

Fact Sheet

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; Joint Rule for Unified and Combined State Plans, Performance Accountability, and the One-Stop System Joint Provisions; Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

Background

President Barack Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Pub. L. 113-128) into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA is landmark legislation designed to strengthen and improve our nation's public workforce system and help get Americans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, into high-quality jobs and careers. WIOA supports innovative strategies to keep pace with changing economic conditions and seeks to improve coordination between the core WIOA and other Federal programs that support employment services, workforce development, job training, adult education and literacy, and vocational rehabilitation activities.

This Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) implements the jointly-administered activities authorized by title I of WIOA. Through this NPRM, the Departments of Education (ED) and Labor (DOL) propose to strengthen the alignment of the workforce development system's six core programs administered by ED and DOL respectively by imposing unified strategic planning requirements, common performance accountability measures, and requirements governing the one-stop delivery system. These proposed regulations emphasize coordination and collaboration at the Federal, State, and local levels to ensure a streamlined and coordinated service delivery system for all job-seekers, including those with disabilities and barriers to employment, and employers.

The core programs are: (1) Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth formula programs administered by DOL; (2) the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program administered by ED; (3) the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program administered by DOL; and (4) the Vocational Rehabilitation program administered by ED.

In addition to this joint NPRM, ED is issuing three NPRMs, and DOL is issuing one NPRM to implement program-specific requirements authorized by WIOA.

NPRM Review and Public Comment

The NPRM will be made available for preview before it is published, at the Federal Register Public Inspection Web site at <https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection>. This site offers a preview of documents scheduled to publish in the Federal Register.

Once the NPRM is formally published in the Federal Register, please provide comments in accordance with the process outlined in the NPRM. Please visit www.regulations.gov to share your comments on the specific proposed rules. Comments may only be submitted after formal

publication in the Federal Register; any comments not received through the processes outlined in the NPRM will not be considered by the Department.

Need for the Proposed Rule

DOL and ED are issuing this joint NPRM to comply with the statutory requirement to develop regulations implementing WIOA.

Highlights of the Proposed Rule

Through the NPRM, DOL and ED propose to implement a number of improvements that WIOA makes to the public workforce system. Specifically, the proposed rule would:

- Ensure that federal core program education, employment and training services are coordinated and complementary by requiring a single, four-year Strategic State Plan for achieving the workforce goals of the State. Additionally, States may include, along with the core programs, collaborative planning with other Federal education and training programs specified in WIOA (generally, the One-Stop partners that are in addition to the core programs) to develop Combined State plans;
- Ensure that federal investments in education, employment and training programs are evidence-based, data-driven, and accountable to participants and taxpayers by establishing a common performance accountability system for the core programs, requiring other authorized programs to report on the common performance indicators, and providing easy-to-understand information to consumers and the public about training provider and program performance; and
- Enhance services provided to all job seekers and employers through the American Job Center system by: requiring the co-location of Wagner-Peyser Employment Services; adding Temporary Assistance for Needy Families as a required partner; providing for State-established certification to ensure high-quality American Job Centers; requiring partners to dedicate funding for allowable infrastructure and other shared costs; and promoting the development of integrated intake, case management, and reporting systems.

Benefits and Costs

DOL and ED have determined that the proposed rule is a “significant regulatory action” under sec. 3(f)(4) of E.O. 12866; therefore, the Office of Management and Budget has reviewed the proposed rule. In addition, DOL and ED have provided a detailed analysis and discussion of the costs and benefits in the NPRM.