



Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District

Policy Name	Youth Additional Barrier
Effective Date	March 1, 2017
Date Approved by the Board	March 1, 2017
Date suspended pending local Plan Revision	October 18, 2018
Date Reinstated	March 4, 2020
Amended	March 2, 2022

The WIOA regulations allow the local workforce board to define an "additional barrier" that can be used when certifying youth for WIOA program services under sec. 129(C)(VII) "an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment". The NWA WDB has approved the following definition to be used for this purpose.

- 1) Barrier - A 16–24-year-old youth who never obtained full-time employment defined as working for 40 hours per week for 6 consecutive months.

Reason for Barrier - The website, <http://www.governing.com/gov-data/economy-finance/youth-employment-unemployment-rate-data-by-state.html> provides statistics showing the high unemployment rate as follows:

Age 16 - 24 - 17.7%

Age 16 - 19 - 26.20%

Age 20 - 24 - 14.805%

Even though the unemployment rate in Arkansas is declining it remains high for the population served in the WIOA youth program, therefore causing a barrier to these individuals finding a meaningful career and employment.

According to "Helping OSY Attain Labor Market Success" report at www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/faculty, employers that offer jobs with good wages and advancement opportunities are reluctant to hire youth with no or limited work history. These youth are often in short-term positions and fail to gain the training and valuable skills for careers.

- 2) Barrier - Children of incarcerated parents (current or past).

Reason for Barrier- the website, www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2014/incarcerated-parents-an-children-health.aspx states that children of incarcerated parents are extremely vulnerable group, and much more likely to have behavioral problems and

physical and mental health conditions than their peers, reports Kristin Turney, a University of California-Irvine sociologist. All of these conditions can affect the youth's ability to gain meaningful training and valuable skills for careers.

- 3) A youth who grew up in or lives in a single parent household.

Reason for Barrier - The website, <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/publications> on the Annie E. Casey Foundation website children growing up in single-parent families typically do not have the same economic or human resources available as those growing up in two-parent families. Compared with children in married-couple families, children raised in single parent households are more likely to drop out of school, to have or cause teen pregnancy and to experience a divorce in adulthood.

- 4) A youth who was or is being raised by his/her grandparent(s) or caretaker (other than natural parent).

Reason for Barrier - The website, <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Articles/2012/US-children-grandparents.aspx>, provides the following information:

By contrast, skipped-generation or custodial grandparent households are made up of grandparents and grandchildren only, and are frequently the result of the grandchild's parents' substance abuse, but also incarcerations, death, mental illness or child neglect. Difficult family circumstances often lead to custodial grandparent care and custodial grandchildren have higher levels of emotional and behavioral problems than children in the overall U.S. populations, according to a study Smith conducted with support from the National Institute of Mental Health.

- 5) A Youth who lives in a rural area. Definition of "rural area" is any land population in a county that is classified as non-Metro.

Reason for Barrier - The website, <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/Issuebriefs/issuerural4.pdf>, provides the following supporting documentation:

Partly due to structural conditions such as geographic isolation, fewer services, fewer jobs, and fewer opportunities rural communities are ill-equipped to break out of the poverty cycle. Consequently, children who grow up in rural poverty face obstacles early in life that make it difficult for them to escape poverty as adults.

Note the following 5 percent categories below:

In School Youth (ISY) limitation: Per WIOA Section 129(a)(3)(B), not more than 5 percent of the ISY served during a program year may be eligible based only on the additional assistance criterion.

Low-Income Exception: WIOA 129(a)(3)(A) allows for 5 percent of youth served during a program year who may be eligible but are not low income. The 5 percent may be figured on Out of School Youth (OSY) or In School Youth (ISY) or both combined. For OSY, the 5 percent is only those OSY who are eligible based on one of the two elements that require the OSY to be low income. 1) additional assistance and 2) high school diploma plus basic skills deficient or English language learner. ALL In School Youth are low income.

Documentation needed:

- Self-Attestation or Case Notes



John Dyess, Chair

Date