



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

What is the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act?

The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides funding to states to offer job training, education and employment services for unemployed and underemployed workers and youth. In Ohio, most of these services are delivered at a network of OhioMeansJobs centers. OhioMeansJobs centers provide free job training and other employment services to people looking for work. They match individuals who are looking for a job with businesses looking to hire workers, and help laid-off workers learn new skills and find new jobs.

How are WIOA funds administered?

The federal government allocates WIOA funds annually based on a formula that takes into account each state's unemployment and poverty rates. The formula awards more money to states whose unemployment and poverty rates increased most in relation to other states. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services administers Ohio's WIOA funding, most of which is allocated to the OhioMeansJobs centers, which the agency supervises.

Locally, OhioMeansJobs centers are managed by 20 regional workforce development boards, which are business-led and establish local policies. Ohio has 30 comprehensive, full-service OhioMeansJobs centers and 59 affiliate sites, with at least one site in every county. You can find the OhioMeansJobs center closest to you at OhioMeansJobs.com.

What programs and services are available?

Primarily career and/or training services. Under certain circumstances, supportive services – such as transportation, child care or work uniforms – also may be provided.

What are the goals of these services?

WIOA programs are designed to help job seekers and workers succeed in the labor market and employers compete in the global economy. The programs promote employment in in-demand industries and occupations. They also seek to increase job seekers' work readiness, educational attainment and occupational skills.

As part of WIOA, each state must submit a combined workforce plan to the U.S. Department of Labor outlining a four-year workforce development strategy. Ohio's plan coordinates workforce development activities among several key programs to better connect businesses to qualified workers: WIOA employment and training programs, the Adult Basic and Literacy Education program, the Senior Community Service Employment Program, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act program, Wagner-Peyser programs, the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program, and the Jobs for Veterans State Grants Program.

ODJFS worked with the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, other state agencies, and local providers and stakeholders to create the plan, which took effect on July 1, 2016. It demonstrates Ohio's commitment to align multiple partners to accomplish three common goals and ten reform principles.

To learn more about WIOA programs, visit jfs.ohio.gov/owd/wioa.