IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

State Administrative Entity

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Comprehensive Participant Incentive Policy

Policy Number: WIOAP 01-22, Change 3

From: Danilo Cabrera, Workforce Administration Bureau Chief *Danilo Cabrera*

Effective Date: **November 2, 2026**

Subject: WIOA Comprehensive Participant Incentives

I. Purpose:

A. 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:

A. The state Workforce Development Council (WDC), as the local board, authorized the Idaho Department of Labor (IDOL) to develop incentive options for WIOA Title I-B participants, as applicable. Based on the references cited in Section V, IDOL, as the state and local Administrative Entity (AE), 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:

A. WIOA regulations allow incentive payments to be made to youth participants, provided the incentives are:
   i. Tied to the goals of the specific program;
   ii. Outlined in writing before the commencement of (enrollment in) the program that may provide incentive payments;
   iii. Aligned with the local program's organizational policies; and
   iv. Issued in accordance with the requirements listed in 2 CFR part 200.

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

C. Although the WIOA Final Rule specifically references incentive payments for youth, it does not include similar references for adults and dislocated workers. The AE issued 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.

D. 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.

E. 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.

F. **WIOA incentive funds may not be used for recruitment or eligibility purposes.**

i. **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:
    a. Incentive payments are financial transactions, not services. WIOA Title I-B program service providers must document the following information:
        i. **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 the achievement is reached, including the potential incentive amount.
        ii. **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 that led to the participant's achievement.
        iii. **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.
        iv. **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:
    a. If WIOA program funding levels become a concern during a program year, WIOA service providers may request 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.
    b. To begin issuing reduced incentives, the WIOA Youth Workforce Bureau Chief or the WIOA Adult/DW Project Director must submit a request to the WIOATAA mailbox justifying the specific percentage decrease. If and when the AE approves the specified reduced incentive rate with a start date, the provider must fund new incentives at the reduced rate across the state. The reduced incentive rate will apply through the end of the WIOA service provider's contract period.
    c. 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 the participant planned to achieve the original incentive 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.

ii. **Incentive Options:** The incentives below apply only to the program(s) designated in their descriptions because funding and service-delivery constraints vary across WIOA Title I-B programs.

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

1. **Educational Skills Incentive: $250**
    a. 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. Use the same assessment instrument for the pre- and post-tests. Click on the following link for the Test Benchmarks NRS Educational Functioning Levels.
    b. This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth, Adult/DW participants.
2. **GED Passage Incentive: $150 each, up to $600**
    a. Participants may earn this incentive by passing GED subject tests during their WIOA program or the 12-month youth follow-up period. Career planners may provide the GED incentive individually as each test is passed ($150 per subject) or cumulatively once the GED is obtained ($600).
    b. This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.
    c. An In-School Youth no longer attending secondary school after enrolling in the WIOA Youth program may receive an incentive of $75 for each GED subject test passed, up to a maximum of $300 for passing all four subjects.
3. **School Credits Incentive: $100**

a. 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:
    i. **Secondary:** transcript or report card for one semester, or
    ii. **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.
b. This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.

4. **School Graduation Incentive: $100**
    a. 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.
    b. This measure applies only to In-School Youth.
5. **Required Exam Incentive: $400**
    a. Participants who attain the technical or occupational skills required by their chosen occupation/industry during WIOA program participation or the 12-month youth follow-up period may earn 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 include a welding test or passing 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.
    b. This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.
6. **Credential or Diploma Incentive: $400**
    a. 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 measurable technical or industry/occupational skills needed to get or advance in a job, 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.
    b. **Listed below are examples of credentials eligible for this incentive**:
        i. Secondary school diploma or recognized equivalent
        ii. Associate degree
        iii. Bachelor's degree
        iv. Occupational licensure

v. Occupational certificates, including Registered Apprenticeship and Career and Technical Education certificates
vi. Occupational certifications

c. This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.
d. An In-School Youth no longer attending secondary school after enrolling in the WIOA Youth program may receive a $ 200 incentive for completing this measure.

7. **Skill Attainment Incentive: $250**
    a. 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 may be a midpoint or closing evaluation and must show the participant's progress toward the goals established in the Memorandum of Agreement with the worksite/employer.
    b. **Note: This incentive is not tied to a measurable skills gain (MSG) for youth.**
    c. This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.
8. **WEX/Internship Completion Incentive: $300**
    a. 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).
    b. This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth and Adult/DW participants.
9. **WEX Completion Incentive: $100**
    a. 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.
    b. This measure applies to In-School Youth.
10. **Employment Attainment Incentive: $200**
    a. 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.
    b. This measure applies to Adult/DW participants.
11. **Progressive Job Retention Incentive: up to $500**
    a. 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.

i. $200 for obtaining employment

ii. $300 for retaining the same position/employer for six (6) months

b. This measure applies to Out-of-School Youth.

IV. Definitions:

A. WIOA Section (3); OMB Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.1

V. References:

A. 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:

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

B. WDC Transmittal #1, 10-26-2016

C. WDC Transmittal #1, 7-13-2017

D. WIOAP 01-22, 4-1-2023

E. WIOAP 01-2022 Change 1

VII. Direct inquiries to: WIOATAA@labor.idaho.gov