
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Comprehensive Participant Incentive Policy

Policy Number: WIOAP 1-2022, Change 2

From: Danilo Cabrera, Workforce Administration Bureau Chief

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Effective Date: **July 1, 2026**

Subject: WIOA Comprehensive Participant Incentives

I. Purpose:

To provide guidance on incentives to eligible Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker (DW) participants under Title I-B of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

II. Background:

The Workforce Development Council (WDC), in its role as a local board, has authorized the Idaho Department of Labor (IDOL), as the state and local Administrative Entity (AE), to develop incentive options for WIOA Title I-B participants, as applicable. Based on the references cited in Section V, IDOL established the following comprehensive policy and accompanying incentive options, which were first implemented on April 1, 2023, and later updated on October 1, 2025 and July 1, 2026.

III. Policy:

[WIOA regulations](#) allow incentive payments to be made to youth participants, provided the incentives are:

- Tied to the goals of the specific program;
- Outlined in writing before the commencement of (enrollment in) the program that may provide incentive payments;
- Aligned with the local program's organizational policies; and
- Issued in accordance with the requirements listed in [2 CFR part 200](#).

All WIOA-funded incentives must be tied to recognition of achievement of program milestones, work experience, education, or training, as detailed in the participant's assessment and Individualized Service Strategy (ISS).

Although the WIOA Final Rules include specific references to incentive payments for youth, there are no similar references to incentive payments for adults and dislocated workers. The AE is issuing this policy to support comprehensive service delivery, including Adult and DW participants who may benefit from incentive services. When federal guidance is issued, the AE will review this policy and make necessary and appropriate revisions.

The state has incorporated the Youth program incentive criteria into the Adult and DW program incentives. Incentive payments to these participants are limited to achievement milestones directly

tied to work-based learning activities (job shadowing, work experience, internships) and the following WIOA-recognized training services: occupational skills training, skills upgrade training, registered apprenticeship, and on-the-job training.

WIOA provider staff should note that achievements completed before WIOA enrollment **do not** qualify for incentives. WIOA Title I-B program incentives are intended to encourage ongoing participation and attainment of specific program goals, not as emergency assistance. WIOA participants needing emergency assistance must be connected to an appropriate service provider. **WIOA funds may not be used for recruitment or eligibility purposes.**

A. Application of Incentives:

1. Requirements for Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Incentives:

- a) Participants must be active in a WIOA Title I-B program (or Youth program follow-up).
- b) Career planners must develop an ISS describing the participant's training and employment goals. WIOA youth in a follow-up service may receive incentives if they achieve predetermined program goals during the follow-up period.
- c) Participants may work towards achieving **two unique incentive options per program year**.

2. Incentive Documentation:

Incentive payments are financial transactions, not services. WIOA Title I-B program service providers must document the following information:

- a) **ISS:** The supportive services section(s) of the participant's ISS should explain the milestone(s)/goal(s) that the participant will work toward during WIOA participation (or Youth follow-up) that could result in an incentive payment. The ISS should clearly outline goals and corresponding incentives before an achievement is reached, including the potential incentive's dollar amount.
- b) **Case Notes:** Explain the qualifying achievement's details and justification for the specific incentive award. At minimum, the notes should include the incentive amount, achievement date, payment date, and information about the WIOA career planner's guidance involved in the participant's achievement that led to an incentive.
- c) **Supporting Documentation:** Documents proving the milestone achievement (credentials, test scores/grades, evaluations, attendance records, etc.) must be uploaded to the participant's case file **before** issuance of the corresponding incentive payment.
- d) **Payment Records:** Service providers must maintain appropriate and identifiable records of incentive payments for local, state, and federal monitoring and audits.

3. Optional Reduced Incentive Status:

If WIOA program funding levels become a concern during a program year, WIOA service providers may submit a request to the AE to provide **all** incentives at a reduced level (i.e., 25% or 50% of policy levels) beginning on a specified date and continuing through the end of the contract period. Reduced incentive status can be invoked for specific service delivery areas (SDAs) or statewide. Original incentive payment levels **may not** return to standard policy levels until the provider's new contract begins.

To begin issuing reduced incentives, the WIOA Youth Workforce Bureau Chief or the WIOA Adult/DW Project Director must submit a request justifying the specific percentage decrease to the WIOATAA mailbox. Upon the AE's approval and beginning on the specified reduced incentive status start date, any **new** incentives offered by that provider must be funded at the reduced rate. The reduced incentive rate will apply through the end of the WIOA service provider's contract period.

Existing incentive commitments made and documented before the reduced incentive status start date should be unaffected by the reduction. If a participant's ISS and case notes entered before the reduction started reflect that a participant has planned to achieve an incentive for the full amount, the WIOA service provider must honor the incentive amount initially discussed with the participant, even if the incentive is achieved after the reduced rate start date.

B. Incentive Options:

The incentives below only apply to the program(s) designated in their descriptions due to funding and service delivery constraints of the different WIOA Title I-B programs.

Activity	Incentive	Max Amount	OSY	ISY	Adult	DW
Education	Educational Skills Incentive	\$250	x		x	x
	GED Passage Incentive	\$600	x		x	x
	School Credits Incentive	\$100	x		x	x
	School Graduation Incentive	\$100		x		
Training	Required Exam Incentive	\$400	x		x	x
	Credential or Diploma Incentive	\$400	x		x	x
Work-Based Learning	Skill Attainment Incentive	\$250	x		x	x
	WEX/Internship Completion Incentive	\$300	x		x	x
	WEX Completion Incentive	\$100		x		
Employment	Employment Attainment Incentive	\$200			x	x
	Progressive Job Retention Incentive	\$500	x			

1. Educational Skills Incentive: \$250

A participant identified as having basic skills deficiencies who demonstrates an increase of one or more educational functioning levels based on pre- and post-test scores from any of the assessments recognized by the National Reporting System for Adult Education programs (including the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), CASAS, GAIN, etc.) can achieve this incentive. The same assessment instrument must be used for the pre- and post-tests. Click on the following link for the [Test Benchmarks NRS Educational Functioning Levels](#).

This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.

2. GED Passage Incentive: \$150 each, up to \$600

A participant can achieve this incentive as they pass GED subject tests during participation in their WIOA program or the 12-month youth follow-up period. Career planners are allowed the flexibility to provide the GED incentive individually as each test is passed (\$150 per subject) or cumulatively once the GED is obtained (\$600).

This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.

3. **School Credits Incentive: \$100**

Participants who complete a sufficient number of credit hours during their secondary or postsecondary schooling while enrolled in WIOA programs, or during the 12-month youth follow-up period, may earn this incentive. Documentation of completed credit hours must demonstrate:

- **Secondary:** transcript or report card for one semester, or
- **Postsecondary:** at least 12 hours per semester (or for part-time students, a total of at least 12 hours over two completed consecutive semesters) shown on a transcript or verified by a school administration official.

This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.

4. **School Graduation Incentive: \$100**

An In-School Youth participant who graduates from the secondary school they are enrolled in during WIOA participation or during the 12-month follow-up period can achieve this incentive. A diploma or equivalent document must be documented in the participant's case file.

This measure applies only to In-School Youth.

5. **Required Exam Incentive: \$400**

Participants who attain technical or occupational skills required by their chosen occupation/industry during WIOA program participation or during the 12-month youth follow-up period can achieve this incentive. Career planners must verify that the participant achieved a trade-related benchmark, such as passing a knowledge-based exam, that leads to an industry credential. Examples may include a welding test or passage of the NNAAP (National Nurse Aide Assessment Program). Exams for general skills, such as a typing test, or excluded credentials, such as CPR, OSHA Health and Safety, flagging certifications, or other similar certifications, do not qualify for the incentive.

This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.

6. **Credential or Diploma Incentive: \$400**

Participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma (or a recognized equivalent) during WIOA participation or during the 12-month youth follow-up period can achieve this incentive. The postsecondary credential must reflect the attainment of measurable technical or industry/occupational skills necessary to obtain employment or advance within an industry/occupation based on standards developed or endorsed by employers or industry associations. Certificates must recognize industry- or occupation-specific skills rather than general skills in safety, hygiene, etc. They must exclude credentials such as CPR, OSHA Health and Safety, flagging certification, and other similar certifications.

Listed below are examples of credentials eligible for this incentive:

- Secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Occupational licensure
- Occupational certificates, including Registered Apprenticeship and Career and Technical Education certificates
- Occupational certifications

This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.

7. Skill Attainment Incentive: \$250

A participant in a work-based activity (OJT, Internship, Work Experience, or Registered Apprenticeship) that attains a skill (occupational/work-readiness/employment preparedness/or other skill attainments) verified by the employer through a positive evaluation can achieve this incentive. The evaluation can be either a midpoint or closing evaluation and must show the participant's progression toward their goals established in the Memorandum of Agreement with the worksite/employer.

Note: This incentive is not tied to a measurable skills gain (MSG) for youth.

This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.

8. WEX/Internship Completion Incentive: \$300

Participants who successfully complete a WEX or internship (an average score of 3.0 or better on evaluations and completion of the WEX hours as specified in the participant's WEX agreement), including all activities required for participation, may achieve this incentive. Successful completion includes attending orientations and workshops, fulfilling WEX requirements, meeting all established program expectations, and attaining positive employer evaluation report(s).

This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.

9. WEX Completion Incentive: \$100

In-School Youth participants who successfully complete a WEX activity, confirmed through an average score of 3.0 or better on WEX evaluations and completion of the WEX hours as specified in the participant's WEX agreement, can achieve this incentive.

This measure applies to In-School Youth.

10. Employment Attainment Incentive: \$200

Adult and DW participants who complete planned training services, work-based learning activities, or employment preparation activities identified in the ISS and obtain unsubsidized employment prior to program exit can achieve this incentive. The career planner must verify and enter employment details into IdahoWorks before issuing the incentive.

This measure applies to Adult/DW participants.

11. Progressive Job Retention Incentive: up to \$500

Out-of-School Youth who have completed WIOA Youth program activities and attained full-time, unsubsidized employment in the individual's selected career/industry as planned in the WIOA ISS can achieve this incentive. The career planner must verify employment and retention before issuing each incentive payment.

- \$200 for obtaining employment
- \$300 for retaining the same position/employer for six (6) months

This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth.

IV. Definitions:

[WIOA Section \(3\)](#); OMB Uniform Guidance [2 CFR 200.1](#)

V. References:

[WIOA Sec. 3\(a\)\(i-v\)](#); WIOA Final Regulations [20 CFR 681.640](#) and [683.200\(b\)\(2\)](#); OMB Uniform Guidance [2 CFR 200.456](#), [2 CFR 200.1](#), and [2 CFR 200.407\(t\)](#); Training and Employment Guidance

Letters (TEGL) [21-16](#) and [19-16](#)

VI. Rescissions/Cancellations:

WDC-10-19-2015- WIOA Transmittal #3

WDC Transmittal #1, 10-26-2016

WDC Transmittal #1, 7-13-2017

WIOAP 01-22, 4-1-2023

WIOAP 01-2022 Change 1

VII. Direct Inquiries to:

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