

	Policy No: PW-308
	Effective Date: July 1, 2026 Original Approval: August 20, 2020
	New ☐ Revised ☒
Basic Skills Deficient	

PURPOSE

To convey expectations for identifying, assessing and documenting basic skills deficiency when serving youth and adults funded under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

REFERENCES

20 CFR 681.290 and 680.600

WIOA Section 3(5)

HECC-OWI Policy Basic Skills Deficient

POLICY

WIOA Section 3(5) defines basic skills deficient as:

- 1) A youth that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test.

or

- 2) A youth or adult that is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

Youth and Adults seeking services through the WorkSource Center and WIOA programs will be assessed to determine their basic skill level at the point of eligibility determination and enrollment.

Adults who are determined to be Basic Skills Deficient will receive WIOA priority of service considerations.

ACCEPTABLE ASSESSMENTS

A reliable assessment must be used to determine basic skills deficiency status for youth for 1) above. The provider staff will select the assessment which is most appropriate for a particular customer, based on the customer's abilities and career goals. Assessment options may include the following:

- Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS)
- Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE)

- A recent school Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) showing the youth is performing below the 8th grade level or is unable to compute/solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society
- Other valid, reliable assessments, upon approval of the SOWIB WIOA Program Director.

Note: Providers may use previous basic skills assessment results if the assessments were conducted within the previous six (6) months.

Unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society for 2) above. This may be determined by staff during the enrollment process while working with the applicant when at least one of the following elements are observed (and therefore assessed):

- Is enrolled in a Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, this also includes enrollment in English as a Second Language (ESL) class.
- Determined to be Limited English Skills proficient through staff-engagement and observation.
- Staff observations of deficient functioning in completing forms, assisting in the development of a service strategy, or behaviors in group discussion settings.
- Information (in writing or through discussion with the participant) that an educational institution the participant engages or engaged with determined them to have a GPA at D or below within the previous six months.
- Qualifies for Special Education services or has an Individual Education Program (IEP) plan.

DOCUMENTATION

WIOA service providers will follow SOWIB and WIOA guidance regarding source documents required to support the eligibility components.

Documentation of basic skills deficiency (either a copy of assessment scores, or a copy of the assessment itself) or an Individual Learning Plan from the youth's most recent school (that documents deficiency and the youth's inability to adequately function on the job, within their family or in society) must be placed in the youth's case file. Assessment results and any post test scores must be entered into the iTrac system and uploaded to docMgt.

Case Manager/Staff observations of deficient functioning will be justified through documentation in a case note/comment.

Both a Case Note and Service must be entered for assessment administration and results.