

STRATEGIC CO-ENROLLMENT – UNIFIED PLAN PARTNERS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy provides the guidance and establishes the procedures regarding California’s strategic co-enrollment. While this policy is not a mandate, this strategy is highly encouraged and supported under the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA) and the California Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan (State Plan). This policy applies to California Unified Plan Partners, and is effective immediately.

This policy has been written in coordination with, and is approved by, the following California state departments: Department of Rehabilitation, Department of Education, Department of Social Services, and the California Community College’s Chancellor Office.

This policy contains no state-imposed requirements.

This Directive finalizes Workforce Services Draft Directive Strategic Co-Enrollment-Unified Plan Partners (WSDD-199), issued for comment on June 5, 2019. The Workforce Development Community submitted 11 comments during the draft comment period. A summary of comments, including all changes, is provided as Attachment 2.

Retain this Directive until further notice.

REFERENCES

- WIOA, Public Law 113-128
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 4-15 \(PDF\)](#), Subject: Vision for the One-Stop Delivery System under the WIOA
- [TEGL 16-16 \(PDF\)](#), One-Stop Operations Guidance for the American Job Center Network
- [RSA-TAC-17-01 \(PDF\)](#), Performance Accountability Guidance for WIOA Title I, Title II, Title III and Title IV Core Programs

The EDD is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

- [RSA-TAC-17-02 \(PDF\)](#), One-Stop Operations Guidance for the American Job Center Network
- [California’s Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan \(PDF\)](#) Under the WIOA for Program Years 2016-2019
- Workforce Services Directive (WSD) [18-12 \(PDF\)](#), WIOA Memorandums of Understanding
- [WSD16-14 \(PDF\)](#), Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers
- [WSD16-20 \(PDF\)](#), Certification Process for Comprehensive AJCCs
- [WSD19-03 \(PDF\)](#), Performance Guidance
- [Promising Practices in Achieving Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide](#)

BACKGROUND

The US Department of Labor commenced a national workgroup in order to collaborate on getting a better understanding of co-enrollment strategies. California participated in the workgroup and committed to creating co-enrollment guidance in order to align service delivery with the concepts and visions found in the WIOA.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The WIOA places a strong emphasis on planning and implementation across multiple partner programs to ensure alignment in service delivery. Co-enrollment is consistently supported by the State Plan, therefore, Local Workforce Development Areas (Local Area) are strongly encouraged to utilize co-enrollment as a strategy to further leverage resources for maximum benefit to a participant. Furthermore, strategic co-enrollment can increase program and participant success, maximize resources, enable greater efficiencies in service delivery, and align services with regional sector pathways. By braiding resources and realigning program service delivery models, we can redefine participant flow and facilitate access to comprehensive services. Establishing co-enrollment models will enhance a more efficient use of system resources on behalf of the participant.

The State Plan identifies the following three policy objectives:

- Fostering demand driven skills attainment.
- Enabling upward mobility for all Californians, including those with barriers to employment.
- Aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services.

By adopting co-enrollment strategies, Local Areas can further advance local and regional objectives by programming service delivery models outlined in the WIOA Memorandums of

Understanding (MOU). Strategic co-enrollment builds upon aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services, where it makes sense for the participant, in order to help all Californians obtain jobs that ensure both long-term economic self-sufficiency and economic security.

Definitions

These definitions apply only to this Directive.

Career pathway – An identified series of positions, work experiences, or educational benchmarks or credentials with multiple access points that offer occupational and financial advancement within a specified career field or related fields overtime. They are designed to facilitate incremental and progressive skills attainment over time that build on the foundation of prior learning efforts. Career pathway is sometimes referred to as “career ladders” or “career lattices” and in this Directive, all hold the same definition. [WIOA Section 3(7) and the State Plan]

Demand-driven skill attainment – Alignment of workforce program content and education program curriculum with industry sector needs to provide the state’s employers with the skilled workforce necessary to compete in the global economy. Examples include cross-partner business services teams, talent pipeline development, and sector partnerships. [Reference: State Plan]

Participant – Partners use different words to define the individuals who participate in their programs. For the purposes of this directive, the word “participant” will be used when referring to job seekers, customers, consumers, reportable individuals, recipients, and students.

Priority industry sectors – These policies and strategies may be implemented using a sector strategies framework and should ultimately lead to placement in a job providing economic security or job placement in an entry-level job that has a well-articulated career pathway or career ladder to a job providing economic security.

Strategic co-enrollment – Deliberate intentional enrollment in more than one WIOA Unified Plan Partner program, as defined in Attachment 1. Sharing case management, leveraging resources, eliminating duplication of services, and improving participant experiences and outcomes are all made possible through the strong partnerships that characterize strategic co-enrollment. It is intended to be participant centered and provides all necessary services to achieve positive incomes. Coordination should prevent duplication or the supplanting of intensive services. Co-enrollment can streamline the provision of intensive services such as case management, job search assistance, and follow-up services.

Unified Plan Partners – Refers to core WIOA and strategic partners that are included in the California WIOA Unified State Plan. The California WIOA Unified State Plan was most recently updated in 2020. A list of California’s Unified State Plan Partners is attached to this Directive.

Leveraging the America’s Job Center of CaliforniaSM System

The America’s Job Center of California (AJCC) is the cornerstone of California’s workforce development system. This system must serve as an all-inclusive access point to education and employment programs that provide demand-driven skills attainment, especially for those with barriers to employment. To ensure maximum participant access to WIOA programs and services, including training, Local Workforce Development Boards (Local Board) can leverage resources through strategic co-enrollment.

Strategic co-enrollment is aligned with the California Workforce Development Board’s (CWDB) vision for the state’s AJCC system. Through existing federal and state policies related to establishing the operation of the overarching AJCC system within the Local Areas, there exists a foundation for implementing strategic co-enrollment. This foundation commenced with the Local Areas engagement in establishing a shared service delivery through MOU negotiations, and selecting a convener of WIOA partners within the AJCC through the selection process of an AJCC Operator. The WIOA partners within the AJCC system can collaborate to streamline administrative processes in order to co-enroll participants and direct more of the system’s limited resources to continuously meet the needs of participants within the Local Area.

The leveraging of the AJCCs and the AJCC Operators can help to establish a more robust, strategic co-enrollment policy. The policies that have been established have helped to lay the foundation for strategic co-enrollment throughout California.

Key Concepts

Integrated Service Delivery – establish and participate as an integrated system of partners that share common goals with services offered by multiple organizations for a seamless participant experience. The focus is on clients or target groups who have complex needs that require services from multiple partners.

Increased Access – ensures any participant, especially individuals with barriers to employment, who enter an AJCC, have access to partner programs, services, and activities where they’re eligible, including physical and programmatic access, as described in WIOA Section 134(d).

Continuous improvement – create a delivery system that is focused on process improvement and challenges the status quo.

Partnership – align goals, outcomes, and resources with all local partners in the AJCC system to leverage resources to provide a higher quality and level of services.

Eligibility/Intake/Referral

An essential component of strategic co-enrollment is identifying when a participant can benefit from being enrolled in more than one partner program at the time of intake. Many partner programs have common eligibility requirements as well as flexibility within their requirements that allow for participants to be co-enrolled. Partners can collaborate to develop a universal intake/enrollment application that can be used by all partners to assess the eligibility for multiple programs, enroll where possible, and make useful referrals.

Common intake involves the AJCC having staff that are cross-trained and knowledgeable in the functions and basic eligibility requirements of multiple programs. The AJCC staff will be able to appropriately assist participants and make informed referrals to partner programs, as necessary.

The benefits of a common intake process may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Reduces the paperwork required for an individual to provide and complete during intake.
- May include authorization to release information that allows partners to share and enter information in their respective case management system.
- Streamlines data sharing and supports the tracking of referrals, co-enrollments, and outcomes.
- Helps people with multiple barriers access coordinated services.

Roles and Responsibilities

Local Boards should determine whether to implement co-enrollment within the Local Area and at which AJCCs. Local Boards are responsible for identifying and overseeing the AJCC Operators and Career Service Providers and certifying their AJCCs. Local Boards may collaborate with partners to increase service integration as appropriate based on the needs of the Local Area. Under WIOA, Local Boards are accountable for workforce system outcomes across the core WIOA Title I programs by negotiating performance measures, providing program oversight, and establishing the goals and objectives for their Local Area.

AJCC Operators – coordinate the AJCCs and affiliated sites within each Local Area. AJCC Operators in Local Areas could support strategic co-enrollment by supporting the integration of service delivery within the AJCC system. This includes maintaining standards and accountability, promoting consistent, coordinated, and quality services, supporting communication within and across sites, and delivering staff training across all partner agencies.

Service Providers – support co-enrollment through collaboration and are encouraged to organize themselves into teams based on the functions necessary for meeting the needs of

participants, such as intake/assessment or career guidance. Co-enrollment of participants makes it easier to align staff expertise and skills with participant needs, rather than focusing on funding sources.

Coordination of Services

Strategic co-enrollment requires coordination from all partner programs in order to avoid duplication of services and costs. Each partner will need to identify which program is providing services, where there may be overlap, and where each service fits into the Individual Employment Plan/Service Strategy. With participants co-enrolled in as many programs as possible, staff have greater flexibility to fund and share the responsibility for the services that help participants meet their goals and objectives while participating in the program(s).

Partner Responsibilities

Each partner will need to ensure that their component of service delivery, coordination and case management is in sync with the other partners and that there is an effective communication system in place. The following points describe partner responsibilities:

- Develop information and confidentiality policies/procedures for information sharing and maintaining the data within the case management record.
- Determine eligibility across programs for co-enrollment, including supportive services.
- Make participant referrals to internal and partner agencies.
- Identify and provide additional referrals, if necessary.
- Track and monitor participant activities and services, placement, and follow-up services, and entering the information into the case management system(s).
- Providing sufficient documentation in the participant case file.

When is Co-Enrollment Appropriate?

- Services being offered to the participant reduces any barriers to employment and allows them to fully participate in all appropriate programs, including those identified in their career pathway.
- The participant requires services and/or activities from multiple partner programs and can use leveraged resources from the various funding streams.
- The participant is in need of and wants the services identified in any initial or subsequent assessment(s).
- Where applicable, participant meets any eligibility requirements or is able to meet requirements with assistance.
- Identified programs and services are not duplicative and do not supplant any services, the creation of employability plans, training, job placement assistant, or follow-up services.

Case Management

Case management is integral to participant success and the overall one-stop system. Being able to track participant progress, through multiple partner programs and services would be the ideal co-case management system in place for strategic co-enrollment. Currently, the partner programs that are able to utilize CalJOBSSM can share data and intake information after obtaining the informed written consent of the individual to share their data. As not all program partners are able to use the same system, it is important for partner programs to keep in communication and shared responsibility of case managing co-enrolled participants. All programs are responsible for carrying out activities in accordance with their laws and regulations. This would include follow-up and retention.

Cross-Training AJCC Staff

Successful implementation of strategic co-enrollment requires staff to innovate operations and to continually improve service delivery to meet participant and employer needs. This can be achieved by helping participants' access resources across partner programs, working in cross-functional teams, and providing ongoing training and professional development to all AJCC staff. All AJCC staff are encouraged to be knowledgeable in the eligibility requirements of their partner programs, however, AJCCs have found that a basic knowledge is needed for integrated services provisions and co-enrollment.

The U.S. Department of Labor expects the AJCC staff to be cross-trained, as appropriate, to increase staff capacity, expertise, and efficiency. Cross-training allows staff from differing programs to understand every program and to share their expertise about the needs of specific populations so participants can be better served ([WSD16-20 \[PDF\]](#)).

Performance

The standardization of WIOA indicators of performance introduces the ability to “share” performance across core programs, which enables multiple core programs to take credit for co-enrolled participants. For example, if a participant is co-enrolled in Title I Adult, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, both programs can take performance credit for the recognized credential obtained from attending a training funded by Title IV. For Title I programs, subrecipient staff should enter performance information (credentials, measurable skills gain, and etc.) received through other core programs into CalJOBS to ensure performance credit is received.

Technical Assistance

The state is committed to helping all Local Areas and their partners in developing and implementing strategic co-enrollment strategies. The state will house a technical assistance website that will include resources to help develop co-enrollment strategies.

ACTION

Please bring this Directive to the attention of all relevant parties.

INQUIRIES

If you have any questions, contact Sandra Hamameh at Sandra.Hamameh@cwdb.ca.gov.

/s/ JAIME L. GUTIERREZ, Chief
Central Office Workforce Services Division

Attachments are available on the internet:

1. [California WIOA Unified State Plan Partners \(PDF\)](#)
2. [Summary of Comments \(PDF\)](#)