

THE MISSISSIPPI PARTNERSHIP WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA

BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENCY POLICY

Revised February 21, 2019

The Mississippi Partnership Workforce Development Board Basic Skills Deficiency Policy

I. Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria in determining basic skills deficiency in The Mississippi Partnership Workforce Development Area.

II. Background

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Section Sec. 3(5) states Basic Skills Deficient means, with respect to an individual—

- (A) who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- (B) who is a youth or adult, that the individual 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.

WIOA Regulations 681.290 states that the State or Local WDB must establish its policy on paragraph (a)(2) of this section in its respective State or local plan.

A. Adult Eligibility

Section 134(c)(3)(E) of WIOA, with respect to funds allocated to a local area for Adult employment and training activities, priority must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient for receipt of Individualized Career Services and Training Services.

B. Youth Eligibility

Basic Skills Deficiency is used to determine eligibility of both in-school and out-of-school youth in WIOA. (Section 129(a)(B) and Section 129(a)(C)).

C. Dislocated Worker Eligibility

Basic Skills Deficiency is not utilized in dislocated worker eligibility. However, basic skills deficient at program entry is a required reportable data element for dislocated worker participants.

III. Basic Skills Deficiency Determination

WIOA service providers are responsible for determining if an individual is basic skills deficient. WIOA service providers must document the method that was used to determine if a participant is basic skills deficient. Individuals are considered basic skills deficient if the individual is in any of the following categories:

- Is below 9th grade level as determined by an acceptable standardized test, such as TABE, or school records
- Scores below a Bronze Level on the WorkKeys® Workplace Documents or Applied Math assessments

- High school cumulative GPA below a 2.5 on a 4.0 scale (in-school youth only)
- Taken but not passed the State end-of-course exams in Algebra I, English II, Biology, and US History (in-school youth only)
- Taken the ACT test but has not met the College or Career Readiness Benchmarks for English/Reading (English subscore of 18 or Reading subscore of 22) and Math (Math subscore 22) (in-school youth only)
- Lacks a high school diploma or its equivalent and is not enrolled in secondary school
- Scores below an 80 on the Work Ready Screening Tool for Youth (youth participants only)

NOTE: The Work Ready Screening Tool for Youth was developed based on the Essential Job Skills training that all WIOA youth are required to receive. This tool is designed to determine if the participant can function on the job.

IV. Effective Date

This policy is effective February 21, 2019, and applies to any WIOA participant in The Mississippi Partnership.