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WIOA BULLETIN NO. 16-18, Change 1

DATE: June 28, 2021
TO: WIOA Partners
SUBJECT: Recording Measurable Skill Gains in HireNet Hawaii
RESCISSION: WIOA Bulletin No. 16-18, issued February 20, 2018

I. Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide guidance on collecting and recording measurable skill gains in participant case files and HireNet Hawaii.

II. Background

The Workforce Development Council issued WIOA Bulletin 16-18 on February 20, 2018. This replacement bulletin clarifies the requirements for the Measurable Skill Gains performance indicator.

Section 116 of WIOA establishes performance indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of States and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals enrolled in the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs and other workforce development programs administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education. Measurable Skill Gains is one of six primary performance indicators that must be reported in every program year. Sanctions may be imposed on States (Section 116(f) of WIOA) and local areas (Section 116(g) of WIOA) that fail to meet any of the primary performance indicators.

III. Policy

A skill gain, which is measurable, must be recorded during a program year for a participant who (1) is enrolled in an education or training program that leads to a recognized secondary or post-secondary credential or employment and (2) is achieving documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress toward such a credential or employment. A skill gain can be one of five types, as described in the procedures section below. It is possible for a participant to have more than one type of measurable skill gain. However, only one skill per

participant in a reporting period may be used to calculate success in the Measurable Skill Gains indicator. In other words, a participant is only counted one time per reporting period, regardless of the number of skill gains they have achieved in a given program year unless the participant has more than one period of participation in a given program year.

In general, all participants including in-school youth participants who are enrolled in an education or training program that leads to a recognized secondary or post-secondary credential or employment are included in the Measurable Skill Gains indicator. Out-of-school youth participants are included in the Measurable Skill Gains indicator, if they are enrolled in any one of the following programs:

1. The program element occupational skills training;
2. Secondary education at or above the 9th grade level during participation in the Youth program;
3. Post-secondary education during participation in the Youth program;
4. Title II-funded adult education at or above the 9th grade level during participation in the Youth program;
5. The YouthBuild program during participation in the Youth program; or
6. The Job Corps program during participation in the Youth program.

IV. Procedures

Case managers should contact participants frequently during the time when they are enrolled in an education or training program and ask them whether they have gained a skill. If a skill has been gained, the case manager must obtain a copy of the skill (e.g., a diploma, a report card, a transcript, a progress report, a training report, or a graded exam) and store it as a record in the participant's case file. The case manager must record the type of skill gain, the type of achievement, and the date the skill was earned in the case file and in HireNet Hawaii. Every measurable skill must be documented.

Types of Measurable Skill Gains

Only certain types of skill gains, which are dependent on a particular education or training program, can be counted in the Measurable Skill Gains indicator. The following five types of measurable skill gains are allowed:

1. **Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the post-secondary education level.** This gain can be documented in one of three ways:
 - a. Comparison of the participant's initial educational functioning level, as measured by a pre-test, with the participant's new educational functioning level, as measured by a post-test. Documentation should include both the pre-test and the post-test to indicate achievement of the next higher educational functioning level.
 - b. An educational gain through the awarding of credits or Carnegie units if the participant is in an adult high school program that leads to a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent. Documentation should include a transcript

or equivalent reporting document that shows completion of credits or Carnegie units.

- c. An educational functioning level was gained when the participant completes a basic education program below the post-secondary level *and* enrolls in a post-secondary education and training program during the program year. A participant must have completed a basic education program and started a post-secondary education and training program within the same program year. Documentation should include completion of the basic education program and an admission letter or equivalent document that shows the participant has started post-secondary education and training.

2. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent. This gain can be documented in one of two ways:

- a. A secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent if the participant obtains certification of attaining passing scores on all parts of a State-recognized high school equivalency test (e.g., GED or HiSet). Documentation should include a diploma and a transcript or report that shows passage of a high school equivalency test.
- b. A diploma or State-recognized equivalent documenting satisfactory completion of secondary studies or an alternate diploma, including a high school or adult secondary school diploma. Documentation should include a diploma or State-recognized equivalent.

3. Secondary or post-secondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards. Depending on the type of education program, this gain can be documented in one of two ways:

- a. For secondary education: a receipt of a secondary transcript or report card for one semester that shows the participant is achieving the State unit's policies for academic standards. Document should include a transcript or report card of the most recent semester.
- b. For post-secondary education: demonstration of a sufficient number of credit hours (at least 12 hours per semester (or equivalent) for a full-time student or a total of at least 12 hours over the course of two completed semesters (or equivalent) for a part-time student during a 12 month period) that shows the participant is achieving the State unit's academic standards (or the equivalent for other than credit hour programs). Documentation for a full-time student should include a transcript of the most recent semester or equivalent. Documentation for a part-time student should include a transcript of the most recent two semesters or equivalent.

4. Satisfactory or better progress report, toward established milestones, such as completion of On-the-Job Training (OJT) or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training. Documenting this gain can vary depending on the

education or training program. Appropriate methodologies for measuring the gain should be included. The following types of progress reports can be obtained and must show substantive skill development:

- a. A satisfactory or better progress report from an employer or training provider.
 - b. A training report on a completed milestone that shows the participant has mastered required job skills. Documentation should indicate completion of a recent milestone.
 - c. A training report on steps that the participant has completed for an OJT or apprenticeship program. Documentation should indicate completion of a recent step or steps or similar progression.
 - d. An increase in pay that results from newly acquired skills or increased performance. Documentation should include a letter or commendation that explains the pay increase is a direct result of job performance or acquiring new skills. Another form of documentation could be a performance evaluation that shows a participant has been granted an increase in pay.
5. **Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks, such as knowledge-based exams.** This gain can be documented in one of three ways:
- a. Passage of a component exam in a Registered Apprenticeship program or an employer-required knowledge-based exam. Documentation of the exam must show a passing grade or score.
 - b. Satisfactory attainment of an element on an industry or occupational competency-based assessment. The element in this case may be a required exam or equivalent instrument that would measure a participant's progress toward achieving the final industry or occupational competency-based assessment. Documentation of the exam must show a passing grade or score.
 - c. Completion of a test necessary to obtain a credential. A participant may be required to take one or more exams during the training program. As such, passage of any one of those exams would qualify as a skill gain. Documentation of the exam must show a passing grade or score.

Participants who are enrolled in a training program provided by a non-profit organization or a for-profit company may be able to achieve a skill gain through Types 4a, 5b, or 5c. Training providers may be able to provide documentation for these specific types of skill gains.

Period of Participation

A new period of participation is counted each time a participant **enrolls** in an education or training program. Each education or training program represents one period of participation. This type of period of participation only applies to the Measurable Skill Gains indicator. Unlike all other performance indicators, it is not necessary to wait until the participant exits the program in order to record a measurable skill gain, because the Measurable Skill Gains indicator is *not* based on the exit date of the program. A type of skill gain can be recorded as it is earned at any

point during an education or training program from the start to completion of the education or training program.

A participant may have more than one period of participation within a given program year. For example, a participant may have taken more than one education or training program. The participant completes a training program and enrolls in another training program, creating two periods of participation in the same program year. The participant may also re-enroll in the same training program if the participant had to discontinue the program for some reason and then found time to continue the program at a later point in time. The participant could also enroll in a third or fourth training program, assuming the participant completed all previous programs and started the fourth program in the same program year. The participant must have been enrolled in an education or training program in all periods of participation. If the participant has achieved at least one skill gain in each period of participation, then the participant is counted for those many times during that program year.

V. Exclusions

Participants who exit for any of the following reasons are *excluded* from the Measurable Skill Gains indicator. The following participants are not counted in the performance indicator:

- **Institutionalized:** Participant becomes incarcerated in a correctional institution or has become a resident of an institution or facility providing 24-hour support such as a hospital or treatment center while receiving services as a participant. There is no minimum length of stay in an institution to qualify for the use of the institutionalized exclusion; however, the exclusion may only be used when the participant is unable to continue to receive program services.
- **Health/Medical:** Participant has medical treatment and that treatment is expected to last longer than 90 consecutive days and precludes entry into unsubsidized employment or continued participation in the program.
- **Deceased:** Participant is deceased.
- **Reserve Forces Called to Active Duty:** Participant is a member of the National Guard or other reserve military unit of the armed forces and is called to active duty for at least 90 consecutive days.
- **Foster Care:** Participant is in the foster care system as defined in 45 CFR § 1355.20(a) who exits the program because he or she has moved from the area. This exclusion only applies to the WIOA Title I Youth program.

VI. Inquiries

Inquiries regarding this bulletin may be directed to Edward Uechi by e-mail at edward.y.uechi@hawaii.gov.

VII. References

- Section 116 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA), Public Law 113-128

- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-16, Change 1, *Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV Core Programs*, August 23, 2017
- U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration Region VI Presentation, "Measurable Skill Gains, WIOA Performance Indicator," October 2020



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