waiver request submission to the U.S. Department of Labor (Department) regarding certain statutory and regulatory provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the accompanying plan to improve the statewide workforce development system (enclosed). The waiver requests were received on April 30, 2026, as part of your recent WIOA State Plan modification submission. This letter provides the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) official response to your request and memorializes that Louisiana will meet the outcomes and implement the measures identified in its plan to ensure accountability agreed to by Louisiana and ETA. This action is taken under the Secretary of Labor's authority to waive certain requirements of WIOA Title I, Subtitles A, B, and E, and Sections 8–10 of the Wagner-Peyser Act in WIOA Section 189(i).

Requested Waiver: Waiver of the requirements outlined in WIOA Section 107(b), to allow a state workforce development board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of a local board.

ETA Response: ETA approves, through June 30, 2028, the State's request for a waiver to allow the state board to carry out the roles of the local workforce development boards in the State. ETA reviewed the State's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived would enable the State to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system.

The State provided a compelling rationale and evidence for this waiver. Specifically, ETA acknowledges that the request:

- Builds on substantial prior work to reduce fragmentation, including statewide guidance, policy review, centralized monitoring, and multi-program alignment efforts already underway;
- Preserves strong regional voice and employer engagement through newly established Regional Workforce Advisory Councils that ensure local input continues to shape strategy, funding priorities, and service design;
- Establishes a structured and collaborative transition process, including an 18-month Transition Advisory Team with local elected officials, employers, and workforce partners to ensure continuity and transparency;

- Advances Louisiana's statewide priorities to increase labor force participation, expand access for individuals with barriers to employment, strengthen employer engagement, and expand work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities; and
- Provides clear, measurable programmatic outcomes, including a phased increase to 60 percent of funds directed to direct participant services, full standardization of statewide policies, full consolidation of governance, and enhanced data-driven continuous improvement.

Under this waiver, the Governor may designate the state board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the local boards in the state. In implementing this waiver, the State must:

- Continue to solicit local input into its activities;
- Allocate funding by formula to the local areas for which the state board is carrying out local board functions; and
- Carry out all other required local board roles and responsibilities described in WIOA Section 107(d).

Louisiana also requested several waivers related to specific local workforce development board functions and responsibilities that it is seeking to carry out at the state level. ETA has determined that, given the approval of this waiver to allow a state workforce development board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of a local board, that the following waivers are unnecessary for each local area in which the state board is assuming the role of the local board:

- Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Section 106(c) and 20 CFR 679.510 and WIOA Section 106(a)(2) and 20 CFR 679.210 to allow the combined state plan to act as a regional planning framework.
- Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Sections 107(d)(12) and 184(a) and (b), and 20 CFR 679.420 and 683.200 to allow the state workforce agency to serve as the statewide fiscal agent.
- Waiver of WIOA Section 121(d) and the associated regulations at 20 CFR 678.600 through 678.635 to procure, designate, and oversee one-stop operators through a centralized, statewide process.
- Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Sections 123 and 129(c)(2) and the associated regulations at 20 CFR 681.400 to allow the state workforce development board to procure, designate, and oversee providers of the 14 required youth program elements.
- Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Section 121(h)(2) and the associated regulations at 20 CFR 678.715, 678.725, 678.730 and 678.735 to allow a statewide infrastructure funding model for American Job Centers.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of WIOA Sections 116(b)(3)(A) and 116(c) and the associated regulations at 20 CFR 677.210 through 677.230 to allow Louisiana to negotiate, apply, and assess WIOA performance accountability measures at the statewide level rather than through separate local area negotiations and performance agreements.

ETA Response: Given the approval of the waiver to allow a state workforce development board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of a local board, for any local areas for which the state

board has assumed local board roles, the State may establish performance targets without negotiations. However, performance outcomes must continue to be reported and assessed separately for each local area.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Sections 116(b)(2)(A)(i) and 134(d)(1)(A), and the associated regulations at 20 CFR 680.320 through 680.360 to expand pay-for-performance contracting authority.

ETA Response: The State clarified that it seeks to incorporate a performance-based contracting method, and not a WIOA pay-for-performance contract strategy described at 20 CFR 683.500. Performance-based contracting, which focuses on performance metrics which impact required activities and payment timelines, is an allowable method of contracting for services. A waiver is not required to implement this contracting method.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of the requirement at WIOA Section 121(e)(1) and 20 CFR 678.300(c) to establish and maintain a comprehensive American Job Center (AJC) in each of the State's local workforce development areas.

ETA Response: ETA approves, through June 30, 2028, Louisiana's request for a waiver of the requirement to establish and maintain a comprehensive AJC in each of the State's local areas. Under this waiver, the State must ensure that job seekers and employer customers in the local areas can access the programs, services, and activities provided by all required one-stop partners. Before implementing this waiver, the State must specify for ETA which local areas will not maintain a comprehensive AJC.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of the requirements of WIOA Sections 133(a)(2) and 134(a)(2)(A) to allow flexibility to use up to 50 percent of funds reserved by the Governor to provide statewide rapid response activities under WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A) to also provide statewide employment and training activities in the first year of funding availability.

ETA Response: ETA approves, for Program Years (PYs) 2026 and 2027, the State's request to waive the spending requirements of WIOA Sections 133(a)(2) and Section 134(a)(2)(A) to enable the State to use up to 50 percent of funds reserved by the Governor to provide statewide rapid response activities under WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A) to also provide statewide employment and training activities in the first year of funding availability.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of 20 CFR 681.550 to allow WIOA individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth (ISY).

ETA Response: ETA approves, for PYs 2026 and 2027, the State's request to waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only out-of-school youth (OSY), ages 16–24. In addition to these OSY, the State may use ITAs for ISY, ages 16–21.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Section 134(d)(2), and the associated regulations at 20 CFR 680.900 through 680.910 to allow the use of supportive services for participants beyond 12 months of exit for employment retention.

ETA Response: ETA approves, for PYs 2026 and 2027, the State's request to allow the use of supportive services for participants beyond 12 months of exit for employment retention. Prior to implementation the State must share with ETA how the State plans to financially track this waiver and provide quantifiable projected outcomes. Additionally, the State must develop a policy that establishes the appropriate duration of supportive services post exit.

Louisiana requested several waivers that fall outside of the Secretary's waiver authority and, therefore, cannot be approved. Waiver requests that ETA cannot approve include:

- Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Section 106(e)(2) and the associated regulations at 20 CFR 679.260 pertaining to the definition of sustained fiscal integrity.
- Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Sections 128 and 133 and the associated regulations at 20 CFR 681 and 683 to allow consolidation of WIOA Title I funding as a block grant.
- Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Sections 128, 133, 134, and 301–306 to allow consolidation of WIOA Title I and Title III funds.
- Waiver of the requirements at WIOA Sections 116(b), 128(c), and 133(c)(6), and the associated regulations at 20 CFR 677 and 683.110–683.120 to allow performance accountability and transitional flexibility during system transformation.

The State is reminded that WIOA Title I waivers may not be used for any discriminatory purposes. All activities and waiver plan provisions must comply with Section 188 of WIOA, the implementing regulations at 29 CFR Part 38, and all applicable federal nondiscrimination laws.

The State must report its waiver outcomes and implementation of the approved waivers in the WIOA Annual Report. ETA will use this information to assess continued waiver approval and to identify promising practices that may be adopted more widely. ETA is available to provide technical assistance to you in support of your goals. If you have questions, feel free to contact my office at (202) 693-2772.

Sincerely,



Marek Laco
Acting Assistant Secretary

Enclosures

cc: Susana Schowen, Secretary, Louisiana Works
Osmar Padilla, Deputy Secretary
M. Frank Stluka, Acting Dallas Regional Administrator, ETA
Coreena Miller, Federal Project Officer, ETA