



Youth Basic Skills Deficiency Policy

Effective: September 2021; July 1, 2022

Revised: March 20, 2024; May 30, 2024

Reference: WIOA Sec 3(5), 20 CFR 681.290, TEGL 19-2

Background: WIOA identifies specific eligibility criteria for youth to participate in WIOA programs. Per WIOA regulations at 20 CFR 681.290, LWDBs must create a basic skills deficiency policy for youth meeting the definition of basic skills deficiency. This policy must be submitted to the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) as part of the LWDB's Local Plan.

Policy: WIOA Sec 3(5) defines a basic skills deficient individual as an individual with English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society. Per part 1 of the definition, to demonstrate that a youth is reading below the 8th grade level, only standardized testing instruments including records from the schools, should be used. LWDBs may use previous basic skills assessment results if the assessments were conducted within the past six months.

Accepted Assessments:

WIOA requires that a valid, reliable assessment must be used to determine basic skills deficiency status. OCWNY staff will select the assessment which is most appropriate for a particular customer, based on the customer's abilities and career goals. Reasonable accommodations will be provided for individuals with disabilities and individuals who are Limited English Proficient. Assessment options may include the following:

- New York State Department of Labor Skills Assessment
- ACT WorkKeys Assessment
- Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)
- STAR Test (often administered by local school districts)
- Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (often administered by local school districts)
- Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)
- A recent school report card or Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) showing the youth is performing below the 8th grade level or is unable to compute/solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society
- Other valid, reliable assessments, upon approval of the WDB Executive Director or the Coordinator of Client Services

Documentation: OCWNY staff and WIOA youth service providers will follow NYSDOL guidance regarding source documents required to support the eligibility components. Documentation of basic skills deficiency (either a copy of assessments scores from the test administrator or copy of the assessment itself), if readily available, must be placed in the youth's file. Assessment results must be entered in or uploaded to the One-Stop Operator System (OSOS) in compliance with NYSDOL guidelines. Both an OSOS comment and service must be entered for assessment administration and results.