

U.S. Department of Labor

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



September 29, 2026

The Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida
400 S Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis:

Thank you for your waiver request submission to the U.S. Department of Labor regarding certain statutory and regulatory provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The waiver request was received on July 2, 2026. This letter provides the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) official response to your request and memorializes that Florida will meet the outcomes and implement the measures identified in its plan to ensure accountability agreed to by Florida 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 WIOA Section 134(d)(2) and 20 CFR 680.910 to allow the use of supportive services for participants within 12 months of exit for employment retention.

ETA Response: ETA approves, through June 30, 2028, the State's request to waive the requirement that prohibits the use of Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for provision of supportive services during the 12 months following participant exit and entry into employment. With this waiver, the State can provide targeted supportive services to participants who have exited from the program and entered employment, including recipients of public assistance, to ease temporary barriers that may impede job retention.

Requested Waiver: Waiver for WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(F)(i) and (G) and 20 CFR 680.320(a) and 680.340(a) to allow for all training services to be provided through training contracts.

ETA Response: ETA approves, through June 30, 2028, the State's request to allow training contracts to be used instead of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). ETA reviewed the State's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the ability of the State to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system.

Requested Waiver: Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 121(e) 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, the State's request to waive the requirement of WIOA Section 121(e), as described in 20 CFR 678.300(c), that a comprehensive

AJC be established in each of the State's local workforce development areas. ETA reviewed the State's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the ability of the State to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system. Before implementing this waiver, the State must provide ETA with the following information:

- Specify which local areas will have a comprehensive center; and
- Explain the reasoning and benefits behind using alternative models in comparison to the current approach.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of the requirement that local youth programs make available each of the 14 youth program elements required under WIOA Section 129(c)(2).

ETA Response: ETA approves, for Program Years (PYs) 2026 and 2027, the State's request to waive the requirement that local youth programs make available each of the 14 youth program elements listed in WIOA Section 129(c)(2) and 20 CFR 681.460. Under this approval, local areas are not required to make available all 14 program elements. ETA reviewed the State's request and plan and determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the State's ability to implement its plan to improve youth workforce development service delivery.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of 20 CFR 681.550 to allow WIOA 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 14–21. ETA reviewed the State's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the ability of Florida to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of WIOA Section 129(c)(4) and 20 CFR 681.590(b) to allow local workforce development areas to count both WIOA local youth formula funds and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds toward the minimum 20 percent expenditure requirement for paid or unpaid work experience.

ETA Response: ETA approves, for PYs 2026 and 2027, which includes the entire time period for which states are authorized to spend each of those PY fund allotments, the State's request to allow local areas in the State to count both WIOA youth and TANF expenditures toward the 20 percent expenditure requirement for paid or unpaid work experience for youth co-enrolled in those programs. ETA reviewed the State's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the ability of Florida to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system. In addition to WIOA local youth program funds spent on paid and unpaid work experiences, including wages and staff costs for development and management of work experiences, local areas in Florida may include TANF work experience expenditures in both the numerator and denominator to calculate the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement.

Requested Waiver: Waiver associated with the requirement at WIOA Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 681.410 that the State and local areas expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).

ETA Response: ETA approves, for PYs 2026 and 2027, which includes the entire time period for which states are authorized to spend each of those PY fund allotments, the State's request to waive the state requirement to expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds on OSY. ETA reviewed the State's waiver request and plan and has determined that this requirement impedes the ability of the State to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system. The State may lower the expenditure requirement of Governor's reserve funds to 50 percent for OSY.

In addition, ETA approves, for PYs 2026 and 2027, which includes the entire time period for which states are authorized to spend each of those PY fund allotments, the State's request to waive the requirement that local areas expend 75 percent of local youth formula funds on OSY. The State may lower the local youth funds expenditure requirement to 50 percent for OSY.

Additionally, the State's waiver request indicated a potential gap in waiver coverage between PYs 2025 and 2026. However, ETA previously approved the waiver for PYs 2024 and 2025. Under this determination, the State is approved for PYs 2026 and 2027; therefore, there is no need for retroactive approval as there is no lapse in waiver coverage.

Requested Waiver: Waiver of WIOA Section 116(b)(3)(A)(v)(II)(bb) and 20 CFR 677.170(c)(2), to remove race, ethnicity, and sex as participant characteristics in the statistical adjustment model (SAM) established by the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

ETA Response: ETA appreciates the State's request and is making changes so this waiver is not necessary. The U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education plan to remove race, ethnicity, and sex data elements from the SAM beginning in PY 2028, when the next iteration of the statistical adjustment model will be used for performance target negotiations at the beginning of the next two-year performance cycle. To align current policy to this change, ETA will treat race, ethnicity, and sex as non-sanctionable factors for PY 2026 to 2027. This means that if Florida does not meet the passing thresholds but would have met them under a model that excludes these characteristics, ETA will not issue a financial sanction. This approach maintains the stability of the current performance framework until the updates to the SAM are made. ETA will also provide this information to all states in a forthcoming notice. Additionally, ETA affirms that Florida has the flexibility to not include these characteristics in its own local area SAM under current ETA policy.

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: Warren Davis, Senior Policy Development Manager, Career Source Florida
Renata Adjibodou, Regional Administrator, ETA
Latanya Lowery, Federal Project Officer, ETA

**State of Florida Waiver Request
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
14 Youth Program Elements Waiver**

Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida is requesting a waiver of the requirements in WIOA Section 129(c)(2) and 20 CFR 681.460(a) for each local workforce development area to provide all 14 youth program elements available to eligible youth. Unemployment rate estimates¹ for Florida's youth have increased 3.4 percentage points since the most recent low of 7.6% in April 2025. This represents over five times the increase in youth unemployment rates reported at the national level over the same time period. Florida's request to allow increased focus on occupational skills training and work-based learning/training is an effort to close this gap.

This waiver will allow Florida to focus greater funding on work experiences, including pre-apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships and to increase occupational skills training opportunities. This waiver request aligns with TEGL 05-25 and with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar I: Industry-Driven Strategies and Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation.

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to allowing local workforce development areas to choose which of the 14 youth program elements to provide to best serve their communities. The only barrier is the federal requirement that the state is seeking to waive.

Strategic Goals of the Waiver

This waiver supports the State's strategic goals by:

1. Expanding opportunities for youth to engage in work-based learning/training and occupational skills training.
2. Allowing local workforce development boards to more effectively respond to local needs in the expenditure of funds available to serve youth.
3. Reducing duplication of services and maximizing efficient use of human and financial resources to serve Florida businesses and job seekers through aligning and

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Local Area Unemployment Statistics* [www.bls.gov/lau/].

U.S. Census Bureau, "Basic Monthly CPS Microdata" Jan 2021 to Mar 2026, <<http://api.census.gov/data/2026/cps/mar/basic>>, accessed on April 14, 2026.

expanding partnerships that leverage and braid funding and coordinate programming to improve outcomes and accountability.

4. Improve service provision for at-risk youth with complex needs by focusing on activities that provide the necessary skills and training for employment opportunities within in-demand careers.

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 05-25 encourages state workforce development boards to review current policies and practices to maximize opportunities provided by WIOA to modernize and innovate operations and optimize service delivery of workforce development programs.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar I: Industry Driven Strategies: Building reliable talent pipelines through a workforce system led by industry and aligned with America's economic priorities. Local workforce development areas will be able to increase focus on work experiences and occupational skills training instead of expending funds on required services that are duplicative of services offered elsewhere or have been ineffective in achieving successful outcomes in that particular community.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation: Creating new models of workforce innovation built to match the speed and scale of AI-driven economic transformation. By allowing local workforce development boards the flexibility to use their financial resources in a way that maximizes work experiences and occupational skills training for youth, Florida will improve outcomes for WIOA youth and assist local employers by creating a talent pipeline that is responsive to their specific needs.

Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

The State expects to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes as a result of this waiver:

1. Increased number of youths participating in meaningful and aligned paid or unpaid work experiences, including, but not limited to, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeships, and registered apprenticeships by five percent.
2. Increased number of youth participating in and completing occupational skills training by five percent.
3. Improve the provision of business services to local employers by creating a pool of candidates for employment that is tailored to local needs.
4. Increase the number of employers and businesses partnering with local boards for work-based learning related activities by five percent.
5. Improved outcomes in youth entered employment, measurable skill gains, and credential attainment.

Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver

1. WIOA youth participants
2. Employers
3. Local Workforce Development Boards
4. Community-based organizations that provide services to youth
5. Training Providers

The Process to Monitor the Waived Activities and Collect Waiver Outcome Information

Annual WIOA on-site and remote programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how the waiver is being used locally and the success of achieving the stated goals and outcomes. Local workforce development boards will also be responsible for assessing the use and effectiveness of the waiver. Local areas will also be required to report on implementation and performance as a result of the waiver in their local and regional plans.

Most Recent Data Available Regarding the Results and Outcomes Observed Through the Implementation of the Existing Waiver

The State of Florida does not have a waiver related to this requirement at present.

Below are current baseline data points considered related to the requested waiver. Based on the data², Florida is trending downward and will need to take direct action to reverse and improve the trend(s).

- The number of youth participating in work-based learning/training activities were: 1,990 in PY 2023; 1,360 in PY 2024; and 411 in PY 2025 Q2.
- The number of employers participating in work-based learning/training activities were: 3,020 in PY 2023; 3,037 in PY 2024; and 1,998 in PY 2025 Q2.

Opportunity for Local Workforce Development Board and Public Comment on the Waiver

Workforce development stakeholders, including LWDBs, businesses, and Chief Local Elected Officials, were notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and post on CareerSource Florida's website. This included instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on

² Employ Florida Marketplace

CareerSource Florida's website, CareerSourceFlorida.com, in the WIOA combined plan. The public comment period was open for 30 calendar days.

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**State of Florida Waiver Request
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
20 Percent Youth Expenditure Waiver Request**

Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida is requesting a waiver of the requirements in WIOA Section 129(c)(4) and 20 CFR 681.590(b) to allow local workforce development areas to count both WIOA local youth formula funds and TANF funds toward the minimum 20 percent expenditure requirement for paid or unpaid work experience. Although Florida met its expenditure requirement for program years (PYs) 2023 (25.3%) and 2024 (23.9%), there are a number of local workforce development boards (LWDBs) that continue to struggle to meet this requirement annually.

This waiver will allow Florida to count TANF funds spent on co-enrolled youth in the work experience expenditure calculation. It will facilitate partnerships across youth-serving agencies such as the Florida Department of Commerce and the Florida Department of Children and Families, as well as efficiencies with federal funds. The state will be able to leverage multiple funding sources to serve youth effectively, freeing up Title I Youth funds to expand access to other meaningful work-based learning opportunities such as credential attainment, occupational skills training aligned with in-demand sectors, registered apprenticeship and preapprenticeship, and the delivery of supportive services to increase participation in these activities. This waiver enables local areas to maximize available resources while reducing administrative barriers and preserving WIOA funds for other critical youth services. Additionally, unemployment rate estimates¹ for Florida's youth have increased 3.4 percentage points since the most recent low of 7.6% in April 2025. This represents over five times the increase in youth unemployment rates reported at the national level over the same time period. Florida's request to allow increased focus on occupational skills training and work experience is an effort to close this gap.

This waiver request aligns with TEGL 05-25 and Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation, of America's Talent Strategy.

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

The State has provided technical assistance and training to local staff and strengthened partnerships between workforce boards and TANF agencies through initiatives like Hope Florida to reduce administrative burden and expand access to paid and unpaid work

¹ Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Population Survey

experience opportunities for youth. There are no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers to allowing local workforce development areas to count both WIOA local youth formula funds and TANF funds toward the minimum 20 percent expenditure requirement for paid or unpaid work experiences. The only barrier is the federal requirement that the state is seeking to waive.

Strategic Goals of the Waiver

This waiver supports the State's strategic goals by:

1. Expanding opportunities for youth to engage in meaningful work-based learning opportunities.
2. Maximizing available resources and reducing administrative barriers through reducing the duplication of services across programs and agencies.
3. Allowing local workforce development boards to more effectively respond to local needs in the expenditure of funds available to serve youth.
4. Improve services to Florida businesses and job seekers by aligning and expanding partnerships that leverage and braid funding and coordinate programming to improve outcomes and accountability.
5. Reducing welfare dependency and increasing economic self-sufficiency for Floridians by focusing on community collaboration between workforce, education, industry, and other partners to break down silos and maximize the effectiveness of workforce development efforts.

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 05-25 encourages state workforce development boards to review current policies and practices to maximize opportunities provided by WIOA to modernize and innovate operations and optimize service delivery of workforce development programs.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation: Creating new models of workforce innovation built to match the speed and scale of AI-driven economic transformation. By allowing local workforce development boards the flexibility to use their financial resources in a way that maximizes work experiences for youth, Florida will improve outcomes for WIOA youth and assist local employers by creating a talent pipeline that is responsive to their specific needs.

Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

The State expects to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes as a result of this waiver:

1. Increased number of youths participating in paid or unpaid work experiences, including, but not limited to, on-the-job training and preapprenticeships by five percent.
2. Improve the provision of business services to local employers by creating a pool of candidates for employment that is tailored to local needs.
3. Expanded number of employers offering work-based learning opportunities to youth by five percent.
4. Increased percent of local workforce development areas that meet or exceed the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement.
5. Improved youth employment and credential attainment outcomes following program participation.

Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver

1. WIOA youth participants
2. Employers
3. Local Workforce Development Boards
4. Families that receive public assistance

The Process to Monitor the Waived Activities and Collect Waiver Outcome Information

Annual WIOA on-site and remote programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how the waiver is being used locally and the success of achieving the stated goals and outcomes. Local workforce development boards will also be responsible for assessing the use and effectiveness of the waiver. Local areas will also be required to report on implementation and performance as a result of the waiver in their local and regional plans.

Most Recent Data Available Regarding the Results and Outcomes Observed Through the Implementation of the Existing Waiver

The State of Florida does not have a waiver related to this requirement at present.

Below are current baseline data points considered related to the requested waiver. Based on the WIOA data², Florida is trending downward and will need to take direct action to reverse and improve the trend(s).

- Number of youth participating in paid and unpaid work experience were: 1,862 in PY 2023; 1,291 in PY 2024; and 387 in PY 2025 Q2.

² Employ Florida Marketplace data extracted 5/7/2026

- Number of youth participating in on-the-job training were: 49 in PY 2023, 30 in PY 2024, and 29 in PY 2025 Q2
- Number of youth participating in pre-apprenticeships were: 61 in PY 2023; 51 in PY 2024; and 26 in PY 2025 Q2.
- Deduplicated number of youth in paid/unpaid work experience, on-the-job training, and pre-apprenticeships were: 1,933 in PY 2023; 1,334 in PY 2024; and 426 in PY 2025 Q2.
- Number of employers participating in on-the-job training activities were: 1,570 in PY 2023; 2,021 in PY 2024; and 1,105 in PY 2025 Q2.
- Number of employers participating in pre-apprenticeship activities were: 6 in PY 2023; 8 in PY 2024; and 7 in PY 2025 Q2.

Opportunity for Local Workforce Development Board and Public Comment on the Waiver

Workforce development stakeholders, including LWDBs, businesses, and Chief Local Elected Officials, were notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and post on CareerSource Florida's website. This included instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on CareerSource Florida's website, CareerSourceFlorida.com, in the WIOA combined plan. The public comment period was open for 30 calendar days.

**State of Florida Waiver Request
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
American Job Centers Waiver**

Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida is requesting a waiver of the requirements outlined in 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.

This waiver will help remote and rural areas avoid burdens associated with acquiring and maintaining a comprehensive AJC site, providing greater flexibility and opportunities to LWDBs to invest funds in service delivery for job seekers and businesses instead of maintaining brick-and-mortar facilities. For the period of May 2025 to February 2026, 12 of the 21 (57 percent) local workforce development boards (LWDBs) have either co-located with their partners and/or closed their brick-and-mortar career centers due to the increase in overhead costs in relation to the decrease in program funding. Additionally, many LWDBs have increased their use of virtual/remote tools to decrease barriers to serving individuals, especially in rural areas.

Florida expects increases in participant numbers as boards retire use of existing spaces where needed and emphasize improving customer service. This waiver request aligns with TEGL 05-25; Pillar III: Integrated Systems; and Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation.

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

The State is conducting a statewide assessment of its one-stop network to identify locations where virtual or mobile service delivery would better serve the community than a fixed physical center. Furthermore, the State is developing standardized intake and case management protocols that ensure there is no loss of service quality during this proposed transition. The State has worked within existing statutory and regulatory constraints to standardize operator expectations, contract language, performance metrics, and monitoring tools across local areas. The State has provided templates, technical assistance, and guidance to support consistent procurement and oversight practices.

Strategic Goals of the Waiver

The strategic goals associated with this waiver are to:

1. Improve services to individuals with barriers to employment by:
 - a. Reducing LWDBs' costs associated with the requirement to maintain a comprehensive AJC in each local area, including, but not limited to, the costs of infrastructure maintenance and co-location requirements; and

- b. Minimizing job seekers' need for transportation to and from a comprehensive AJC and for childcare associated with in-person visits.
2. Take advantage of the new FL WINS system and comply with section 445.009(6), Florida Statutes, which provides, in relevant part: "To the extent possible, core services, as defined by Pub. L. No. 113-128, shall be provided electronically, using existing systems... To expand electronic capabilities, the state board and the department, working with local workforce development boards, shall develop a centralized help center to assist local workforce development boards in fulfilling core services, *minimizing the need for fixed-site one-stop delivery system centers*... To the extent feasible, core services shall be accessible through the Internet. Through this technology, core services shall be made available at public libraries, public and private educational institutions, community centers, kiosks, neighborhood facilities, and satellite one-stop delivery system sites."
3. Allow LWDBs to be more agile and innovative in-service delivery through co-location with community partners that serve a similar customer base and the use of technology like virtual AJCs and the FL WINS system.
4. Maximize constructive collaboration with the Florida College System, the primary access point to higher education for Floridians, including recent high school graduates and returning adult students. The 28 member colleges of the Florida College System respond quickly and efficiently to meet the demand of employers by aligning certificate and degree programs with regional workforce needs.

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration Policy Priorities

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 05-25 encourages state workforce development boards to review current policies and practices to maximize opportunities provided by WIOA to modernize and innovate operations and optimize service delivery of workforce development programs. This waiver aligns with USDOL's guidance to encourage opportunities to integrate systems and realign resources and optimize service delivery. The innovative [FL WINS](#) system will allow LWDBs to expand the "virtual AJC" concept by providing a one-stop, electronic individualized service match and connection with a network of workforce partners. This streamlined approach is also aligned with Florida's vision to minimize the need for fixed-site one-stop delivery systems and will allow LWDBs to focus on serving customers in a more modern, accessible way.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar III: Integrated Systems: Replacing a fragmented web of duplicative programs with a streamlined, coordinated system that delivers unified workforce services. By reducing the focus on funding and maintaining brick-

and-mortar comprehensive AJCs, LWDBs will be able to realize this pillar of the vision by facilitating streamlined intake processes and using digital tools like FL WINS that help frontline staff guide individuals to the right services and allow job seekers to access multiple services electronically.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation: Creating new models of workforce innovation built to match the speed and scale of AI-driven economic transformation. By allowing LWDBs the flexibility to choose whether a comprehensive AJC is the best fit for the needs of job seekers and businesses in their local area, the waiver will foster innovation in service delivery and allow more efficient transactions, resulting in greater numbers of participants served.

Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

The State expects to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes as a result of this waiver:

1. Significant cost savings to LWDBs, including lower administrative costs, resulting in more funds for the provision of services to job seekers and businesses.
2. Improved access and time to service for individuals who use virtual options.
3. Administrative efficiencies will be gained through centralized procurement and oversight, allowing greater investment in staff training, service innovation, and continuous improvement
4. Increased number of participants due to increased focus on co-location and use of technology to connect them to services.

Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver

1. WIOA participants (Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth): This waiver benefits program participants by providing more consistent and predictable service experiences across locations, regardless of where they enter the system.
2. Employers and businesses: Employers will also benefit from a centralized operation through streamlined employer engagement, consistent business service offerings, and better coordination of training and hiring solutions across regions.
2. Local Workforce Development Boards
3. Workforce partner agencies

The Process to Monitor the Waived Activities and Collect Waiver Outcome Information

The State will monitor waiver implementation through uniform contract management, performance monitoring, and fiscal oversight processes. Operator performance will be evaluated using standardized metrics tied to service quality, customer outcomes, and compliance. The State will conduct regular reviews of operator effectiveness and will retain the ability to modify, recompetete, or terminate contracts based on performance. Outcomes and implementation status will be reported through the WIOA Annual Report and other required reporting mechanisms.

Most Recent Data Available Regarding the Results and Outcomes Observed Through the Implementation of the Existing Waiver

The State of Florida does not have an AJC waiver in place at present.

Opportunity for Local Workforce Development Board and Public Comment on the Waiver

Workforce development stakeholders, including LWDBs, businesses, and Chief Local Elected Officials, were notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and post on CareerSource Florida's website. This included instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on CareerSource Florida's website, CareerSourceFlorida.com, in the WIOA combined plan. The public comment period was open for 30 calendar days.

**State of Florida Waiver Request
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
In-School Youth Individual Training Accounts**

Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida (State) is requesting renewal of the waiver of 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 681.550, which allows Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) individual training accounts (ITAs) for out-of-school youth (OSY), ages 16 to 24, using WIOA youth funds when appropriate.

20 CFR 681.550 allows ITAs funded by WIOA youth funds to be used for OSY. The final rule did not expand the use of ITAs for in-school youth (ISY). Instead, ISY wishing to access ITAs may only do so through co-enrollment in the WIOA Adult program. The State would like to continue to waive the requirement limiting ITAs to only OSY and expand this use of ITAs to ISY, ages 14-21. Additionally, the State is requesting retroactive approval to avoid any lapse in approval through the review process post the anticipated expiration date of June 30, 2025.

Waiving this requirement will provide greater flexibility and increase the State's capacity for responding to the training and employment needs of the State's youth. The waiver will also ensure a responsive approach to preparing youth for future career success.

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

There are no state, local, statutory, or regulatory barriers to implementing the waiver.

Strategic Goals of the Waiver

The strategic goals associated with this waiver are to:

1. Address the talent pipeline shortages faced by many employers by ensuring the State's youth have the skills and preparation needed to enter the workforce and become contributing members of the local and State economy.
2. Expand access to apprenticeships by reducing barriers for related training instruction provided by post-secondary institutions.
3. Increase opportunities for youth to acquire occupational skills in post-secondary settings irrespective of their education status.
4. Enhance partnerships with schools and preparing ISY for post-secondary education in occupations that lead to self-sufficiency.

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration Policy Priorities

WIOA encourages strategies that connect education and training and support educational opportunities to improve job and career results. This waiver request is being made to permit local workforce development boards' use of the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to provide training through an ITA to ISY who are preparing to complete secondary education and begin post-secondary education.

This waiver request is aligned with the pillars of the America Talent Strategy, which emphasizes strengthening the nation's talent pipeline through early, coordinated, and access to high-quality

education-to-career pathways. Below are ways in which expanding the use of the ITAs to ISY directly supports the America Talent Strategy Pillars:

- **Aligning Education with Workforce Needs** - Allowing ITAs for ISY will strengthen Florida's partnerships with school districts, youth service providers, and training institutions to ensure youth have a seamless transition into post-secondary training and employment, reinforcing one of the core goals identified in this waiver.
- **Engaging and Supporting Disconnected Workers** – Allowing the use of ITAs for ISY expands access to post-secondary training, industry-recognized credentials, and other structured learning pathways providing early exposure to high-value career pathways and increased opportunities for youth to prepare to fill high-demand occupations being vacated by aging, retiring workers.

Growing Industry-Specific Training – Expanding access to ITAs allows youth to pursue portable, industry-recognized credentials resulting in stronger pipelines into high-demand, high-skill occupations.

Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

The State expects to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes because of this waiver:

1. Improve the local workforce development boards' and youth service providers' ability to respond to the workforce needs of ISY.
2. Increase the number of youth who utilize an ITA to pursue an industry-recognized postsecondary credential by five percent.
3. Increase access to, and engagement of, ISY in need of post-secondary education, training, apprenticeships and support necessary to succeed in the labor market and meet current high-growth industry demand in the State through acquisition of portable credentials, college credit, and a degree.
4. Improvement in the primary indicators of performance for the WIOA Youth program as set forth in WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A)(ii), thus increasing credential attainment and measurable skills gains by five percent.
5. Increase the number of prepared youth candidates who are ready to work by five percent.

Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver

1. Employers.
2. The State's ISY populations.
3. Youth service providers.
4. The State's career centers and the one-stop delivery system.

The Process to Monitor the Waived Activities and Collect Waiver Outcome Information

Annual WIOA on-site and remote programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how the waiver is being utilized locally and the success of achieving the stated goals and outcomes. Youth service providers will also be responsible for assessing the use and effectiveness of the waiver.

Most Recent Data Available Regarding the Results and Outcomes Observed Through the Implementation of the Existing Waiver

Over the prior three program years (PY), Florida served 8,882 OSY and 1,756 ISY. Additionally, from PYs 2023-2024 to 2024-2025, Florida experienced a 17.7 percent decrease in the number of ISY served. . During PY 2024, Florida experienced three hurricanes and two occurrences of inclement weather that caused some local areas to cease operations for a period of time. Florida attributes this steep decrease to the five weather systems experienced during one program year, which led to a focus on disaster recovery and dislocated workers.

The State and local workforce development boards (LWDBs) are continuing to develop strategies to optimize the flexibility afforded by this waiver, even in the wake extended career center closures.

The below data¹ represents information available for PYs 2022, 2023, and 2024.

**In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth
Enrolled in Education or Training Programs Leading to Credentials**

PY	Program	OSY in Education and Training	OSY w/ Measurable skill gains	OSY Measurable Skill Gain Rate	ISY in Education and Training	ISY with Measurable Skill Gain	ISY Measurable Skill Gain Rate
2022	Youth	2,976	2,254	75.7%	843	707	83.9%
2023	Youth	3,911	2,576	69.9%	911	764	83.9%
2024	Youth	3,266	2,188	67.0%	744	670	90.1%

The above chart provides the number of ISY and OSY enrolled in education or training programs leading to a recognized credential by PY.

**In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth
Enrolled in Education or Training Using an Individual Training Account**

PY	Program	Education and Training	Training Accounts	ISY Enrolled in Education and Training	Using Individual Training Accounts
2022	Youth	2,976	846	843	14
2023	Youth	3,911	967	911	18
2024	Youth	3,266	577	733	17

The above chart reflects the number of OSY and ISY that were enrolled in education or training and utilized an ITA to pursue an industry-recognized postsecondary credential. Based on the data provided, the number of ISY using an ITA in PY 2023 increased by 28.6 percent from the prior year. Conversely, there was a slight decrease of 5.6 percent from PY 2023 to PY 2024. The State anticipates that as more LWDBs and youth service providers develop effective strategies and service delivery models to respond to the workforce needs of ISY, there will be a continued increase in the current and upcoming program years.

Youth Placements (Quarter 2 After Exit)

¹ All data provided on ISY/OSY participation is obtained from ETA 9170 reports

PY	Program	ISY Placements	OSY Placements	Total Placements	Difference
2022	Youth	496 (20.1%)	1,975 (79.9%)	2,471	N/A
2023	Youth	267 (12.4%)	1,892 (87.6%)	2,159	-12.6%
2024	Youth	301 (13.2%)	1,971 (86.8%)	2,272	+5.2%

The above chart provides the number of youth, including a breakdown of ISY and OSY, that were employed post-exit. There was a 12.6 percent decrease in youth employed from PY 2022 to PY 2023; however, there was an increase in placements by 5.2 percent from PY 2023 to PY 2024.

Opportunity for Local Workforce Development Board and Public Comment on the Waiver

Workforce development stakeholders, including LWDBs, businesses, and Chief Local Elected Officials, were notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and post on CareerSource Florida's website. This included instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on CareerSource Florida's website, CareerSourceFlorida.com, in the WIOA combined plan. The public comment period was open for 30 calendar days; no comments were received.

**State of Florida Waiver Renewal Request
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Out-of-School Youth Expenditure Requirement**

Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida (State) is requesting a renewal of the waiver of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section 129(a)(4)(A) and 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 681.410, which requires state and local areas to expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on out-of-school youth (OSY).

The State is requesting to renew the waiver of the requirement to expend 75 percent of Governor's reserve youth funds and local formula youth funds on OSY, allowing Florida to continue to lower the minimum expenditure requirement to 50 percent. Additionally, the State is requesting retroactive approval to avoid any lapse in approval through the review process post the anticipated expiration date of June 30, 2025.

The State will continue to serve OSY by providing occupational skills training, work-based learning, to include employer-provided training programs like pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship, tutoring/study skills, education and workforce preparation activities, leadership development opportunities, supportive services, mentoring, guidance and counseling, financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills training, career counseling, transition to post-secondary education activities, and follow up services.

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

There are no state, local, statutory, or regulatory barriers to implementing the waiver.

Strategic Goals of the Waiver

This waiver will allow the State to support its strategic goals with targeted strategies aimed at reducing barriers and increasing employability for its youth. There are several barriers experienced by at-risk ISY that impact their ability to avoid dropping out of secondary school or obtaining/retaining gainful employment. Some of these barriers include:

- Lower labor force participation - For year to date, the labor participation rate was 31.1 percent for younger youth ages 16-19 with an estimated 31.6 percent for February 2026.
- The age group of 16-19 is the target age group that is at risk of experiencing challenges to remain in school and earn a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- Drop-out rate - Based on data from the Florida Department of Education, for the period of 2024-2025, of Florida's 67 counties, approximately 9 percent have a dropout rate of five percent or more. Florida continues to seek an expansion of partnerships with schools and community programs that serve populations such as at-risk ISY. By investing additional funds to support ISY at-risk of dropping out of school, the State expects to continue to lower the number of youth who drop out of school and obtain their high school diploma or its equivalent.
- Poverty rate – Based on the Florida Chamber of Commerce's Florida Scorecard, it is estimated that 16.5 percent of youth in Florida live in poverty.

- Unemployment rate - The unemployment rate for youth ages 16-19 is approximately 15 percent while Florida's unemployment rate is 4.6 percent.

The strategic goals associated with this waiver are to:

1. Address the talent pipeline shortages faced by many employers by ensuring the State's youth have the skills and preparation needed to enter the workforce and become contributing members of the local and State economy.
2. Allow local areas to serve OSY and ISY in a way that best meets the needs of the local workforce area according to populations, resources, and other labor market factors.
3. Expand opportunities at the local level for recruitment and enrollment of at-risk ISY who could benefit from the services of the workforce system.
4. Allow the State to spend its federal WIOA resources with more flexibility.

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration Policy Priorities

WIOA encourages strategies that connect education and training, support work-based learning, and improve job and career results. This waiver will increase at-risk ISY access to opportunities for necessary education, training, employment, and support services. Generally, this waiver will align with WIOA's career pathways strategy and prepare more ISY for in-demand careers. Approving this waiver request will increase the connection between education and training, provide work-based learning opportunities that include work experience and pre-apprenticeship, and increased access to workforce services for ISY. Specifically, this waiver will align with the following USDOL policy priorities, as found in the USDOL Fiscal Year 2026 - 2030 Strategic Plan, America's Talent Strategy, WIOA, and federal regulations:

- The USDOL ETA prioritizes youth skill development for jobs of the future through the development of AI skills and promotion of work-based learning within occupations using AI;
- The ETA has prioritized implementing innovative strategies to enhance workforce development and boost economic growth;
- The ETA focuses on optimizing federal investments to align America's reindustrialization and economic growth needs, preparing workers to fill high-demand skilled trade positions, and empowering qualified protected veterans and individuals with disabilities to secure jobs;
- America's Talent Strategy's Pillar I focuses on industry-driven strategies such as Registered Apprenticeships and other high-quality work-based learning models, to transform the workforce system into a reliable pipeline of American talent led by industry and aligned with America's economic priorities.
- America's Talent Strategy's Pillar III focuses on creating a modern workforce system that is unified, navigable, and built around the needs of its users.
- WIOA places a strong emphasis on work experience for youth participants, requiring that 20 percent of WIOA Youth funding be expended on this element;
- WIOA promotes strong partnerships to leverage resources and increase opportunities for youth; and
- WIOA prioritizes participant success, as measured by skill gains, entry into and retention of employment or post-secondary education attendance, and achievement of an industry-recognized credential.

Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

This waiver will allow the State and LWDBs to develop strategies that address challenges of at-risk youth whether in school or out and will help address student retention, engagement, and immediate transition to post-secondary education, meaningful employment, and/or the military. Expected outcomes for youth participants include an increase of five percent in the:

- Number that attain a measurable skill gain.
- Number that attend post-secondary education.
- Number that participate in occupational skills training.
- Number of ISY who participate in work experience opportunities.
- Number that earn an industry-recognized credential.

For the three preceding program years, Florida has experienced an overall increase of two percent between the PY 2022 through PY 2024 in the number of ISY participating in work experience opportunities.

Program Year	ISY Work Experience	Difference
2022	498	N/A
2023	597	+19.9%
2024	508	-14.9%

Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver

1. Future employers.
2. Florida at-risk ISY and OSY populations.
3. Youth service providers.
4. Florida career centers and the one-stop delivery system.

The Process to Monitor the Waived Activities and Collect Waiver Outcome Information

Annual WIOA on-site and remote programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how the waiver is being utilized locally and the success of achieving the stated goals and outcomes. Youth service providers will also be responsible for assessing the use and effectiveness of the waiver.

Most Recent Data Available Regarding the Results and Outcomes Observed Through the Implementation of the Existing Waiver

Over the prior three program years (PY), Florida served 8,882 OSY and 1,756 ISY.

The first chart provides a comparison of the total number of OSY and ISY served statewide for PY 2022, 2023 and 2024. Additionally, the latter chart below compares new ISY and OSY participations in PYs 2022, 2023 and 2024. Florida saw an increase of 89 new ISY participations in PY 2023 compared to the prior year.

Florida anticipates continued growth in the number of new ISY enrollments over the upcoming program years as more LWDBs expand opportunities at the local level for recruitment and enrollment of at-risk ISY.

**Out-of-School Youth and In-School Youth Participation
for Program Years 2022 - 2024¹**

	PY	Program	OSY Youth Participants	ISY Youth Participants	Total Youth Participants
SW	2022	Youth Participants	4,375 (83%)	884 (16.9%)	5,259
SW	2023	Youth Participants	4,378 (82%)	957 (18%)	5,335
SW	2024	Youth Participants	3,665 (82.3%)	788 (17%)	4,453

	PY	Program	New OSY Youth Participants	New ISY Youth Participants	Total New Youth Participants
SW	2022	New Youth Participants	2,604	421	3,025
SW	2023	New Youth Participants	2,509	510	3,019
SW	2024	New Youth Participants	1,991	360	2,351

Below are counts of ISY and OSY enrolled in education or training programs leading to a recognized credential by PY. In summary, ISY enrollments experienced an increase from PY 2022 to PY 2023 by eight (8) percent. Conversely, from PY 2023 to PY 2024 the enrollments decreased in education or training programs leading to a credential by 18 percent. Although ISY enrollments in education or training programs decreased in PYs 2023 and 2024, Florida was able to maintain its momentum and increased the rate at which ISY obtain a measurable skill gain by 7.4% in PY2024.

**In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth
Enrolled in Education or Training Programs Leading to Credentials²**

PY	Program	OSY in Education and Training	OSY w/ Measurable skill gains	OSY Measurable Skill Gain Rate	ISY in Education and Training	ISY with Measurable Skill Gain	ISY Measurable Skill Gain Rate
2022	Youth	2,976	2,254	75.7%	843	707	83.9%
2023	Youth	3,911	2,576	69.9%	911	764	83.9%
2024	Youth	3,266	2,188	67.0%	744	670	90.1%

Opportunity for Local Workforce Development Board and Public Comment on the Waiver

Workforce development stakeholders, including LWDBs, businesses, and Chief Local Elected Officials, were notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and post on CareerSource Florida's website. This included instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on CareerSource Florida's website,

¹ Data sourced from ETA 9170

² Data sourced from ETA 9170

CareerSourceFlorida.com, in the WIOA combined plan. The public comment period was open for 30 calendar days; no comments were received.

State of Florida Waiver Request
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Removing Race, Ethnicity, and Sex from the Statistical Adjustment Model

Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida is requesting a waiver of WIOA Section 116(b)(3)(A)(v)(II)(bb) and 20 CFR 677.170(c)(2), to the extent that they permit the use of race, ethnicity, and sex as participant characteristics to adjust levels of performance under the statistical adjustment model established by the Secretaries of Labor and Education. Notably, neither the law nor the regulation *requires* the Secretaries to use these participant characteristics. Instead, they include characteristics that are indicative of barriers to employment, such as indicators of poor work history and lack of work experience.

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

This waiver will enhance Florida's focus on serving individuals with barriers to work instead of providing services based on an individual's immutable traits, which may be unconstitutional but nonetheless has the effect of diverting services from otherwise eligible individuals.

This waiver request aligns with TEGL 05-25, which encourages states to identify barriers to modernizing performance systems and to adopt waivers that improve accountability and outcomes and is also in alignment with issued state guidance. Further, this waiver also supports Florida's state strategy by placing an emphasis on real progress in employment and skill attainment rather than demographic categories. Florida remains committed to sharpening attention on measurable results that matter to workers and employers

Strategic Goals of the Waiver

The strategic goals associated with this waiver are to:

1. Focus on serving individuals with barriers to employment, rather than the participant characteristics of race, ethnicity, and sex.
2. Implement the United States Attorney General's July 2025 Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination and other federal guidance.
3. Align state practices to be consistent with the opinion of the Florida Attorney General from January 2026.
4. Improve WIOA performance outcomes statewide.

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration Policy Priorities

Removal of race, ethnicity, and sex as participant characteristics from the statistical adjustment model is aligned with U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi's July 29, 2025, Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination. The Guidance provides that "[u]sing race, sex, or other protected characteristics for employment, program participation, resource allocation, or

other similar activities, opportunities, or benefits, is unlawful, except in rare cases where such discrimination satisfies the relevant level of judicial scrutiny.”

The United States Supreme Court has held that universities’ race-based admissions programs failed to satisfy the rigorous “strict scrutiny” judicial review used to evaluate their constitutionality. *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President & Fellows of Harvard College (SFFA)*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023). The use of race, ethnicity, and sex as participant characteristics in the statistical adjustment model may not withstand strict scrutiny and is inconsistent with sub-regulatory guidance issued at the federal and state levels.

Removal of these characteristics is also aligned with Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 07-25, issued on January 26, 2026. The TEGL cautions states that implementation of “discriminatory equity ideology,” as defined in Executive Order 14190, risks violating federal civil rights laws and jeopardizing federal funding. “Discriminatory equity ideology” means “an ideology that treats individuals as members of preferred or disfavored groups, rather than as individuals, and minimizes agency, merit, and capability in favor of immoral generalizations...” Continued use of the noted participant characteristics may constitute discriminatory equity ideology.

Finally, removal of race, ethnicity, and sex as participant characteristics in the statistical adjustment model is consistent with Florida Attorney General James Uthmeier’s January 19, 2026, opinion finding the use of race-based classifications presumptively unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment’s Equal Protection Clause and Article I, section 2, of Florida’s Constitution. See [Uthmeier Opinion](#).

Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

The State expects to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes as a result of this waiver:

1. Elimination of focus on the participant characteristics of race, ethnicity, and sex.
2. Improved WIOA performance outcomes statewide due to alignment with WIOA’s focus on serving individuals with barriers to employment.

Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver

1. Individuals with barriers to employment.
2. Local Workforce Development Boards.
3. Employers.

The Process to Monitor the Waived Activities and Collect Waiver Outcome Information

The state workforce development board (CareerSource Florida) and the Florida Department of Commerce will continue to monitor performance in serving individuals with barriers to employment but will no longer need to consider the participant characteristics of race, ethnicity, and sex. Annual WIOA on-site and remote programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of the impact of the waiver and the success of achieving the stated goals and outcomes. The Florida Department of Commerce

and its Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research will continue to monitor, assess, and report on implementation and performance resulting from this waiver.

Most Recent Data Available Regarding the Results and Outcomes Observed Through the Implementation of the Existing Waiver

The State of Florida is currently developing a statistical adjustment model adjusting participant characteristics only for those barriers to employment as identified in WIOA for use with its local workforce development boards and can share progress on this development as it progresses. While this is a work in progress, Florida is providing the baseline data below for assessment of potential outcomes.

Program Year 2025 Q2 WIOA Adult Performance ¹	
Employment Rate Q2	85.4%
Employment Rate Q4	83.6%
Median Earnings	\$10,250
Credential Attainment Rate	79.8%
Measurable Skill Gains	77.8%

These baselines will be used to monitor impacts as Florida migrates the statistical adjustment model toward WIOA-defined barriers to employment.

Program Year 2025 Q2 Rolling Four Quarters WIOA Adult Participant Barrier Profile ²	
Low-income Individuals Served	64% of Cohort
Single Parents Served	18% of Cohort
Older Individuals Served	5% of Cohort
Ex-offenders Served	7% of Cohort

These barrier characteristics, rather than demographic attributes (race, ethnicity, sex), will anchor future statistical adjustments.

Opportunity for Local Workforce Development Board and Public Comment on the Waiver

Workforce development stakeholders, including local workforce development boards, businesses, and Chief Local Elected Officials, were notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and post on CareerSource Florida's website. This included instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on CareerSource Florida's website, [CareerSourceFlorida.com](https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/federal-program-reports/py2025q2-statewide-eta9173.pdf), in the WIOA combined plan. The public comment period was open for 30 calendar days.

¹ This data originates from the ETA-9173 report submitted to USDOL ETA for PY 2025 quarter ending December 31, 2025 <https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/federal-program-reports/py2025q2-statewide-eta9173.pdf>

² This data originates from the ETA-9173 report submitted to USDOL ETA for PY 2025 quarter ending December 31, 2025 <https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/federal-program-reports/py2025q2-statewide-eta9173.pdf>

**State of Florida Waiver Request
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Training Contracts Waiver**

Statutory and/or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida is requesting a waiver of the requirements in WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(F)(i) and (G) and 20 CFR 680.320(a) and 680.340(a) to allow all training services to be provided through training contracts for services directly tied to local employer needs. Presently, training services for eligible individuals are provided by training providers on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) that receive payment for their services through an Individual Training Account (ITA). Contracts for services may be used instead of ITAs only when one or more of five listed exceptions apply, and the local area has fulfilled the consumer choice requirements of 20 CFR 680.340.

This waiver will allow local workforce development boards flexibility to innovate and develop new training models without the burden of complying with the regulatory exceptions noted above. It is expected to expand the use of work-based training, preapprenticeships, on-the-job training, and to fast-track programs already validated by employers. This waiver request aligns with TEGL 0525; Pillar I: Industry-Driven Strategies and Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation.

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

The State has encouraged LWDBs and training providers to take advantage of the robust Eligible Training Provider List, which includes over 3,000 training programs. The State encourages the use of contracts for services instead of ITAs when one of the exceptions applies, but the waiver would streamline the process and allow local boards to tailor these agreements to the needs of their communities. It would also allow employers to provide the training component of a registered apprenticeship, internships and other earn as you learn workforce training models without having to formally apply for inclusion on the ETPL.

Strategic Goals of the Waiver

This waiver supports the State's strategic goals by:

1. Allowing local workforce development boards to efficiently and effectively provide training that is directly tied to local employer needs.
2. Increasing the use of work-based training strategies, including on-the-job training, customized training, and incumbent worker training, enrollment of participants in preapprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs, and contracted training with training providers for programs that feature explicit employer validation and offer

job guarantees, interview guarantees, or other mechanisms that ensure training leads directly to employment opportunities.

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 05-25 encourages state workforce development boards to review current policies and practices to maximize opportunities provided by WIOA to modernize and innovate operations and optimize service delivery of workforce development programs.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar I: Industry-Driven Strategies: Building reliable talent pipelines through a workforce system led by industry and aligned with America's economic priorities. It will allow individuals to receive training services that are directly aligned with and informed by the needs of local employers with less administrative burden.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar V: Flexibility and Innovation by creating new models of workforce innovation built to match the speed and scale of AI-driven economic transformation. It will facilitate training that meets the specific needs of local employers and trainees, allowing for more agility and speed in service delivery.

Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

The State expects to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes as a result of this waiver:

1. Remove barriers to training for both employers and job seekers.
2. Increase the number and type of training services, with an emphasis on work-based training, available to eligible individuals.
3. Allow employers that are not on the ETPL to provide the related technical instruction component of a registered apprenticeship where appropriate.

Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver

1. WIOA participants (Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth)
2. Employers
3. Training Providers
4. Local Workforce Development Boards

The Process to Monitor the Waived Activities and Collect Waiver Outcome Information

Annual WIOA on-site and remote programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how the waiver is being used locally and the success of achieving the stated goals and outcomes. Local workforce development boards will also be responsible for assessing the use and

effectiveness of the waiver. Local areas will also be required to report on implementation and performance because of the waiver in their local and regional plans.

Most Recent Data Available Regarding the Results and Outcomes Observed Through the Implementation of the Existing Waiver

The State of Florida does not have a waiver related to training contracts in place at present.

Opportunity for Local Workforce Development Board and Public Comment on the Waiver

Workforce development stakeholders, including LWDBs, businesses, and Chief Local Elected Officials, were notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and post on CareerSource Florida's website. This included instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on CareerSource Florida's website, CareerSourceFlorida.com, in the WIOA combined plan. The public comment period was open for 30 calendar days.

State of Florida Waiver Request
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Waiver to Allow Use of Supportive Services Within 12 Months of Exit

Statutory or Regulatory Requirements to be Waived

The State of Florida is requesting a waiver of WIOA Section 134(d)(2) and 20 CFR 680.910 to allow use of supportive services for participants within 12 months of exit for employment retention. This waiver will allow Adult and Dislocated Worker program participants who have exited to have access to short-term, targeted supportive services.

Priority provision of these services will be provided to participants who are or were recently justice-involved and recipients of public assistance (PA). Services will be designed to address issues experienced by jobseeker customers whose increase in wages reduces or eliminates public benefits. Such supportive services may include transportation-related costs, temporary living costs, or childcare expenses while the individual adjusts to his or her employment circumstances.

As shown in the chart¹ below, for program years (PYs) 2023 and 2024, the number of individuals participating in employment and training activities through WIOA and who are also recipients of PA increased for both the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. This data supports providing additional priority for supplementary support to increase employment retention and mitigate the potential that an individual will regress back onto public assistance.

	PY	Program	Total Participants	Receiving PA	Percent Receiving PA
SW	2023	Adult	8,483	2,949	34.8%
SW	2024	Adult	8,405	3,170	37.7%
SW	2023	Dislocated Worker	1,100	216	19.6%
SW	2024	Dislocated Worker	989	233	23.6%

For the same program timeframe, there were 717 (663 adults/54 DWs) justice-involved individuals served in the WIOA program for PY 2023 and 655 (598 adults/57 DWs) served in PY 2024 for a decrease of 8.6 percent over the year².

Actions the State Has Undertaken to Remove State or Local Barriers

¹ETA-9170 report USDOL's WIOA Joint Participant Individual Record Layout.

² This data originates from the ETA-9173 reports submitted to USDOL ETA for PY 2023 and PY2024 quarters ending 06/30/2024 and 06/30/2025, respectively. <https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/federal-program-reports/adult-py2023q4-local-performance.pdf>, <https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/federal-program-reports/dw-py2023q4-local-performance.pdf>, <https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/federal-program-reports/adult-py2024q4-local-performance.pdf>, <https://www.floridajobs.org/docs/default-source/federal-program-reports/dw-py2024q4-local-performance.pdf>

To support the waiver extending post-exit supportive services beyond 12 months, the State has taken several actions to remove barriers for participants. These include helping with transportation, childcare, and other work-related expenses, offering individualized follow-up and case management to identify emerging needs, and connecting eligible participants to community resources such as counseling, health services, and additional training opportunities. The State has worked within existing statutory and regulatory constraints to incentivize activities related to co-enrollment that can assist in meeting participant needs for supportive services and encourage employment retention. The State also works with employers to address workplace challenges, ensures access to technology and digital tools, and leverages flexible program policies to eliminate administrative or financial barriers, all aimed at promoting sustained employment, wage progression, and long-term self-sufficiency.

Strategic Goals of the Waiver

The waiver extending post-exit supportive services beyond 12 months supports the State's strategic goals by helping participants maintain employment, advance in their careers, and achieve long-term self-sufficiency. It ensures services remain responsive to individual needs, strengthens coordination across employment and training programs such as WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Welfare Transition (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T) programs, and maximizes the impact of workforce investments by reducing barriers that could lead to job loss or repeated program re-entry.

1. Continue to reduce participant reliance on and regression towards public assistance.
2. Improve employment retention by ensuring individuals have the ongoing support needed to overcome periodic barriers as they transition into the workforce.
3. Strengthen coordination across workforce development programs to facilitate better long-term outcomes.

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration Policy Priorities

Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 05-25 encourages state workforce development boards to review current policies and practices to maximize opportunities provided by WIOA to modernize and innovate operations and optimize service delivery of workforce development programs. This waiver aligns with USDOL's guidance to enhance worker mobility and optimize service delivery. The flexibility to provide supportive services to individuals who have obtained employment is expected to mitigate benefits cliff issues for workers and improve performance outcomes for local workforce development boards.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar II: Bringing more Americans into the labor force and helping them advance, including through the innovative use of technology and labor market data. Job seekers who have been hesitant to enter or re-enter the workforce due to issues with the benefits cliff, transportation, and childcare will be able to achieve and maintain employment

with the additional supports that may be provided using the waiver. Fewer individuals will need to continue accepting public assistance as a result.

The waiver is aligned with America's Talent Strategy, Pillar IV: Accountability: Ensuring federally funded workforce programs deliver measurable results by linking investments to outcomes & enforcing performance discipline. Local Workforce Development Boards can achieve greater success on performance accountability measures.

Projected Programmatic Outcomes Resulting from Implementation of the Waiver

The State expects to achieve the following goals and programmatic outcomes as a result of this waiver:

1. Assist more individuals with barriers to employment in obtaining and maintaining employment.
2. Wage Progression and Career Advancement: Ongoing services support skill development, training, and career pathway opportunities, helping participants increase earnings and move into higher-level positions
3. Reduced Program Re-Entry and Administrative Burden: By addressing barriers post-exit, participants are less likely to need re-enrollment, allowing the system to focus resources on outcomes rather than repeated intake and case management.
4. Increase performance on WIOA primary indicators of performance, including Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit; Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit; Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit; and Effectiveness in Serving Employers.
5. Continue to reduce participant reliance on public assistance.

Description of Individuals, Groups, or Populations Impacted by the Waiver

1. Individuals with barriers to employment.
2. Employers.
3. Local Workforce Development Boards.

The Process to Monitor the Waived Activities and Collect Waiver Outcome Information

Annual WIOA on-site and remote programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of how the waiver is being used locally and the success of achieving the stated goals and outcomes. Local workforce development boards will also be responsible for assessing the use and effectiveness of the waiver. Local areas will also be required to report on implementation and performance as a result of the waiver in their local and regional plans.

Most Recent Data Available Regarding the Results and Outcomes Observed Through the Implementation of the Existing Waiver

The State of Florida does not have a supportive services waiver in place at present.

Opportunity for Local Workforce Development Board and Public Comment on the Waiver

Workforce development stakeholders, including LWDBs, businesses, and Chief Local Elected Officials, were notified of the State's waiver request through an email alert and post on CareerSource Florida's website. This included instructions on how to submit comments. In addition, both the public and stakeholders had access to the waiver request on CareerSource Florida's website, CareerSourceFlorida.com, in the WIOA combined plan. The public comment period was open for 30 calendar days.

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