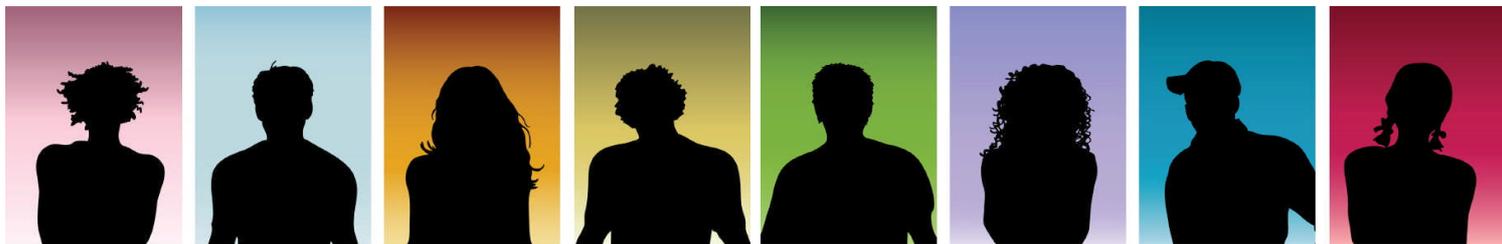


OK Youth!

Information Brief

No. 2



At a Glance

- *Follow-up services are required for not less than 12 months beginning the first day after the last youth program service.*
- *Follow-up is an activity during which a set of services may be provided in order to assist youth with retention of employment and/or educational pursuits.*
- *Follow-up should be individualized ; with a service strategy based on needs, goals, and personal circumstances.*
- *Documentation of follow-up is required by state policy and involves the entry of both services and Program Notes.*

Tracking Successes

Tips for Providing Follow-Up Services

The Workforce Investment Act requires that all youth receive “follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate.” Follow-up services help to monitor a youth’s progress and success as he or she transitions to education or employment after program completion. These services continue to support youth as they assume their roles and responsibilities in the adult world, helping to ensure positive performance outcomes.

What Are Follow-Up Services?

According to the WIA Final Rule 664.50, follow-up services for youth may include any of the following:

- Leadership development and supportive service activities listed in 20 CFR 664.420 and 20 CFR 664.440;
- Regular contact with a youth’s employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems as they arise;
- Assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development, and further education;
- Work-related peer support groups;
- Adult mentoring; and
- Tracking the progress of youth in employment after training.

According to 20 CFR 664.420, leadership development is defined as a set of activities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors. Leadership development includes but is not limited to: exposure to post-secondary educational opportunities, community and service learning projects, peer-centered activities (including mentoring and tutoring), organizational and team work training, training in decision-making, and citizenship training.

Supportive services are defined in 20 CFR 664.440 and may include the following: linkages to community services, assistance with transportation, assistance with child and dependent care, assistance with housing, referrals to medical services, and assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire or work-related tool costs. In addition, local areas may have other examples of allowable supportive services listed in their local policy.

When Do Follow-Up Services Begin?

Follow-up services should begin at the point of the last youth program service even if the program exit has not occurred. "Follow-up Services" must be entered into the Service and Training Plan (S&T Plan) the day after the last youth program service has ended. Any follow-up activity, such as leadership development opportunities or supportive services, received during the follow-up period must also be entered as a **quick service** when they occur. Follow-up activities do not extend the youth's participation in the program.

When youth have completed the activities and services planned for in their Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and have attained the goals that they have set during their participation in the WIA Youth program, they are ready to enter follow-up as a means to help them transition to long-term employment and/or education. Provision of follow-up services must be recorded in the participant's S&T Plan in Oklahoma Service Link (OSL) and a Program Note must be entered. Documentation of follow-up services in Program Notes and the S&T Plan must be sufficient enough to adequately show that the service provider attempted to provide follow-up to the participant for at least 12 months as required by the WIA.

Providing Effective Follow-Up Services

Follow-up must be appropriate to the needs of the individual and documented in Program Notes. It is the last WIA activity in which youth will be involved. To ensure its effectiveness, planning for follow-up should begin during the intake process and be incorporated in the participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Case managers should inform youth of the follow-up requirement and include follow-up services, such as leadership development opportunities, supportive services, work-related peer support groups, adult mentoring, etc., in the development of the participant's ISS, with input from the participant. Case managers should describe follow-up to youth in a manner such that follow-up is seen as continued assistance that will help the youth transition to full-time employment or post-secondary education. Follow-up also provides youth with an opportunity to highlight their achievements and gain recognition for their continued hard work. Case managers should remind youth that they are available to be contacted at any time should the youth need additional assistance or wish to share successes.

Like other services provided during participation, follow-up activities should be based on a youth's individual needs, goals, and personal circumstances. Case managers should review the participant's ISS and existing case documentation and gather and document additional information if needed to provide a customized follow-up plan. The case manager should work with the youth to create a written follow-up plan several weeks prior to the planned completion of participation.

The follow-up plan should address the following issues:

- Short-term and long-term educational goals and the steps to attain them;
- Plans for dealing with challenges at work or in school;
- Supportive services that might be needed for work or school;
- A schedule of regular follow-up activities (i.e. career counseling or leadership development opportunities) that will continue during the follow-up period; and
- Preferred method of contact (i.e. home phone, cell phone or text message).

Case managers should provide frequent and regular contact while a youth is in follow-up, especially when a youth first starts a new job or enrolls in post-secondary education or advanced training. During contacts with youth, case managers should discuss personal problems faced by youth and possible barriers to success, the need for supportive services, plans for advancement on the job, referrals to advanced training or additional support services, experiences in employment or education, etc.

In order for continued youth involvement during the follow-up period, it is important to keep youth interested and connected through engaging activities. These activities should be scheduled for the convenience of the youth. Examples of possible follow-up activities include but are not limited to:

- Leadership development activities, such as youth serving as mentors for new program participants or participating in a community service project;
- Team-building activities, such as evening workshops, peer tutoring, discussion groups or support groups; and
- Social and cultural activities that educate youth, such as visiting a zoo or museum.

Documenting Follow-Up Services

Documentation of follow-up is required by state policy and involves both entries into the S&T Plan and Program Notes. The beginning of follow-up must be documented by entering the service, Follow-up Element in the participant's S&T Plan the next day after completion of the last youth program service. A case note must also be entered in the Program Notes section of OSL to mark the beginning of follow-up services. Additional allowable activities that youth may participate in during follow-up are documented by the entry of any of the following services as a **quick service**:

- Follow-up Leadership Development;
- Follow-up Supportive Service; and
- Follow-up Adult Mentoring.

Once a service has been entered, a corresponding case note must be entered into the Program Notes section of OSL. Program Notes should provide a complete, accurate, and concise explanation of the type of follow-up service provided and any outcomes associated with that service.

Any contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise; any assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development, and further education; tracking the progress of youth in employment after training; OR any other type of contact with a youth during the follow-up period **must be documented in the Program Notes section of OSL** each time it occurs.

Follow-Up Services and Common Measures

- In addition to aiding participants in remaining successful in either employment or education after participation in the WIA Youth program, effective follow-up services have a direct impact on statewide performance measures. The State of Oklahoma has been granted a waiver to allow youth to be measured on three separate criteria to determine the success and progress of Oklahoma's youth programs.

The criteria measured are:

- Placement in Employment or Education—Youth that are in employment or education at the time of the program exit date or are placed in employment or education during the 1st quarter after the program exit date. To count as a positive in this measure the youth can not have been employed or in education at the time of program participation. Credit for this is taken by answering questions that appear in the exit questions link on the WIA Program Details page. This link will not appear until the youth has exited the program
- Attainment of a Degree or Certificate—Youth that attain a degree or certificate during program participation or up to 3 quarters (9 months) after the program exit. To count as a positive in this measure the youth must have been enrolled in education or training at the time of enrollment or at some point during the course of program participation. Youth enrolled in secondary education fall into this category. Credit for this measure is taken by entering information into the Outcomes link on the WIA Program Details page. This link is available during the participants' active enrollment and after exit. Outcomes should be entered as they occur.
- Literacy and Numeracy Gains—Youth that meet the definition of out of school youth and tested as skills deficient that gain at least 1 educational functioning level within a 12 month period. To count as a positive the first year in this measure the youth must be post-tested *within* 12 months of the enrollment date and must move up to the next educational functioning level above the level they initially tested at. Credit for this measure is taken by entering both the pre and post test in the Out of School Testing screen in the program enrollment.

Follow-up is essential for obtaining information on a youth's employment status, educational progress, need for supportive services, and possible barriers to successful transition from program participation to education or employment.

Frequent and regular contact with youth is important and should continue throughout follow-up; however, the youth is not the only source for obtaining information on performance outcomes. Other possible sources of information include but are not limited to:

- Contact with employers;
- Wage records;
- Training institutions or providers;
- State regulated certification entities; or
- Adult Basic Education providers.

Summary

Youth who have completed participation in the WIA Youth program have taken an important step in transitioning to the adult world. Follow-up activities continue to support these youth as they enter adulthood and aid in addressing barriers youth may face in becoming productive and successful members of society. Follow-up can take many different forms and range from simply contacting the youth on a regular basis in order to identify and address issues the youth may be having, or to organizing group activities that promote leadership development. Follow-up activities should not be provided merely because they are required in the WIA, rather they are a critical stepping stone that bridges the gap between youth and adulthood.

Sources

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