

Southwest Arkansas Workforce Investment Board Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Policy Number: 005-2011

Title: INDIVIDUAL TRAINING ACCOUNT (ITA) POLICY

Reference:

Date of Issue

Effective Date:

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are a payment agreement between WIOA Title 1 Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth providers and eligible training providers. ITAs pay for training services linked to demand occupations as defined by the LWDB, and from State-approved eligible training providers and programs. WIOA states that Training Services shall be provided in a manner that maximizes participant choice in the selection of an eligible provider.

1. Individual Training Accounts are established on behalf of a participant who a Career Planner or one-stop partner determines, after an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and career planning are:
 - Unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services;
 - In need of training services to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment; and
 - Have the skills and qualifications to participate successfully in training services;
2. Select a program of training services that is directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area or the planning region, or in another area to which the individuals are willing to commute or relocate.
3. Are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of such training, including such sources as scholarships, Career Pathways, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), and Pell Grants; or require WIOA assistance in addition to other sources of grant assistance.

ITAs are designed to be flexible and facilitate the payment for a training program that best meets the participant's needs and interests. The maximum amount of each ITA shall not exceed \$15,000. Participants who have had previous post-secondary coursework must present a transcript that shows a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher in order to receive Training Services.

An ITA may be issued for participants who possess a credential, certificate, and/or a degree (other than a Bachelor's Degree or higher) if the participant is determined to be eligible for

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Training Services and a need for additional training has been established by the Career Planner. The need for additional training will be determined by:

- Evidence of extensive job search that has been unsuccessful in the career path in which the participant holds a credential.
- Physician's statement that the participant can no longer work in the career path of the credential held due to legitimate medical reasons.
- Documentation that the credential held is outdated or that the participant has not maintained a proficiency in that career path due to not having a substantial work history in that occupation.
- The credential is not on the in-demand occupation list for Southwest Arkansas or the State of Arkansas.

Participants who have selected a Bachelor's Degree program must complete the first two years of training, prior to being eligible for an ITA.

A participant must be a full-time student, and cannot change degree plans without prior written approval from the Career Planner. Degree plans must be strictly adhered to regarding full time status, unless required classes are not available to remain a full time student. Should a participant choose to take additional hours that are not part of their degree plan, the ITA will only cover the required classes being offered.

Each participant is required to maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative grade point average. A participant with a cumulative or semester point grade average below 2.0 will be placed on probation. If the participant fails to raise their grade average to 2.0 during the following semester, they may lose their ITA.


SWAWDB Chairman

5/28/2020
Date

Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Individual Training Account (ITA) Procedure

Adults, Dislocated Worker and Older Youth training programs offered by Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board are provided through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) with certain federally mandated exceptions. Training services (except for On-the-Job Training and Customized Training) are provided through the use of ITAs and eligible individuals will receive ITAs through the Southwest Service Provider.

It is the role of the Career Planner (CP) to assist the participant in identifying training that will assist them in attaining their goals. This is accomplished through the development of ITAs. ITAs are established on behalf of an eligible participant who has received basic career services. ITAs are designed to be flexible and facilitate the payment for a training program that best meets the participant's needs and interests.

Training services will be provided in a manner that maximizes the participant's choice in the selection of an eligible service provider and program. Participants must be enrolled in training for occupations that are in-demand and are included on the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) List from the Arkansas Consumer Report System (ACRS), which is available for review at <https://www.employment.arkansas.gov/ACRS/>. Training programs selected by participants must not be prohibited by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Final Rules, the OMB circulars, Department of Labor policies, State of Arkansas or the Southwest Arkansas Workforce Development Board. For a list of SWAWDB prohibited programs, contact Board staff.

Training related costs include tuitions necessary for all enrollees (WIOA or non-WIOA) to complete the selected course of study. ITAs may only be used for training related costs paid directly to the eligible training provider. Training related costs that are paid to another party (vendor or reimbursement to participant) are paid through a purchase order.

In order to be eligible for an ITA, participants are required to apply for Pell Grants and all other available financial aid, excluding student loans. Documentation is required to be maintained in the participant's file and recorded in AJL as appropriate.

- The CP will complete the ITA form, print it and sign it and place a copy in the skeleton file and the master file (a scanned copy is sufficient for the master file).
- To comply with federal, state, and local directives, an ITA must be established prior to submitting a training voucher.
- The training voucher is a purchase order issued to the training provider by the CP as a representative of the SW Service Provider. The CP will complete the training voucher and submit it to the training provider, by email, fax, hand deliver, etc (CP choice). Place

a copy in the skeleton file. Send/scan a copy to Accounting so that it is on hand to match to the invoice. Once paid, it will be placed in the master file and a copy of the paid bill will be forwarded to the CP for the skeleton file.

- Training vouchers may be issued to the institution no earlier than 10 days prior to the semester or term the voucher applies to.

Once a participant is enrolled into an ITA approved program and the individual negatively terminates they cannot be enrolled in another ITA training activity without approval from the SW Service Provider designee. CPs should document circumstances surrounding the negative termination and submit it to the SW service provider designee with supporting documents.

CPs are responsible for terminating ITAs for a participant's failure to adhere to all requirements outlined in the participant agreement.

WRITING AN ITA:

1. The SWAWDB has determined the maximum ITA amount; always refer to the existing policy for the maximum amounts. The Initial Request for Services should be made for the actual amount you reasonably expect to spend on training at the time the request is written. Do not arbitrarily request the maximum. The approved amount for an ITA may be adjusted when funding becomes limited.
2. Applicants for ITA's who currently are in post-secondary coursework must present a transcript of their most recent post-secondary schooling that shows a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher in order to receive an ITA. Participants seeking enrollment into post-secondary training services who do not possess a 2.0 cumulative grade point average at the time of application will not be accepted.
3. Participants who possess an occupational skills credential, occupational skills certificate, and/or a degree (other than a Bachelor's Degree or higher) may be considered for enrollment into a program of study requiring an ITA if they are determined to be eligible for training and a need for additional training has been established by the Career Planner, and approved by the SW Service Provider designee. The request should be well documented in the form of the following, but not necessarily limited to:
 - a. Evidence of extensive job search that has been unsuccessful in the career path in which the participant holds a credential. "Extensive" is subjective; the higher the career ladder, less proof is required; (think along the lines of hospital administrator needing one piece of evidence, and a CNA needing 5) and higher populated areas would garner more evidence and less populated areas would produce less. Such proof includes:

- i. Application submission or denial letters following interviews, or
 - ii. CP statement referring to AJL data showing where the applicant was referred but not hired.
 - b. Physician's statement that the participant can no longer work in the career path of the credential held due to legitimate medical reasons.
 - c. Evidence that the credential held is outdated or requirements for that career path no longer include the skills learned at the time the credential was granted, for instance mimeograph and typewriter experience.
 - d. The applicant has not maintained a proficiency in that career path due to not having a substantial work history in that occupation, for instance, being a stay at home parent for a number of years.
 - e. Proof that the credential held is not an in-demand occupation in Southwest Arkansas or the State of Arkansas, by means of ACRS.
4. Participant must show they are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to validate the need for WIOA funding. WIOA staff will coordinate services between WIOA and other available funding sources. WIOA may elect to not cover the full expenses of the participant when it is determined that funding provided by other source(s) is sufficient to meet their need or when total costs exceed, WIOA limits or available funding.
5. Some training programs, such as nursing, have pre-requisite college classes that are necessary to gain admission to the program. We do not pay for these pre-requisite classes. These programs require the student to demonstrate a basic proficiency in college level classes or a proficiency in the training area before admission to the program. We require that applicants have completed all classes, provide documentation that is required to apply for that program, and present an official and unconditional letter of acceptance from the selected eligible training provider before obtaining an ITA.
6. Once the ITA is developed, participants cannot change degree plans without prior written approval of the SW service provider designee.
 - a. The cost of any classes (tuition books and fees) taken under the initial degree plan that would be considered prerequisites under the new degree plan must be reimbursed to WIOA prior to the new degree plan becoming effective.
 - b. The new degree plan must not exceed the original ITA amount. (Keep in mind that additional Supportive Services may not be approved if the duration is extended beyond the original request).

- c. The CP must provide relevant documentation to support the change to the SW Service Provider designee with their request.
7. Each Training Voucher can be manually adjusted by \$100 for unexpected price increases. However, once the ITA maximum has been reached an additional services request must be submitted for approval; no approvals will be made in excess of the ITA Policy limits.
 - a. For instance,
 - i. If the ITA is approved for \$12,000 and the \$100 allowance is not sufficient, an additional services request should be made. The modification should be documented on the original ITA as indicated on the form in your skeleton file and a copy should be provided to the master file.
 - ii. If the ITA is approved for the maximum allowed by Policy, currently \$15,000 then no more may be requested, and all payments shall not exceed \$15,000. Keep in mind that the final ITA may end up short if unexpected costs occur and planning should begin early in order to prepare the participant for a financial shortfall.
8. A participant must be a full-time student during any session in which they are enrolled. Whenever full-time status cannot be established, the participant must obtain official documentation from the eligible training provider stating why full-time status is not available. The CP must provide relevant supporting documentation for the participant file.
9. Each participant is required to maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average each semester. The CP will place a participant with a cumulative or semester grade point average below 2.0 on probation. If the participant fails to raise their grade point average to 2.0 during the following semester, they may lose their ITA. The CP will make this determination by reviewing the participant's grades each semester.

INVOICING

The CP should instruct the training institution that they would be responsible for submitting an invoice with itemized charges to the Accounting Department within 45 days from the beginning of the semester for which they are billing to ensure prompt payment. The Accounting Department will reconcile the training voucher to the invoice and proceed with payment in a timely manner.