

Notes from NYEC-DOL Ask Away Session, 3/10/26

Presenters: Evan Rosenberg and Lillian Fix, DOL National Office

Questions and Answers

1. With TEGL 09-22 rescinded, can supportive service costs tied to work experience still count toward the 20 percent work experience expenditure requirement?

No. Evan clarified that moving forward supportive service expenditures should not be counted toward the WIOA Youth work experience expenditure requirement. Local areas do not need to go back and revise past reporting, but should stop counting those costs going forward.

2. Did rescission of TEGL 09-22 eliminate all of the policy clarifications that had been in that guidance?

No. for the most part, the policy clarifications from TEGL 09-22 remain relevant unless they conflict with newer guidance. The two main exceptions discussed were the prior self-attestation language affected by TEGL 23-19, Change 3 and the prior clarification allowing supportive services connected to work experience to count toward the work experience expenditure requirement.

3. Are virtual work experiences still allowable after TEGL 09-22 was rescinded?

Yes. DOL confirmed that virtual work experiences and virtual work environments are still allowable under WIOA Youth.

4. How does DOL envision building and sustaining WIOA in-school youth and out-of-school youth capacity across local areas?

DOL recommended leveraging other funding streams and partnerships, including co-enrollment with programs such as Title I Adult, Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, and YouthBuild. Presenters also encouraged local areas to consider available waivers under TEGL 05-25 and to explore whether virtual service delivery can help stretch limited resources when appropriate for participants.

5. How should labor market information be used to align youth training investments with regional workforce demand?

States and local areas were encouraged to use state labor market information to align training with regional demand. Presenters noted that registered apprenticeship is one strong example of a model that can provide occupational skills training and industry-recognized credentials aligned with high-growth and high-demand industries.

6. What strategies seem most effective for increasing out-of-school youth engagement and retention?

Evan highlighted paid work experience as one of the strongest engagement and retention strategies. He noted that many young people first come to the workforce system looking for income, so paid work experience can help keep them connected while they also receive training, soft skills development, and other supports.

7. Are there upcoming policy shifts, funding priorities, or initiatives that local providers should be preparing for?

Presenters encouraged providers to watch Workforce Pell developments, stronger WIOA and Perkins alignment, AI literacy guidance under TEGL 03-25 and TEN 07-25, and continued emphasis on registered apprenticeship. They also referenced the RESTART initiative and upcoming YouthBuild work as areas to monitor.

8. What federal guidance applies when a state management information system uses exit categories such as employment pending exit or pending exit other?

DOL explained that those specific exit categories are state or local system choices, not federal WIOA Youth exit categories. At the federal level, exit is defined as no services for 90 days, with the exit date retroactive to the last date of service. Follow-up frequency, tracking, and documentation beyond the one-year youth follow-up requirement are generally handled through state or local policy.

9. Are WIOA Youth incentives and stipends taxable?

Presenters did not give tax advice and stated that tax questions should be directed to the Internal Revenue Service or other tax professionals. They noted generally that tax treatment often turns on whether the youth is considered a trainee or an employee, but they emphasized that this was not official tax guidance.

10. Can states or local areas apply to youth the same supportive service policy used in Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, such as checking other community resources first before approving a supportive service?

DOL said there is no federal youth requirement identical to the Adult and Dislocated Worker supportive service provision, but a state or local area may choose to adopt that kind of policy for youth. Presenters described that as a reasonable and sensible practice. Note that Minnesota's policy is to coordinate resources with other sources whenever possible but it is not necessary to verify that no other resources are available prior to providing a supportive service with WIOA Youth funding. This will be reflected in upcoming updates to the Minnesota WIOA Youth Administrative policies.

11. Can states still allow the use of academic assessments that are older than six months?

Yes. Presenters said that rescission of TEGL 09-22 does not prevent a state or local area from adopting or continuing a policy that allows use of prior assessments older than six months, if that policy is otherwise appropriate.

12. If a 17-year-old completed high school in December but will not formally receive the diploma until May and is not attending postsecondary education, should the youth be considered in-school or out-of-school?

DOL said that, as a general rule, a youth who has graduated high school and is not attending postsecondary education at the time of enrollment would be considered out-of-school youth. However, for specific cases involving local school district timing and status, providers may need to check how the education system is classifying the individual.

13. Is WIOA Youth a funding source of last resort?

Presenters said there is no federal WIOA Youth requirement stating that all other funds must be used first before youth funds can be used. A state or local area may choose to impose such a policy, but DOL is not aware of a federal youth requirement making WIOA Youth the funding source of last resort. Note that Minnesota's policy is to coordinate resources with other sources whenever possible but it is not necessary to verify that no other resources are available prior to expending WIOA Youth funding for an eligible youth. This will be reflected in upcoming updates to the Minnesota WIOA Youth Administrative policies.

14. Are there resources or partnerships available to support opportunity youth, especially foster youth and justice-involved youth, in light of SNAP work requirements?

Lillian noted that DOL and USDA signed a memorandum of understanding in December 2025 to collaborate on guidance and technical assistance, including around the newer 80-hour SNAP-related requirements. She also pointed participants to HUD's Foster Youth to Independence program and to the RESTART grant work related to justice-involved individuals.

15. Can WIOA Youth help with the high cost of driver's education or obtaining a driver's license?

Presenters said Congress would have to change the law to formally expand what WIOA can offer. However, depending on state or local supportive service policy, youth funds may be used in some cases to assist with costs related to obtaining a driver's license.

16. For credential attainment, would a pre-apprenticeship certificate awarded by a recognized State Apprenticeship Agency likely count as a postsecondary credential?

DOL said it likely could, but the answer depends on the exact certificate and whether it meets the credential definition in TEGL 10-16, Change 3. Completion of a pre-apprenticeship program alone is not automatically enough; the actual certificate or award has to be reviewed against the federal definition.

17. Can Medicaid by itself make a youth low income under the public assistance category?

Medicaid alone does not appear to automatically satisfy the low-income definition unless it is part of qualifying state or local income-based public assistance or the youth also meets another allowable low-income category such as SNAP, TANF, or SSI.

18. Can youth funds be used for celebrations such as GED graduations or completion events?

Presenters treated this mainly as a state or local policy question. They did not give a blanket federal answer and recommended checking state policy or asking the federal project officer when needed.

19. Is there a federal cap on the amount of incentive payments that can be provided to a WIOA Youth participant in a program year?

No federal cap was identified. DOL said it is good practice for states or local areas to set their own incentive policy, including any appropriate maximums.

20. Can emergency groceries be provided as a supportive service even if the youth is not actively sitting in a program activity at that exact moment?

Generally yes, if allowed by state or local policy. DOL referenced 20 CFR 681.570 and noted that needs-related payments are an allowable type of supportive service for youth, which could include emergency groceries.