



**WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)
PROGRAM POLICY NOTICE NO. 10 Rev. 2**

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 31, 2026
SUBJECT: REFERRAL PROCESS POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear, consistent, and compliant referral process for entities awarded a subcontract or agreement through the Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board (NALWDB). This policy supports coordinated, customer-centered service delivery across Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs and partner agencies within the Northern Workforce Development Area.

II. AUTHORITY

This policy is issued pursuant to the following authorities:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Pub. L. 113–128, §§ 121, 134
- 20 CFR Part 678 (One-Stop Delivery System)
- 20 CFR §§ 678.300–678.430 (Roles and responsibilities of one-stop partners)
- 20 CFR § 683.230 (Nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions)
- New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) 11.2.8 (Job Training Programs)
- New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) state administrative guidance supporting implementation
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) executed between the NALWDB and required one-stop partners

III. BACKGROUND

The vision of WIOA partnerships in New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers is to:

- a) Connect customers with the full range of services available within their communities.
- b) Provide seamless, customer-focused, and integrated service delivery across all partner programs; and
- c) Ensure that job seekers and businesses have access to information and services that lead to positive employment outcomes.

Grantees, subrecipients, and contractors funded under WIOA must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies governing service delivery and referrals.

IV. POLICY STATEMENT

NALWDB service providers must establish and maintain a documented referral process that facilitates timely, appropriate, and effective access to services offered by WIOA core partners and other community service



providers. Referral processes must be transparent, equitable, and responsive to customer needs and must be available for review by local, state, and federal monitors.

The selection of a referral method must be based on the customer's needs, informed consent, and the capacity of both the referring and receiving organizations.

V. TYPES OF REFERRALS

Referral processes may take multiple forms. Service providers must determine the most appropriate referral type based on the customer's circumstances, barriers to employment, and readiness to engage in services.

A. Passive Referral

The customer is provided with contact information for appropriate services and independently initiates contact at a time that best suits their needs.

B. Facilitated Referral

The customer is assisted in accessing another service. This may include scheduling appointments on the customer's behalf, warm handoffs, or transferring calls to partner agencies.

C. Active Referral

With the customer's informed consent, the referring organization shares relevant information and professional assessments with the receiving organization to support continuity of services and reduce duplication.

D. Cold Referral

The customer is transferred to another service without prior communication between service providers. Cold referrals should be avoided whenever possible due to the increased risk of service disruption and customer disengagement.

VI. CUSTOMER CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All referrals must be made with the customer's informed consent. Service providers must ensure that the collection, use, and sharing of customer information complies with applicable confidentiality, privacy, and equal opportunity requirements. Information shared through referrals must be limited to what is necessary to facilitate access to services.

VII. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Referrals must be provided in a nondiscriminatory manner consistent with WIOA Section 188 and applicable federal and state equal opportunity regulations. Service providers must ensure meaningful access to referral services for all customers, including individuals with disabilities, individuals with limited English proficiency, and other individuals who may require reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids and services. Referral practices must not create barriers that limit access to services based on protected characteristics.

VIII. PRIORITY OF SERVICE CONSIDERATIONS

Referrals must be made in a manner consistent with Priority of Service requirements under WIOA. Service providers must ensure that veterans, eligible spouses, low-income individuals, recipients of public assistance,



individuals who are basic skills deficient, and individuals with barriers to employment receive appropriate priority access to referrals and services, where applicable.

IX. REFERRAL TIMEFRAMES

Referrals must be initiated in a timely manner based on the customer's identified needs, the urgency of services requested, and the availability and capacity of the receiving organization. When delays occur, the reason for the delay must be documented in the participant case record.

X. TRACKING AND DOCUMENTATION OF REFERRALS

All referrals made by core and non-core partners must be documented in the state-approved case management system. At a minimum, documentation must include:

- a) Date the referral was initiated.
- b) Type of referral (passive, facilitated, active, or cold);
- c) Program, partner, or service to which the customer was referred.
- d) Evidence of customer consent.
- e) Follow-up actions and outcomes, when applicable.
- f) Supporting documentation verifying the referral, which may include referral forms, electronic referral confirmations, partner communication records, or case notes documenting the referral process and coordination with the receiving program or partner.

Referral activity and documentation are subject to monitoring by the NALWDB, NMDWS, and federal oversight entities.

XI. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND SKILLS

Staff responsible for making referrals must possess the knowledge and skills necessary to support customers in accessing services, including the ability to:

- a) Assess customer needs and perceived barriers.
- b) Discuss options and prioritize needs collaboratively with the customer.
- c) Determine the most appropriate referral type.
- d) Identify and address factors that may impede successful follow-through.

XII. MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The NALWDB will review referral practices as part of routine monitoring activities. Identified deficiencies may result in technical assistance, corrective action, or other remedies as appropriate. This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with federal and state requirements and evolving service delivery practices.

XIII. EFFECTIVE DATE AND REVIEW



This policy becomes effective upon approval and will be reviewed and updated as necessary to maintain compliance with applicable laws and guidance.

This policy rescinds any previous NALWDB policy regarding subject.

INQUIRIES; Contact WIOA Program Manager at (505) 986-0363.



NALWDB CHAIR

3-31-26

DATE