TO: Workforce Development Board Directors

FROM: Paige Perigo, Policy Manager  
Office of Workforce Development

Date: February 4, 2022

RE: WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Flexibility Guidance for COVID-19

Please review the following guidance that provides temporary WIOA adult & dislocated worker program flexibility as local workforce development areas continue to adapt to challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. Keep in mind that the flexibilities reflected in this guidance are intended to allow clients to begin services and should be used out of necessity and not convenience. Local areas should make every attempt to gather signatures and documentation through traditional methods prior to accepting verbal options.

WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Application

The WIOA adult and dislocated worker application may be conducted with the client over the phone. Case managers must read all contents of the application to the client, including all acknowledgements and a statement of understanding. A verbal signature from the client will be accepted.

Example Statement of Understanding
“Do you acknowledge, agree and affirm that the information you have provided to me over the phone to complete this form is true and correct to the best of your knowledge? And, that by signing this form verbally, do you understand, acknowledge, and agree that you are authorizing the provider of career services and/or OhioMeansJobs Center to obtain whatever information or documentation we may need to determine your eligibility and suitability for workforce-related services or training, and that you are also authorizing the provider of career services and OhioMeansJobs Center to disclose any information we have about you to employers, training facilities, and other organizations for the purpose of determining your eligibility and appropriateness for services or training, and for the purpose of providing you with any approved services?”

WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Eligibility and Documentation

Client/applicants may verbally sign the JFS 13186, Self-Attestation and the JFS 13187 Citizenship Status/Authorization to Work Self Attestation over the phone. These documents may thereafter be utilized as documentation for WIOA Attestation and Dislocated Worker eligibility criteria. Within this self-attestation, the individual must document which specific elements of eligibility he or she is attesting (e.g.,
age, birthdate, authorization to work, income, barrier to employment, etc.) and how he or she meets the eligibility criteria.

For the criteria in which the JFS 13186 or the JFS 13187 is not currently accepted in accordance with Attachment A of WIOAPL 15-07.2 such as age/birthdate, source documentation must be collected from the client within 90 days of program enrollment. Case notes must be entered in OWCMS with specific dates of conversations, communication method and details on what documentation must still be collected.

Verbal Signatures

Verbal signatures are allowed on WIOA forms but should be collected only as an absolute necessity. Local areas must exhaust all other options before resorting to the acceptance of a verbal signature.

Verbal signatures should be documented in the state’s case management system in case notes using the following language: “On [Insert date] [Insert client name] provided a verbal signature to the [Insert form name(s)]. This verbal signature is in accordance with the Temporary WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Flexibility Guidance for COVID-19 that was issued on February 4, 2022. A copy of the [Insert form name(s)] has been mailed to the client.”

Prior to accepting a verbal signature, case managers must read all contents of the form to the client, including a statement of understanding. Following the acceptance of any verbal signature(s), a copy of the document must be mailed to the client and the case manager must document in the case notes section the reason for the verbal signature.

Local areas must gather an electronic or physical (pen on paper) signature within 90 days following the capture of the verbal signature.

Electronic Documents and Signatures

Local areas may accept electronic documents and signatures from clients. Any documentation gathered electronically must be done in a manner that is secure and encrypted to protect a client’s personally identifiable information (PII). Please refer to Section VI(D) of WIOAPL 15-07.2 for guidance on the handling and protecting of PII.

Monitoring

The state’s monitoring system has been notified of this temporary guidance and will take this flexibility into consideration during the annual onsite monitoring review.

Please contact OWDPOLICY@jfs.ohio.gov if you have questions regarding this guidance. We will continue to provide updated guidance related to COVID-19 as changes occur federally and at the state level.