

SECTION 13 – YOUTH SERVICES

13.1 Purpose

This section establishes standards governing youth and young adult workforce programming administered or overseen by the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board, including WIOA Youth services and YouthBuild.

Youth programs shall operate in accordance with:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- YouthBuild statutory and regulatory requirements
- Applicable federal and state guidance
- Grant-specific Notice of Award requirements

Where YouthBuild or other discretionary grants impose stricter requirements, the stricter standard shall apply.

13.2 Youth and Young Adult Services Framework

13.2.1 Scope

Youth and young adult services may include:

- WIOA Youth (In-School and Out-of-School)
- State-funded youth initiatives
- Discretionary youth grants
- Young adult workforce programs

All youth services must align with career pathway development and labor market demand.

13.2.2 Youth Eligibility

Youth eligibility must be determined in accordance with:

- Age requirements
- Income eligibility (where applicable)
- Barrier categories

- School status
- Selective Service requirements (when applicable)

Eligibility must be fully documented prior to enrollment.

Exception categories must be tracked and monitored to ensure percentage limits are not exceeded.

13.2.3 Required Youth Program Elements

Where required by WIOA Youth, programs shall make available the fourteen (14) program elements, including but not limited to:

- Tutoring and dropout prevention
- Alternative secondary school services
- Work experience
- Occupational skills training
- Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation
- Leadership development
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial literacy
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Labor market information
- Postsecondary transition activities

Documentation must demonstrate access to required elements.

13.2.4 Work Experience Requirements

Where required, a minimum percentage of youth funds must be expended on work experience activities.

Tracking of work experience expenditures must:

- Be documented
- Be monitored periodically
- Align with fiscal reporting

Work experience documentation must comply with Section 4 of this Manual.

13.2.5 Follow-Up for Youth

Youth participants must receive at least twelve (12) months of follow-up services after exit, unless stricter requirements apply.

Follow-up must be documented and aligned with Section 7 of this Manual.

13.3 YouthBuild Program Operations

The YouthBuild Program shall operate in accordance with the YouthBuild Program Policies and Operations Manual adopted by the Workforce Development Board and incorporated herein by reference.

The YouthBuild Manual establishes detailed requirements governing:

- Eligibility
- Mental toughness
- Stipends
- Leadership development
- Construction safety
- Credential attainment
- Case management
- Follow-up
- Incident reporting
- Federal reporting compliance

In the event of conflict between this Programmatic Manual and the YouthBuild Manual, the YouthBuild Manual shall govern for YouthBuild-funded activities.

13.3.1 YouthBuild Program Authority

YouthBuild is a federally funded discretionary program administered under specific statutory and regulatory authority.

YouthBuild operations must comply with:

- YouthBuild authorizing statute
- Applicable federal regulations
- Notice of Award
- DOL guidance
- Grant-specific conditions

Where YouthBuild requirements conflict with general program policy, YouthBuild requirements shall govern.

13.3.2 YouthBuild Eligibility

YouthBuild eligibility must include:

- Age requirements
- Low-income status
- Barrier category qualification
- School status verification
- Selective Service compliance (where applicable)

Eligibility documentation must be complete prior to enrollment.

13.3.3 Mental Toughness and Orientation

YouthBuild programs may include a structured orientation or “Mental Toughness” phase.

This phase must:

- Be documented
- Include attendance tracking
- Include participant evaluation
- Align with program expectations

Participation standards must be applied consistently.

13.3.4 Construction Training and Safety

YouthBuild programs involving construction must:

- Comply with applicable safety standards
- Ensure appropriate supervision
- Provide safety training
- Maintain documentation of certifications

OSHA 30-hour certification may be recognized as an industry credential where applicable.

Safety documentation must be retained.

13.3.5 Stipends

YouthBuild stipends must:

- Be tied to participation
- Be supported by attendance documentation
- Follow fiscal controls
- Be documented prior to payment

Stipend calculations must be retained in participant files.

All stipend payments must comply with the Financial Management and Procedures Manual.

13.3.6 Leadership Development and Community Service

YouthBuild participants must receive:

- Leadership development opportunities
- Community service engagement
- Civic engagement training

Documentation must reflect participation and outcomes.

13.3.7 Case Management and Follow-Up

YouthBuild participants must receive:

- Structured case management
- Documented Individual Service Strategies
- Barrier resolution support
- Twelve (12) months of follow-up

Documentation must align with Sections 3 and 7 of this Manual.

13.3.8 Performance Accountability

YouthBuild performance reporting must comply with:

- DOL performance requirements
- Grant-specific outcome measures
- Federal reporting timelines

All performance outcomes must be supported by documentation consistent with Section 8.

13.3.9 Incident Reporting

YouthBuild programs must maintain an internal incident reporting protocol for:

- Safety incidents
- Participant misconduct
- Construction site accidents
- Mandatory reporting events

Incidents must be documented and reported in accordance with grant requirements.

13.3.10 Partner Oversight

YouthBuild may involve subcontractors or community partners.

Such partners must:

- Operate in accordance with this Manual
- Maintain required documentation
- Comply with safety and eligibility standards
- Submit required reports

Subrecipient oversight must comply with fiscal monitoring standards.

13.4 Monitoring and Enforcement

Youth program operations are subject to:

- Internal monitoring
- Fiscal review
- Federal monitoring
- Performance review

Noncompliance may result in:

- Corrective action
- Special conditions
- Funding adjustments
- Enrollment suspension

13.5 Requires Additional Assistance (Eligibility Barrier)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) identifies “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment” as an allowable barrier to eligibility for youth participants. In accordance with 20 CFR § 681.310(a), the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board establishes the following local definition and requirements.

A. Definition

A youth shall be considered to “require additional assistance” when the individual demonstrates documented educational, employment, or personal barriers that significantly impede their ability to:

- Complete a secondary or postsecondary educational program; or
- Secure, retain, or advance in employment

Eligibility under this category must be based on objective and documented need and may not be used in the absence of supporting evidence.

B. Allowable Criteria

A youth may qualify under this barrier if one or more of the following conditions are documented:

Educational Barriers

- Grade point average below 2.0
- One or more grade levels behind expected age progression
- History of course failure or credit deficiency
- Documented risk of dropping out as determined by a school official
- Suspension, expulsion, or documented behavioral issues affecting academic progress
- Low standardized test scores or basic skills deficiency not otherwise qualifying under another barrier

Employment Barriers

- Little or no prior work history
- Inconsistent or unsuccessful employment history
- Demonstrated lack of job readiness skills
- Limited exposure to workplace expectations or career pathways
- Chronic unemployment or underemployment

Social, Family, or Personal Barriers

- Lack of stable or supportive home environment
- Living in a non-traditional or unstable household

- Family history of chronic unemployment or public assistance dependency
- Documented behavioral, emotional, or social challenges impacting employability
- Exposure to trauma, substance use, or other adverse life conditions that impede success

C. Documentation Requirements

Eligibility under the “requires additional assistance” category must be supported by appropriate documentation, which may include:

- School records or transcripts
- Case notes from objective assessment
- Employer statements or work history records
- Court, social service, or partner agency documentation
- Self-attestation only when no other documentation is reasonably available and must be justified in the case file

All determinations must be clearly documented in the participant file and aligned with the Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

D. Limitation on Use for In-School Youth (ISY)

In accordance with 20 CFR § 681.310(b):

- No more than five percent (5%) of newly enrolled In-School Youth (ISY) participants in a given program year may be determined eligible solely under the “requires additional assistance” category

Programs must prioritize enrollment of ISY participants who meet other eligibility criteria when feasible.

E. Tracking and Monitoring

The Workforce Development Board and its service providers must:

- Track the number and percentage of ISY participants enrolled under this eligibility category
- Maintain internal controls to ensure compliance with the five percent (5%) limitation

- Monitor usage of this barrier during programmatic and eligibility reviews
- Implement corrective action if thresholds are approached or exceeded

Tracking must be conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the program year.

F. Consistency and Oversight

All determinations under this category must:

- Be applied consistently across participants and service providers
- Be based on objective assessment and documented need
- Be subject to monitoring, review, and validation

Failure to properly define, document, or track this eligibility category may result in findings, disallowed costs, or corrective action.